



Strategies for **governments** to strengthen civil society engagement at the national levelⁱ

Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)ⁱⁱ can play a key role in all aspects of the research process, from developing a research agenda that responds to the needs and concerns of the public, to conducting research and transforming research findings into action.

The goal of research for health is *better health for all*. Reaching this goal is possible with the involvement of the actors that represent the rich spectrum of sectors and disciplines, including CSOs.

BUILDING RECOGNITION

CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR CSO ENGAGEMENT

Develop Commitment

- Advocate for CSO engagement. Target other policy-makers, researchers, funders and CSO
- Engage in dialogue with CSOs about harmonising efforts towards national policies and agendas

Lay the Foundations

- Describe the role of CSOs in national policies, plans and strategies
- Include CSOs in national priority setting processes
- Encourage participation of CSOs in conducting research on country priorities

IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

ENGAGING WITH CSOs

Develop Partnerships and Alliances

- Establish and strengthen research partnerships and networks among CSOs, government and academia, respecting good partnership principles

Strengthen Capacity

- Support development of institutional and human capacity of CSOs, ensuring their role in national human resources plans

Secure Funding

- Make CSO involvement a criteria for selected calls for proposals
- Increase national funds available to CSOs
- Involve CSOs in research projects and programmes where appropriate

Move from Research to Action to Policy

- Create a national web-based platform for information sharing at national level, making research findings available in a language and format useful to the general public
- Build on CSO expertise and networks for research communication
- Create a space where all researchers can present their results

MONITORING PROGRESS

ASSESSING ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Evaluate Success

- Identify and apply indicators that evaluate the impact of CSO engagement. This is an ongoing, cross-cutting process that should be implemented in all strategies that are applied
- Document stories, good examples and lessons learnt

ⁱ This worksheet is based on: A Call for Civil Society Engagement in Research for Health. Input to the Global Ministerial Forum on Research for Health, Bamako, November 2008 (http://www.cohred.org/main/Assests/PDF/Bamako_web.pdf)

ⁱⁱ Civil Society Organisations – CSOs – are defined as organisations that are private, not-for-profit, operate between the state and the public, and between the state and the market. These organisations represent or serve groups of people, are guided by a passion to contribute to social justice, have interest in research, science and innovation, and in using these to assess and tackle health determinants, influence health policies and improve health outcomes.