

## MMI Network Strategy 2016-2020

- 1** “We will promote knowledge sharing and mutual learning between actors in international **health cooperation.**”
- 2** “We will provide autonomous, sustainable and stimulating spaces for the analysis and debate of **global health** and promote platforms for joint civil society advocacy, with a focus on the World Health Organization.”
- 3** “We will **enhance collaboration** among Network members in view of joint projects and consortia.”
- 4** “We will further invest in the Network’s **consolidation and development.**”



## INTRODUCTION

The MMI Network Strategy 2016-2020 refers to the revisited MMI Network Policy (2014) which defines both the shared vision of Network members on how to jointly contribute to achieving the Right to Health and the expected particular contribution of the MMI Network itself.

### Shared vision and individual approaches

MMI is a network of organizations working in the field of international health cooperation and global health. The MMI [Network Policy](#) adopted in 2014 frames the shared vision of the Network members of how to achieve access to health and health care as a fundamental human right (“Health for All”) as follows:

- **“Promoting universal health coverage** in a sense of universal, equitable and affordable access to quality health services (promotion, prevention, care and rehabilitation) for all people; as this is essential to the improvement of health, fighting diseases and reducing poverty.”
- **“Promoting strong national health systems** with a strong leadership by the government, strong accountability systems and a decisive role of communities and users of health services in the development, management and monitoring of health policies and services at all levels.”
- **“Promoting policies that address the social and political determinants of health,** as unfair economic arrangements and poor social programs, unhealthy living conditions, inequality and gender inequity, violence, bad politics and injustice are at the root of ill health and death.”
- **“Linking the local and national with the global level by getting involved in global health policy,** global health governance and global governance for health, as many determinants of health and health care lie outside the scope of national policies and programs.”
- **“Promoting health policies and practices that are based on evidence.”**
- **“Critically reflecting the role and contributions of international health cooperation** to universal access to health, health systems strengthening and global governance for health.”

This shared vision does not limit the scope of action of the individual Network members. As actors in the fields of international health cooperation and global health, it is up to the Network members to determine the expected outcomes of their own action and to develop the specific approaches and strategies in order to achieve them.

### Particular role and mandate of the MMI Network

The second key reference for the development of the Network strategy within the Network Policy is the definition of the Network’s particular aim and mandate. According to the Network Policy, the MMI Network promotes the efforts undertaken by its members to achieve Health for All by a set of specific contributions:

- **Enhancing communication and cooperation** among members and providing a platform for the development of joint activities, and thematic working groups and consortia;
- **Providing a platform for joint advocacy at a global level,** with a focus on the World Health Organization and in close cooperation with other networks and campaigns promoting Health for All;
- **Fostering an evidence based approach** in the members’ institutional cultures and programs and promoting collaboration between the Network members and research institutions;
- **Fostering the visibility of the Network members and their activities** by publishing their news, reports, statements, events and other contributions.

It is important to note that, with the exception of joint global advocacy, the outcomes of the MMI Network’s activities are mainly expected to be achieved at the level of the members and not directly at a structural or even population level: The Network provides input into the development of the member’s strategies and activities which then lead/contribute to the expected outcome at structural level. This is shown in the [figure on page 9](#) which provides an overall illustration of the MMI Network Strategy 2016-20 and how it links with the Network Policy.

## NETWORK STRATEGY 2016-2020: FOUR INTERRELATED FIELDS OF WORK

**The Strategy 2016-2020 explains how the MMI Network shall pursue the shared vision of its members and carry out its operational mission during the five years ahead. The strategy defines four interrelated fields of work.**

1. MMI will promote knowledge sharing and mutual learning between actors in international **health cooperation**.
2. MMI will provide autonomous, sustainable and stimulating spaces for the analysis and debate of **global health** and promote platforms for joint civil society advocacy, with a focus on the World Health Organization.
3. MMI will **enhance collaboration** among Network members in view of joint projects and consortia.
4. MMI will further invest in the Network's **consolidation and development**.

