

policy

September 2015

PEPFAR 2015
COP CIVIL SOCIETY
ENGAGEMENT
ANALYSIS

*Recommendations for
Future Engagement*

This publication was prepared by Andrew Zapfel and
Ashley Gibbs of the Health Policy Project.



Suggested citation: Zapfel, A. and A. Gibbs. 2015. *PEPFAR 2015 COP Civil Society Engagement Analysis: Recommendations for Future Engagement*. Washington, DC: Futures Group, Health Policy Project.

ISBN: 978-1-59560-131-5

The Health Policy Project is a five-year cooperative agreement funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development under Agreement No. AID-OAA-A-10-00067, beginning September 30, 2010. The project's HIV activities are supported by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). It is implemented by Futures Group, in collaboration with Plan International USA, Avénir Health (formerly Futures Institute), Partners in Population and Development, Africa Regional Office (PPD ARO), Population Reference Bureau (PRB), RTI International, and the White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood (WRA).

PEPFAR 2015 COP Civil Society Engagement Analysis

Recommendations for Future Engagement

SEPTEMBER 2015

This publication was prepared by Andrew Zapfel¹ and Ashley Gibbs¹ of the Health Policy Project.

¹ Futures Group

The information provided in this document is not official U.S. Government information and does not necessarily represent the views or positions of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

CONTENTS

- Acknowledgments..... v**
- Executive Summary..... vi**
 - Backgroundvi
 - Methodologyvi
 - Findings and HPP Recommendationsvi
 - Conclusionviii
- Abbreviations..... ix**
- Introduction..... 1**
- 2015 Country Operational Plan Planning and Review 2**
- Survey Methodology..... 3**
 - Caveats.....3
- Survey Respondents..... 4**
 - Country-Level CSO Respondents.....4
- Survey Results..... 7**
 - Quantitative Responses: Country-Level CSOs.....7
 - Qualitative Responses: Country-Level CSOs13
 - Quantitative Responses: Regional CSOs.....14
 - Qualitative Responses: Regional CSOs.....20
- Interviews..... 23**
 - Main Themes.....23
- Discussion and HPP Recommendations..... 26**
- Conclusion..... 27**
- Annex A. Survey Questions..... 28**
 - Background Questions.....28
 - First Page: Likert Scales30
 - Page 2: Separate for Civil Society and External Partners.....31
 - Page 3: Short Answer Responses.....34
- Annex B. Interview Guide for Individual Interviews..... 35**
 - Interview Guide35
- References..... 37**

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: What Country Do You Primarily Work In?	4
Figure 2: Primary Focus of Country-Level CSOs in the HIV Response	5
Figure 3: Primary Focus of Regional CSOs in the HIV Response.....	6
Figure 4: Transparency Results.....	7
Figure 5: Diversity in CSO Representation in COP Reviews.....	8
Figure 6: Preparation for the COP Engagement Meeting	9
Figure 7: Implementation of the CSO Engagement Meeting	10
Figure 8: CSO Input After the COP Engagement Meeting	10
Figure 9: Use of Information for Decision Making and Engagement	11
Figure 10: If you attended a PEPFAR engagement meeting, what information were you given by the PEPFAR team prior to the meeting?.....	12
Figure 11: The PEPFAR country team provided the following to civil society representatives prior to the meeting.....	12
Figure 12: PEPFAR Engagement with Civil Society	15
Figure 13: Diversity in CSO Representation in COP Reviews.....	16
Figure 14: Preparation for the COP Engagement Meeting.....	17
Figure 15: Implementation of the CSO Engagement Meeting	18
Figure 16: CSO Input After the COP Engagement Meeting	19
Figure 17: Use of Information for Decision Making and Engagement	20

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank the following staff from the Health Policy Project for their support in reviewing the survey and report: Ron MacInnis, Nicole Judice, Margaret Reeves, Sara Bowsky, Dara Carr, and Carol Miller. Thanks also to Mary Ann Tores from the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations and Matthew Kavanagh from Health Gap for their review of and comments on the survey. We would also like to thank Deborah Kalief, Maeve McKean, Maheisha Adams, and Kenneth Slaw from the U.S. Government for their input and guidance. Final thanks go to Lory Frenkel, Katie West-Slevin, Brent Franklin, and Erin Crandell of the Health Policy Project for their editing of the final document.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The *PEPFAR Fiscal Year 2015 Country/Regional Operational Plan Guidance* includes specific guidelines for engagement of PEPFAR country teams with civil society organizations¹ in the planning and development of the COP. Following the finalization of the 2015 COP process, the USAID- and PEPFAR- funded Health Policy Project was requested by the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator and Health Diplomacy to conduct an analysis on civil society's perception of their engagement in the PEPFAR country team country operational plan (COP) planning and to solicit recommendations for future PEPFAR country team engagement with civil society. This report documents responses from an online survey and in-depth interviews with representatives from civil society organizations located in PEPFAR countries.

Methodology

Two online surveys were administered in July and August of 2015 to civil society organizations in 55 PEPFAR countries. The surveys, administered in French, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese, and English, were developed to ask specific questions to civil society organizations involved in PEPFAR country COP planning meetings or with PEPFAR programming. A separate survey was developed for civil society organizations involved in regional reviews of COP processes. Interviews were conducted with randomly selected survey respondents.

A total of 96 civil society representatives from 30 countries responded to the survey. A total of 73 of the 96 respondents participated in the in-country survey, while the remaining 23 respondents were engaged in regional COP reviews. Most of the respondents came from sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, with a few respondents from the Caribbean. A total of six follow-up interviews were conducted: four from sub-Saharan Africa countries, one from the Caribbean, and one from Central Asia.

Findings and HPP Recommendations

Above all, civil society organizations were grateful for the opportunity to engage with PEPFAR country teams to strengthen the 2015 COPs by providing input and suggestions. Civil society organizations also appreciated the ability to learn about PEPFAR processes, understand the priorities by which PEPFAR supports the response to HIV, and to make suggestions on what PEPFAR country teams should prioritize in terms of service delivery or technical assistance. Also, civil society respondents were better able to understand how PEPFAR programming correlates with the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS and Global Fund support to countries. While the COP 2015 guidance provides a good foundation for PEPFAR country teams and civil society engagement, more can be done to ensure full engagement by civil society organizations in PEPFAR planning and programming. The following summarizes respondents' feedback and recommendations to strengthen PEPFAR engagement with civil society.

¹ This report follows the definition set by the *PEPFAR Fiscal Year 2015 Country/Regional Operational Plan Guidance* for civil society organizations. Specifically, the term civil society organization includes, "nongovernmental, local organizations; networks/coalitions; professional associations; activist and advocacy groups; including groups representing key affected populations, women, children, [lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender]/gender and sexual minorities, drug user networks, and sex worker organizations; groups representing populations highly affected by the epidemic, such as persons with disabilities; PEPFAR program beneficiaries or end users; faith-based organizations; community associations; and not-for-profit organizations at national, district and local levels" (U.S. Department of State, OGAC, 2014, p. 25).

Planning for civil society engagement

The majority of respondents indicated that the needed information (i.e., PEPFAR budgets, targets, and epidemiologically data) to effectively engage with PEPFAR country teams and processes was not provided to civil society organizations early enough or at all, making it difficult to provide knowledgeable input to PEPFAR programs.

Recommendation: As part of the pre-COP preparation process, **PEPFAR country teams, in collaboration with civil society organizations, should develop COP planning roadmaps** to ensure that timelines and processes are followed through to effectively engage with civil society organizations.

Resources for engagement

The primary concern reported by civil society organizations was a lack of financial support that prevented them from attending PEPFAR engagement meetings. Most, if not all, of the PEPFAR engagement meetings were held in capital cities. Civil society organizations that were located outside of the capital or in more rural parts of the country did not have the means to send staff and were not supported to attend these meetings. Not having civil society organizations working outside of the capital was a missed opportunity for valuable input and perspective to the development of the 2015 COPs.

Recommendation: As part of the PEPFAR civil society engagement roadmap, **PEPFAR country teams should allocate resources to support civil society organizations outside of capital cities to attend PEPFAR engagement meetings.** PEPFAR country teams should also **plan meetings in high HIV burden geographic areas outside of the capital** to allow for better participation by and broader engagement with civil society.

Capacity building

Civil society organizations noted an overall lack of understanding of PEPFAR processes and systems. Increasing civil society's knowledge of PEPFAR programming and providing trainings in monitoring and accountability (for example, the use of the PEPFAR dashboards for advocacy planning) is needed for civil society to effectively engage with PEPFAR country teams. Additionally, civil society organizations indicated that they would like to have more information on PEPFAR in-country implementing partners. This would ensure civil society's ability to monitor and hold accountable all stakeholders involved in the country-level HIV response.

Recommendation: Civil society organizations would benefit from PEPFAR country team trainings and mentorship to **build civil society's understanding of PEPFAR programmatic processes and technical priorities and data and monitoring systems.** This would allow civil society organizations to have more meaningful input to COP development and implementation and provide them the skills to hold government accountable to the commitments they make to their country health programs.

Ongoing engagement

Civil society organizations were eager to have ongoing engagement with PEPFAR country teams as a means of continued capacity building, staying current on PEPFAR developments, and to build stronger working relationships with and provide feedback to PEPFAR programs. Ultimately stronger relationships with PEPFAR country teams will allow for more effective engagement by civil society organizations and lead to a greater level of country ownership.

Recommendation: PEPFAR country teams **should develop civil society engagement plans to allow for more and regular feedback and engagement.** This can be achieved by having civil society representatives participate in programmatic or technical working groups or advisory boards, holding quarterly civil society/PEPFAR meetings to give updates and discuss special topics, inviting civil society

representatives as regular attendees to specific programmatic or technical gatherings or briefings. For civil society organizations that might want to remain anonymous, **PEPFAR should develop online tools and systems to allow these civil society organizations to provide anonymous feedback throughout the year.** Such an online portal would also be useful for those located outside capital cities and who are unable to otherwise provide regular input to PEPFAR country teams.

Conclusion

The 2015 PEPFAR COP process provided a great starting platform for future engagement between PEPFAR country teams and civil society organizations. Civil society contributions can support PEPFAR country teams in understanding geographic priorities, service delivery issues, and where bottlenecks might be in achieving program goals. Continued engagement with civil society organizations will only benefit PEPFAR country teams and should be strengthened as much as possible with each year's COP.

ABBREVIATIONS

ART	antiretroviral treatment
CSO	civil society organization
COP	country operational plans
HPP	Health Policy Project
MSM	men who have sex with men
PEPFAR	U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
OGAC	Office of Global AIDS Coordinator and Health Diplomacy
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

INTRODUCTION

“Nothing about us without us” has been the rallying cry of civil society organizations² (CSOs) from around the world since the beginning of the HIV epidemic. From the start of the HIV epidemic, CSOs have also been one of the primary providers of HIV care. With the inception of PEPFAR in 2004, the U.S. Government increased its commitment to supporting HIV and AIDS prevention, care, and treatment programs in developing countries. With a global focus on ending the HIV epidemic by 2030 and unprecedented resources to support those living with HIV, it is now more important than ever to ensure CSOs, especially including those representing people living with HIV, are active partners.

CSOs are critical to the provision and quality of HIV service and are often the early warning system and future planners in the HIV response. CSOs reach geographic and programmatic areas and populations that governments may be unable or unwilling to support (e.g., key populations stigmatized by society). Further, CSOs’ close ties to affected communities give them a unique and crucial advantage when it comes to supporting community-based or community-oriented services across the HIV treatment continuum.

In September, 2014 U.S. President Barack Obama released a presidential memorandum on engaging civil society in U.S. policy and planning processes and confirmed his commitment to expanding interaction with civil society in planning U.S. government activities. As such, U.S. agencies are now required to, “consult with representatives of civil society to explain the views of the United States on particular issues, seek their perspectives, utilize their expertise, and build strong partnerships to address joint challenges” (The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, 2014).

The PEPFAR program has heeded the call of “nothing about us without us” in its PEPFAR 3.0 strategy, which provides guidance to its teams around the world. This guidance calls for increased and regular, long-term dialogue with civil society from program planning through implementation and has been translated into operational guidelines within the *PEPFAR Fiscal Year 2015 Country/Regional Operational Plan Guidance*. It is within this context that this study was developed.

² This report follows the definition set by the *PEPFAR Fiscal Year 2015 Country/Regional Operational Plan Guidance* for CSOs. Specifically, CSOs are, “nongovernmental, local organizations; networks/coalitions; professional associations; activist and advocacy groups; including groups representing key affected populations, women, children, [lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender]/gender and sexual minorities, drug user networks, and sex worker organizations; groups representing populations highly affected by the epidemic, such as persons with disabilities; PEPFAR program beneficiaries or end users; faith-based organizations; community associations; and not-for-profit organizations at national, district and local levels” (U.S. Department of State, OGAC, 2015, p. 25).

2015 COUNTRY OPERATIONAL PLAN PLANNING AND REVIEW

Every year, the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC) releases guidance to PEPFAR country teams on how to develop their yearly work plans, known as country operational plans (COPs). These plans dictate the disbursement of millions of dollars in foreign aid and provide details on how the U.S. Government will support country responses to the HIV epidemic.

