

The Power of Partnership: Uniting for women, children and adolescents

Partners' Forum 2018: Report



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Partners' Forum 2018 (PF2018) was convened by the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health (PMNCH) and the Government of India in New Delhi on 12-13 December 2018. Among the 1,600 participants were heads of country delegations, ministers, parliamentarians and over 400 young people.

The objective of PF2018 was to achieve greater consensus and alignment among PMNCH's 1,000+ partners on priorities, strategies and technical approaches to accelerate implementation of the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health and progress towards universal health coverage and the Sustainable Development Goals.

PF2018 focused on improving multisectoral action for results, sharing country solutions, and capturing best practices and knowledge within both health and related sectors. It also emphasized the importance of people-centred accountability, bringing forward the voices and lived realities of women, children and adolescents through innovative programming and creative projects.

Highlights of PF2018

Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India, delivered the opening address to a standing-room-only audience. The opening ceremony used film, music and animation to highlight the voices of women and girls, a theme which continued throughout the two-day event.

From facilitating knowledge exchange to galvanizing political momentum and trending on Twitter, the highlights of PF2018 are presented in the infographics on the following pages.

Post-conference survey findings

In March 2019, IngeniousPeoplesKnowledge (I-P-K) conducted a survey for PMNCH to elicit feedback from participants on PF2018's programme, content and logistics. The survey was emailed to 1,600 participants and the response rate was 9%.

Three results stand out. First, when asked to describe their experience at the Forum in two words, the three most commonly expressed sentiments were "excellent", "learning" and "partnership". Second, 69% of respondents reported that PF2018 had a positive impact on their work practice, and over half (56%) reported making new contacts and forging potential collaborations as the key change. For an event intended to foster multisectoral action for results, this widening of networks and partnerships can be counted as a success. Third, the survey found high approval rates with the organization of the Forum, with a high of 94% (for the accommodation) to a low of 69% (for availability of materials and the registration process).



UNITED CONSTITUENCY GROUPS AND PARTNERS

Global champions

33
heads of country
delegations

23
parliamentarians

22
ministers

400
young people with
50 youth and adolescent
scholarships granted



SOCIAL MEDIA

5,000
unique
participants

18.7 K
Total
mentions

Total
engagements

36.6 K

Total
impressions

464.4 M

#EWECisME

was trending on Twitter on day 1 of the Forum



LAUNCH OF SIX PUBLICATIONS



Making multisectoral
collaboration work: *The BMJ*
with 12 "Success Factors"
country case studies



India's Strategy for
Women's, Children's and
Adolescents' Health
(I-Wach) 2018-2030



Proven Paths for Women's,
Children's and Adolescents' Health:
Compendium of best practices on
India's RMNCAH initiatives



Guidelines for
Midwifery Services
in India



Advocating for change for adolescents!
A Practical Toolkit for Young People to
Advocate for Improved Adolescent
Health and Well-Being



Implementation
Guidelines for the Global
Strategy in Latin America
and the Caribbean

SHOWCASED THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP



Narendra Modi
Prime Minister of India

"It is only partnerships that will get us to our goals; partnerships between citizens, partnerships between communities, partnerships between countries. Countries have moved beyond stand-alone efforts. They are committed to empowering communities, improving health and education, ending poverty, boosting economic growth, and ultimately, leaving no one behind."



António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations

"We can see the advances being made possible through partnerships. Countries are empowering women and girls and investing in their health, civil society is engaged, health-care workers are promoting quality and dignity in services, and donors are insisting on innovation and collaboration. Now we need to build on this progress with new cross-sectoral approaches."



Michelle Bachelet
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

"The Partners' Forum highlights the work of many partners, showing us a pathway to greater creativity, effectiveness and transparency. It is our responsibility and obligation to take these lessons to heart, to reinvigorate our commitment to partnership as a global goal; above all, because partnership across individuals, communities, agencies, sectors and countries is the secret ingredient to the achievement of all development goals."