The two “technical” fields of work (international health cooperation and global health) build on key strengths of MMI: its character as an open, inclusive network and its track record of the last strategic period.

With its explicit focus on enhancing collaboration among members and on the consolidation and further development of the MMI Network, the strategy underlines the fact that the Network members are the key assets of MMI and that the Network's success depends on the combined strength of its members.

The shared overall approach on the promotion of Health for All, combined with professionalism and dedication and the aim for linking practice with evidence, remain the binding elements in the MMI Network and in the contributions to the members' work.

Whereas the strategy 2016-20 clearly determines these four fields of work and sets particular objectives to be achieved by the end of 2020, the definition of specific activities remains more open and the current strategy document only gives some first indications - which makes sense in such a dynamic field as international health cooperation and global health policy and also for a members driven network as MMI.



# 1 "We will promote knowledge sharing and mutual learning between actors in international health cooperation."

We use the term "health cooperation" in the sense of organizations providing direct health care or support to partner organizations or health sector development. Traditionally most of the members of the MMI Network are rooted in development cooperation for health, health aid, humanitarian assistance or technical cooperation – fields of activities that have, such as the terms to describe them, considerably developed over time. Cooperation for health has moved beyond aid and hence cooperation with other actors has become more relevant and necessary.

The previous MMI Network strategy (2010-15) explicitly focused on contributing to health system strengthening as common denominator for Network activities. The current strategy further specifies this approach, asking **how international cooperation itself can best contribute to strengthening health systems and policies**, and how to avoid weakening them.

In the arena of international health, there are already a great number of thematic communities. However, **there is still a lack of platforms where actors in health cooperation can critically reflect their own practices and approaches**, share information and experiences, learn from each other and have an opportunity to further develop their institutional and personal skills and practices.

This is where the MMI Network will invest into the development of further services. **The focus will be on policies and instruments for international health cooperation.**

The range of topics includes:

- Overall approaches and policies (e.g. results based financing)
- Universalism of policies and programs vs. differentiation and adaptation to the national and cultural context
- Accountability and governance of international cooperation
- Role and responsibility of international organizations in a national health system
- Methods and instruments (e.g. evidence based work, open data, etc.)

**OBJECTIVE 1: By the end of 2020, Network members will be able to build on a range of platforms and instruments for knowledge sharing and mutual learning in the field of international health cooperation.**

## ACTIVITIES:

**ACTIVITY 1.1:** MMI will establish a high-profile technical symposium on health cooperation.

In addition to the NGOs working in the field of international health, the planned annual or at least biennial symposium shall attract actors such as bilateral agencies, implementing organizations, academia, policy makers and funding bodies. The symposium co-organized with interested institutional partners within and outside the MMI Network shall link sharing of good practices with dialogues relevant for policy.

**ACTIVITY 1.2:** MMI will continue to promote members' events.

MMI will enhance and further develop the current model of labelling and promoting particular members' events as "MMI Network meetings". MMI will promote these events within and beyond the Network.

**ACTIVITY 1.3:** MMI will foster a more structured involvement of the Network and its members in global events and thematic platforms.

MMI will promote and coordinate joint contributions of Network members to already existing conferences relevant for international health cooperation.

MMI will support a more structured involvement of the Network in relevant thematic platforms. Key topics will be identified by members who take the lead.

**ACTIVITY 1.4:** MMI will foster the dialogue between research institutions and actors in international health cooperation.

MMI will continue to create and use opportunities for an interdisciplinary dialogue between research institutions and NGOs/actors in international health cooperation at all levels: events, publications, columns, newsletter editorials, etc. For this purpose, MMI will further strengthen its institutional relations with international research platforms.

MMI will continue to collect and publish resources on linking NGO practice and research.