The 2015 COP guidance includes specific guidelines on engaging with CSOs in the planning and development of COPs. The guidance directs PEPFAR country teams to take the following steps:

- **Step 1: Develop a civil society engagement plan.** This plan should detail how PEPFAR teams will engage with civil society throughout the year and include how PEPFAR will solicit input from CSOs on the monitoring and overall accountability of PEPFAR programming.
- **Step 2: Convene engagement meetings.** Engagement meetings should be held during the COP development process, in which PEPFAR will share their plans, strategies, and objectives with civil society stakeholders in order to seek their input.
- **Step 3: Solicit written feedback from civil society.** Civil society will be given a chance to provide written feedback during COP planning to ensure that all stakeholders will be heard by PEPFAR teams.
- **Step 4: Provide written feedback.** PEPFAR teams will provide written feedback to civil society on how their inputs have been included (or not included) in the final COP.

Besides in-country review of COPs by civil society, OGAC incorporated a separate role for CSOs during the 2015 PEPFAR COP review process. The COPs were reviewed at five different consultations by OGAC staff, multilateral partners, and CSOs to ensure that best practices in service delivery and human rights were being considered in program planning.

In July, 2015 PEPFAR requested that the USAID- and PEPFAR- funded Health Policy Project (HPP) conduct an analysis of civil society's perception of PEPFAR country team engagement and compile lessons learned for PEPFAR engagement with civil society. The following report documents the findings from the survey and interviews conducted with civil society, and provides recommendations for PEPFAR and other international programs seeking to engage with civil society during program planning and implementation.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

In July and August 2015, HPP conducted two online surveys with CSOs in 29 PEPFAR priority countries. The surveys, administered in French, Russian, Spanish, Portuguese, and English, were developed to ask specific questions to CSOs involved in PEPFAR COP planning meetings. A separate survey was developed for CSOs involved in regional reviews of COP processes. PEPFAR country teams selected the CSOs that would be engaged in the PEPFAR planning processes. As such, the survey was sent to PEPFAR country coordinators to disseminate to those who had been engaged in PEPFAR COP meetings. The survey was also sent out by HPP staff members who have been engaged with civil society organizations in-country. Follow-up interviews were conducted with a random sample of survey respondents, selected from those who provided contact information. Follow-up interviews were conducted in Russian and English.

Caveats

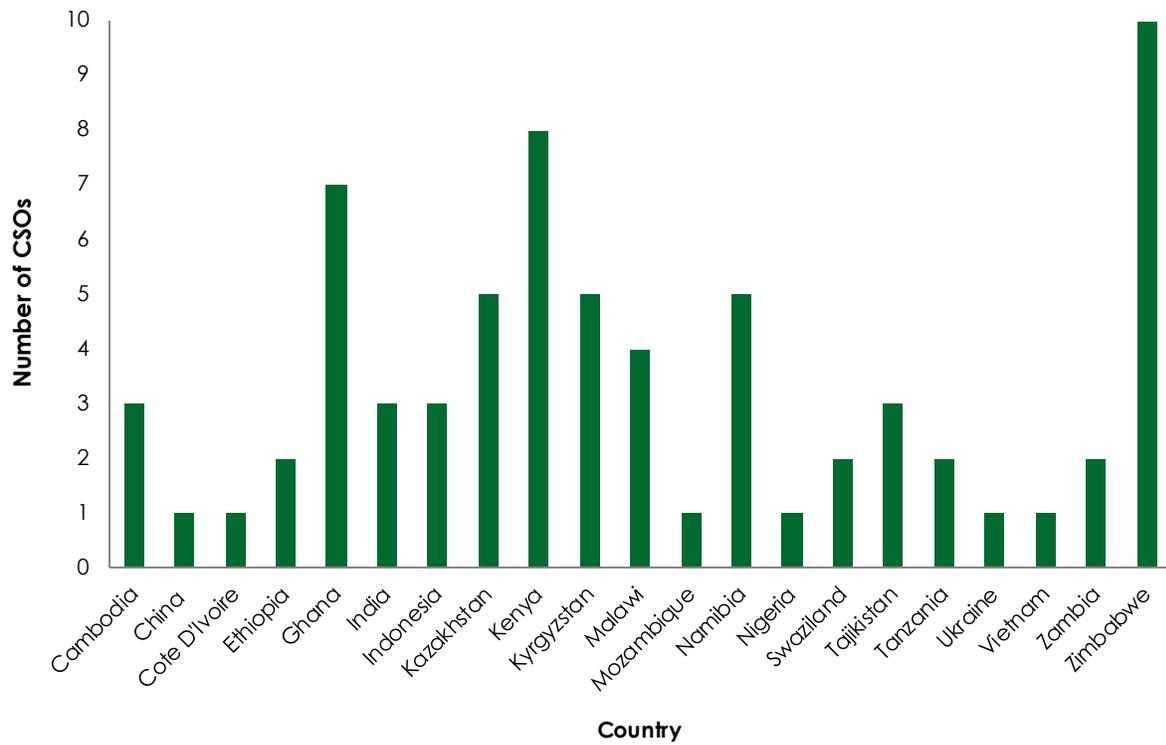
The report below is based on responses from those who completed the survey. The answers below are not meant to be representative of all CSOs involved in the PEPFAR COP process, nor are participants' responses indicative of every PEPFAR country program. Many CSOs who may have engaged with PEPFAR teams did not take part in the survey, either due to time constraints or because they did not receive an invitation to participate. The qualitative responses in the survey below have been aggregated to protect confidentiality of respondents.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Country-Level CSO Respondents

Of the 96 respondents to the survey, 70 (35 male, 34 female, and 1 not indicated) were from 21 in-country CSOs. Figure 1 depicts which countries had CSOs respond to the survey. A majority of the organizations (54) had their main office in capital cities, while 15 did not. A majority (46) also had regional district offices, while (25) did not.

Figure 1: What Country Do You Primarily Work In?

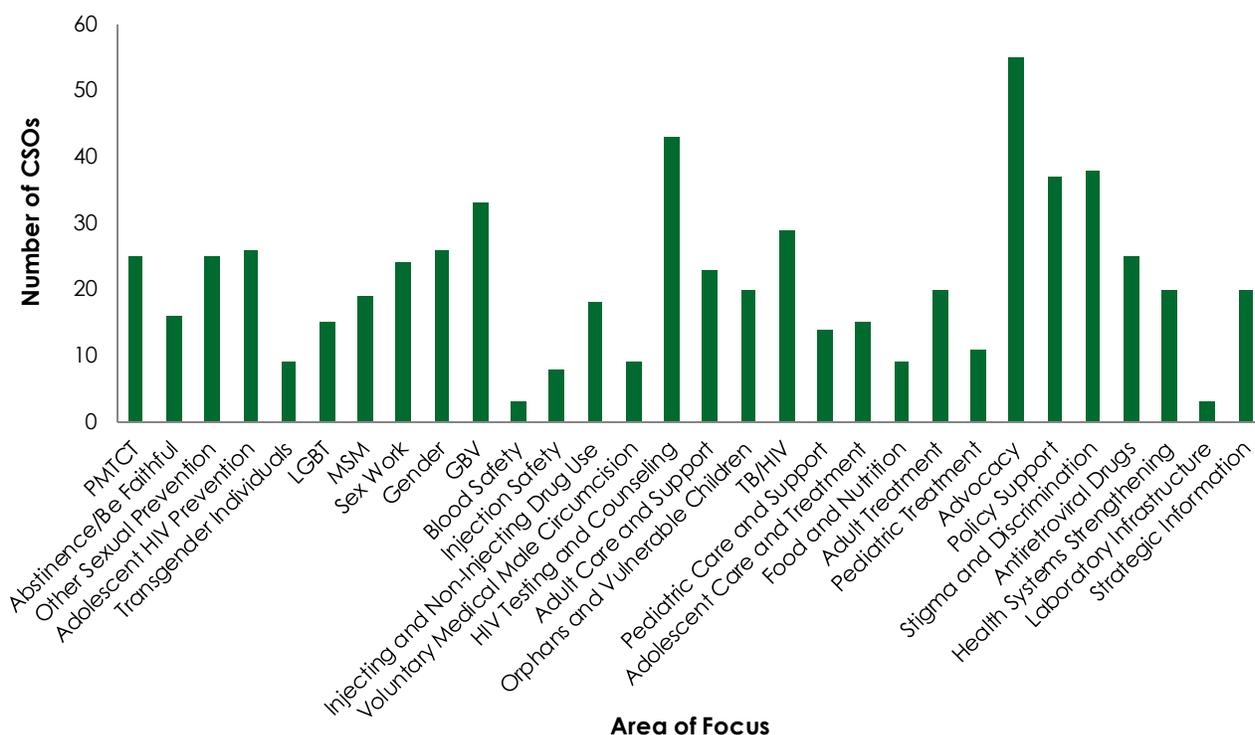


Source: Authors

As seen from Figure 1, Zimbabwe (10), Kenya (8), and Ghana (7) had the highest number of respondents. There was also diverse representation from Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

When asked about their organization's primary focus in the response to HIV, there was a wide range of answers. Most respondents identified advocacy, HIV testing and counseling, stigma and discrimination, and policy support as their primary areas of focus (Figure 2). The least identified areas of focus were in laboratory infrastructure, blood safety, and injection safety.

Figure 2: Primary Focus of Country-Level CSOs in the HIV Response*



Source: Authors

*CSOs were permitted to select multiple answers.

Of the organizations that responded to the survey, 17 receive PEPFAR funding, 15 receive Global Fund money, 19 receive funding from both, and 20 do not receive funding from either. Exactly 23 organizations had worked with PEPFAR as a partner for over five years, 16 for two to five years, and 15 for less than two years.

Regional CSO respondents

Of the 96 respondents, 21 (11 male, 8 female, 1 other, and 2 preferred not to respond) were from CSOs that participated in the COP regional reviews. Eighteen of the organizations noted that their main office was in the capital city, while eight did not. Fourteen had offices in different regions and districts and eight did not.

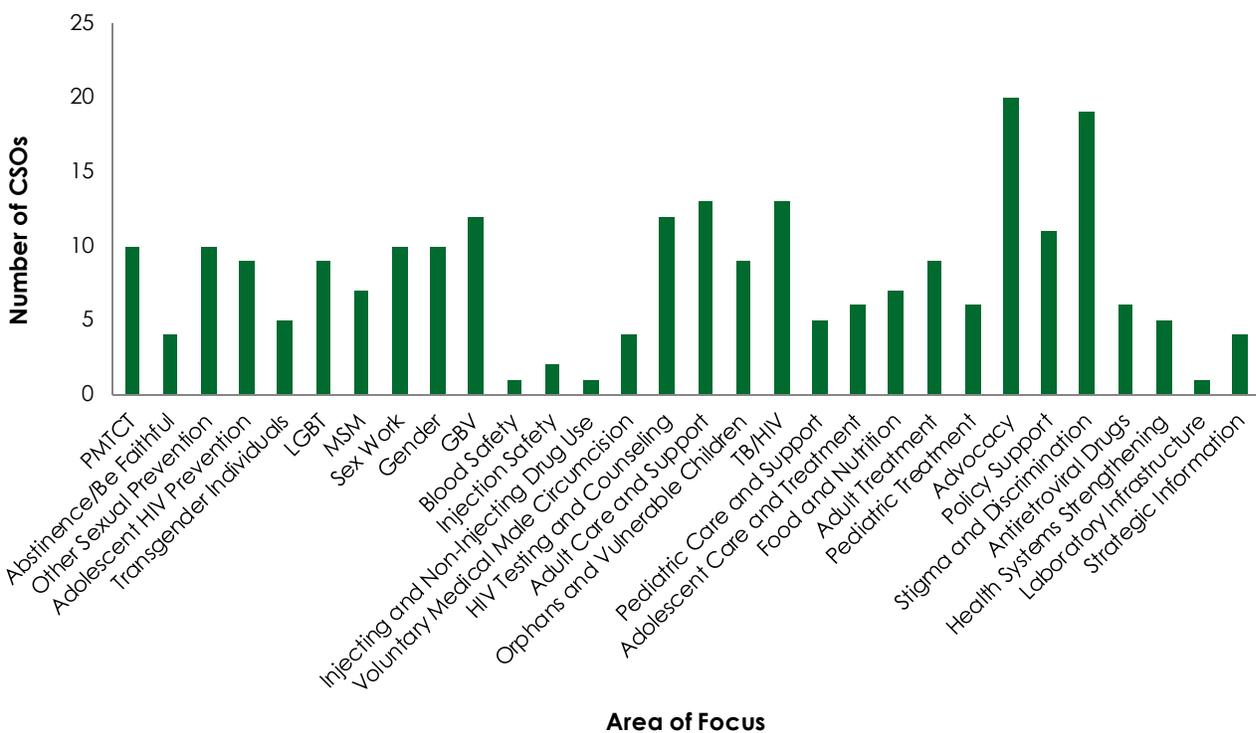
Of the CSOs that were engaged in regional COP reviews, four of the CSOs that took the survey receive PEPFAR funding, six receive Global Fund funding, five receive PEPFAR and Global Fund funding, and seven did not receive either. Five organizations noted they worked with PEPFAR for five or more years, eight had worked with PEPFAR between two and five years, and five CSOs said they had worked as a PEPFAR partner for less than two years. Most of the organizations noted their budget was US\$100,000 or higher and their countries of focus varied widely. The countries in which the regional CSOs work include

- Cameroon
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Haiti
- Indonesia
- Jamaica

- Kenya
- Lesotho
- Malawi
- Namibia
- Nigeria
- Rwanda
- South Africa
- Uganda
- Vietnam
- South Africa

In terms of each organization’s primary focus in the HIV response, respondents noted their engagement in advocacy (20), stigma and discrimination (19), adult care and support (13), and tuberculosis (TB) and HIV (13). The areas where regional CSOs were least engaged were in blood safety (1), injecting and non-injecting drug users (1), and laboratory regulation (1). Figure 3 shows the diverse representation of the regional CSOs that took part in the survey.

