

# Shifting Dynamics: Activating Meaningful Civil Society Involvement in Global Health Governance

Center for Indonesia's Strategic Development Initiatives

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Speakers	Notes
<b>Keynote Speech - Dr. Mamadi Yilla</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic underscore the critical importance of community involvement.</li><li>• Since pandemics originate within communities, it is imperative to integrate community participation into our strategies and recognize its pivotal role in crafting effective solutions.</li><li>• Community is inherently a part of our solutions. Community is needed to hold us accountable.</li><li>• The department has made a decision to harness the programs to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic. That experience is something that we need to leverage for the future.</li><li>• Civil society is growing in our ability, but we need to bridge the gap between the government and the population that we all collectively serve.</li><li>• Channels are needed to engage with how world leaders are moving.</li><li>• We needed to rely on communities, as they were the ones most affected by the pandemic.</li><li>• The pandemic can have different names but who it impacts is still the civil population.</li><li>• We need to emphasize the importance of engagement with those affected the most.</li><li>• Monitoring programs also need a funded mechanism so that we can oversee the governments and bring them back to the dialogue.</li><li>• Including the community's leaders is needed in the planning, executing, and monitoring.</li><li>• We need to learn our success stories from the HIV/AIDS pandemic and engage with civil society at all levels.</li></ul>
<b>Opening Remarks - Eloise Todd</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inclusive collaboration in global and regional efforts is needed, especially with the shrinking voices of civil society in many countries.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to technical experts, and community leaders, are really important for a good negotiation. We must be fighting to get those CSO accesses.</li> </ul>
<b>Diah S. Saminarsih</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current reality does not favor civil society. The prevailing narrative suggests that the election outcome in Indonesia will restrict our ability to have our voices heard.</li> <li>• We find ourselves in a challenging situation regarding our stance. Navigating this terrain is proving to be quite tricky. Presently, the outlook appears unfavorable. It's anticipated that civil society's influence will be increasingly constrained. It requires courage to continue pushing forward in this environment.</li> <li>• This year, CISDI initiated a coalition on the pandemic agreement and UHC with the expectation that it will enhance decision-making processes at the WHA 77.</li> </ul>
<b>Elisha Dunn-Georgiu</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We observe the shrinking of the civil society space, particularly evident during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Even the space allocated for the WHA has significantly diminished; what was once unlimited has now been reduced to just six.</li> <li>• Even among health associations, the majority of global headquarters are situated in Europe, the UK, the US, or other locations in the Global North. This geographical concentration extends to related events, posing significant challenges to enhancing collaboration between the Global North and the Global South.</li> <li>• Northern CSOs have often been perceived as having a more credible perspective. However, it's crucial to recognize the enriching value in listening to the voices of Southern CSOs, and collaboration should be prioritized accordingly.</li> <li>• It's important to understand the distinction between equitable and equal. We should view things through an equity lens rather than equality. This implies the necessity of creating more spaces for voices from the Global South.</li> </ul>
<b>Kumanan Rasanathan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Epistemic community is a network of professionals with recognized expertise.</li> <li>• Knowledge and evidence are crucial, but they operate on only one level. Like a triangle, you require not only researchers but also policymakers and the participation of the people to move the wheel.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil society is often viewed as a force for social mobilization, yet its role as a vital knowledge provider should not be overlooked.</li> <li>• Researchers should break out of their silos and actively engage with both civil society and policymakers to ensure their work translates into real-world impact.</li> <li>• Researchers at academic institutions often prioritize grants, publications, and similar academic pursuits, which may not always align with contributing to policymaking. Consequently, civil society plays a crucial role in providing real-world experiences that can bridge this gap.</li> </ul>
<b>Priya Basu</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSOs amplify voices that can be both sovereign and non-sovereign. There's a desire for increased participation from the Global South in CSOs, with a focus on equity rather than equality perspectives.</li> <li>• The greater civil society's involvement, the higher the likelihood of success. From the Pandemic Fund's experience, we are witnessing notable enhancements in papers, and now we are beginning to observe improvements in their actual implementation as well.</li> </ul>
<b>Suerie Moon</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In many countries, there is very little domestic financial support for civil society, which can impede its local initiatives. This challenge is particularly pronounced for policy advocacy groups that aim to challenge policymakers.</li> <li>• There has been a shift and a concerted effort towards increased transparency, possibly as a response to the proliferation of misinformation both during the pandemic and in reaction to the pandemic agreement.</li> <li>• Civil society should be allowed to sit together at the decision-making table. I am optimistic that there will be a gradual expansion of space for their participation going forward.</li> <li>• Certain member states express discomfort with the participation of CSOs. However, the advocacy for greater openness in the process has yielded positive results. Therefore, it's imperative to persist in these efforts.</li> <li>• Those who fund CSOs, please continue to do so because that has been very critical to allow civil society engagement.</li> </ul>
<b>Q&amp;A Session I</b>	