In its communication channels, MMI will provide a dedicated space for publications (including "grey literature") of Network members' approaches, practices and resources related to evidence based work.

# 2 “We will provide autonomous, sustainable and stimulating spaces for the analysis and debate of global health and promote platforms for joint civil society advocacy, with a focus on the World Health Organization.”

With “global health”, we herewith refer to the health of populations in a global context. Global health has been defined as “the area of study, research and practice that places a priority on improving health and achieving equity in health for all people worldwide”. Focusing on problems that transcend national borders or have a global political and economic origin or impact, global health is about worldwide health improvement, reduction of disparities and protection against global threats that disregard national borders.

“Getting involved in global health” was one of the objectives of MMI in the last strategic period. And, in fact, over the past five years, **the MMI Network has successfully got involved in debates on global health policy and governance** and can now be considered as a valuable, respected and well known voice of civil society at the World Health Organization, also benefitting of its status as “NGO in official relations with WHO” and its long history of collaboration with WHO.

Related to this, **MMI has developed a reputation as a dedicated and unbiased networker and convener for WHO related right-based civil society advocacy**. In this context, MMI has established good working relations with international social justice movements, networks and coalitions promoting Health for All.

**Therefore it makes sense to further invest in both roles of MMI** – providing direct input to health policy debates at the WHO and other global health platforms and being a dedicated networker and **convener**.

Global advocacy by the MMI Network shall continue to cover key issues of global health policy and governance such as:

- health related global regulation and health policy development;
- access to health as a human right / global common;
- health equity;
- social, political and economic determinants of health and health policies;
- global governance for health and policy coherence for health in relation to other urgent themes such as trade, macro-economic policies and labour migration;

- Strengthening WHO and protecting its regulatory work from undue influence.

**OBJECTIVE 2:** By the end of 2020 the MMI Network will have contributed to strengthening and protecting the World Health Organization as key institution of global health governance, to better integrating the voice of civil society in WHO policy making processes, and to creating strong civil society platforms on global health issues related to the WHO and beyond.

#### **ACTIVITIES:**

**ACTIVITY 2.1:** MMI will be a strong voice of civil society at the World Health Organization, its meetings and processes.

MMI will further enhance its WHO related advocacy developed over the last strategic period. The Network’s engagement will continue aiming at strengthening and protecting the regulatory, policy making and normative role of the WHO.

In “multi-stakeholder” platforms that deal with global norms and regulation, policies and strategies such as the Global Health Workforce Alliance or the NCD Coordination Mechanism, MMI will continue to act as a critical civil society voice.

**ACTIVITY 2.2:** MMI will foster cooperation among civil society organizations involved in global health.

MMI will further develop its profile as a reliable and effective networker and convener, fostering systematic sharing, strategizing and alliance building among those civil society institutions and representatives that are strongly involved in WHO related advocacy, participate in the governing body meetings of the World Health Organization and aim at defending and strengthening the regulatory, policy making and normative role of WHO.

In order to play this role effectively, MMI will continue to cooperate with other global and regional civil society networks and platforms promoting Health for All and will participate, when adequate and feasible, in joint activities related to WHO processes and beyond.

# 3 “We will enhance collaboration among Network members in view of joint projects and consortia.”

The MMI Network has been playing a considerable role in providing spaces and opportunities where actors in international health cooperation present their work and jointly develop projects. There have been a number of successful collaboration projects and consortia based on informal or event related contacts among Network members and partners. With its thematic events and other spaces for interaction such as the newsletter and website, the Network provides a breeding space for decentralized matchmaking and cooperation among members.

MMI intends to strengthen this role both as a formal broker and as an informal space for collaboration by creating more opportunities (such as events), attracting more potentially interesting partners into the Network (see below), and providing particular services in this field.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** By the end of 2020, Network members will be better able to use the MMI Network for matchmaking and collaboration in view of joint projects and consortia in the field of international health cooperation and global health advocacy.