Figure 3: Primary Focus of Regional CSOs in the HIV Response*



Source: Authors

*CSOs were permitted to select multiple answers.

SURVEY RESULTS

Quantitative Responses: Country-Level CSOs

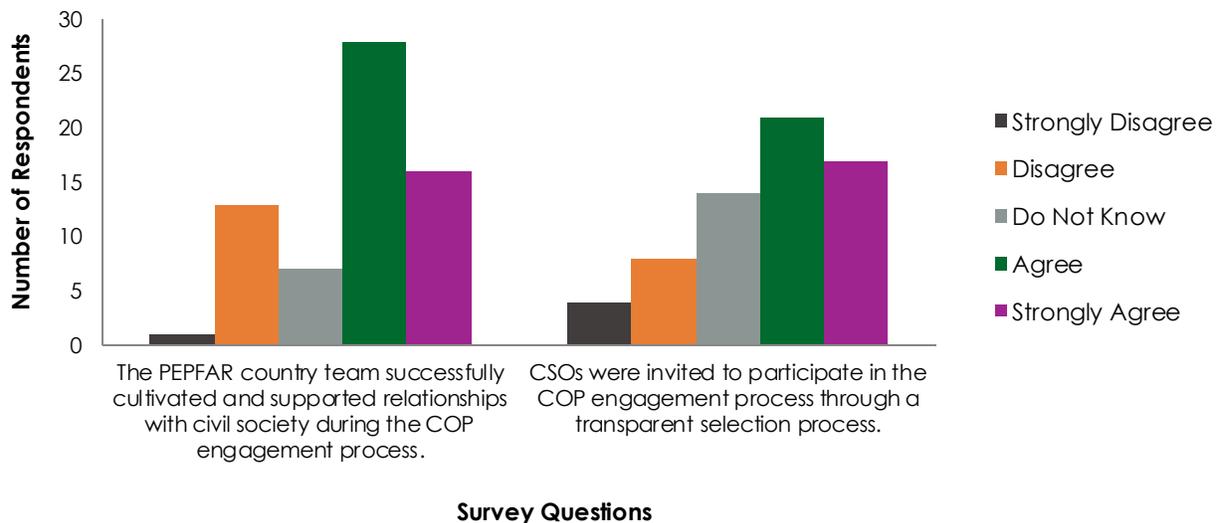
As part of the survey, country-level CSOs were asked a series of questions covering a broad range of topics from how PEPFAR engaged civil society to how CSO’s input was used to inform decision making. Their responses are summarized here.

PEPFAR engagement with civil society

Most responses either strongly agreed (16) or agreed (28) with the statement that, “The PEPFAR country team successfully cultivated and supported relationships with civil society during the COP engagement process.” Four respondents disagreed with the statement and one strongly disagreed (Figure 4).

Most respondents strongly agreed (17) or agreed (21) with the statement that, “Civil society organizations were invited to participate in the COP engagement process through a transparent selection process.” One respondent did not know, three disagreed, and two strongly disagreed.

Figure 4: Transparency Results



Source: Authors

Diversity in CSO representation in COP reviews

Most respondents either strongly agreed (18) or agreed (23) with the statement, “PEPFAR country teams engaged program implementers to identify and address COP goals and targets” (Figure 5) Thirteen (13) did not know, nine disagreed, and two strongly disagreed.

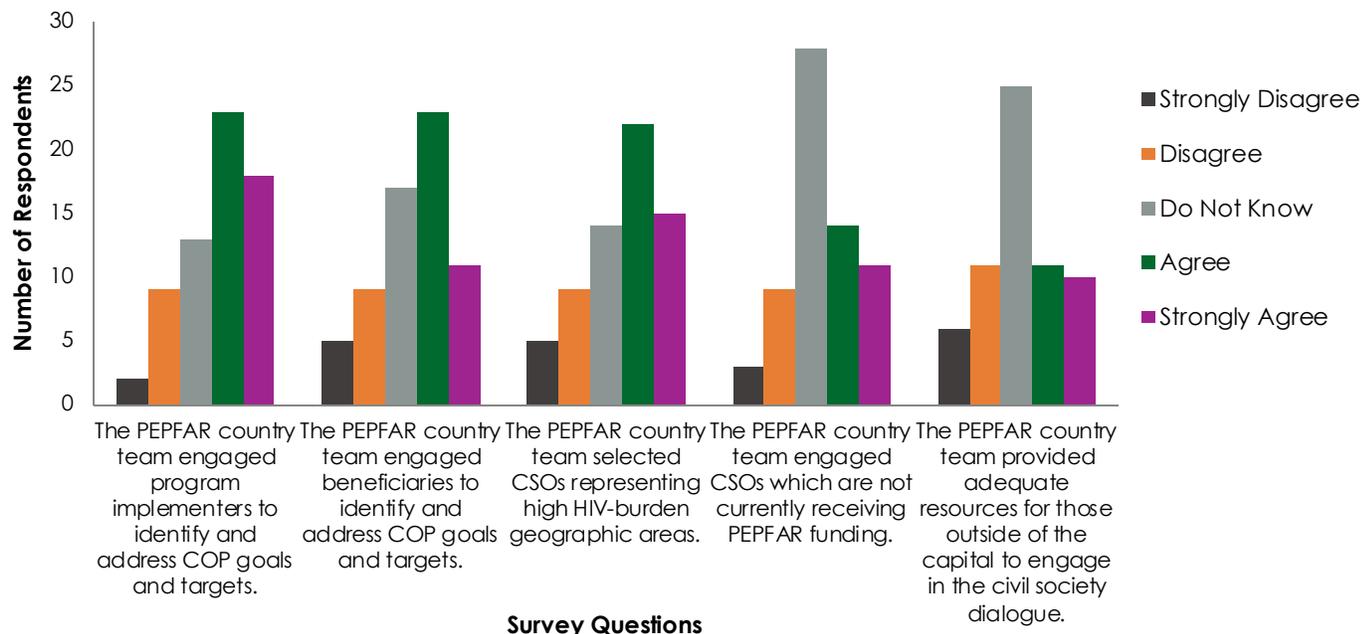
For the statement, “PEPFAR country teams engaged beneficiaries to identify and address COP goals and targets,” 11 strongly agreed, 23 agreed, 17 did not know, 9 disagreed, and 5 strongly disagreed (Figure 5).

A majority of respondents strongly agreed (15) or agreed (22) with the statement, “The PEPFAR country teams selected CSOs representing high HIV burden geographic areas.” Fourteen did not know, while nine disagreed and five strongly disagreed (Figure 5).

Also, shown in Figure 5, there was more of a disagreement in the statement, “The PEPFAR country team engaged with civil society organizations which are not currently receiving PEPFAR funding.” Eleven strongly agreed, 14 agreed, 28 did not know, nine disagreed, and three strongly disagreed.

Most of the respondents (25) indicated that they did not know when presented with the statement, “The PEPFAR country team provided adequate resources for those outside of the capital to engage in the civil society dialogue” (Figure 5). An equal number of respondents (11) agreed and disagreed with the statement, while 10 strongly agreed and six strongly disagreed.

Figure 5: Diversity in CSO Representation in COP Reviews



Source: Authors

Preparation for the COP engagement meeting

As shown in Figure 6, nine respondents strongly agreed, 22 agreed, 18 did not know, 12 disagreed, and four strongly disagreed with the statement, “The PEPFAR country team appeared to dedicate sufficient staff and financial resources to the COP civil society engagement process.”

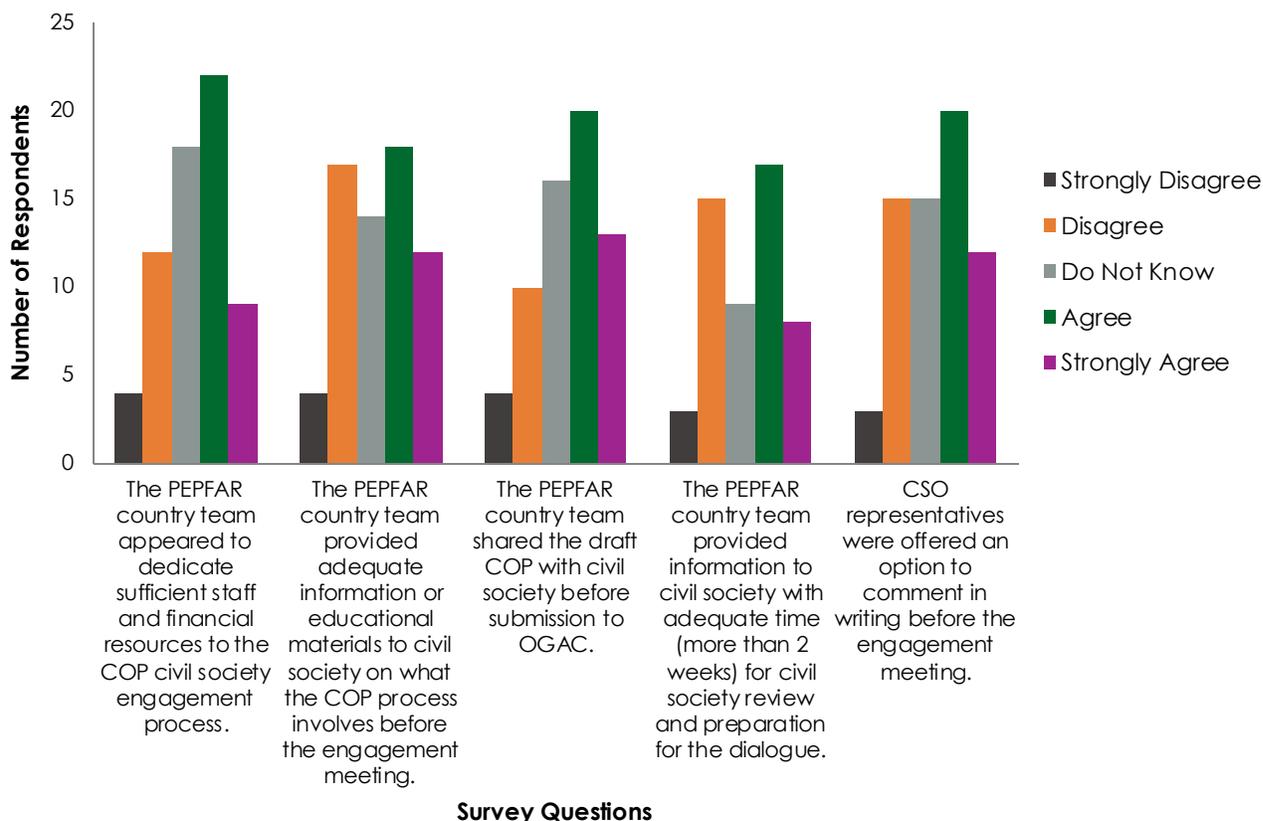
In response to the statement, “The PEPFAR country team provided adequate information or educational materials to civil society on what the COP process involves before the engagement meeting,” 12 strongly agreed, 18 agreed, 14 did not know, 17 disagreed, and four strongly disagreed (Figure 6).

For the statement, “The PEPFAR country team shared the draft COP with civil society before submission to OGAC,” 13 strongly agreed, 20 agreed, 16 did not know, 10 disagreed, and four strongly disagreed (Figure 6).

Also shown in Figure 6, nine respondents strongly agreed, 17 agreed, nine did not know, 15 disagreed, and three strongly disagreed with the statement, “The PEPFAR country team provided information to civil society with adequate time (more than 2 weeks) for civil society review and preparation for the dialogue.”

