

Geneva Global Health Hub (G2H2)

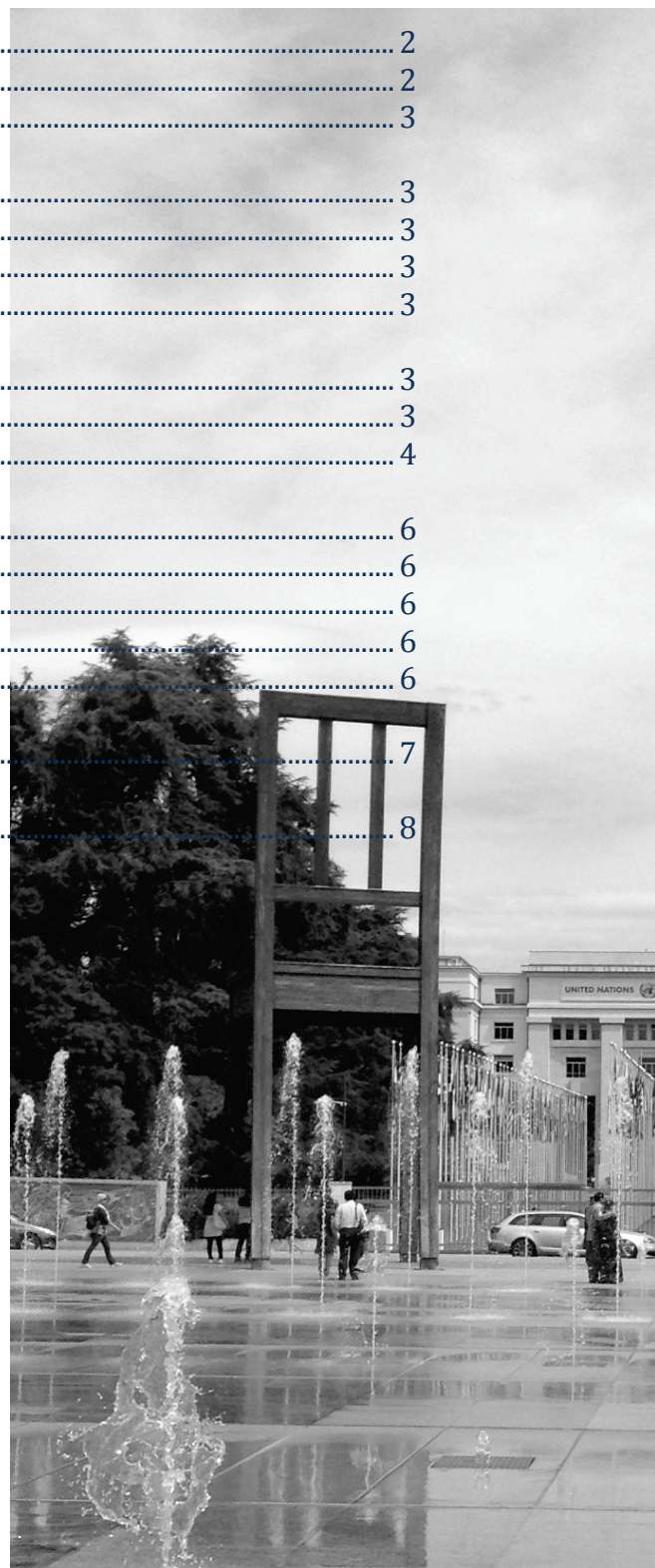
Project proposal

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Project proposal sent by the G2H2 Interim Steering Committee (ISC) to potentially interested organizations in March 2016 for endorsement and resubmitted to the Constitutive Assembly on 21 May for approval.

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I. Introduction

Rationale

Health is a human right given increasing recognition and enforceability in both international and national law. Yet the health of the majority of the world population remains insufficiently protected, and in the increasingly complex arena of global health actors, there are no clear lines of leadership or accountability. As the UN health agency, the World Health Organization (WHO) remains in today's globalized world the “directing and coordinating authority” for the realization of the right to health and universal coverage. Its role as the sole global legal authority in health is embedded in its constitution, and needs to be strongly supported.