## **ACTIVITIES:**

**ACTIVITY 3.1:** MMI will provide Network members with tools for sharing information and presenting their work, and for better communicating and interacting among themselves.

The set of communication tools including the already established MMI ePlatform (news, events, papers, resources, annual reports) and the monthly MMI newsletter will be further developed and extended.

**ACTIVITY 3.2:** MMI will explore new instruments for improved matchmaking between Network members aiming at increased cooperation.

The current MMI ePlatform provides a simple “who works where” tool based on the lists of projects published on the members’ websites and annually analysed by the MMI secretariat. Based on a sound feasibility check, this tool will be further elaborated.

**ACTIVITY 3.3:** MMI will promote joint health cooperation projects and consortia.

The MMI secretariat will join existing online networks and tender platforms, screen opportunities and publish opportunities for joint projects (international donors, EU) and forward funding calls to Network members and encourage them to set up consortia.



# 4 “We will further invest in the Network’s consolidation and development.”

The further development of the Network and its membership and structures are considered an integrated and important part of the strategy – which needs to be a growth strategy.

The MMI Network continues to rely on a small core structure with a dedicated Board and a professional secretariat, both capable and flexible enough to cope with the demand of the Network members and to take up new opportunities. At the same time MMI promotes decentralised ownership and investment by all members in Network activities.

The functioning of the Network is described in detail in the MMI Network Policy revisited in 2014.

The Network members are the key assets of MMI, and the Network’s success depends on the combined strength of its members. On the other hand, the Network also needs a critical size to attain the strategic tasks and to remain financially and structurally sustainable. This size is not yet achieved.

In the past, MMI Network membership was restricted to NGOs. With the new Network policy adopted in 2014, the Network opened up for all institutions working in the field of international health cooperation and/or global health, sharing the members’ vision of Health for All and supporting the mandate of the Network.

**OBJECTIVE 4: By the end of 2020, the number of Network members has substantially increased, and MMI has achieved financial and structural sustainability.**

## **ACTIVITIES:**

**ACTIVITY 4.1:** MMI will promote ownership and investment in the Network and its activities by all members.

According to the organizational requirements and the involvement of particular Network members,

additional management capacities and infrastructures will be created at the peripheral or central level of the Network.

At a central level, MMI aims at having a fully equipped and highly competent secretariat and a core financing which allows not only covering the secretariat overheads, but also the full range of activities outlined in the strategy.

**ACTIVITY 4.2:** MMI will promote its main fields of work.

MMI will rearrange its profile, services and communication channels alongside its main strategic fields of work. Members interested in one of these fields are provided with more tailored content and opportunities for collaboration.

**ACTIVITY 4.3:** Implementing the revised Network Policy, MMI will promote membership of organisations and networks among and beyond international NGOs.

MMI will promote membership among organizations whose quality and inputs (financial and activity related) substantially contribute to strengthening the Network and its key activities, mainly:

- NGOs working on international health issues with a track record in evidence based work;
- NGOs working on international health issues with a track record in advocacy at a global level;
- Research institutes working in the fields of international/global health, public health and health systems;
- National platforms for international health cooperation and global health;
- Global or regional thematic networks in key areas of global health policy.

In order to create incentives for joining the Network, MMI will continue to limit certain activities and offers to Network members.

## STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the Network Strategy 2016-20 and the particular activities will depend on sound planning, including the analysis of demand and feasibility, but is also interrelated with the development of the Network and its environment.

The strategy will be complemented by a monitoring tool and by instruments for annual planning and reporting, in order to translate the overall ambitions into feasible steps.

We are confident that the current strategy and the first steps of its implementation will confirm the relevance and potential of the MMI Network as a dynamic community of change.

*MMI Network Strategy 2016-2020  
Adopted by the Annual Assembly, 23 May 2015*

# MAIN ELEMENTS OF MMI NETWORK POLICY (2014) AND STRATEGY 2016-2020

