

Civil Society and Social Development

In the context of BBC Media Action

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Civil society organizations are playing essential role in social development field across world. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) not only contribute to maximizing the reach and impact of programs, but also help in opening up areas for dialogue with the Government and other stakeholders, and contribute their capacities and expertise to high quality policy and normative discussions for development of health system.

CSOs are frequently observed to be a source of experience, expertise and information. The studies reviewed indicate that CSOs provide new insights and approaches to people-centered and participatory development. They pioneer and provide services to communities poorly reached by the state or market. They promote transparency and accountability in decision-making, create livelihoods and economic opportunities and promote human rights, contribution to improve health facilities. They facilitate policy change in states and societies to reflect people's circumstances and needs. They have helped to generate formal and informal networks of trust, openness, communication and co-operation, as well as shared norms, goals, beliefs and decision-making institutions. (Sen 1994, UNFPA 1998)

What is 'civil society'?

It's hard to describe civil society in a few words, because it involves diverse stakeholders within and across countries. For the purpose of partnerships, civil society as the sphere of autonomous associations that are independent of the public and for-profit sectors and designed to advance collective interests and ideas. CSOs may be formal or informal, and they work with a broad range of Health, political, legal, economic, social, and cultural contexts.

A civil society is comprised of groups/organizations working in the interest of the society but operating outside of the governmental and for-profit sectors. Organizations and institutions that make up civil society include non-profit organizations and other

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