Moreover, the Sustainable Development Goals which comprise the new agenda for development adopted for the period 2016 to 2030 include health as a comprehensive, stand-alone goal that engages all actors while upholding the leadership of the WHO. Accordingly, we consider it a public responsibility to promote Universal Health Systems within a broader framework of social security systems that ensure principles of universality, equity and comprehensiveness. Public policy space must be democratic and transparent and protected from commercial interests that disregard health risks and flout the right to health. In a deeply interdependent world, intergovernmental multilateralism should remain the ultimate authority for legitimate and just global governance of health

Support for the role and independence of the WHO has been threatened, as illustrated by a longstanding freeze of assessed contributions and increased earmarking of contributions by Member States and a reform agenda that risks weakening rather than strengthening WHO's institutional mandate. The last few decades have witnessed the rapid emergence of new actors who have sought to shape the global agenda. Their increasing prominence is the manifestation of a diffuse shift in institutional culture, favouring the penetration of market values into areas where they do not belong and resulting in a new influence on health policy governed by other priorities than the public health.

These developments have mobilized civil society, most especially since the proposal to reform the World Health Organization (WHO) was tabled and acted on¹. The importance and complexity of the reform process, in the context of the politicization of the debates and the growing prominence of new actors in the global health landscape, requires strong and regular presence and skilled human capacities for analysing the major challenges and following up key events and negotiations. Civil society voice must be strong and adamant to safeguard inclusiveness, democracy and transparency at national, regional and international level.

¹ See, for example, the [Core Statement](#) of the Democratising Global Health Coalition on the WHO Reform (DGH)

The Geneva Global Health Hub

Against this background, the **overall objective** of the proposed Geneva Global Health Hub (G2H2) is to contribute to longer-term strategic thinking and coherent and sustained action by civil society entities involved in global health advocacy, taking account of country-level contributions and national variability.

The imbalance of presence and inputs in global health debates between civil society organizations defending the public interest and others defending commercial interests, due in particular to large disparities in resources, calls for creating strong and stable alliances among the various organizations representing civil society and sharing common values. By creating a space where these organizations can meet, share knowledge and strategize, civil society can have a more sustainable presence and meaningful engagement in relevant discussions and key negotiations.

II. Vision, mission and values

Our vision

Democratic global health governance is essential to achieve universal access to health and equitable health for all.

Our mission

Build a coherent, progressive and strong civil society space in Geneva for more democratic global health governance.

Our values

The values that guide and drive the work of the G2H2 are belief in democracy with equity in diversity, dignity, accountability and transparency, ethics and justice.

III. Strategic directions and objectives

A. Strategic directions

Three major strategic directions will guide the work of the G2H2:

- ***Supporting WHO's reaffirmed mandate to lead global health governance and critical regulatory, normative and policy-making roles.*** The G2H2 will seek to:
 - a) improve follow-up of the issues and processes (during and) between the WHO governing body meetings;

- b) liaise with country missions in Geneva and their regional and thematic structures; and
- c) strengthen ties and promote issue-based alliances with civil society groups and other progressive actors working at national, regional and global levels.

- ***Addressing processes at other key (multilateral) institutions and global health initiatives most of which are based in Geneva that have a mandate in global health***, including UNAIDS, OHCHR, UNHCR, the Global Fund, GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, MMV, and DNDi². The G2H2 may also look at policy and decision-making processes by the ECOSOC and other global health actors such as the World Bank, regional development banks and the IMF, as well as philanthropies such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to the extent that they have implications for specific aspects of the financing of global health and the mandate of WHO in Geneva. In so doing, the G2H2 may link up with other networks and hubs that monitor the policy and decision-making processes of these other institutions.
- ***Addressing the implications for the health sector of organizations and processes in other sectors***, such as the ILO, WTO and WIPO. In this regard, the proliferation of bilateral and regional trade agreements needs scrutiny, as provisions in these treaties may undermine the policy space of governments and override existing multilateral agreements that protect public health.

