Mapping of the Civil Society Organizations in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

Outline of Methods and Tools

Submitted by:
Association for Health and Environmental Development (AHED)

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Description of the Mapping Process

Within the framework of the “Commission on Social Determinants of Health”, the Association for Health and Environmental (AHED) was selected by the Commission’s Secretariat of the World Health Organization (WHO) as a civil society facilitator for the Eastern Mediterranean Region. Among the activities that AHED’s mission entails is to coordinate a mapping exercise of the civil society organizations in the indicated region.

This is the suggested methodology of this mapping process.

The process is expected to resulted in two main outputs:

1. **A report on the status of civil society in the Eastern Mediterranean Region.** The report should provide an overview of the following items:

   a. **General Context:**
      
      i. An analysis of trends within current policies, legislations, programs and institutions dealing with or affecting the social determinants of health (SDH)
         
         At this stage, focus will be given to key issues such as, the impact of globalization and neo-liberal economic policies on equity, prevalent approaches to development (e.g. vertical versus comprehensive, economic based vs. human based.)
      
      ii. Identification of opportunities and challenges in the current situation and for the coming three years. This exercise is essential for strategy development. It helps to identify what opportunities can we build upon and utilize as well as what risks and challenges are we to address, if we are to be successful in addressing the SDH in our region. gaps, challenges, opportunities and strength in current context in addressing SDH
   
   b. **Operational definition of Civil Society.** The definition is to help set the margins of the type of organizations to be included in the mapping exercise. A definition has been agreed upon by in the Civil Society meeting with the secretariat. (Attached)
   
   c. **Status of Civil Society in the region today.** This would include:
      
      i. **A brief historical development of civil society in the region.** The historical development should provide an understanding of the current status including the degree of development, roles, types of inputs, coverage and impact. Focus will be give to outlining regional differences and similarities of different models.
      
      ii. Factors affecting these developments
      
      iii. Dominant trends (charity vs. human right based, etc)
   
   d. **Categories of civil society organizations** according to:
      
      i. approach and mission
COMMISSION ON
SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

ii. field of activity

iii. Inputs to development in general

iv. Inputs in addressing S.D.H in particular

e. Gaps, challenges, opportunities and strength regarding role in development in general and role in addressing SDH in particular.

This SOWT analysis is to provide us with a picture of available opportunities and challenges in the environment surrounding civil societies work in general and in addressing S.D.H in particular. In addition, to available strengths and entry points as well as gaps in existing capacities.

2. A computerized Database of key civil society organizations. Attention will be given to ensure the representation of different types of civil society organization as well as different sub-regions. The database will include information about each included organization regarding:

a. Contact details such as the address, e-mail, telephone, fax, etc.

b. Fields of work.

c. Organizational experience relevant to the SDH.

d. Type of organizations and legal status.

e. Experience, skills and technical capacities and resources.

Obviously, at this stage only some key organizations will be included and will not represent all civil society organization. However, as the mapping will be a continuous exercise along the life span of the Commission and even beyond it, a wider representation should be one of the outcomes of the process.

Objectives

• To expand the engagement of civil society to the process of the Commission. This can be obtained through further identification of key civil society organization in the region.

• To identify status of the civil society in the region including its diversity according to the type and role.

• To explore the potentials of civil society in addressing the social determinants of health in the region in respect to possible differences in different sub-regions.

• To identify the gaps and challenges facing the civil society in addressing the social determinants of health.

• To explore the general potentials and challenges in addressing the social determinants in the region in general including the identification of the key actors.

Activities and Methods

1. Regarding the report on the status of civil society in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. The following activities are included:

a. Collation of materials and information related to the above described report areas. Information will be collected from all possible sources, such as:
i. Secondary sources: formal country statistics and records; regional and country reports affiliated to governments; international organizations, local authorities, etc; regional or country-based studies; Internet search; etc. Reports produced by civil society organizations in different countries will be given special attention.

ii. Administered open-ended questionnaire (guidelines). AHED will develop guidelines covering the above described types of needed information. These guidelines will be sent to all identified country focal points to write a brief report on civil society in their countries and submit it back to AHED.

b. Drawing up the first draft of the report.

c. Sending the report to all country focal points for their feedback. All country focal points will be asked to make their feedback through as wide a consultation as possible with civil society organizations as well as resource persons in their countries.

d. Finalize the report.

e. Dissemination of the report. The final report will be printed and disseminated to all involved organizations. Report will be produced in English, however full Arabic version and French Summary will be attempted.

