

NGO Sustainability

STRENGTHENING A HEALTH ORGANIZATION SO
IT CAN GROW, EXPAND, AND SERVE THE PUBLIC
HEALTH NEEDS OF ITS COMMUNITY.



COMMERCIAL MARKET STRATEGIES
NEW DIRECTIONS IN REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH





What is NGO sustainability?

At Commercial Market Strategies (CMS) sustainability is defined as an organization's ability to:

- ¥ Improve institutional capacity to continue its activities among target populations over an extended period of time;
- ¥ Maximize impact by providing quality services and products;
- ¥ Minimize financial vulnerability; and
- ¥ Develop diversified sources of institutional and financial support.

In other words, sustainability consists of an NGO's ability define a relevant *mission*, follow sound *management* practices and to develop diversified sources of income that assure continuity of *quality* activities and services and coverage of target populations.

Why is sustainability important?

Around the world, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) make an invaluable contribution to the delivery of high-quality affordable reproductive health and family planning products and services. NGOs take the lead in developing information, education and communication programs that encourage healthy behavior and are often a driving force behind service delivery as well. Additionally, many NGOs have the organizational flexibility to make changes to meet the health needs of a community.

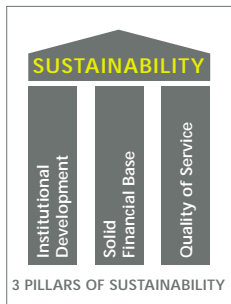
As donor funding diminishes, and as public health programs begin to contract services to NGOs, the need for financial independence, sound management and quality control is more important than ever. NGOs must be able to operate efficiently over time and they must function in an autonomous manner. A successful and sustainable NGO has a flexible and responsive organizational structure, an independent board of directors, and a motivated, qualified and properly paid staff.

What can CMS sustainability activities achieve?

By keeping NGOs viable over the long term, the communities they serve will reap the benefits of consistent, affordable high-quality products and services. As an NGO moves closer to a greater degree of self-sustainability, this independence allows the NGO to master its own fate. It can provide

services and products that international donors cannot. Strong NGOs become important members of their communities and contribute to a richer civil society.

What Can CMS Do in NGO Sustainability?



There are three pillars of sustainability as defined by CMS. The first pillar is *institutional development*; improving the way an NGO functions and is managed, especially in response to change, the second pillar is a *solid financial base* and the third pillar is the ability to *deliver quality services or products*. At CMS, we take a holistic approach toward sustainability – working toward a coordinated and balanced development of all three pillars.

- CMS can assist NGOs by conducting an internal and external **needs assessment**. Assessments look at the internal structure of the NGO as well as outside factors such as competition, policy environment and the government. An in-depth analysis of both factors helps in the development of a sustainability strategy.
- Through workshops, CMS can help NGOs learn to write **effective business plans**. An NGO may then use its business plan as a tool for taking advantage of bank and donor financing opportunities as well as other types of outside support like strategic alliances and customer and distributor relationships.
- CMS can assist NGOs in defining a **mission, vision and strategy** that articulates who they are and where they are going. A clear mission statement clarifies an NGO's purpose to the outside world and provides direction to the organization.
- CMS assists NGOs in developing a **SWOT** (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis. This exercise helps an NGO understand its capacities and weaknesses.
- To contribute to an NGO's **institutional development**, CMS provides assistance designing job descriptions, staffing plans, performance and management assessments, and policies and procedures.
- For those NGOs engaged in social marketing, CMS assists in developing strategic **marketing plans**. Marketing plans incorporate research, market analysis, market segmentation, marketing mix, brand positioning, communication, and monitoring and evaluation.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC:

The CMS program in the Dominican Republic provides assistance to ADOPLAFAM, INSALUD, MUDE and PROFAMILIA; four national NGOs. CMS provides on-going technical assistance to these NGOs on sound management practices, strategic business planning, diversification of funding sources, and overall financial management.

SENEGAL:

The CMS partner in Senegal is ADEMAS (an acronym from the French for Senegalese Association for the Development of Social Marketing). In order for ADEMAS to run efficiently and continue its dynamic social marketing programs, CMS conducted a two-week hands-on training program with their financial officers. Basic spread sheet analysis and accounting practices were incorporated into their standard operating procedures as a result of this assistance.



The ADEMAS office in Senegal

Commercial Market Strategies (CMS) is a USAID-funded project that aims to increase access to and demand for reproductive health and family planning in developing countries through the private sector.

- CMS provides technical assistance to NGOs in **financial and managerial accounting**.
- CMS provides assistance on writing effective **feasibility plans**. These plans help NGOs determine the viability of new business ventures.
- The **board of directors** is critical to an NGO's success or failure. CMS provides specific technical expertise in this area and helps organizations determine the exact responsibilities of the board, its officers and the CEO.

Contact CMS

Contact CMS to explore how our reproductive health and private sector expertise can increase the health impact of your current programs. Visit our web site, www.cmsproject.com, for more information about the project, our current country programs and CMS research publications (available for download).



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IPPF – ARAB WORLD REGION:

CMS was asked by International Planned Parenthood Federation to conduct an NGO sustainability workshop for their Arab World Region affiliates. This one-week workshop was conducted in March of 2001 in Tunisia. There were representatives for 14 different Arab World IPPF offices. These participants were either financial officers or CEOs. The workshop was interactive and during the week all the participants developed a business plan for their organizations, presented it to the group and finalized it before they left. Many of these plans have already been approved and are being implemented.



Representatives from the Sudan Family Planning Association at the NGO Sustainability workshop in Tunisia. Ahmed Youssef (left), Senior Program Advisor, and Rabai Abdulkader, Executive Director.