Finally, in response to the statement, “CSO representatives were offered an option to comment in writing before the engagement meeting,” 12 strongly agreed, 20 agreed, 15 did not know, 15 disagreed, and three strongly disagreed (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Preparation for the COP Engagement Meeting



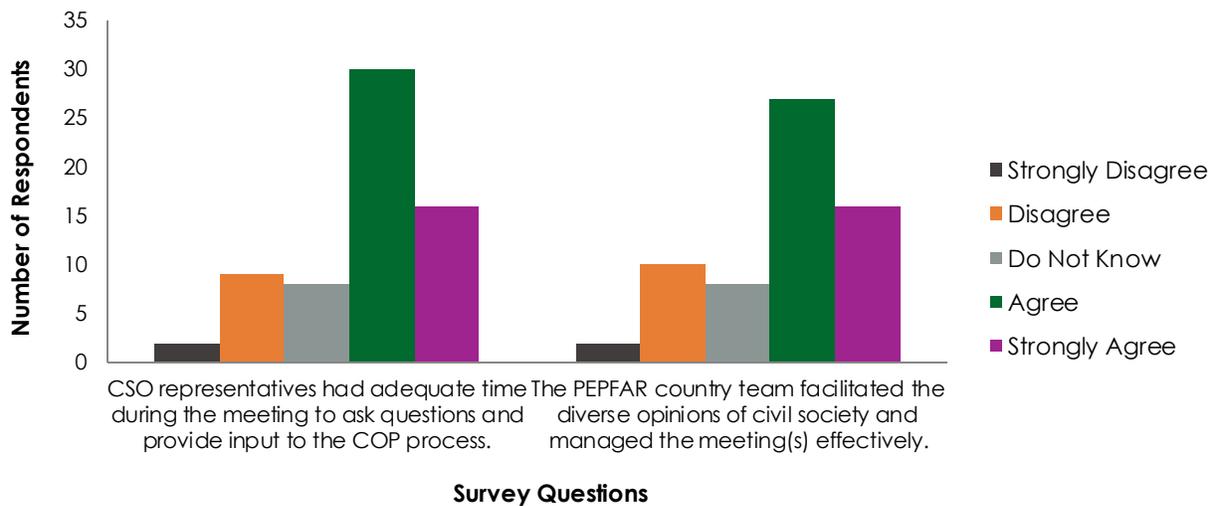
Source: Authors

Implementation of the CSO engagement meeting

Survey respondents were also asked two questions covering the implementation of CSO engagement meetings (Figure 7). In response to the statement, “CSO representatives had adequate time during the meeting to ask questions and provide input to the COP process,” 16 respondents strongly agreed, 30 agreed, eight answered that they did not know, nine disagreed, and two strongly disagreed.

Similarly, in response to the statement, “The PEPFAR country team facilitated the diverse opinions of civil society and managed the meeting(s) effectively,” 16 strongly agreed, 27 agreed, eight did not know, 10 disagreed, and two strongly disagreed.

Figure 7: Implementation of the CSO Engagement Meeting



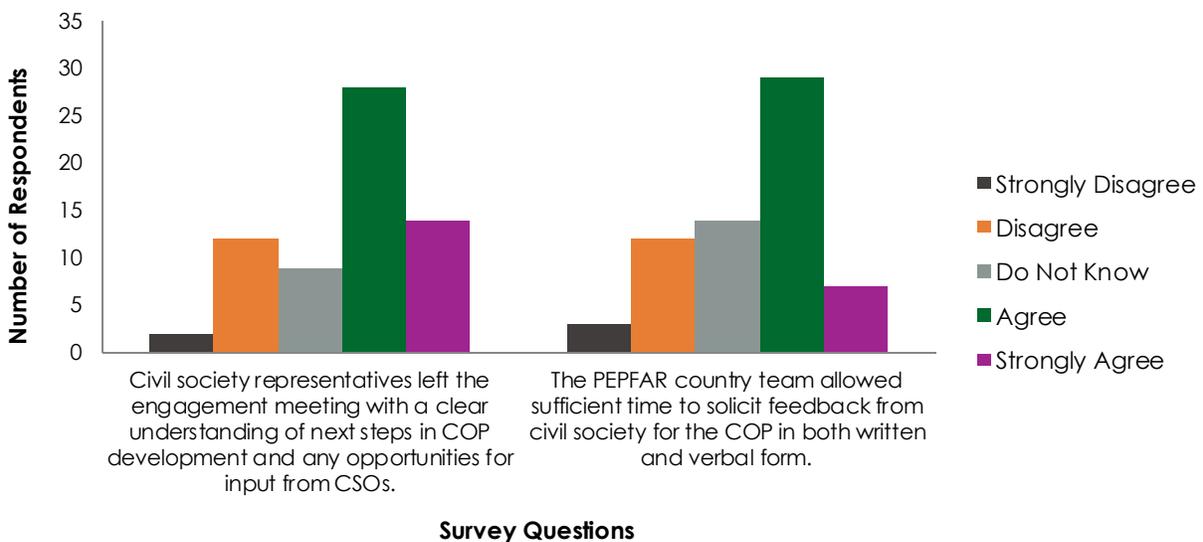
Source: Authors

CSO input after the COP engagement meeting

CSOs were also presented with the statement, “Civil society representatives left the engagement meeting with a clear understanding of next steps in COP development and any opportunities for input from CSOs.” In response, 14 CSOs strongly agreed, 29 agreed, nine did not know, 12 disagreed, and two strongly disagreed (Figure 8).

Similarly, in response to the statement, “The PEPFAR country team allowed sufficient time to solicit feedback from civil society for the COP in both written and verbal form,” seven respondents strongly agreed, 29 agreed, 14 did not know, 12 disagreed, and three strongly disagreed (Figure 8).

Figure 8: CSO Input After the COP Engagement Meeting



Source: Authors

Use of information for decision making and engagement

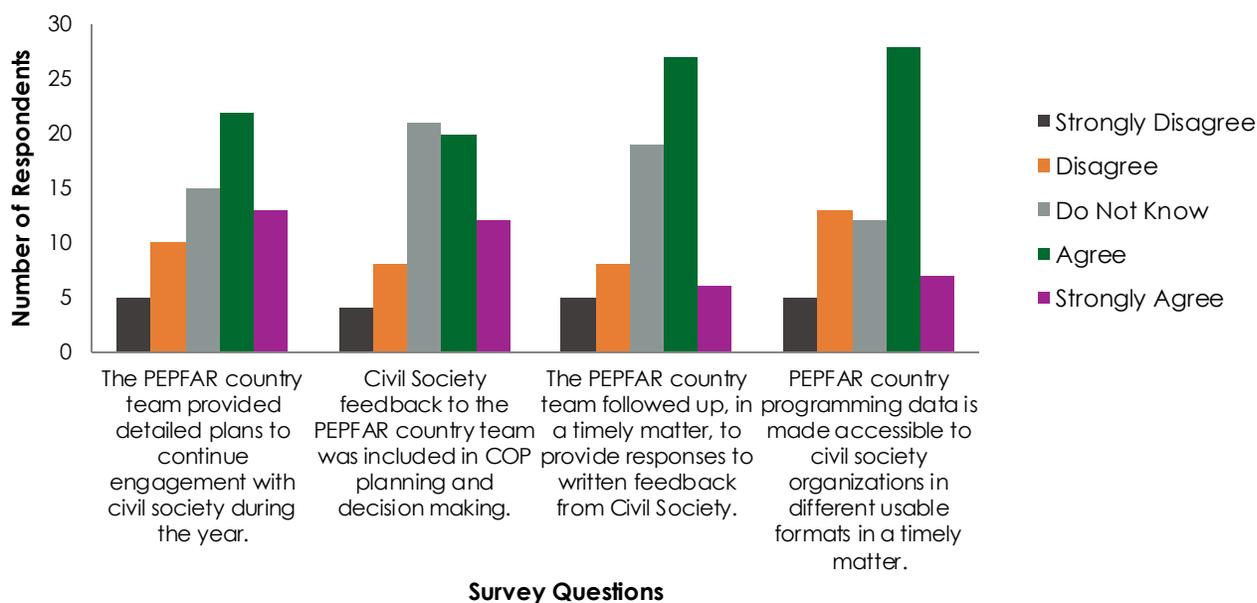
When presented with the statement, “The PEPFAR country team provided detailed plans to continue engagement with civil society during the year,” 13 respondents indicated they strongly agreed, 22 agreed, 15 did not know, 10 disagreed, and five strongly disagreed (Figure 9).

In response to the statement, “Civil society feedback to the PEPFAR country team was included in COP planning and decision making,” 12 respondents strongly agreed, 20 agreed, 21 did not know, eight disagreed, and four strongly disagreed (Figure 9).

As shown in Figure 9, responses to the statement, “The PEPFAR country team followed up, in a timely matter, to provide responses to written feedback from civil society,” were six strongly agreed, 27 agreed, 19 did not know, eight disagreed, and five strongly disagreed.

Similarly, when presented with the statement, “PEPFAR country programming data is made accessible to civil society organizations in different, usable formats in a timely manner,” seven respondents strongly agreed, 28 agreed, 12 did not know, 13 disagreed, and five strongly disagreed (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Use of Information for Decision Making and Engagement

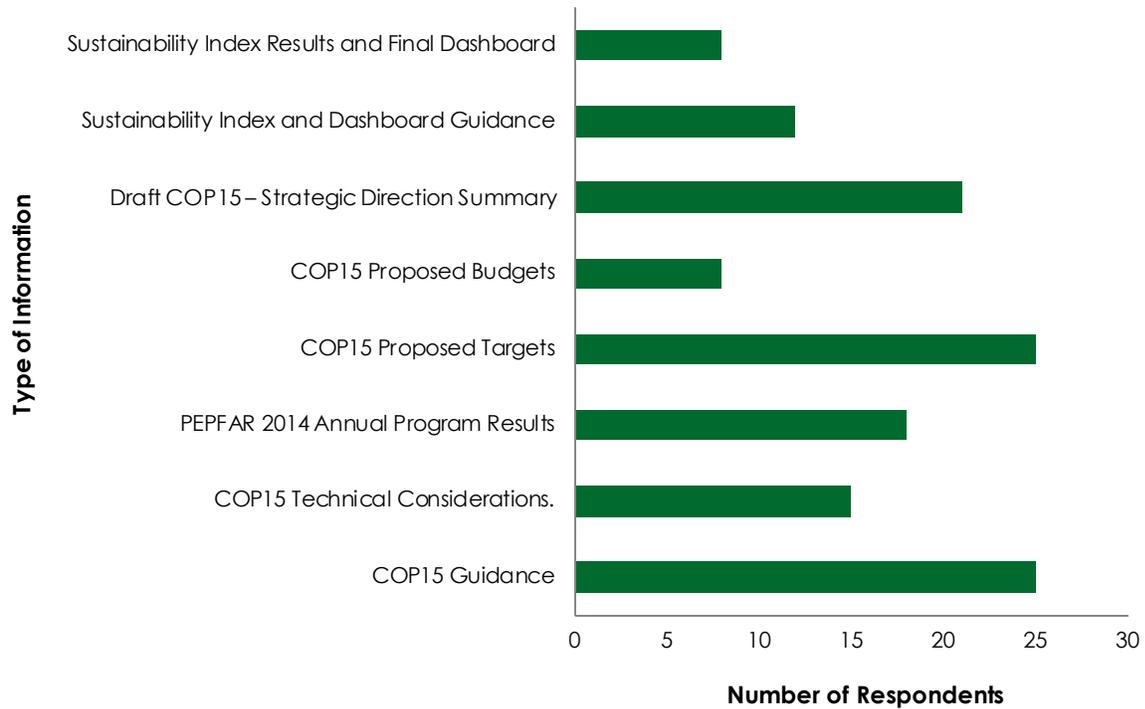


Source: Authors

PEPFAR information provided for COP engagement

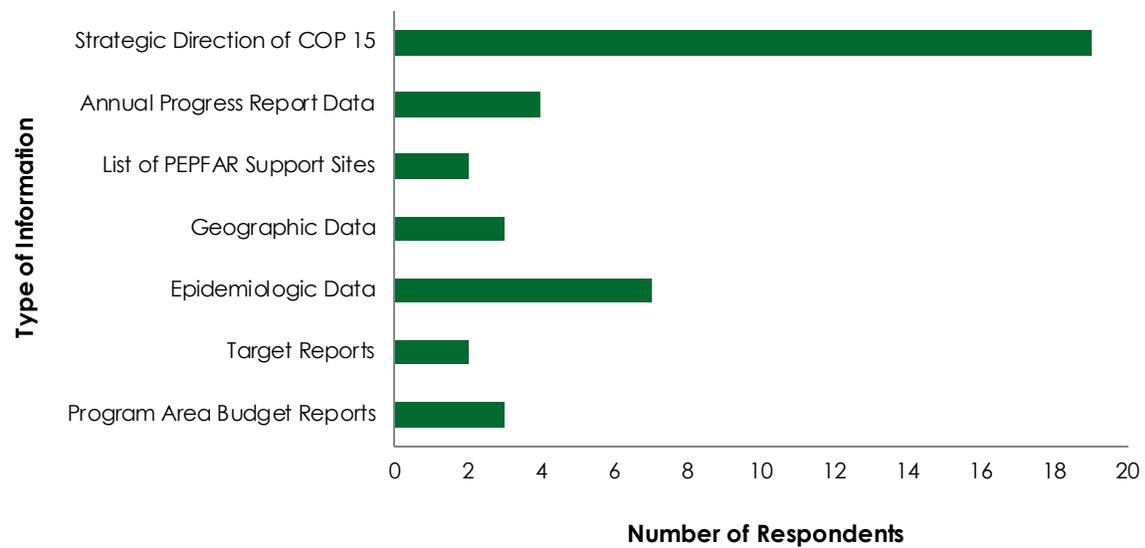
Figures 10 and 11 summarize the information that was provided to CSOs to facilitate their engagement in COP planning meetings. As shown in Figure 10, *COP2015 Guidance* (25), *COP15 Proposed Targets* (25), and *Draft COP14- Strategic Direction Summary* (21) were the documents most shared with respondents of the online survey. The *COP15 Proposed Budgets* (8) and *Sustainability Index Results and Final Dashboard* (8) were the documents least received by respondents. From Figure 11, it appears that PEPFAR country teams gave most participants the *Strategic Direction of COP 15* (19). Other epidemiologic, geographic, or target data appear to have been given to a much smaller number of survey respondents.