Jane Ruth Aceng
Minister of Health, Uganda

"The Partners' Forum is an extremely important forum. It gives us an opportunity to come together as partners that are committed to reducing maternal mortality and morbidity; as well as addressing child and adolescent health and ensuring that the entire globe moves in tandem with the targets we have set to ensure a healthy population."

Helga Fogstad
Executive Director, Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health

"We have come together because of a common vision to demonstrate the power of partnership. As the world's largest multistakeholder alliance for women's, children's and adolescents' health and well-being, PMNCH has the strength of our 1,000 members, with the zeal, the will, and the capacity to change the world and achieve global health equity."

Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Director-General of the World Health Organization

"As a former co-chair and current member of the Partnership I have seen first-hand the value of working together. Together we are more than the sum of our parts. We all have a role to play in ensuring that all women and children receive the health services they need when and where they need them. Today I call on all of you to harness the power of partnership for a healthier, safer and fairer world."

Kim Simplis Barrow
First Lady of Belize and Special Envoy for Women and Children

"I urge all of us to heed the call to action, and stand on behalf of our sisters and their children. We must raise our voices and use our influence to advocate and ensure that every woman, every adolescent and every child can live a healthy and dignified life."



GALVANIZED POLITICAL MOMENTUM

Parliamentarian and Ministerial Conclaves

28

ministers and other government
representatives met to pledge
new or updated commitments to
the Global Strategy

23

members of parliament from
15 countries shared best practices and
pledged to be champions for women's,
children's and adolescents' health

19

countries made
commitments

Indian Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**
pledged **US\$ 100 billion** by 2025 for
health services

World Vision International pledged
US\$ 7 billion for women's,
children's and adolescents' health

Laerdal Medical Foundation pledged
an additional **US\$ 65 million**
to Every Woman Every Child

19 additional commitments were received
which will be followed, quantified and
registered on the Every Woman Every Child
website at everywomaneverychild.org



MEDIA COVERAGE

30

sponsored young
journalists from
around the world

100

Almost

interviews
conducted

85

published
stories in
20 countries



FACILITATED KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

Programme

6

official
pre-Forum events

6

plenaries

24

concurrent
sessions

195+

speakers &
moderators

Recommendations for the next Partners' Forum

- 1. Provide even more opportunities for networking and advocacy:** Survey respondents found professional networking, advocacy and interaction with policy-makers among the most valuable benefits of the conference. This aspect of the Forum should be repeated and enhanced.
- 2. Continue to frame content around knowledge products:** The *BMJ* series of 12 country case studies on multisectoral collaboration featured prominently at PF2018. Framing the next Forum similarly around a substantial technical body of work will bring new knowledge and innovative approaches, stimulate dialogue and build interest among partners.
- 3. Foster increased learning by including more interactive sessions:** Fewer presentations, fewer speakers per session and alternative formats should be considered to promote knowledge sharing, participation and dialogue.
- 4. Harness technology:** PMNCH needs to assess how best to use information technology in order to increase participation and engagement.
- 5. Make more content available online:** The opening and closing ceremonies and the four plenary sessions were broadcast live on the PF2018 website. Future concurrent sessions could also be recorded, and presentations, session summaries and advocacy materials made available online.
- 6. Expand the reach of the Virtual Forum:** The Virtual Forum should be strengthened to maximize outreach and engagement.
- 7. Ensure a clear division of roles and responsibilities among organizing partners:** A successful Forum depends on clarifying roles and responsibilities from the beginning and on all parties honouring their commitments.
- 8. Start planning early:** Survey respondents' high level of satisfaction with the logistics of PF2018 was largely due to meticulous planning, which began in September 2017. For the next Forum it is essential to work with a competent conference management company that can ensure a sufficient number of well-trained staff on site.
- 9. Choose an appropriate venue:** Reliable Wi-Fi service is vital for the next Partners' Forum; the venue must also have a plenary hall with sufficient seating for all participants and smaller rooms with flexible seating to facilitate participatory sessions and networking.
- 10. Improve the post-Forum evaluation process.** Circulating the survey immediately after the next Forum may increase the response rate; a separate survey for Virtual Forum users is needed to assess their experience; and an assessment of media uptake and interviews with a cross-section of participants would also be valuable.