2. Regarding the computerized Database of key civil society organizations. Developing the database will entail the following activities:

a. Collecting data about key different civil society organizations from different countries in the region. Data will be collected through a questionnaire that will be sent to key identified organizations. Each organization will be asked to fill in the questionnaire and submit it back via the e-mail. In addition, it will be asked (as a part of the questionnaire to indicate other relevant organizations/networks from the region and from their own countries to be contacted and included in the process. The questionnaire should focus on crucial items and be specific enough to facilitate and ensure the quality of responses as well as a good response rate.

b. Computerizing the collected data. A computerized database with a simple search mechanism will be designed for data retrieval. Received filled questionnaires will be entered regularly. English will be the formal language of questionnaire as well as the computerized database. Executive summaries in English and Arabic shall be made by AHED.

c. Dissemination of the database. The database will be copied on CDs and disseminated to all organizations which participated in the process.

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3 During the civil society regional meeting, it was agreed to consider the participant organization as focal point organizations in their countries during the first phase of the civil society related to the CSDH. Focal points from the countries that were not represented in the meeting will be further identified through consultation with key organizations in each country. It should be mentioned here that participants of the regional meeting agreed on that focal point organizations are not country representatives, but rather, they are facilitators of country-level work.
Tools
Based on the above description, two main tools will be utilized:

1) **Guidelines for country-based contribution to the report on the status of civil society in the Eastern Mediterranean Region.** (The guidelines will be sent with a proper introductory letter, especially to those did not participant in the civil society regional meeting).

**Notes:**

* Please cover the following question to submit finally a brief report about the status of civil society in your country in relation to addressing the SDH.

** You may support your report with whatever available documents.

1. **From your point of view, how can you briefly describe the general context of your county concerning the social determinants of health?** You may consider the following items:
   
   a. What are the key determinants of people’s health? Please categorize those determinants under the following categories:
      - Early Childhood Development
      - Social Exclusion
      - Gender and Women
      - Globalization
      - Urban Settings
      - Employment Conditions
      - Health Systems
      - Priority Public Health Conditions
   
   b. Describe a few examples of national polices / legislations addressing the social factors affecting people’s ill-health (both negatively and positively).
   
   c. Enumerate some of the key actors addressing the SDH in your country, and describe generally what they do. You may categorize these actors as:
      - Governmental institutions.
      - Civil society institutions.
      - Academic institutions or research centers.
      - International organizations having a branch/office in your country.
   
   d. What are the overall key challenges/gaps in the current policies and programs in addressing SDH in your country? (what to address?) (This question relates to all actors including government, civil society, international agencies, political parties…etc)
   
   e. What are the overall key opportunities in the current context in addressing SDH (what to build on?). (This question relates to all actors including government, civil society,
international agencies, political parties…etc)

2. **From your point of view, how can you comment on the status of civil society in your country?** You may use the following guidelines questions/items to build your comment.
   
a. What are the milestones of the historical development of civil society in your country? Please comment briefly on each.

b. What are the key factors affected the development of the civil society?

c. What are the current key factors that affect further development of the civil society, if different from those you mentioned?

d. What are the dominant trends (charity vs. human right based, etc)

3. **From your point of view, how does civil society addresses the SDH in your country?**

4. **How can you summarize the gaps and challenges facing the civil society in addressing the SDH?**

5. **How can you summarize the opportunities and strength in relationship to the role of civil society in development in general and in addressing SDH in particular?**

2) A questionnaire for *computerized Database of key civil society organizations* *(The questionnaire will be sent with a proper introductory letter to the largest possible number of civil society organizations. Different types of civil society organizations as well as the representation of different countries will be highly considered)*
## I. Contact information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the organization:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address: Street and No.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town / City:</td>
<td>Zip code:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Person: Name:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title in the organization:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tel. (full numbers with country and city codes):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax (full number with country and city codes):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## II. Status of the Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the status of your organization?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Membership association, specify no. of members: _____ Males _____ Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Foundation □ Syndicate □ Trade Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ NGO network, specify no. of member organizations ______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Other, specify______________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the geographical coverage of activities of your organization?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Urban □ Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Single Village, Specify __________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Single Town / City, specify ______________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Single Province, specify_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Country □ International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Regional, specify the region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Sub-regional, specify the countries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## III. Fields of Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under which theme(s), would you categorize the work of your organization/network?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>□ Social Exclusion □ Early Childhood Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Gender and Women □ Globalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Urban Settings □ Employment Conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Health Systems □ Priority Public Health Conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ Others, specify______________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 According to the definition agreed during the first meeting of CSDH regional civil society facilitators (non-for-profit, non-governmental), civil society organization would include the following types:
1. Non-governmental organization registered in their countries according to the law.
2. Networks and coalitions of non-governmental organizations (geographical and thematic based networks).
3. Syndicates and Unions (for workers and professionals).
4. Independent research centers and academic institutions.
5. People’s movements.
6. Community based coalitions and organizations.
7. Others.

ii During the civil society regional meeting (Cyprus, 3-5 Dec. 05), the following categorization of the region was endorsed:
1. High income countries (Gulf countries)
2. Middle income countries with considerable freedom for civil society organizations
3. Middle income countries with restrictions on civil society organizations
4. Low income countries