Figure 10: If you attended a PEPFAR engagement meeting, what information were you given by the PEPFAR team prior to the meeting?



Source: Authors

Figure 11: The PEPFAR country team provided the following to civil society representatives prior to the meeting



Source: Authors

Qualitative Responses: Country-Level CSOs

How would you describe the role of PEPFAR in the response to HIV versus the role of the Global Fund or the country's Ministry of Health?

All country-level respondents articulated the importance of PEPFAR as a partner in the response to HIV in their countries. Many noted that PEPFAR programs are critical, engaging with civil society when other partners do not. However, there were diverse responses in whether PEPFAR was more engaged in service delivery or with technical assistance. These discrepancies were mostly dependent on the respondent's country's epidemic and unmet need for treatment.

A few respondents indicated that PEPFAR country teams may often follow their own strategic initiatives or goals, rather than work with the Ministry of Health and other partners to develop shared goals. There was concern that strategic plans are set in Washington, DC (where OGAC is located) versus in the country. There is also confusion as to the future of PEPFAR given the program's shifting priority to fewer geographic areas to concentrate their response to the epidemic.

Did you feel that all appropriate civil society sectors were represented? Please explain.

Most respondents felt that a diverse group of civil society organizations were engaged in the meetings. A number of respondents noted that key population groups were well represented and that their inputs were included in the engagement meetings. Yet, there was a call for improving participation by those living outside the capital and in more rural areas of the country. Many CSOs were unable to find the resources to travel to the capitals for these meetings and were thus left out of the discussion. Other groups that lacked representation included orphans and vulnerable children and people living with disabilities.

Do you feel more information was needed from the PEPFAR country team to effectively engage in the meeting? Please explain.

There was a mixed reaction to this question. Many respondents noted that the information was adequate to effectively engage with PEPFAR country teams, while several others felt that more information could be shared, including data on key populations, annual program reviews, proposed targets and budgets, and general information on how the COP will directly influence PEPFAR projects being implemented in-country. One respondent expressed that this survey was the first time he/she had heard about the COP and its role in PEPFAR programming. Participants also voiced the need for more time to engage with PEPFAR country teams at these meetings and to have more discussions on specific country issues that PEPFAR wants to address.

Do you or your team need additional support (i.e., training in PEPFAR systems or monitoring and evaluation training) to effectively engage with PEPFAR? If yes, what type of support would be helpful?

There was a resounding need for additional support for CSOs to effectively engage with PEPFAR country teams. Many respondents indicated that CSO representatives need trainings on how to effectively engage with PEPFAR and be able to monitor the program's activities. Requests were made for presentations or documents that detail how PEPFAR operates and how country teams work in the response to HIV. Respondents noted a request for newsletters and other methods of information sharing would be useful throughout the year so CSOs know what PEPFAR is implementing.

Respondents indicated that financial resources are also needed for CSOs to reach out to constituencies outside capital cities to solicit their feedback on PEPFAR processes. One respondent suggested that CSOs should have the ability to meet prior to the PEPFAR engagement meeting to go over the information provided by PEPFAR country teams and come to a consensus on what the discussion with PEPFAR should look like.

Was the information provided adequate to effectively engage in the meeting? Please explain

Most of the respondents noted that information to effectively engage with PEPFAR country teams was either not available until a few days before the meeting or was only presented at the meeting itself. Because of this, there was no time for analysis and CSOs were unable to participate fully in dialogues. Respondents noted that more time is needed for CSOs to be able to go through the information and be able to provide meaningful responses.

What were some of the benefits of increasing civil society engagement in this year's COP15 development and review process?

Most respondents noted a better understanding of PEPFAR programming; how the COP process worked; and the importance of more transparency, accountability, and civil society engagement in PEPFAR COP planning and programming. CSOs were also able to network with each other and form new connections. Respondents appreciated the information shared and the ability to comment on actions. A few noted that the meetings did feel like just presentations, not giving the chance for CSOs to provide comment or feedback on country teams' plans.

What were some of the challenges with engagement in the PEPFAR COP 15 process?

As mentioned in previous responses, most of the challenges revolved around the need for PEPFAR country teams to provide information to CSOs earlier in order for CSOs to review and analyze the information. This lack of time led to an engagement meeting that was not as effective as it could have been. One respondent noted the need for a clear road map for PEPFAR country teams to effectively engage with CSOs. This would help ensure that timelines are established on when information is shared, with whom, and how engagement meetings can be planned and executed.

What might be improved in the COP civil society engagement process next year?

Respondents again expressed a need for a clear road map for PEPFAR country teams and CSOs on how civil society can effectively engage in the PEPFAR review processes. One respondent noted the need for PEPFAR to allocate resources to hold earlier meetings and trainings for CSOs on how to effectively engage. Financial support should also be available to CSOs outside of capital cities. Respondents stated the need for more engagement meetings that are held throughout the year in order to continue CSOs' involvement in PEPFAR program implementation.

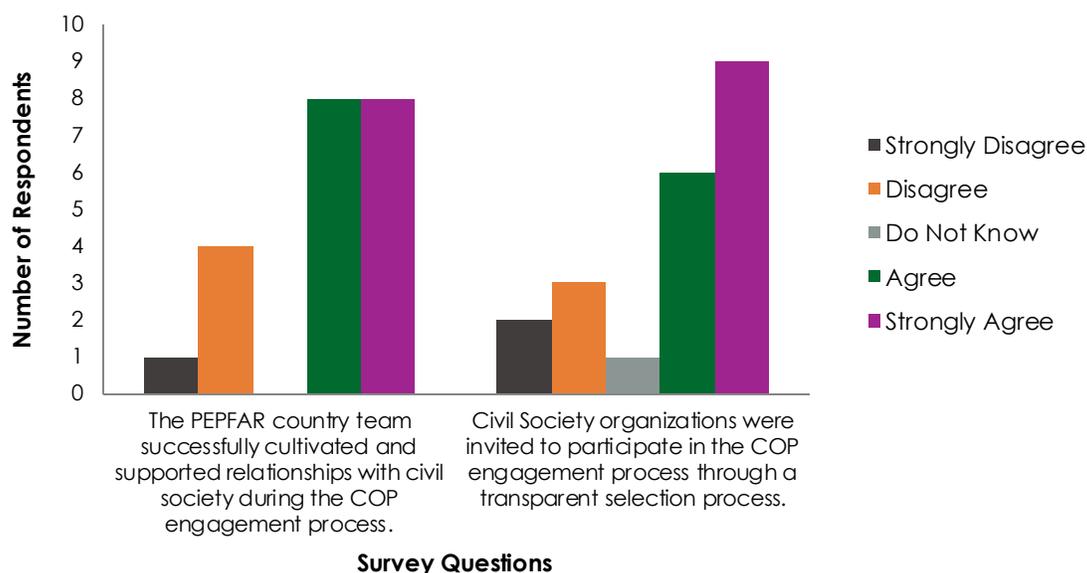
Quantitative Responses: Regional CSOs

PEPFAR engagement with civil society

In response to the statement, "The PEPFAR country team successfully cultivated and supported relationships with civil society during the COP engagement process," five respondents strongly agreed, four agreed, two disagreed, and one strongly disagreed (Figure 12).

Similarly, in response to the statement, "Civil society organizations were invited to participate in the COP engagement process through a transparent selection process," nine survey respondents strongly agreed, six agreed, one did not know, three disagreed, and two strongly disagreed (Figure 12).

Figure 12: PEPFAR Engagement with Civil Society



Source: Authors

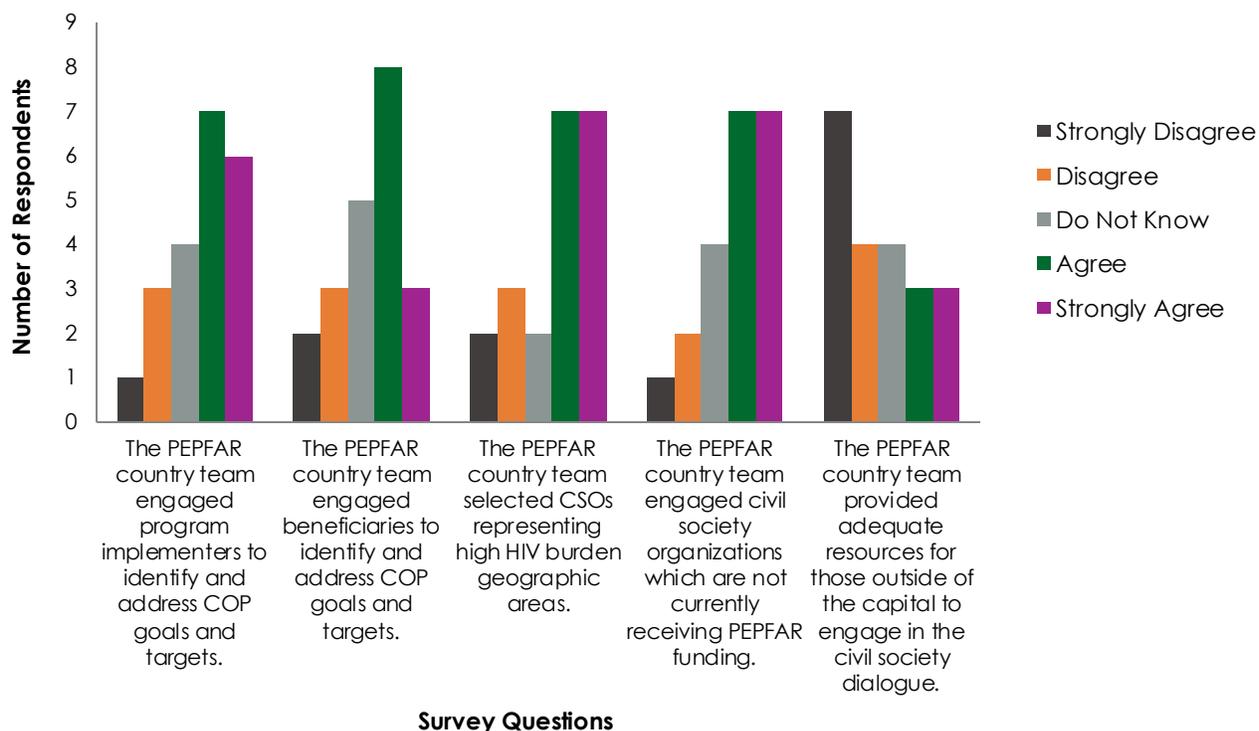
Diversity in CSO representation in COP reviews

As shown in Figure 13, the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements:

- “The PEPFAR country team engaged program implementers to identify and address COP goals and targets” (6 strongly agreed, 7 agreed, 4 did not know, 3 disagreed, and 1 strongly disagreed).
- “The PEPFAR country team engaged beneficiaries to identify and address COP goals and targets,” (3 strongly agreed, 8 agreed, 5 did not know, 3 disagreed, and 2 strongly disagreed).
- “The PEPFAR country team selected CSOs representing high HIV burden geographic areas” (7 strongly agreed, 7 agreed, 2 did not know, 3 disagreed, and 2 strongly disagreed).
 “The PEPFAR country team engaged civil society organizations which are not currently receiving PEPFAR funding” (7 strongly agree, 7 agree, 4 did not know, 2 disagree, and 1 strongly disagreed).