1. INTRODUCTION

The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH) holds a Partners' Forum every 3-4 years. All member organizations are invited to participate in the Forum.

The Partners' Forum:

- consolidates and increases members' commitments to the Partnership's objectives and maintains and reinforces high-level political commitment;
- fosters active exchange of information and experience which enriches plans and activities;
- enables advocacy, communications activities and social mobilization at national and global levels; and
- disseminates good practice and experience.

The fourth Partners' Forum (PF2018) was convened by PMNCH and the Government of India in New Delhi on 12-13 December 2018. It brought together 1,600 participants from 85 countries with one common goal: to harness the power of partnership to deliver on commitments to improve the health and well-being of women, children and adolescents everywhere. Among the participants were 33 heads of country delegations, 22 ministers, 23 parliamentarians and over 400 young people.

The objective of PF2018 was to achieve greater consensus and alignment among PMNCH's 1,000+ partners on priorities, strategies and technical approaches to accelerate implementation of the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (Global Strategy) and progress towards universal health coverage (UHC) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

PF2018 focused on improving multisectoral action for results, sharing country solutions and capturing best practices and knowledge within both health and related sectors. It also emphasized the importance of people-centred accountability, bringing forward the voices and lived realities of women, children and adolescents through innovative programming and creative projects.

This report presents highlights from PF2018, summarizes findings from a post-conference survey, and sets out recommendations for the next Forum.

2. FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister of India, delivered the opening address to a standing-room-only audience. The opening ceremony used film, music and animation to highlight the voices of women and girls, a theme which continued throughout the two-day event.

Prime Minister Modi and other high-level politicians and heads of agencies emphasized the importance of partnership in achieving shared goals (see Box 1 for examples of statements made either in person or by video).

Programme

The programme comprised four plenary sessions, 24 concurrent sessions and six official pre-Forum side events, and involved 195 speakers and moderators. It was shaped around the common deliverables specified in the Every Woman Every Child Partners' Results Framework, including those relating to the cross-cutting themes of the Survive-Thrive-Transform agenda and the six priority focus areas:

- Early Childhood Development
- Adolescent Health and Well-Being
- Quality, Equity and Dignity in Services
- Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
- Empowerment of Women, Girls and Communities
- Humanitarian and Fragile Settings.

The Programme Committee ensured that the programme encompassed the broader agenda set by the Global Strategy, as well as being fresh, innovative, forward-looking and action-oriented.

The themes of the plenary sessions were:

Political leadership in uncertain times.

The first plenary session brought together high-level leaders and highlighted the proposition that committed political leadership is necessary for progress, especially in the face of challenges such as conflict and climate change.

BOX 1. Showcasing the power of partnership

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister of India

"It is only partnerships that will get us to our goals; partnerships between citizens, partnerships between communities, partnerships between countries. Countries have moved beyond stand-alone efforts. They are committed to empowering communities, improving health and education, ending poverty, boosting economic growth, and ultimately, leaving no one behind."

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"The Partners' Forum is an extremely important forum. It gives us an opportunity to come together as partners that are committed to reducing maternal mortality and morbidity; as well as addressing child and adolescent health and ensuring that the entire globe moves in tandem with the targets we have set to ensure a healthy population."

Best practices in multisectoral action. This plenary session focused on a key theme of the Forum: that better integration of action across multiple sectors is key to unlocking progress so that every woman, child and adolescent can survive, thrive and transform their communities and our planet.

