



CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS' STATEMENT

TANZANIA HEALTH DATA COLLABORATIVE LAUNCHING MEETING

11 September 2017

Honorable Permanent Secretary (MoH), Deputy Permanent Secretary (PoRALG), Hon. Members of Parliament, Chief Medical Officer, UN agencies and Development Partners; ladies and gentleman, good morning.

I am happy to read this statement on behalf of several CSOs, whose health programs feed into and directly benefit from Health Data. There are CSOs working hand in hand with the government to deliver various services and improve health systems, while others, work to mobilize communities to participate in the implementation, monitoring and evaluating health services and policies. Researches and analytical works carried out by CSO's have as well improved decisions, national frameworks including policies, quality of services and accountability to citizens.

The launching of Tanzania Health Data Collaborative is, therefore, timely. It is timely because the technology allows and that citizens have means and greater desire to access and share information. It is also appropriate since partners including CSOs have already developed greater capacity than ever before to produce and use data.

Mr. Chairman, our presence in this meeting expresses our commitment to continue and expand the existing collaboration with the government across all levels. We will continue to produce and collect quality data to support the

government in improving the quality of decisions, policies and overall health. In addition, we encourage this collaboration to seek and leverage resources in order to find solutions to existing gaps and challenges in data and information management.

Having committed ourselves to this initiative Mr Chairman, please allow us to make a few remarks for the purpose of improvement.

Firstly, that information should be utilised at different levels from the producer (be it in community or facility level), management level, decision makers and policy makers. In this case data needs to be considered important regardless of whether it is being consumed at the immediate time or not or in future.

Secondly, we would wish to remind that Health Data Collaborative should be cross sectoral in nature or in other words it should not just be about health policy, but also about health in all relevant development policies. This will mean engagement with other sectors and agencies, such as, education, water, PoRALG, NIDA, etc. In this case we note the participation of other government agencies in this meeting such as NBS, eGov, and RITA. For example, we understand that birth registration is a feeder document for national ID, and a death certificate is the exit document for ID. But all through life, identity is important for entitlements that lead to health, including health insurance. Here we intend to emphasize on the need for synergies and linkages as means of being cost effective and increase efficiency gains.

Thirdly, we understand that this collaboration and alignment which we seek in this initiative aims to implement the Five-Point Call to Action of Health Measurement and Accountability for Results in Health. It will be counterproductive to expect all of us to maximize data revolution and increase accountability, if only we are not ready to open up. In the spirit of “Open Data” and “Open Government”, it is further re-emphasized on the need to ensure open access to data for information and utilisation by everyone and if possible in real time.

Final but not least, we further wish to underscore the need for this initiative to comprehensively integrate the community based data for the health sector, which is usually fragmented and less captured in the routine data systems. This is an area where the CSOs are willing and committed to work in partnership with sectoral Ministries and LGAs. We shall be further pleased to have the CSOs play an active role in this initiative. The lessons learnt and best practises gained by CSOs in health data management at both community and facility levels should be maximally utilized in the spirit of partnerships for results.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen

Once again, and on behalf of my colleagues, I thank you and I wish you all a good and productive meeting.



Irenei Kiria, Executive Director of Sikika, on behalf of CSOs