Conversely, in response to the statement, “The PEPFAR country team provided adequate resources for those outside of the capital to engage in the civil society dialogue,” three respondents strongly agreed, three agreed, four did not know, four disagreed, and seven strongly disagreed (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Diversity in CSO Representation in COP Reviews



Source: Authors

Preparation for the COP engagement meeting

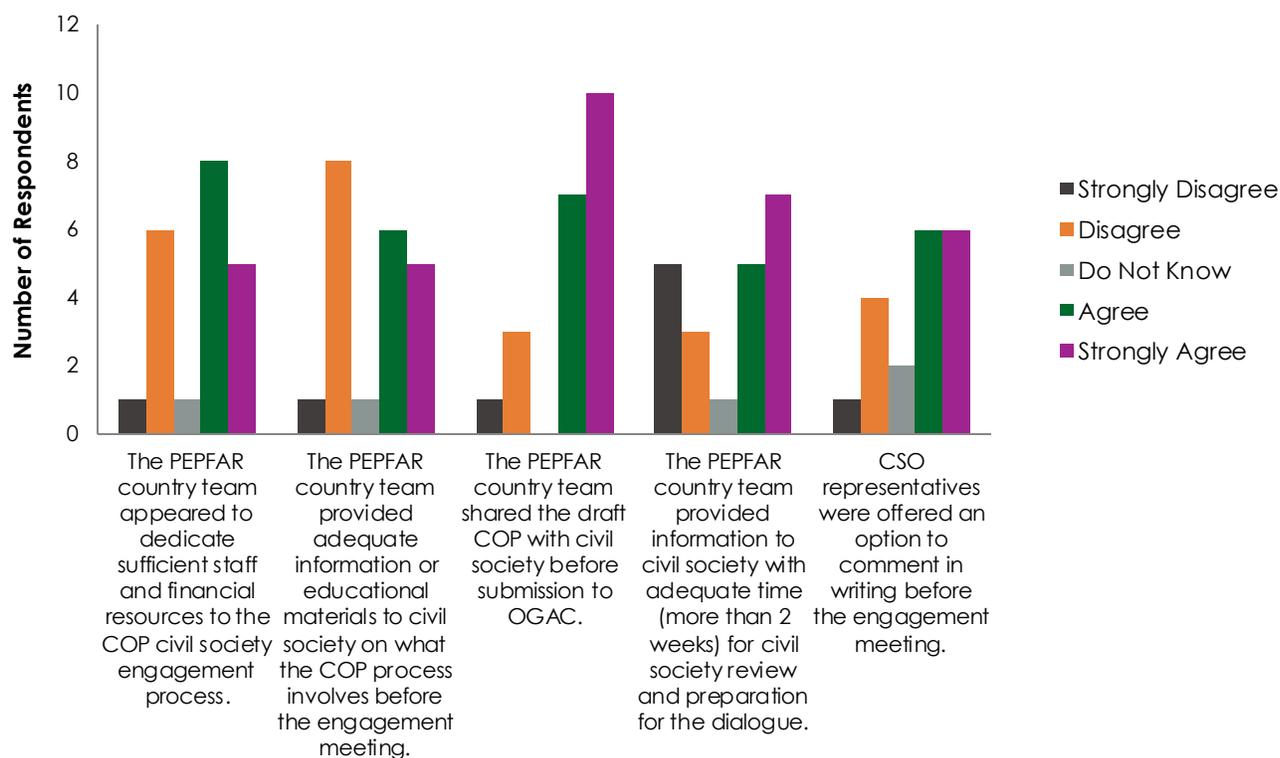
In response to the statement, “PEPFAR country team appeared to dedicate sufficient staff and financial resources to the COP civil society engagement process,” five respondents strongly agreed, eight agreed, one did not know, six disagreed, and one strongly disagreed (Figure 14).

When asked whether the PEPFAR country team provided adequate information or educational materials to civil society on what the COP process involves before the engagement meeting, five respondents strongly agreed with the statement, six agreed, one did not know, eight disagreed, and one strongly disagreed (Figure 14).

As shown in Figure 14, most respondents agreed that the PEPFAR country team shared the draft COP with civil society before submission to OGAC (10 strongly agreed, 7 agreed, 3 disagreed, and 1 strongly disagreed); and that PEPFAR country team provided information to civil society with adequate time (more than 2 weeks) for civil society’s review and preparation for the dialogue (7 strongly agreed, 5 agreed, 1 did not know, 3 disagreed and 5 strongly disagreed).

Finally, in response to the statement, “CSO representatives were offered an option to comment in writing before the engagement meeting,” six strongly agreed, six agreed, two did not know, four disagreed, and one strongly disagreed (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Preparation for the COP Engagement Meeting



Survey Questions

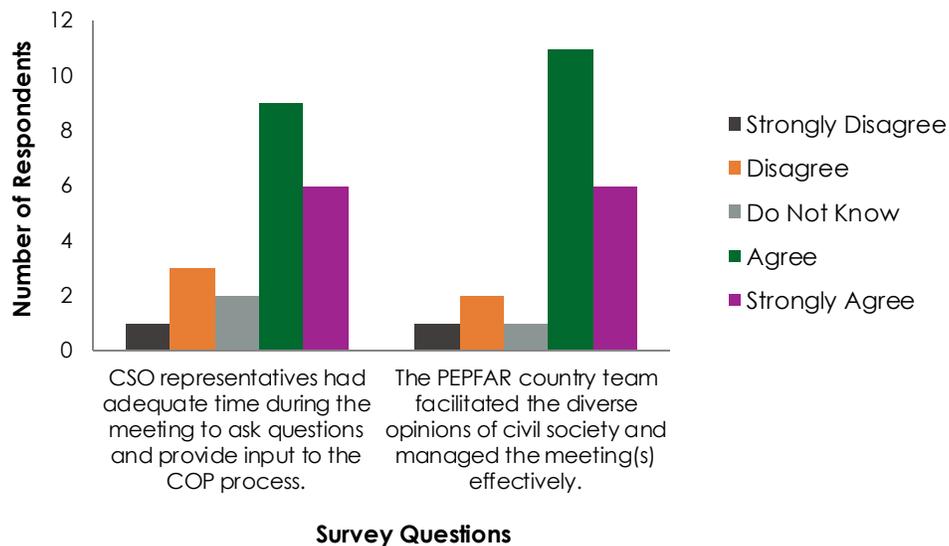
Source: Authors

Implementation of the CSO engagement meeting

In response to the statement, “CSO representatives had adequate time during the meeting to ask questions and provide input to the COP process,” six respondents strongly agreed, nine agreed, two did not know, three disagreed, and one strongly disagreed (Figure 15).

Similarly, when asked whether PEPFAR country teams facilitated the diverse opinions of civil society and managed the meeting(s) effectively, six respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 11 agreed, one did not know, three disagreed, and one strongly disagreed (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Implementation of the CSO Engagement Meeting

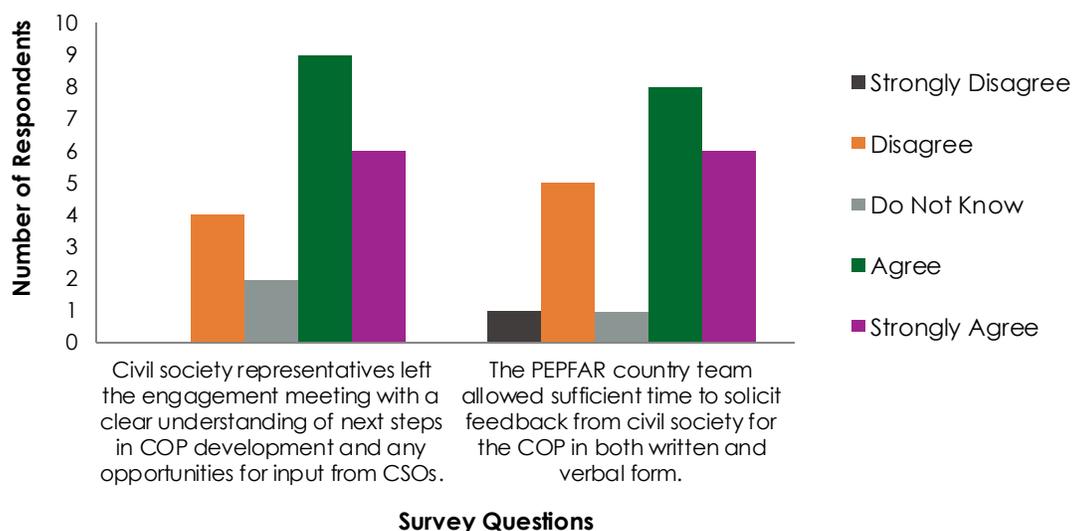


Source: Authors

CSO input after the COP engagement meeting

In response to the statement, “Civil society representatives left the engagement meeting with a clear understanding of next steps in COP development and any opportunities for input from CSOs,” six respondents stated that they strongly agreed, nine agreed, two did not know, four disagreed, and 0 strongly disagreed (Figure 16).

Similarly, most respondents agreed that the PEPFAR country teams allowed sufficient time to solicit feedback from civil society for the COP in both written and verbal form, with the majority of respondents stating they strongly agreed (6) or agreed (8), far fewer stating they disagreed (5) or strongly disagreed (1), and one respondent stating they did not know (Figure 16).

Figure 16: CSO Input After the COP Engagement Meeting

Source: Authors

Use of information for decision making and engagement

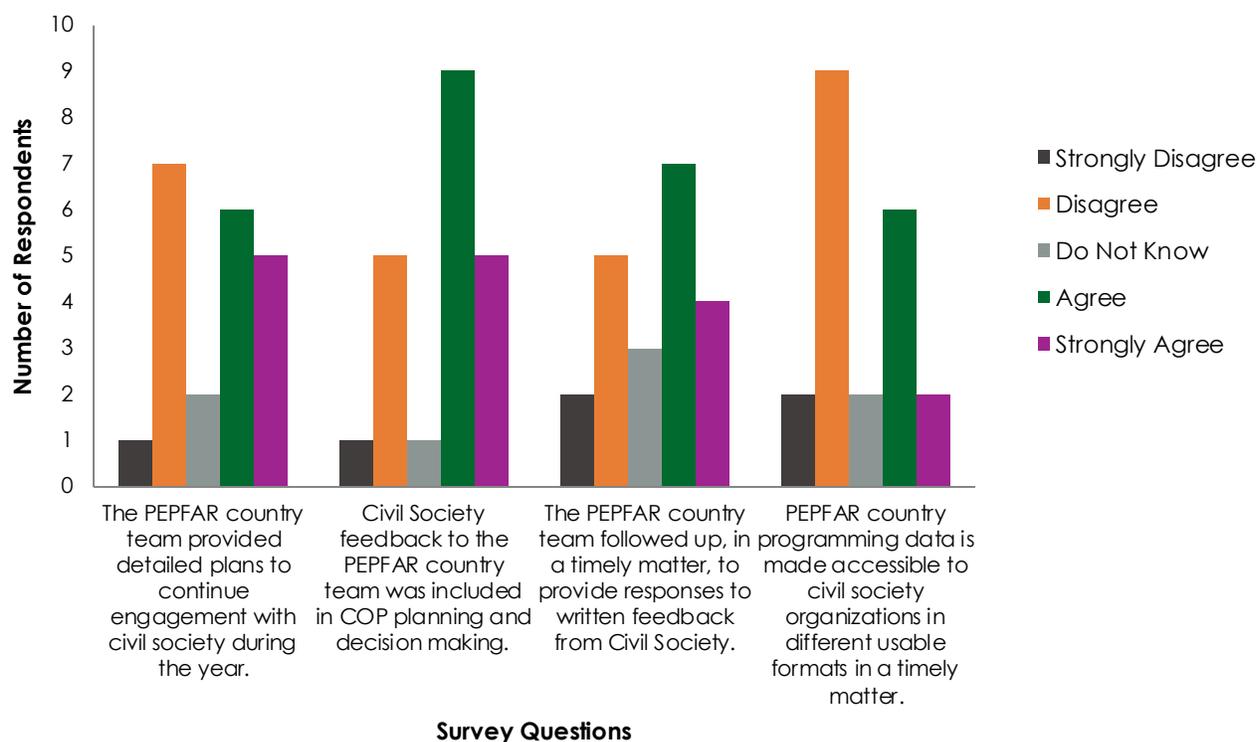
In response to the statement, “The PEPFAR country team provided detailed plans to continue engagement with civil society during the year,” five respondents strongly agreed, six agreed, two did not know, seven disagreed, and one strongly disagreed (Figure 17).

Similarly, the majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements (Figure 17):

- “Civil society feedback to the PEPFAR country team was included in COP planning and decision making” (5 respondents strongly agreed, 9 agreed, 1 did not know, 5 disagreed, and 1 strongly disagreed).
- “Civil society feedback to the PEPFAR country team was included in COP planning and decision making” (4 respondents strongly agreed, 7 agreed, 3 did not know, 5 disagreed, and 2 strongly disagreed).

Finally, in response to the statement, “PEPFAR country programming data is made accessible to civil society organizations in different usable formats in a timely matter”, two respondents strongly agreed, six agreed, two did not know, nine disagreed, and two strongly disagreed (Figure 17).

Figure 17: Use of Information for Decision Making and Engagement



Qualitative Responses: Regional CSOs

What were the benefits of having external partners at review meetings?

Respondents noted that the meetings provided a space for dialogue and consensus building. The spaces allowed for a diverse range of stakeholders to collaborate on the issues and provide different perspectives on the COP reviews. Regional partners often had different opinions than direct service delivery organizations and could provide insight through their involvement in different country programs. Participants noted that the meetings were transparent and allowed for increased networking with country teams and OGAC leadership.

What could be done differently at next year’s regional COP review?

The most resounding need voiced by participants was in terms of providing information in a timely fashion and ensuring full transparency of the COP documents to CSOs. Respondents urged that CSOs should be given materials long before the engagement meeting to give them time to analyze the materials and prepare for the meetings.

Participants also noted logistical challenges to the sessions. According to respondents, some meetings were rushed and there wasn’t enough time allocated for civil society discussion. Some of the international CSOs appeared unavailable to provide assistance to the country-level CSOs invited. Further, translators were needed at some regional meetings to ensure full participation by CSOs.