Accountability. This session concerned the evolving paradigm of accountability for women's, children's and adolescents' health (WCAH). It addressed strengthening health information systems, people-centred accountability initiatives and emerging best practices of review and remedy through national human rights mechanisms and parliaments.

Power of partnerships. The final plenary session brought the various threads and themes together, focusing on partnerships as accelerators of action.

Each plenary session was followed by six concurrent sessions, exploring in greater depth the issues raised in the plenary.

In collaboration with more than 50 partners, two full-day side events and four half-day events were held on 10-11 December 2018. Topics included: India's Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health + Adolescents (RMNCH+A) programme; self-care health interventions for young people; multisectoral partnerships for child health; early childhood development; quality, equity and dignity in health services; and using data on inequalities in WCAH.

Ministerial and parliamentary conclaves

In closed sessions, ministerial and parliamentary conclaves focused on country-specific priorities and actions to accelerate progress on improving WCAH. Twenty-eight ministers reaffirmed their political commitments to WCAH and discussed issues and challenges impeding progress. They agreed that PMNCH has an important role to play in bringing partners together to support effective and functional national multistakeholder platforms for improved joint planning and accountability. Twenty-three parliamentarians from 15 countries discussed their role in holding governments accountable for commitments to improve WCAH and in taking concrete actions in the areas of legislation, budget allocation and advocacy. They also discussed modalities that would enable them to enhance their capacities and pledged to establish WCAH chapters or caucuses in their respective countries that would cut across political parties and existing committees and structures.

Communications

PMNCH made a significant investment in communications for the Forum, implementing a robust digital and traditional media strategy that supported activities in the lead-up to and during the two-day event. Social media were key for promoting the Forum's messages and expanding reach. On the first day of the Forum #EWECisME trended in the sixth spot. The official Forum hashtag #2018PMNCHLive generated 18,700 mentions and 36,600 likes and shares and garnered 464.4 million impressions (compared with 94.4 million during the 2014 Forum) with a total of 5,000 unique participants (up from 3,700 in 2014).

BMJ series and other publications

In support of a key theme of the Forum, PMNCH commissioned and supported the development of 12 country case studies, which were published in *The BMJ* and launched at the Forum. The case studies showcase how diverse sectors are finding new ways of collaborating and devising strategies to achieve shared goals. The studies provide real-world examples and lessons to incorporate into efforts to achieve the objectives of the Global Strategy, UHC and the SDGs. Developing the case studies was itself an exercise in partnership. More than a year in the making, the published studies, chosen from a pool of over 300 submissions, were prepared by dedicated country teams and involved over 500 participants

from the 12 countries. This huge project required extensive coordination: teams in countries, the PMNCH secretariat, partners and *The BMJ* all made it happen.

Five other publications were also launched at PF2018:

- India’s Strategy for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health (I-Wach) 2018-2030
- Proven Paths for Women’s, Children’s and Adolescents’ Health: Compendium of best practices on India’s RMNCAH initiatives
- Guidelines for Midwifery Services in India
- Advocating for change for adolescents! A Practical Toolkit for Young People to Advocate for Improved Adolescent Health and Well-Being
- Implementation Guidelines for the Global Strategy in Latin America and the Caribbean

Youth participation

As part of its youth engagement strategy, PMNCH invited more than 400 young people to attend the Forum and awarded 50 youth and adolescent scholarships. Approximately 25% of participants at the Forum were from this age group, representing all regions of the world. Eight members of the Adolescent and Youth Constituency (AYC) led on the selection of scholarship recipients and participated in the global organizing committee, the national organizing committee, the programme sub-committee and the communications and advocacy sub-committee. This focus on youth ensured that young people spoke at all 26 sessions in the main programme as well as the opening and closing ceremonies. Youth-related activities during PF2018 included: a youth dialogue; a youth networking reception; an interactive youth hub space for AYC members to network and host informal meetings; and a “youth flash mob” of 50 young participants who communicated key messages relating to young people’s health and well-being to 500 other participants. A young person wrote the lyrics to the Partners’ Forum anthem and sang it during the closing ceremony.



