

The Motion Tracker Approach: Building Coalitions to Drive Change, Strengthen Accountability and Achieve Commitments

Background Information

In 2012, the London Summit on Family Planning brought together national governments, international organizations, civil society, the private sector and donors from around the world with the goal of ensuring 120 million additional women and girls had access to modern contraceptive methods by 2020. This global initiative, known as Family Planning 2020 (FP2020), called on governments to develop national FP2020 commitments that would expand access to available, acceptable, affordable and sustainable family planning (FP) services. The achievement of these commitments required coordinated action by government agencies, civil society, community leaders and other partners from the local to national levels, as well as strong mechanisms for tracking progress and holding commitment-makers accountable.

However, by 2014, there was no clear indication of progress from commitment-making countries. An overall lack of multisectoral stakeholder structures led to conflicting understandings of commitments and limited engagement among civil society organizations (CSOs), development partners and governments. In this disjointed context, FP2020 focal points in each country produced reports for the FP2020 Secretariat without receiving input from CSOs. As a result, these reports focused solely on outcomes without acknowledging the process of achieving commitments.

In 2014, Samasha Medical Foundation developed a proprietary, participatory and innovative approach to building coalitions of government, civil society and other stakeholders to advance progress on government commitments. This approach, called the Motion Tracker, quickly gained traction and was later adopted for use in Ethiopia, Indonesia, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia and the Ouagadougou Partnership countries, where it strengthened the countries' FP2020 commitments, increased multisectoral partner engagement, identified government funding gaps, directed advocacy efforts and increased media coverage. As the decade closed with significant progress made toward achieving FP2020 commitments — including 60 million additional women and girls who gained access to contraceptives since 2012 — the global partnership renewed its commitment with the launch of Family Planning 2030 (FP2030), emphasizing the importance of collaborative partnerships, advocacy, accountability and tracking progress.¹ The Motion Tracker has since been used across 16 different countries to track FP commitments, and new countries continue to adopt it as a mechanism for driving progress on FP2030. In 2022, the Motion Tracker was updated to incorporate the innovative ways partners implemented it in different country contexts, resulting in the Motion Tracker Approach (MTA).

¹ Family Planning 2020. (2021). The Arc of Progress. <http://progress.familyplanning2020.org/arc-of-progress#timeline>

What Is the MTA?

The MTA is a civil society-led approach for strengthening accountability and driving action at every step of the process from commitment formation to achievement. It uses purposeful and sustained stakeholder engagement to ensure a universal understanding of commitments, coordinate stakeholder actions, foster partner participation across multiple sectors, track progress on commitments and raise public awareness. In each country, a local CSO serves as the convener and is responsible for leading the implementation of the MTA, while continuously building and strengthening the coalition of government and civil society stakeholders.

The MTA's Six Steps

If the government has not launched commitments

1. Development and launch of commitments

The convener works with the government, civil society partners and experts to develop specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timebound (SMART) commitments that will achieve the proposed goals. The convener then classifies each commitment as implicit, if it is broad, or explicit, if it is clear and actionable.

The convener then supports the government's public launch of the commitments, including providing input in the planning process, conducting media engagement and participating in the launch event.

If the government has already launched commitments

1. Identification of commitments

The convener works with government and civil society partners to identify the commitments and classify each one as implicit or explicit.

2. Deconstruction of commitments

The convener brings together government, civil society partners and other stakeholders involved in the development of the commitments to remove ambiguity and identify specific strategies for each commitment. The group then categorizes each commitment according to the World Health Organization health system building blocks to allow stakeholders to easily identify which commitments are linked to their area of work.

3. Development of process indicators

The convener works with government, civil society partners and other stakeholders to develop process indicators for tracking progress for each strategy identified in step 2, providing insight into the process of achieving commitments.

4. Validation meeting and stakeholder mapping

The convener gathers all stakeholders involved in achieving the commitments to present the results of steps 1-3 and ensure consensus on both the commitments and the road map for achieving them. As part of the validation meeting, the convener

develops a partner matrix indicating how each stakeholder contributes to achieving the process indicators developed in step 3.

5. Media training and engagement

The convener works with the government to conduct a training workshop for journalists to improve their understanding of the commitments and the MTA. The training also focuses on building strong relationships between the government and the media to improve transparency and reporting on government activities and progress. Following the media training, the journalists continue to engage with the government and use their reporting to raise public awareness of the commitments and progress made toward achieving them.

6. Tracking progress and accountability

The convener works with partners to regularly collect data on process indicators, which are validated and disseminated through semiannual stakeholder meetings and published on the country page on the MTA website.² The convener uses the data and other information gathered from partner engagements — as well as data from independent data collection tools (e.g., Track20, Performance Monitoring for Action (PMA) and scorecards) — to track progress on the commitments and identify successes and challenges. The convener then conducts targeted engagement with the government, CSOs and other stakeholders in the partner matrix to celebrate successes and address challenges in achieving the process indicators.

What Sets the MTA Apart?

The MTA distinguishes itself from progress measurement tools like PMA, Track20 and Demographic Health Surveys by employing a holistic approach to achieving development goals that encompasses accountability, advocacy, coalition building, coordination and data collection. While other approaches rely on quantitative methodologies for collecting data on end results, the MTA incorporates these data while also collecting data on the progress of key activities leading to improved FP outcomes. In doing so, the MTA provides crucial insight into the process of achieving commitments. In addition to organizing and initiating action, the MTA's ability to continuously monitor progress on activities enables it to serve as a mechanism for course-correcting when challenges emerge. The MTA ensures that progress toward commitments is highly visible and fosters transparency and clear communication among all stakeholders by aligning goals and clarifying responsibilities. The MTA also maintains local ownership while driving action at the subnational, national, regional or global levels, making it extremely adaptable for a wide variety of contexts.

² The Motion Tracker. (2022). Countries. <https://www.motiontracker.org/countries>