In addition, respondents noted the need for more representation by key populations and high HIV geographic burden areas at the meetings. Respondents suggested that support from PEPFAR should be made available so that smaller CSOs can partake in future dialogues.

Did your participation in the COP 15 review result in any changes to your country's COP?

While most respondents indicated that they were unsure of how to answer this question, as the finalized COPs had not been made publicly available, a few noted that there were benefits to CSO engagement seen at the meetings. One respondent noted that targets for men who have sex with men (MSM) and sex workers were revised upwards due to CSO engagement and another respondent reported that CSO engagement led to increased planned investments in voluntary medical male circumcision. Another participant noted how they thought that government agencies witnessing CSO discussion and contribution to the regional meetings enhanced the potential for future CSO-government partnerships.

Other partners felt that their inputs were not fully recognized by PEPFAR country teams. A few indicated they believed PEPFAR country teams had already decided on what the COPs would look like, no matter the issues raised by CSOs. Another voiced that they did not feel they were involved in a country health partnership, but instead in a donor-client relationship.

What were some of the benefits of increasing civil society engagement in this year's COP15 development and review process?

For many recipients, the benefit to the engagement process was the building CSOs' capacity in understanding the PEPFAR process and the broad work being conducted by the bilateral program. Respondents also commented that it was important for PEPFAR staff to see the work done by CSOs, and to see them as partners in the in-country, HIV response. Further, respondents noted that it was beneficial for PEPFAR to receive early buy in to the COPs, as civil society was able to have a say and support the planning process.

What were some of the challenges with engagement in the PEPFAR COP 15 process?

Respondents noted the need for resource support to get CSOs located outside capital cities engaged in the meetings. Timing of the engagement meetings was also an issue, as many saw them to be done too fast and with limited time for dialogue.

Respondents also expressed that PEPFAR country teams should do their best to ensure that civil society inputs on the COPs are considered and potentially included into the final plans. Some respondents left engagement meetings feeling that PEPFAR country teams did not seriously consider the opinions of civil society, or that the COPs were, in reality, already finalized by the time engagement meetings were being conducted.

What might be improved in the COP civil society engagement process next year?

Respondents noted that continued work was needed to ensure that PEPFAR country teams are engaging with CSOs and not just presenting on the COP or results. A respondent request was made for PEPFAR to have an anonymous, online portal for CSOs to submit complaints or needs for redress on PEPFAR programming.

Respondents provided a number of recommendations to enhance civil society engagement in the COP planning process. Respondents suggested that PEPFAR country teams hold additional meetings to allow CSOs to fully participate in the COP planning process. Many respondents felt resources could be made available for CSOs outside capital cities to attend meetings. Overwhelmingly, respondents indicated that making data available earlier and continuous dialogue with CSOs were necessities for better engagement. Respondents also suggested that CSOs selected to participate in engagement meetings be made public to ensure that proper networking and coalition building is done before meetings and to gather as much input as possible for PEPFAR country teams.

Further, respondents recommended that CSO engagement plans be adopted and resourced to provide for long-term CSO engagement with PEPFAR country teams; that these plans should include calendars for further meetings between CSOs and PEPFAR country teams; and that support should be given to CSOs to develop engagement with PEPFAR country teams to build their capacity and understanding of PEPFAR programs.

INTERVIEWS

In addition to the online survey, HPP interviewed six individuals from six different countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean. Individuals were selected randomly from those who provided their contact information on the survey. Of those individuals, one was engaged only at the country level, three were involved at the country and regional review levels, and two interviewees were not directly involved in the PEPFAR 2015 COP process at all.

While those who participated in regional COP reviews spoke enthusiastically about the benefits of their engagement, other respondents were not contacted by PEPFAR country teams and were unaware of the COP process and the 2015 civil society engagement guidelines. These respondents demonstrated negative attitudes about the state of PEPFAR's civil society engagement.

All respondents who were engaged in the COP process—either at country or regional review level—described this as a new experience. Some respondents stated that there had been engagement with PEPFAR in their countries prior to COP15, but that it had been irregular and less formalized. One respondent commented, “Civil society engagement before the COP guidance wasn't a concern for PEPFAR.”

All respondents strongly emphasized their desire for continued engagement with PEPFAR, and were hopeful that engagement would increase in the future. One person stated, “We want regular meetings and information sharing, ongoing feedback.” Another respondent said that even organizations that do not receive PEPFAR funding directly are interested in being involved in the in-country dialogues in order to improve the HIV response.

Main Themes

Respondents not involved in COP 15

The two respondents who were not involved in the COP process had no knowledge of PEPFAR's CSO engagement mandate. They were not invited by PEPFAR to any consultations, and to their knowledge COP discussions were not openly announced. They expressed frustration in the lack of transparency, both in the process and in PEPFAR's programming priorities. Both felt that as community-level implementers that, if given the chance, they could contribute information that would benefit PEPFAR, but were unclear how to engage with PEPFAR country teams. They expressed interest in engaging with PEPFAR country teams in the future.

Civil society coordination

All three respondents who attended regional reviews mentioned that civil society in their countries have a forum or leadership group of CSOs working in HIV. It is likely that the existing civil society convening mechanisms aided PEPFAR's engagement in these countries, contributing to the positive experiences related by these individuals.

Information provided by PEPFAR

The respondent who only engaged at the country level stated that civil society did not receive enough information to adequately engage in the COP consultation process. The individual felt that information on PEPFAR's priorities and budget was lacking.

In contrast, the three respondents who engaged at both country and regional reviews stated that they had received adequate information from PEPFAR. One respondent commented, “Yes, we had all the information needed. We sat down to discuss new issues with the team. The information sharing was great.

They even gave written feedback for once.” Of these three, however, only one respondent felt that information was shared with adequate time for civil society to prepare for the engagement meetings. The others felt that the materials were not shared far enough in advance; including one respondent who confided that information for his/her country meeting was first shared at the consultation meeting itself. In this instance, civil society was unable to review the COP draft in advance or to otherwise prepare for the consultation.

In addition to receiving materials with enough time to review and comment, one respondent suggested providing the calendar of consultation meetings in advance so that organizations can determine who is available to attend. Two respondents suggested that the consultation process should start when the local mission starts designing the COP, rather than after it has already been drafted.

Representation

At the country level, a lack of representation by CSOs based outside of capital cities was a common complaint. Providing resources for travel and/or holding consultations in priority geographic regions were suggested as a way to improve engagement by these groups.

The main criticism of the regional reviews was that too few organizations were able to be involved at that level and the review was, therefore, not representative of all populations’ needs. One respondent noted, “It was not as representative as they would have wanted it to be. It would be good to have representatives for key affected populations, children, and so on.” Two respondents mentioned that they had met with their national-level civil society forums prior to travelling to the regional review in order to discuss the interests of different in-country CSOs and raise these at the review.

Benefits to COP development

Respondents felt that civil society engagement was highly beneficial to the COP development. Civil society has specific concerns around programming needs, and the consultations and reviews provided a platform to make these known. A variety of community organizations were able to give feedback to the COPs. All three respondents involved in the regional reviews were able to cite specific examples of civil society recommendations taken on by PEPFAR for incorporation in the COP. One respondent shared, “We learned it’s possible for CSOs to actually ask for more from PEPFAR.”

Transparency

All four respondents involved in the COP process highlighted transparency as a benefit of civil society engagement. Prior to this experience, their knowledge of PEPFAR’s programming and goals had been limited. They appreciated the opportunity to learn about the PEPFAR program in their country. One respondent said, “Last year civil society did not know what PEPFAR’s plan was. People were uninformed. [PEPFAR is] opening up to civil society. Government is also now slowly opening up to civil society.” Another respondent noted, “We are now starting to get an insight on the PEPFAR priorities for the country.”

Dialogue platform

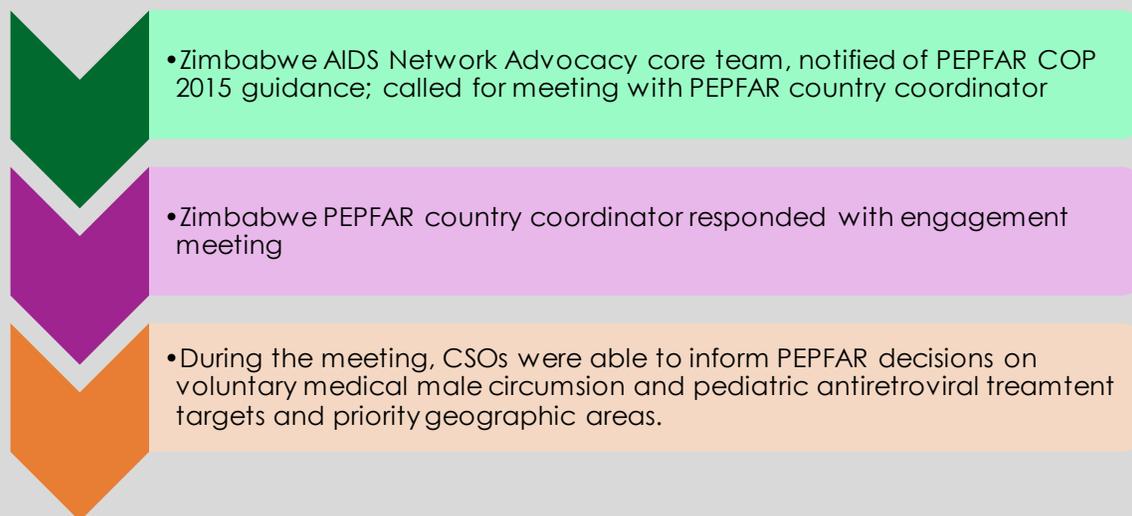
The regional reviews not only provided civil society with an opportunity to collaborate with PEPFAR, but were also described by two respondents as a unique, new platform for civil society-government dialogue. Specifically, one respondent noted, “It built accountability and transparency between government and civil society and vice versa. This dialogue is not easy to initiate in-country.” One respondent described how civil society was able to help the government advocate its interests to PEPFAR in addition to civil society advocating to government.

Two respondents stated that the regional review was also a chance to understand what different donors, including the Global Fund and the United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS are doing, and to improve coordination and complementarity of programming.

Box 1. Survey Highlight: Zimbabwe

While the intent of this survey was not to gather data on specific countries, numerous survey respondents shared how civil society engagement worked in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has one of the highest HIV prevalence in the world, with an adult HIV prevalence of 15 percent. The country continues to exhibit a generalized epidemic, with high-risk populations, including commercial sex workers, military, and mobile populations like truck drivers or migrants. The U.S. Government response, through PEPFAR, has been supporting the work of Zimbabwe's Ministry of Health and Child Care and the National AIDS Council. Specifically, notable areas of work include financial and technical assistance to the prevention of mother-to-child transmission and voluntary medical male circumcision scale-up (PEPFAR, 2013).

From the survey, several of the Zimbabwe respondents provided an example of successful engagement between PEPFAR country teams and CSOs. The graph below depicts the path of how a CSO network was able to call for a meeting and engage with the PEPFAR team to provide valuable insight and information.



Source: Authors

DISCUSSION AND HPP RECOMMENDATIONS

From the responses to the survey and follow-up interviews, it is clear that CSOs are grateful for the opportunity to engage with PEPFAR country teams, in order to reach the targets and goals of ending the HIV epidemics in their countries. The chance to speak to PEPFAR representatives and provide input to strategic plans for PEPFAR's HIV response in their countries was seen as a step forward for CSO engagement. This engagement also empowered advocates to seek out additional engagement opportunities with other partners. While the COP 2015 guidance laid a good foundation for PEPFAR country teams and CSO engagement, more can be done to ensure full engagement by CSOs in PEPFAR planning and programming. The following are seen as areas for further growth to continue engagement between CSOs and PEPFAR country teams:

Resources for engagement

The strongest concern that CSOs reported about the PEPFAR engagement process was the lack of financial support for CSOs to be able to attend the engagement meetings. Most, if not all, of the PEPFAR engagement meetings were held in capital cities. CSOs that were located outside of capital cities, particularly those located in more rural parts of the country, had no way of attending these meetings, leaving an important voice out of the conversation.

Recommendation: PEPFAR should allocate resources to allow for CSOs located outside capital cities to attend engagement meetings. PEPFAR country teams should also plan for meetings in geographic areas with high-HIV burden, outside of the capitals, to allow for easier access to CSOs.

Planning for civil society engagement

Most of the respondents noted that the information they needed to effectively engage with PEPFAR country teams, such as PEPFAR budgets, targets, and epidemiologic data, was not provided to CSOs early enough, or at all. Respondents noted that some PEPFAR country teams provided data and information either the day before or at the meeting, not giving CSOs adequate time to analyze and provide input on PEPFAR programming. Respondents also noted that many of the civil society engagement meetings were rushed and should be extended to incorporate more diverse civil society input.

Recommendation: PEPFAR country teams should develop COP planning process roadmaps and other planning tools, based on templates provided by OGAC, to ensure that timelines and processes are followed to effectively engage with CSOs. Such tools will give PEPFAR country teams the ability to know when to start reaching out to civil society coalitions, when to engage, and when to provide the information needed for civil society to effectively engage in the COP process.