Partnership with the media

PMNCH in collaboration with the International Center for Journalists facilitated the participation of 50 journalists from around the world, including 30 young journalists. Almost 100 interviews were conducted, including by the *Financial Times* and CNN, and more than 85 stories were published in 20 countries. A media workshop for the young journalists sponsored to attend the Forum was held in New Delhi a few days before the Forum.

Virtual Forum

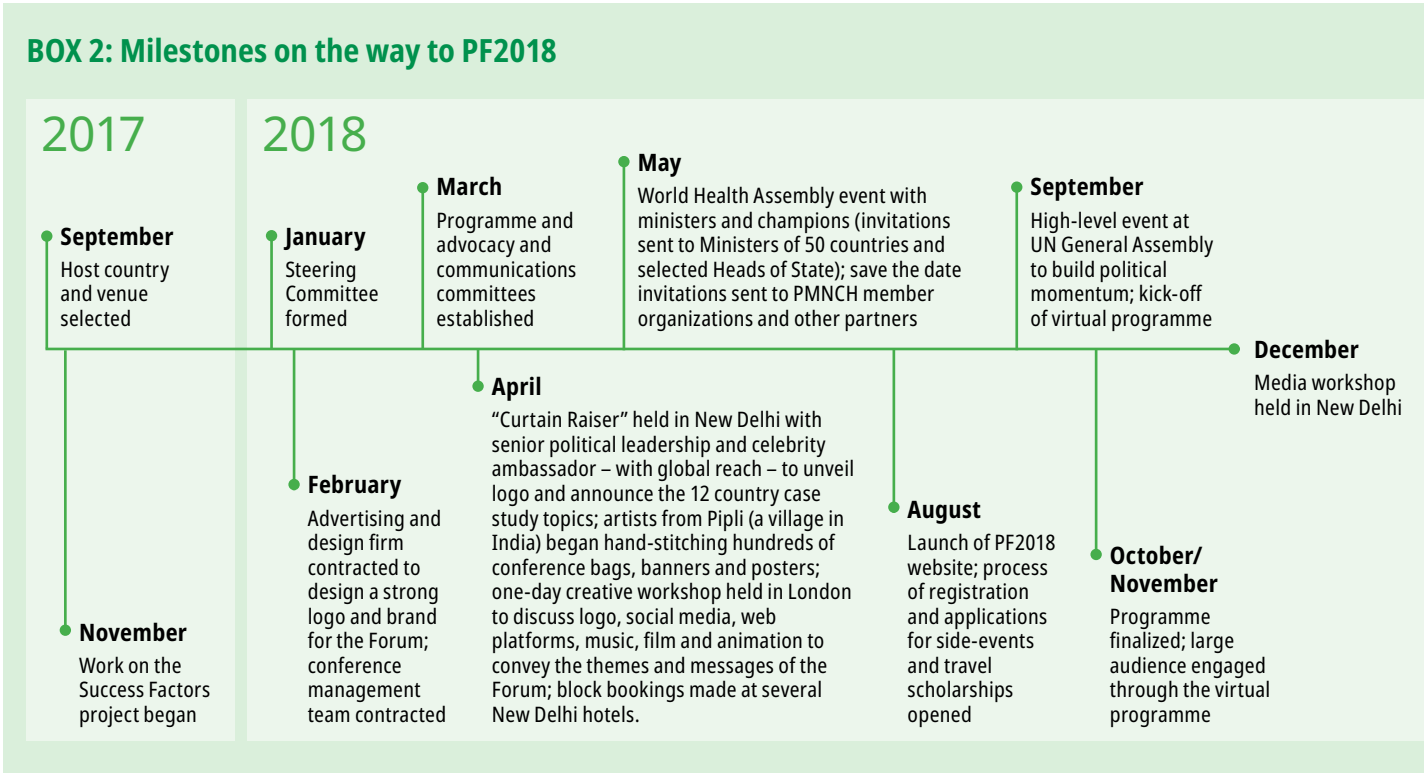
For the first time, PMNCH developed an online platform to engage a much larger and more diverse audience before and during PF2018. Five pre-Forum webinars reflecting the plenary session themes were organized by partners and drew 300 participants from over 80 countries. During the Forum, the opening and closing ceremonies and the four plenary sessions were live-streamed and accompanied by a live Facebook-moderated discussion.

