

Application for the ‘Practitioners Convening on Community Monitoring for Accountability in Health’

July 18-20, 2011, South Africa

Open Society Foundation - Public Health Program Accountability and Monitoring in Health Initiative

BACKGROUND

The Accountability and Monitoring in Health Initiative¹ (AMHI) of the Open Society Foundation’s Public Health Program (PHP) supports civil society groups to effectively and strategically use community monitoring as a mechanism for ensuring greater government accountability and transparency in health care to its citizens at the local, national, regional and global levels.

The absence of spaces and opportunities for practitioners of community monitoring for accountability in health to come together to share and collectively reflect on their experiences and to think creatively about the field and its future has been identified as a critical gap that is hampering the advancement of the field. AMHI seeks to address this gap through organizing a strategic convening of experienced practitioners in community monitoring for accountability in health from July 18 – 20, 2011 in South Africa. The objectives of the convening are:

1. **Sharing field experiences and synthesizing lessons:** To share and synthesize learning on the contexts for, purpose, methods, reporting and use of different approaches for generation and use of community based evidence for social accountability in health with a focus on the following sub-themes:
 - a. ***How are we thinking?*** Conceptual frameworks and design of community monitoring for accountability in health. What are the essential features (contexts, methods, actors and processes) of current initiatives on community monitoring for accountability in health? What issues arise in applying the different approaches, conceptual frameworks and designs that are being used by different community monitoring for accountability in health initiatives and what implication does this have for our design and approaches?
 - b. ***How are we doing?*** Operational issues of community monitoring for accountability in health approaches. What are the mechanisms, capacities, technical and other support by which communities are empowered/activated to participate in monitoring their health services and demand accountability? How is evidence gathered, organized, communicated/ reported and used for engagement? How are the outputs tracked? What are the critical factors that ensure action following the processes of and using the evidence collected through community monitoring?
 - c. ***What impact are we having?*** How do we understand impact in community monitoring for accountability? What types of impact are practitioners looking at while using community monitoring for accountability in health approaches? Illustrative examples of successes and setbacks of different community monitoring for accountability in health initiatives with a focus on enabling factors and challenges (contextual, organizational and others) of different approaches
2. **Supporting and enhancing the practice of community monitoring for accountability in health:** To identify and critically assess the existing resources and resource gaps in knowledge, skills and conditions for effective use of community monitoring in health and for introducing the approach to interested but uninitiated organizations and chart out a plan for filling some of the identified gaps with a focus on:
 - a. Mobilizing and strengthening civil society/people’s capacity (What resources are required to support interested organizations to adapt community monitoring for accountability in health

¹ Combining the former Public Health Watch and Health Budget Monitoring and Advocacy Projects of Open Society Foundation’s Public Health Program

- with a focus on processes/methodology questions, tools, analytical issues, and advocacy and dissemination strategies? What resources exist for this? What are the gaps? How can these gaps be filled)
- b. Documenting the impact of community monitoring in health initiatives (Which indicators are important to capture the progress and impact of community monitoring for accountability in health initiatives? What indicators can be built-in within the community monitoring initiatives to document the effectiveness and impact?)
 - c. Community monitoring for accountability in health for use by marginalized and criminalized populations (Can community monitoring for accountability in health initiatives be effectively adapted for promoting accountability in services for marginalized and criminalized populations like sex workers, drug users, and such others?)
 - d. Identifying socio-political preconditions, enabling and retarding contextual factors, which can significantly influence community monitoring processes. Understanding how to strengthen enabling factors and minimize retarding factors. Grasping specific limitations and pitfalls related to the community monitoring approach which may need to be dealt with by appropriate precautions and measures.

3. Identifying ways to strengthen the field of community monitoring for accountability in health

- a. Linking practice, learning and documentation in mutually reinforcing ways within the promising community monitoring for accountability in health initiatives (How can learning be in-built within community monitoring for accountability in health initiatives? What resources/support is required to stimulate reflection and document experiences for disseminating community monitoring for accountability in health practices for different audiences?)

In addition to pre-selected participants, AMHI is inviting a limited number of open applications for the convening. Up to four applicants will be selected based on the following criteria:

- At least three years of practical experience implementing community monitoring for accountability in health efforts.
- Expressed interest in and demonstrated initiatives in strengthening the field of community monitoring for accountability in health (e.g. documenting experiences on various aspects of community monitoring for accountability in health, holding meetings and building/strengthening networks with like minded people/organizations) **AND/OR** Expressed interest in and demonstrated initiatives in capacity strengthening of civil society groups to use community monitoring for accountability in health (e.g. developing training materials, conducting trainings, mentoring groups doing community monitoring).
- Commitment to filling-out a questionnaire on community monitoring experiences to inform a background paper for the convening.
- Ability to communicate well in English

All relevant travel and program related expenses are covered by the Open Society Foundations (OSF). These covered expenses include a round trip non-refundable economy class ticket, airport transfers, hotel, meals, visa and travel insurance for each participant.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Applicants should submit the application form below together with a CV (not exceeding 3 pages) to Kandice Arwood (e-mail: karwood@sorosny.org; fax: +1 646-557-2582) by **May 20, 2011**. Successful applicants will be informed by **June 3, 2011**.

Application Form for the 'Practitioners Convening on Community Monitoring for Accountability in Health'

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY IN CAPITAL LETTERS

1. Participant details

Title (Mr, Ms)	
Family name	
First name	
Middle Name	
Position/Job Title	
Organization	
Postal address	
Telephone	
Fax	
Email	
Website address	

2. Current organizational details

Name of the organization	
Type of the organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Independent foundation <input type="checkbox"/> Community based organization <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate/Corporate foundation <input type="checkbox"/> Non-governmental organization <input type="checkbox"/> Multilateral <input type="checkbox"/> University/research institute <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>please specify</i>) _____
Telephone number	
Fax number	
Postal Address	
Website address	

3. Please provide a brief description of your organization: mission, background, year of establishment, geographic focus.

4. Please provide a summary of relevant work experience implementing a community monitoring for accountability in health initiative, whether with government or civil society. Please specify number of years of experience. *(Use additional sheets if necessary)*

5. Please provide details of your personal experience and involvement in strengthening the field of community monitoring for accountability in health. This could include documenting experiences on various aspects of community monitoring for accountability in health, organizing meetings and building/strengthening networks with like minded people/organizations

AND/OR

Details of your personal experience and involvement in capacity strengthening of civil society groups to use community monitoring for accountability in health (e.g. developing training materials, conducting trainings, mentoring groups doing community monitoring). *(Use additional sheets if necessary)*

6. Please explain how you think your participation will add value to the convening? (use additional sheets if necessary)

7. What are your expectations for attending the convening? (*Use additional sheets if necessary*)

Signature: _____ Place and Date: _____