

## LEARNING BRIEF 2

# Civil Society, Government and Private Sector Participation in Response to COVID-19

Since 2022, VillageReach, the Ministry of Health and other stakeholders have worked on Learning Brief 2 (LB2) on the theme of “Systematization of the Participation of Civil Society, Other Sectors of Government and the Private Sector in the Response to COVID-19.” This two-page summary presents the key findings of LB2.

The brief highlights aspects of coordination, articulation, mobilization, financing, assistance and mitigation by civil society. It recognizes that civil society and the private sector are complex concepts that must be understood in the context of their relationships with government, the market and society more broadly.

## Key Findings

### Civil Society

- Civil society organizations (CSOs) have played some role in supporting public institutions such as the Ministry of Health (MISAU) in mitigating the effects of COVID-19.
- CSOs have used a variety of media, including television, radio and digital media, to expand their reach and impact. However, most of these activities have been concentrated in urban areas.
- CSOs have been limited in their ability to take action due to a lack of financial resources. They often rely on external donors, which can be a slow and bureaucratic process.
- The lack of coordination and, in some cases, conflicting interests among CSOs has also been a challenge. This has led to duplication of efforts and a lack of focus.

### Private Sector

- The private sector has played a greater role in COVID-19 response. They have donated goods and services, such as vaccines and personal protective equipment (PPE).
- The private sector has also been involved in the deployment of new technologies to combat the virus.
- However, the private sector has also been affected by the pandemic. Many businesses have been forced to close or reduce their operations.
- There is a need for greater collaboration between the private sector and government to ensure a coordinated and effective response to future health emergencies.

# 80%

of relief funding went to Maputo, with only 20% spent outside of the capital

## Conclusions

The findings of LB2 highlight the importance of civil society and the private sector in the response to public health emergencies. These sectors can play a vital role in providing support to public institutions, mitigating the effects of the crisis and developing new solutions.

The private sector played a significant role in reducing the damage caused by COVID-19, both through visible and non-visible actions. Their support alleviated the costs incurred by the public sector in providing essential inputs, and a large part of the population benefited from donations made by the private sector through MISAU and its partners.

However, there are a number of challenges that need to be addressed in order to ensure that these sectors can play their full potential. These challenges include:

- **Civil society:** Civil society has historically been an important arm of aid to public health actions, and this was again evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. CSOs contributed to the provision of goods and services aimed at protecting against the pandemic, as well as the creation of mechanisms to monitor the use of resources allocated by the different actors in the prevention and combat of the disease. However, their actions were concentrated in the city of Maputo and there was duplication of efforts at times.
- **Private sector:** A considerable challenge is to seek fiscal benefit for the sector even during an emergency situation. While companies suffered the economic impact of the pandemic, they were also called upon to contribute to the supply of medical supplies, as well as virus containment. Despite a strong mobilization in the early days of the pandemic, there has been discontinuity in the initiatives previously agreed upon by the various actors as the economic situation worsened.

By working together, we can create resilient communities that are better prepared to respond to emergency situations

## Recommendations



Actions carried out by the different actors must serve to promote public health and support MISAU in pursuing its mission. This can only be done if there is better and broader coordination of actions, especially where resources are scarce.



There is also a need to reduce the duplication of efforts, as it is important to improve communication and coordination mechanisms between the various actors and sectors.



Finally, there is a need for an in-depth discussion on how to ensure that the actions taken are coordinated, sustainable, structured, and replicable over time, in the event of the emergence of new health emergencies.

The findings of LB2 provide valuable insights into the role of civil society and the private sector in the response to public health emergencies. Looking to the future, we envision a more coordinated and collaborative response to public health emergencies. This will require greater involvement of community-based health structures, civil society and the private sector in planning, monitoring and evaluation of interventions.

To read the full Learning Brief 2, click here: [Portuguese](#) [English](#)

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