Commitments

The Forum provided a platform for new global commitments to the survival, health and well-being of women, children and adolescents. A total of 19 country commitments were made during the Forum, including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s announcement of a US\$ 100 billion investment in health by 2025, a pledge by World Vision International to mobilize US\$ 7 billion for WCAH and a US\$ 65 million extension to previous pledges by Laerdal Medical Foundation to Every Woman Every Child.

Planning

The Forum’s success was due to the efforts of PMNCH secretariat staff and consultants as well as the many partners who helped organize the Forum and all the donors who supported PMNCH in 2018 (both are listed at the end of this report). PF2018 took over a year to plan; the timeline in Box 2 shows milestones along the way.



3. POST-FORUM SURVEY FINDINGS

In March 2019, IngeniousPeoplesKnowledge (I-P-K) conducted a survey for PMNCH to elicit feedback from participants on key aspects of the Forum, to enable lessons to be learned and improvements made in future. The survey, developed jointly with PMNCH, was emailed to 1,600 participants for completion between 13 and 25 March 2019. Twenty-four emails bounced and 141 participants responded, giving a response rate of 9%.

While this relatively low response rate raises some potential concerns, there was substantial variation among respondents terms of gender, age and country of residence, few outliers in the data and no responses that required specific investigation or pause for explanation. Thus, in their presentation to the PMNCH Executive Committee on 3 April 2019, I-P-K said that while a statistically significant sample would have required an additional 175 responses, it was unlikely that this factor would have changed the main findings. The Executive Committee accepted this analysis.

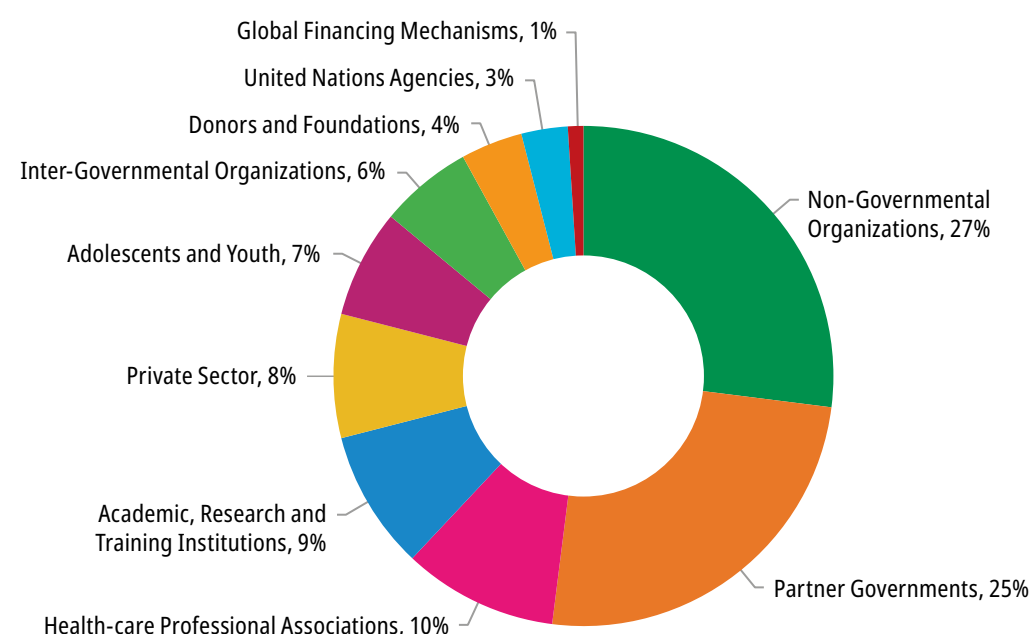
This section summarizes the findings of the survey, following the categories of questions asked: demographics and overall impressions; process; content; and logistics (see Annex 1).