B. Specific objectives and activities to be carried out with the support of a Secretariat

1) Tools giving opportunities for civil society entities to meet, identify affinities, promote the G2H2 and allow regular communication through online networking and communication and face-to-face meetings

Activities

- Set up and specify features for a G2H2 website and internal online collaboration tool for G2H2 members, including call for offers and contracting as appropriate
- Set up and update an internal list of names and contacts of G2H2 members
- Organize meetings at the time of WHO EB sessions in January and May annually
- Facilitate networking and communication between meetings
- Promote G2H2 to civil society, the public and potential donors, and provide G2H2 contacts on the website

² Full titles for the abbreviations used in order of appearance are Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization, the International Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization, Malaria Medicines Venture, Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative, The United Nations Economic and Social Council, the International Monetary Fund, the International Labour Organization, the World Trade Organization and the World Intellectual Property Organization.

Tools for networking and communication are core elements of the G2H2 and will be jointly developed, implemented and administered in a process led by the Steering Committee. Active use of networking and communication tools by the G2H2 for collaboration between members and sub-groups will demonstrate their value.

Outputs year 1

- Networking and communication tools are operational and the Secretariat is supporting their use for collaboration in particular projects, in development of joint civil society positions, statements and/or concerted action
- Two meetings have taken place with active participation by G2H2 members, leading to the development of joint civil society positions
- The G2H2 website receives visits and enquiries from members and others

2) Knowledge gathering and sharing on multilateral governance structures and policy processes

Activities

- Map Geneva global health institutions and key contacts for civil society advocacy
- Gather information on key processes requiring civil society attention and involvement (guided by strategic priorities set by G2H2 members)
- Forward updates, invitations, enquiries to G2H2 members and sub-groups
- Attend meetings to gather thematic information for G2H2 projects

Outputs year 1

- Mapping and information gathering on track, and draft documents available on a topic selected by G2H2 members
- Outcome of meeting attendance provides satisfactory results

3) Logistical support for local meetings and for travel costs as appropriate

Activities

- Support members in the organization of internal and other meetings (collaborating with Geneva G2H2 members and external service providers)
- Provide office and infrastructure to interested local and visiting G2H2 members
- Help raise funds to support civil society participation in the Geneva global health institutions through travel grants to resource constrained members
- Help members and sub-groups raise funds for specific thematic projects

Outputs year 1

- Information on logistical support available to G2H2 members
- Logistical support used for Geneva meetings
- Clear expressions of interest for fundraising support from G2H2 members to attend Geneva global health venues addressed to the Steering Committee

IV. Governance and institutional setting

A. Legal status: the G2H2 as an Association

The members of the Coalition of Ownership will set up a non-profit Association under Swiss law, based on acceptance of a formal project proposal by a Constitutive General Assembly and on guarantees of seed money to launch the G2H2.

The Association will be legally and practically responsible for all concrete steps of the planning and implementation of the G2H2.

In Switzerland, the legal principles governing the establishment and functioning of associations are defined in Articles 60 to 79 of the Swiss Civil Code (Code of the Helvetic Confederation) and available in French, German and Italian.

B. Governance, role of the G2H2 members

- Members of the G2H2 join or leave the G2H2 by joining or leaving the Association
- Paid-up G2H2 members constitute the General Assembly, ultimate decision-making body of the Association, which, in particular:
 - Approves the Statutes³ that regulate the Association of G2H2 members
 - Elects the Steering Committee and the Auditor(s)
 - Approves the work plan, budget, annual reports and accounts
- Paid-up G2H2 members are the owners of the Association and contribute to its core budget through membership fees and additional voluntary contributions

C. Organizational arrangements, according to the principle of subsidiarity

The G2H2's work will be done by:

- The **Individual owners/members** who actively use and promote the G2H2 individually or in thematic sub-groups
- **Sub-groups** created from common interests that collaborate on a topic, project or process with Secretariat support
- The **Steering Committee**, elected by the General Assembly, who provide conceptual inputs, strategic guidance and regular oversight; its **Bureau** and **Auditors**
- A **Secretariat** that implements an agreed package of centralized functions in support of the above which cannot be done by G2H2 members and thematic sub-groups and/or by the Steering Committee
- **External service providers** who provide professional input not available from among the G2H2 owners (e.g. OCT; website design; logistical support) when needed and affordable, with costs to be covered by G2H2 budget

³ See the Annex for the Draft Statutes

D. G2H2 Secretariat

The success and functionality of the G2H2 will depend first and foremost on a critical mass of investment and engagement by the G2H2 members and on a dedicated Steering Committee. They will be assisted by an effective Secretariat.

Initially, *the G2H2 Secretariat* will be *hosted by one of its members*. The Interim Steering Committee will launch a call to the members of the Coalition of Ownership prior to the Constitutive General Assembly for offers to host the G2H2 Secretariat. The terms of reference of the Secretariat and the selection will be negotiated by the Interim Steering Committee to be submitted for approval to the Constitutive General Assembly and hence by the new G2H2 members.

Delegating the set-up of a Secretariat, including staff, suitable office space and infrastructure to a hosting partner will facilitate start-up functions of the G2H2 Secretariat. Selection of the hosting member is key to ensure trust, accountability and communication between the host, the Steering Committee and G2H2 members.

The Secretariat agreement will cover provisions for mandate and deliverables, administration fees, accountability and oversight. The Secretariat reports to the Association (*via* the Steering Committee) and not to the hosting G2H2 member.

V. Budget

The budget will be annual, prepared by the Steering Committee of the G2H2 and submitted to the AGM for adoption.

At present, it is recommended that the annual operating budget be sufficient to cover the core infrastructure expenses of the G2H2. This includes the basic capacity of the G2H2, of the Steering Committee, and of the Secretariat to seek additional funding for specific purposes and for the elected actions and events to be carried out by the G2H2 members, groups and sub-groups, as appropriate.

The sustainability of the G2H2 will depend on the sustainability of core financing. Ideally, core financing will come from the membership, through membership fees. Core financing complements can also be secured from donors who can ensure multi-year financing for durability and stability.

Beyond this, and in accordance with the activities selected by groups or sub-groups of the G2H2 membership, earmarked, dedicated and short-term funding can be sought at any time, and it may be feasible to include in any and all funding requests a proportion for administrative costs that can contribute to the core financing of the G2H2 itself (overheads).

Prior to adoption of the proposal itself, the Coalition of Membership will be asked to consider 1) a quadrimester budget for the months of September to December 2016; 2) a draft budget for the first operating year, 2017.

Realistically, the level of the operating costs of the G2H2 will be determined by the will and commitment of the founding members. Growth can always be anticipated, but the level at which there is a collective will to start the undertaking will largely determine its basic capacity for some time to come.

IV. Monitoring & Evaluation

The routine monitoring of the G2H2 will be ensured by its Steering Committee and by its Assembly thanks to the annual reports from the Committee, according to the modalities specified by the G2H2 Statutes.

In addition, it is important, especially in the first year(s) of its activity, to take stock of the difficulties and achievements of the G2H2 for possible reorientation, improvements, and eventually extension and growth, if deemed appropriate. Many of the G2H2 features will have to be tested and adapted as we go. For this reason, there should be a more in-depth evaluation by the G2H2 membership undertaken after one year – maximum 2 years – of functioning of the G2H2. The exact timing and the terms of reference of that evaluation will be proposed by the Steering Committee in the course of the first year of activities, and submitted to the Assembly for discussion and final decision.

Similar evaluations should be undertaken regularly once the G2H2 is well established, at a periodicity to be determined after the first evaluation.

Annex: draft statutes