



Community of Practitioners on Accountability and Social Action in Health

Inputs from COPASAH community and e-mail insights from experts on accountability

COPASAH sought opinion from its community members and experts in the field of accountability who have been co-travellers of COPASAH in order to gain insights on the future directions of COPASAH in 2016. The community opinion was administered through an online sent through the COPASAH listserve and the expert opinion was sought through mail interviews and Skype interviews, coordinated by the COPASAH Secretariat. A set of questionnaire was developed to get the feedback of the COPASAH community on the current context of the network and how can it be taken further and how the community visions it to see further.

1. Responses of the COPASAH community were from

- India
- Uganda
- Pakistan
- Nigeria
- Zimbabwe
- Indonesia
- Bangladesh
- United Kingdom
- Macedonia
- Bulgaria

2. Majority said that out of the platforms of COPASAH

- COPASAH Knowledge products and COPASAH newsletter (Communiqué) most useful. Followed by the listserve, COPASAH social media platforms and blog.

3. Usefulness of platforms was listed as by the community that

- The discussions on COPASAH are very relevant on the community practices and citizens engagements
- COPASAH provides platform to share accountability related work through newsletter and workshops
- It was important to follow the discussion on listserv but also case studies were really insightful
- It provides platform to variety of stakeholders to connect, share and discuss issues of public health concern. Reading various perspectives deepens understanding and flourishing collective wisdom.

- Because the group is very sensitive in social sector and to other communication regarding social accountability and health field
- The listserv helps to get regular update from the secretariat and what members are doing globally related to accountability work. The newsletter serves a hub for detail information of key activities that could be replicated elsewhere.
- For knowledge and best practice sharing platforms.
- COPASAH Communiqué because it is interesting to read about various SA programmes in different regions; also liked the use of different mediums for sharing knowledge (photo essays, videos). The knowledge products - I read them all, in part because I was one of the issue paper authors. I found them interesting for their diversity of contexts, perspectives and strategies. However, I remain disappointed that these products were not more widely disseminated. Also that we didn't take forward our initial plan to use these docs to provide a more analytical overview of what they collectively said about SA. This was a missed opportunity to deepen learning and debate within COPASAH
- The knowledge products from COPASAH give me new perspective and very enlightening
- It helps to connect the members with useful information 2. Newsletter keep members and others informed about the networks activities 3. Events help to get together members and practitioners to learn each other's experiences and works. Builds partnership, communication directly.
- Received regular and prompt information from Google group.
- It provides a rich source of Knowledge and information that has enabled as an individual activist but also a community practitioner to integrate into daily sphere of work in budget advocacy, community health service monitoring using social accountability tools, training and capacity building of CBOs. It also provided with an opportunity to share knowledge and skills with other practitioners in areas of Budget analysis and Advocacy country experiences especially when facilitated learning exchange were held in Uganda.
- They are insightful, provocative and help building perspective

4. COPASAH's contribution to their work was valued

- Very High for – learning from other's work and experience
- Followed by value for learning new skills and approaches and learning about the field of accountability
- High value was also accorded to food for thought and new ideas.
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5. Individual Responses on experience of engagement with COPASAH

- Experience has been satisfactory
- As a social accountability practitioner, it has been very useful to learn from others' experiences
- Wonderful, engaging and delightful experience of being COPASAH
- COPASAH gives a better opportunity for understanding in health and social accountability sector for a marginalized community

- As the coordinator of Africa Health Budget Network I share useful information about our work and events via the list serve. I also read reports from other members that enrich my work as well. It is a very useful platform.
- benefited from newsletters most
- As a member of the SC from its founding until the end of 2014. More peripherally engaged with the COP since then
- I met Abhijit a couple of years ago at FP2020 forum; we immediately recognized that the chemistry is there. He invited me to join COPASAH, without hesitating I immediately joined COPASAH
- Learn about others experiences through the network; help me devise new ideas and implement in the field of accountability mechanism.
- Almost four years me and NGO, KHAM are members of COPASAH. We are participants in training's organized about accountability, where we learned new methods, and we have capacity building. Also we shared our experience through the Newsletter, until now we have three story, and using resource park for new idea and skills. Videos are very important tool and we follow too.
- Through AGHA-Uganda, an Organization that i work for as Policy and advocacy manager, we were able to receive a facilitated technical support in the area of Monitoring and Evaluating our advocacy engagements. During the capacity assessment for this technical support, we were also able to moot up an idea of integrating PETS into the community score cards as a strategy to not only improve relations but strengthen transparency and accountability initiatives in health service delivery. To this end Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development is now furnished with quarterly expenditure performance reports from districts by CSOs working in the health sector
- We Read the listserv postings, blogs and resource materials with immense interest and find them invaluable.
- COPASAH and explicitly Abhijit Das have been very supportive and have helped us a lot in adapting the method of social accountability and community monitoring on the Balkans. At the same time we have been part of several events, meetings and exchange visits which provided us with a lot of opportunities

6. Suggestion for COPASAH to be engaging with in the future on a priority basis and reasons outlined -

Majority opted for -Strategic Networking and Alliance Building, Field building and knowledge building from practice were next best options, Followed by advocacy for bottom up- citizen centric accountability

Reasons outlined

- Because working in a network and alliance is critical for advocacy and social change
- Field building is key to organising a critical mass of social accountability practitioners,
- Practitioners do not often access mainstream knowledge portals and platforms, putting practice into knowledge gives flavours of community accountability in various contexts.