Demographics and overall impressions

Over two thirds of respondents were female (65%) and 35% were male. Ages ranged from 18 to 61 years with an average of 39.8 years. Of 138 respondents who answered the question about country of residence, 63% were from Asia, 15% from Africa, 12% from Europe, 7% from North America and 2% from Latin America.

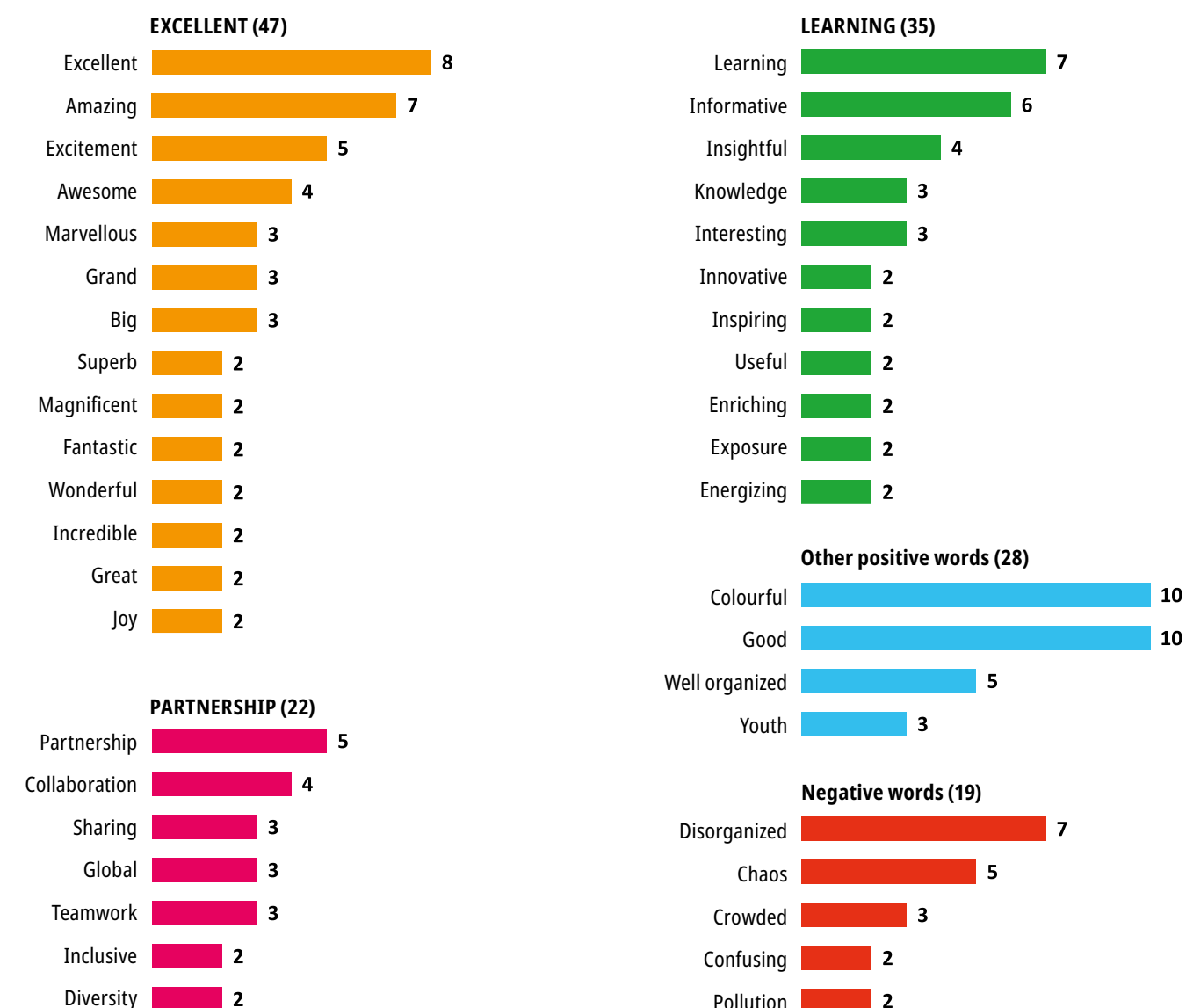
In terms of work position, 30% of respondents were managers, 18% were health-care professionals, 14% were consultants and 15% held “other” positions (most were working for governments in various capacities). An analysis by PMNCH constituency (Figure 1) shows that most respondents worked for a non-governmental organization (27%) followed by those employed in partner governments (25%). Notably, only 7% of respondents were young people, even though they comprised 25% of Forum participants.

