

CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION IN HEALTH SECTOR PLANNING, BUDGETING, AND MONITORING IN SELECTED DISTRICTS IN UGANDA

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ABSTRACT

This article highlights some of the findings of a survey carried out by Action Group for Health, Human Rights and HIV/AIDS (AGHA) Uganda on health sector transparency, accountability and civil society participation in health sector budgeting and planning in selected districts of Uganda. It examines some components of participation including the right of access to information and the obligation of the state to seek the active and informed participation of the public in decision making. Uganda has embraced a participatory approach to developing plans and budgets for the health sector. However, some components of the right to participation in health-related decision making have not been fully embraced. The Ministry of Health has not taken adequate steps to ensure the active and informed participation of individuals and communities in health-related decisions. Health budgeting and planning is largely seen as a province for health planners and a few selected stakeholders. Moreover, limited information sharing and lack of capacity also undermine the ability of CSOs to meaningfully participate. This is magnified by the uncoordinated representation in planning even where there is an opportunity. These factors have been a major obstacle to meaningful participation.