- As the world commences implementing the SDGs, strategic networking and alliance building are very key in building synergy and coordinating activities of NGOs and groups working in accountability, The networking can help to track progress .of SDGs and other international commitments using format like scorecard that all members could adopt and use concern that Monitoring and Soc Accountability as defined by COPASAH remains narrowly defined as holding states and the private sector accountable within an existing inequitable health system, rather than coming in a few steps earlier in looking at SA as part of a longer and more cyclical approach to working with communities which includes building a shared critique and analysis, working with strategic partners in acting on that shared understanding, and strengthening the collective identity and power of communities to challenge inequities and help to transform health systems. This calls for long term processes and the building of knowledge around these processes that can be shared within the COP - also see below re suggestions to move toward a more thematic approach to working on SA issues, with knowledge generated from the bottom-up
- By building strategic networking and alliance building, our local work becomes a regional/global issue, which will increase the leverage of our local advocacy works, and continuously we enriched each other and create a new synergy.
- Without alliance building and networking, the accountability mechanism could not be successful. It builds mutual understanding among the network partners, and spread the ideas across fields, which will ultimately bring the changes in the accountability mechanism.

Expert view:

- Field building (Learning, sharing & strengthening accountability experience, facilitating communication & capacity building
- Knowledge building from practice
- See a lot of potential for creative initiatives to project COPASAH perspectives, experiences and evidence more broadly – to contribute to knowledge building both within the global health and the social accountability fields.

7. How should COPASAH be best organized in future? (For example, you see it as a strong global entity, with loose regional nodes; or strong regional entity, loosely knit as a global network; or thematic node; or any other)

Mixed responses

- Global meeting should be organised and people from community should participate in that.
- Strong regional entity, loosely knit as a global network
- International level a training programme for experiences syringe to better understanding the value of COPASAH work.
- See it as strong global entity with loose regional nodes in Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America.
- Global entity ,It should be a global network with regional cooperation

- It may be interesting not to think in terms of global vs regional, but to identify 2-4 key themes (eg SA and human rights; participation and community empowerment, SA and the private sector, ...) and to identify key orgs to take a lead in developing programmes and learning around each theme. Each lead org would have the responsibility of identifying other orgs to work with (not limited to one region - open call to orgs on the COPASAH e-list) and in developing a programme of action and learning that would feed into a wider global perspective. COPASAH would still need a global secretariat and steering committee to bring the various strands together and to continue with the communication work, but the idea of regional nodes would fall away.

Note: If COPASAH were to move to a more thematic way of working, it will be important to check that you are not duplicating existing networks in any area of focus. Whatever COPASAH decides, it will be important to work with and strengthen existing networks/alliances globally, regionally and at country level, esp important during this time of limited civil society resources. Also, in thinking about accountability of the private sector as a possible theme - this is a huge and potentially interesting area of focus, particularly given the ongoing encroachment of private into public spaces. And, as far as I know, has not been given the attention that it needs. Something for the COPASAH leadership to explore.

- Prefer strong regional entity, loosely knit as global network with thematic node
- As a strong global CoP entity is important and also critical for its success. The idea to represent as much local voices around contextual insights into the practices as possible should continue.
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8. How would you like to contribute for COPASAH's growth in the future?

- By adding more members into it and by bringing community voices in global platform
- As a resource person in capacity building workshops...
- Sharing knowledge
- Through strengthening of member.
- Contributing in webinar to share our regional experiences in Africa, sharing useful information to members and making input to reports.
- Participate in workshops and events organized by COPASAH
- As a practitioner would always ready to learn new ideas and implement and experience with network and partnership.
- Knowledge sharing and participating workshop
- By sharing much more to the web of COPASAH with our partners not just in Macedonia but with our partners in all our networks in different areas.
- Actively seek to strengthen its financial position by either members contributing to it to ensure ownership and performance to the expectations of the members. Members of the regional block should be allowed to brainstorm periodically on what new things the block can undertake to ensure its visibility

9. Suggestion/s for consolidation and sustained relevance of COPASAH in the future.

- Stay the path.
- Expanding regionally in all countries (Deriving my experience from South Asia)
- Provide and arrange a national and international level experience single platform.
- The steering committee list should be review to reflect regional and international diversity.

- There should be strong alliances and experience sharing for replication
- COPASAH should be active in generating evidence through mobilizing resources and partnership building with members
- Ensure that the regional task force committee is created to plan and advance COPASAH Interest Government officials to attend some of the COPASAH meetings to improve knowledge sharing, learning and adoption
- Every NGO member of network must obligate to share report or experience from his/her work at least every third month. Also it is very important to use much more video like creative tool, to hear the voice of community not just of a experts, and ordinary people to use and understand why we do this and where is the community in the Social accountability.