Capacity building

CSOs noted an overall lack of understanding of PEPFAR processes and systems. Many did not know how targets or budgets were set, with a few respondents thinking that all decisions were made out of PEPFAR headquarters in Washington, DC. Increasing CSO's knowledge on PEPFAR programming, monitoring, and accountability was seen as necessary to effectively engage with PEPFAR country teams. For example, in-depth trainings on advocacy could be done using the PEPFAR dashboards, available online. Additionally, follow-up information to the finalized COP and what implementers are tasked with for in-country PEPFAR programs and projects would be useful for further transparency of PEPFAR programs.

Recommendation: PEPFAR country teams should look to find ways to support trainings to help CSOs better understand PEPFAR targets, processes, monitoring, and accountability; and to effectively advocate with PEPFAR, other donors, and government programs. PEPFAR country teams could also provide yearly reports to CSOs on the implementing partners working in-country and detailing what projects are

being implemented or supported in-country by USAID, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and other US Government agencies on the response to HIV.

Continued engagement

CSOs look forward to continued engagement with PEPFAR country teams. Continued engagement throughout the year, whether through the development of advisory boards or in specific program functions, would increase civil society's capacity to understand PEPFAR processes and provide better feedback during future COP engagement meetings.

Recommendation: PEPFAR country teams should develop civil society engagement plans for continued discussions throughout the year, allowing for more feedback and continued engagement. For CSOs that might want to remain anonymous, PEPFAR should develop online tools and systems to allow CSOs to provide anonymous feedback throughout the year. An online portal would also be useful for those located outside capital cities that are otherwise unable to provide input regularly to PEPFAR country teams.

Organization of civil society

CSOs noted in the survey and in follow-up interviews that they felt most prepared to engage with PEPFAR country teams when there were pre-formed coalitions and advocacy working groups to understand PEPFAR COP guidance and analyze PEPFAR data. These coalitions were able to call for meetings with PEPFAR country teams, educate other CSOs, and act as civil society leadership in PEPFAR engagement meetings.

Recommendation: PEPFAR country teams, in their development of civil society engagement plans, should incorporate the development or support of existing coalitions of CSOs that can engage in advocacy and policy planning. These groups should meet regularly to discuss data collected on the in-country response to HIV and to develop advocacy plans for realizing specific objectives with partners in the HIV response. Such groups can then be called upon by PEPFAR country teams to provide support for program planning and monitoring implementation.

CONCLUSION

The 2015 PEPFAR COP process provided a great starting point for future engagement between PEPFAR country teams and CSOs. Through continued efforts to build the capacity of CSOs, provide resources for more diverse CSO representation, and promote engagement between PEPFAR country teams and CSOs, the global HIV community will see a more empowered civil society community in PEPFAR priority countries, one that can hold partners accountable. PEPFAR COP planning and implementation can only be improved through the inclusion of CSOs unique insights and perspectives. Their contributions can support PEPFAR country teams in understanding geographic priorities, service delivery issues, and where bottlenecks might be in accelerating and achieving goals. In short, continued engagement with CSOs will only benefit PEPFAR country teams in the future and should continue to be strengthened as much as possible with each COP cycle.

ANNEX A. SURVEY QUESTIONS

Background Questions

What country do you primarily work in?

****For Regional Partners**** If multiple countries, please list:

What is your organization's primary focus in the response to HIV? (Select as many as you would like)

- Prevention of mother-to-child transmission
- Abstinence/be faithful
- Other sexual prevention
- Adolescent HIV prevention
- Key populations
- Transgender individuals
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
- MSM
- Sex Work
- Gender
- Gender-based violence
- Blood safety
- Injection safety
- Injecting and non-injecting drug use
- Voluntary medical male circumcision
- HIV testing and counseling
- Adult care and support
- Orphans and vulnerable children
- TB/HIV
- Pediatric care and support
- Adolescent care and treatment
- Food and nutrition
- Adult treatment
- Pediatric treatment
- Advocacy
- Policy support
- Stigma and discrimination

- Antiretroviral drugs
- Health systems strengthening
- Laboratory infrastructure
- Strategic information
- Other: _____

Does your organization receive PEPFAR or Global Fund funding?

- Receive PEPFAR funding
- Receive Global Fund funding
- Receive PEPFAR and Global Fund funding
- Do not receive either

How many years has your organization been engaged as a PEPFAR partner (i.e., received grants or agreements from PEPFAR or worked on allied projects together)?

- < 2 years
- 2- 5 years
- >5 years

How many staff members does your organization have in the primary country you are working in?

- >5
- 5-10
- 10-20
- 20-50
- 50+

What is your organization's annual budget?

- >10,000 USD
- 10,000-50,000 USD
- 50,000-100,000 USD
- 100,000-250,000 USD
- 250,000 – 500,000 USD
- 500,000 – 1,000,000 USD
- 1,000,000 USD +

Does your organization have its main office in the capital?

- Yes
- No

Does your organization have regional/district offices?

- Yes
- No

Please note your gender identity:

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer Not To Respond

First Page: Likert Scales

***Note that this section is the same for the surveys to allow for cross analysis to be conducted.**

The following questions are related to PEPFAR country team's implementation of the COP engagement strategy. Please rank each question based on the following:

1= Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3= Do Not Know 4= Agree 5=Strongly Agree

Transparency

The PEPFAR country team successfully cultivated and supported relationships with civil society during the COP engagement process.

Civil Society organizations were invited to participate in the COP engagement process through a transparent selection process.

Diversity

The PEPFAR country team engaged program implementers to identify and address COP goals and targets.

The PEPFAR country team engaged beneficiaries to identify and address COP goals and targets.

The PEPFAR country team selected CSOs representing high HIV burden geographic areas.

The PEPFAR country team engaged civil society organizations which are not currently receiving PEPFAR funding

The PEPFAR country team provided adequate resources for those outside of the capital to engage in the civil society dialogue

Implementation of the COP Engagement Process

Preparation for the COP Engagement Meeting

The PEPFAR country team appeared to dedicate sufficient staff and financial resources to the COP civil society engagement process.

The PEPFAR country team provided adequate information or educational materials to civil society on what the COP process involves before the engagement meeting.

The PEPFAR country team shared the draft COP with civil society before submission to OGAC.

The PEPFAR country team provided information to civil society with adequate time (more than 2 weeks) for civil society review and preparation for the dialogue.

CSO representatives were offered an option to comment in writing before the engagement meeting.

Implementation of the CSO Engagement Meeting

CSO representatives had adequate time during the meeting to ask questions and provide input to the COP process

The PEPFAR country team facilitated the diverse opinions of civil society and managed the meeting(s) effectively.

CSO Input after the COP Engagement Meeting

Civil society representatives left the engagement meeting with a clear understanding of next steps in COP development and any opportunities for input from CSOs.

The PEPFAR country team allowed sufficient time to solicit feedback from civil society for the COP in both written and verbal form.

Use of Information for Decision Making and Engagement

The PEPFAR country team provided detailed plans to continue engagement with civil society during the year.

Civil Society feedback to the PEPFAR country team was included in COP planning and decision making.

The PEPFAR country team followed up, in a timely matter, to provide responses to written feedback from Civil Society.

PEPFAR country programming data is made accessible to civil society organizations in different usable formats in a timely matter.

Page 2: Separate for Civil Society and External Partners

In Country Civil Society Section

How would you describe the role of PEPFAR in the response to HIV versus the role of the Global Fund or the country's Ministry of Health?

Did you feel that all appropriate civil society sectors were represented? Please explain.

If you attended a PEPFAR engagement meeting, what information were you given by the PEPFAR team prior to the meeting?

Check That Apply:

1. COP15 Guidance
2. COP15 Technical Considerations.
3. PEPFAR 2014 Annual Program Results
4. COP15 Proposed Targets

5. COP15 Proposed Budgets
6. Draft COP15 – Strategic Direction Summary
7. Sustainability Index and Dashboard Guidance
8. Sustainability Index Results and Final Dashboard

Other:

Do you feel more information was needed from the PEPFAR country team to effectively engage in the meeting? Please explain.

Was this the first time you were engaged in a PEPFAR COP review process?

Was the updated PEPFAR gender strategy discussed during the engagement meetings?

| Do you or your team need additional support (i.e., training on PEPFAR systems or monitoring and evaluation training) to effectively engage with PEPFAR? If yes, what type of support would be helpful?

The PEPFAR country team provided the following to civil society representatives prior to the meeting:

*Please check all that apply.

- Program Area Budget Reports
- Target Reports
- Epidemiologic Data
- Geographic Data
- List of PEPFAR Support Sites
- Annual Progress Report Data
- Strategic Direction of COP 15

Was the information provided adequate to effectively engage in the meeting? Please explain.

The PEPFAR civil society engagement process included representatives from organizations focusing on (leave blank if you do not know):

- People living with HIV networks or representative groups
- Women and girls-centered organizations
- MSM
- Transgender
- Sex workers
- People who inject drugs
- Youth/adolescents
- Faith based organizations
- Healthcare access
- Human rights and rights to health

Which of the following areas were reviewed during the COP engagement meeting? *Check All That Apply*

- Prevention of mother-to-child transmission
- Abstinence/be faithful
- Other sexual prevention
- Adolescent HIV prevention
- Key Populations
 - Transgender individuals
 - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
 - MSM
 - Sex work
- Gender
- Gender-based violence
- Blood safety
- Injection safety
- Injecting and non-injecting drug use
- Voluntary medical male circumcision
- HIV testing and counseling
- Adult care and support
- Orphans and vulnerable children
- TB/HIV
- Pediatric care and support
- Adolescent care and treatment
- Food and nutrition
- Adult treatment
- Pediatric treatment
- Advocacy
- Policy support
- Stigma and discrimination
- Antiretroviral drugs
- Health systems strengthening
- Laboratory infrastructure
- Strategic information

External Partners Section

What were the benefits of having external partners at review meetings?

What could be done differently at next year's regional COP reviews?

Did your participation in the COP 15 review result in any changes to your country's COP?

Is there anything you would like to add about the COP review?

Page 3: Short Answer Responses

Please provide as much detail as possible to the questions below.

What were some of the benefits of increasing civil society's engagement in this year's COP15 development and review process?

What were some of the challenges with engagement in the PEPFAR COP15 process?

What might be improved in the COP civil society engagement process next year?

Please include anything else you would like to share:

Please include the following contact information if you are open to being interviewed by a member of the survey team:

Name:

Email:

ANNEX B. INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Interview Guide:

Thank you again for the chance to interview you for the PEPFAR FY15 COP civil society engagement evaluation. Appreciate you giving your time.

As you may know, the 2015 COP Guidance called for increased civil society engagement, giving civil society in country a chance to review the current version of the COP, and the data involved in creating that COP, provide feedback, and continue to engage with PEPFAR country teams during implementation of the COP. Now that the 2015 COP review process is finalized, we are asking those who were involved to provide feedback on this year's civil society engagement process so feedback can be offered to PEPFAR at country and global level, allowing for any necessary adjustments to improve next year's review process.

This year's COP Guidance directs PEPFAR country teams to take the following steps:

- Step 1: *Develop a civil society engagement plan.*
- Step 2: *Convene engagement meetings.*
- Step 3: *Solicit written feedback from civil society.*
- Step 4: *Provide written feedback.*

We have a few short questions we would like to ask you about your experience in the COP engagement experience:

For Civil Society Organizations Engaged in Country for COP Review

- Did the PEPFAR country team provide the information needed to effectively engage on COP planning?
 - Was the information provided with enough time to prepare before the civil society engagement meeting?
- What does the PEPFAR country team need to do to effectively plan for next year's COP engagement process? What are your recommendations for the PEPFAR team?
 - What resources or information do you need to effectively engage with PEPFAR country teams?
- Does the PEPFAR country team engage with civil society throughout the year?
 - If yes: on what do they engage you on?
 - If no: why do you think this is the case?
- What were some of the lessons learned from your experiences at the civil society engagement review in terms of PEPFAR engaging with you?
- Do you have an example of PEPFAR using your feedback to inform the COP or for future planning?

For Civil Society Organizations Engaged in Regional COP Reviews

- What were the benefits of having civil society members at the regional COP reviews?

- What were some of the lessons learned from your experiences at the regional review in terms of civil society engagement?
- Did the PEPFAR country team provide the information needed to effectively engage on COP planning?
 - Was the information provided with enough time to prepare before the civil society engagement meeting?
- Do you have any recommendations for PEPFAR in terms of civil society engagement?

REFERENCES

The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. 2014. “*Presidential Memorandum – Civil Society.*” Available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/09/23/presidential-memorandum-civil-society>.

U.S. Department of State, Office of Global AIDS Coordinator and Health Diplomacy. 2015. *PEPFAR Country/Regional Operational Plan (COP/ROP) 2015 Guidance*. Washington, DC: US Department of State.

PEPFAR. 2013. *Zimbabwe Country Operational Plan, FY 2014*. Harare: PEPFAR. <http://www.pepfar.gov/countries/cop/240134.htm>.

For more information, contact:

Health Policy Project
Futures Group
1331 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20004
Tel: (202) 775-9680
Fax: (202) 775-9694
Email: policyinfo@futuresgroup.com
www.healthpolicyproject.com