



CWGH IN BRIEF

PVO 01/2014

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HEALTH IS YOUR RIGHT AND RESPONSIBILITY



Community Working Group on Health (CWGH)

The Community Working Group on Health (CWGH) was formed in early 1998 to take up health issues of common concern. The 31 organizations in the CWGH include national membership organizations that have branches across the country, while others have areas-specific membership (such as the residents associations). It is registered as a Private Voluntary Organisation (PVO) 01/2014 and operates in all the 10 provinces of Zimbabwe, with a geographic presence in 35 districts across the country.

Who is Community Working Group on Health?

CWGH is a network of national membership civil society and community organisations who aim to collectively enhance community participation in health in Zimbabwe. The CWGH aims to collectively:

1. Enhance community participation in health issues and support community interaction with local structures.
2. Raise community concerns, issues and positions with health care providers
3. Develop collective positions on policy and other issues on health
4. To stimulate the formation of local structures for civic participation in health and support informed community participation in local health structures
5. Dialogue with health worker organisations to resolve issues of common concern
6. Identify areas for and ensure provision of information and education to community/civic organisations and their members.
7. Make input of community perspectives, positions and experiences to statutory health structures at national level, including commissions of inquiry and health boards
8. Create and promote co-operation with other civic organisations on health internationally.



Over the years, the CWGH has positioned itself as a voice in the health sector and built community power, organizing involvement of communities in health actions within their communities and around Primary Health care, whether within the community on environmental health, or mobilizing resources to support health centres. These are being done through community level initiatives with limited external support.

The CWGH will consistently engage with stakeholders and the government to make PHC a more central policy principle, and will strengthen community structures such as health centre committees and boards and committees at district and national level to organize public efforts to achieve this principle.

CWGH Vision

A society in which Health Rights and equitable Health Services are realised.

Mission Statement

To enhance community participation in health through advocacy, networking, digitalisation, research and development.

Core Values

- a) **Accountability:** Being answerable to our beneficiaries, donors, other stakeholders and our structures
- b) **Integrity:** Being truthful, reliable, honest with good social standing
- c) **Teamwork:** Ability to work together towards the same goal regardless of personal differences (Cooperation and Collaboration)
- d) **Non-partisan:** Not aligning ourselves to any political party
- e) **Diversity:** Acceptance and respect of individual differences and uniqueness
- f) **Environment Conscious:** Uphold environmental protection

GOAL

Organized and health literate communities that are able to claim their rights.



How do we relate to the health system?

The CWGH identified through its research in 1997 that community participation has in the past been a 'top down' phenomenon, inadequately driven by an informed and organised community participation in health.

The CWGH has advocated for the establishment of HCCs and community health councils that involve local councillors, civic groups and all health providers to enable participation and effective links between people and health providers. The CWGH also advocates that Hospital Advisory Boards should include civic organisations, particularly those that represent hospital users. This will enable civic group participation in the planning and implementation of health activities in a more substantive manner, including in respect of CWGH activities. The CWGH also seeks to strengthen informed civic representation in national health planning, in the Public Health Advisory Board and through a working relationship with the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Health.

The CWGH has formalised its interaction with local health providers through joint planning meetings and committees involving the local CWGH steering committee, the local health authority and other health providers.

At national level, the CWGH has institutional relationship with the Ministry of Health and the Parliament of Zimbabwe, works closely with the Ministry of Health, holds joint meetings with health professionals and health providers and informs and works with parliamentarians.

What Does CWGH Do?

The organization's current programme of work is organized into four (4) main thematic areas namely:

- a. Health Literacy:** Emphasizing health rights, responsibilities, and community roles in addressing priority health needs, with a focus on sexual reproductive health, health emergencies, climate change, and pandemic preparedness.
- b. Health Systems Strengthening:** Enhancing health systems through grassroots capacity building, mobilizing health service uptake, social accountability monitoring, and addressing community-raised health concerns.
- c. Health Advocacy:** Advocating for positive health outcomes through strategic efforts in health financing, quality service delivery, evidence-based engagement, and amplifying community concerns for responsive actions.
- d. Health Rights:** Promoting health as a fundamental human right by addressing its intersection with human rights and advocating for its protection.

What has CWGH done?

- In 1998 the CWGH began a Health Literacy Programme that aims to exchange information between the public and health system on common health problems and their management.
- The CWGH has disseminated information and made inputs on a number of specific issues, including:
- With the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ) and Ministry of Health, on the Patients Charter. The CWGH has also disseminated the charter through its education activities
- With Training and Research Support Centre (TARSC) and the Ministry of Health, development of a training manual supporting the role of Health Centre Committees (HCCs)
- With MOHCC, the CWGH commemorates UHC Day, 12 December.
- Campaigned for the inclusion of the Right to Health in the 2013 Zimbabwe Constitution
- Advocated for the legal status of HCCs in the Public Health Amendment Act 2018
- With Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Health, the CWGH develops a Position Paper on the National Health Budget and coordinates the Pre and Post Budget Meetings on Domestic Resource Mobilization
- CWGH has also provided civic representation to a number of health-related processes including the Public Health Advisory Board.
- The CWGH hosts a number of national and regional networks such as the GFF CSO Platform, Civil Society Engagement Mechanism for UHC 2030, Global Fund Advocates Network (GFAN) Africa, Peoples Health Movement and is also a member of EQUINET, Medicus Mundi and International Network (MMI)
- Partnered with media to become a trusted voice in health advocacy.
- Promoted the Waiting Mothers' Home model for safer maternal care.

It has also co-operated with the Ministry of Health in review of information and promotion of strategies around a number of health issues including new laws and the health budget.



List of CWGH National Members

- Associated Mineworkers Union of Zimbabwe (AMWUZ)
- Bulawayo Health and Community Welfare Task Force (BHCWTF)
- Bulawayo United Residents Association (BURA)
- CARELITE
- Counsellors Combined Harare Residents Association (CHRA)
- Chinhoyi Residents and Ratepayers Association (CRRA)
- Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ)
- Counselling Services Unit (CSU)
- General Agriculture Plantation Workers Union of Zimbabwe (GAPWUZ)
- Gweru Residents and Ratepayers Association (GRRA)
- Harare Residents Trust (HRT)
- Informal Traders Association of Zimbabwe (ITAZ)
- Kariba Urban Residents Association (KURA)
- Marondera Residents and Ratepayers Association (MRRA)
- Mutare Residents and Ratepayers Association (MRRA)
- National Council for the Disabled Persons of Zimbabwe (NCDPZ)
- Public Service Association (PSA)
- Rusape Residents and Ratepayers Association (RRRA)
- The AIDS and ARTS Foundation (TAAF)
- Women and AIDS Support Network (WASN)
- Women's Action Group (WAG)
- Zimbabwe Aids Aid Organisation (ZHAAO)
- Zimbabwe Confederation of Midwives (ZICOM)
- Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU)
- Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC)
- Zimbabwe Homeless People's Federation (ZHPF)
- Zimbabwe Network of HIV Positive Women (ZNPW)
- Zimbabwe Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS (ZNNP+)
- Zimbabwe Women's Resource Centre and Network (ZWRNC)
- Zimbabwe Young People Development Coalition (ZYDPC)
- Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights)

it is imperative that we act to rebuild the health systems from the bottom up!

Where do we find the CWGH?

You can find us through the CWGH Secretariat: Speak to:

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