<p>Q1: How is within this decision-making process, the formal steps needed to be taken?</p>	
<p>Q2: In our countries, we have seen a lot of fragmentation. Speakers sometimes feel disconnected from the populations they serve. How can they reconnect with them?</p>	<p><b>Kumanan Rasanathan:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We often find ourselves fixating on the last problems before addressing new problems. It's important to approach our knowledge with humility and strive to effectively implement it. Both global civil society and global policymakers share a common failure in leaving the most affected populations behind. This diversion prevents us from concentrating on finding solutions.</li> </ul>
<p>Q3: How to communicate with the member states about the importance of including the voices of CSOs.</p>	<p><b>Diah S. Saminarsih:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizing civil society presents its own set of challenges. However, if we are not organized, achieving a common goal becomes more difficult. From CISDI's experience, we have endeavored to foster inclusivity by partnering with other organizations sharing similar interests, and amplifying their voices at the WHA. Initially, we must advocate to our respective governments or at the national level, providing tangible examples. "Is there an alternative method for civil society to advocate at the policy level, similar to how we've facilitated the participation of other organizations from Indonesia to come to Geneva this year?"</li> </ul> <p><b>Priya Basu:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have been contemplating how to amplify all the voices we represent. However, there's a question to reflect on: are civil society organizations the most suitable entities to cultivate awareness about behavior change within communities, particularly concerning prevention, and to serve as advocates during the pandemic?</li> </ul> <p><b>Elisha Dunn-Georgiou:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The definitions of global northern-southern/LMIC-HIC-LIC categorizations provide a broad overview of populations but often overlook marginalized individuals who are most vulnerable to inequities.</li> <li>• Global funders tend to prioritize big moments with a splash, yet improving health outcomes is an ongoing process that doesn't typically occur with a single big moment.</li> <li>• For civil society organizations, garnering attention at large events like the WHA may seem preferable to engaging in</li> </ul>

	<p>grassroots advocacy within their own communities or countries. Civil participation encompasses more than just adopting the principles of civil engagement; it requires active involvement and commitment to local advocacy efforts.</p> <p><b>Sueri Moon:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No other health advocacy group has implemented as strategic and impactful measures as the HIV movement. I am not suggesting to copy paste and have a global fund for everything. However, the lessons lie in understanding the factors enabling the success of the HIV movement. If civil society organizations become overly reliant on funders, engaging in challenging conversations may become difficult due to excessive institutionalization.</li> </ul>
<p>Q4: How can we better integrate healthcare services, particularly for People Living with HIV (PLHIV) who also have Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) comorbidities? Should we transition towards a healthcare system framework for funding instead of a disease-based approach?</p>	<p><b>Kumanan Rasanathan:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The deeper you delve into the real-world issues facing the population, the greater potential you have to drive change.</li> </ul> <p><b>Sueri Moon:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts are lagging behind the pace of the problem. We require greater involvement from experts in the HIV movement to collaborate on addressing other health issues.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Conclusion</b></p>	<p>Funding is crucial for consolidating resources and has the potential to streamline our efforts.</p>