FIGURE 1: Distribution of respondents by occupation, according to PMNCH constituency, N=138



The first substantive question of the survey asked respondents to sum up their experience of the Forum in New Delhi in one word. They were then asked to add a second word in order to elicit a more considered response. Of the 41 words mentioned more than once, 36 are positive and five are negative. Grouping words with the same or similar meaning, the three most commonly expressed sentiments were “excellent”, “learning” and “partnership” (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2: Most commonly used words to summarize experience of the Forum



The responses to the open-ended final question of the survey asking for further comments included: “excellent innovative work”, “appreciation to PMNCH for the work they are doing” and “I cherish my stay in New Delhi”. Several respondents said they liked the food, the conference bag and the branding, and one person said: “LOVED the special *BMJ* edition with success stories”. Other comments were:

“Congratulations to the organizers, up-to-date information and data shared, well organized sessions.”

“It was a great learning opportunity for me and I would like to attend more Forums in the future.”

“One thing that really got stuck to my brain was...understanding the dark side of accountability. I will always remember to build this into programme planning.”

Organization of the programme

Respondents were asked to identify two activities during (and prior to) the Forum they would have liked to spend more time on, and two they would have preferred to spend less time on. Table 1 shows the results.

TABLE 1: Respondents' preferences for more or less of the various Forum activities

Forum activity	More of (%)	Less of (%)
Opportunities for professional networking	44	5
Advocacy/interaction with policy-makers	41	3
Learning about technical content	35	18
Plenary sessions	21	23
Concurrent sessions	20	22
Youth engagement	19	6
Dedicated meeting times each day	14	18
Exhibitions	12	19
Pre-Forum events	8	19
Special evening events	8	25
Sponsorship opportunities	7	22
Social media	3	13
Time on the Virtual Forum	0	24

The two activities on which most respondents would have preferred to spend more time were *opportunities for professional networking* and *advocacy/interaction with policy-makers*. A high number of respondents asked for more of these elements, and only a few for less of them. *Learning about technical content* and *youth engagement* were also largely seen as useful. Although PMNCH ensured that 25% of participants came from the youth sector, a number of respondents would have liked more youth engagement.



There was no general consensus on either *plenary sessions* or *concurrent sessions*: votes for increasing and reducing these were nearly equivalent. Similarly, preferences about daily *dedicated meetings times* showed near-equivalence.

Special evening events were deemed expendable and there were few calls for these to be increased.

Interest in the *Virtual Forum* appears to be limited, with no respondents requesting more time for it and a high number of calls for it to be reduced. Responses to the direct question about the Virtual Forum (Table 2) show that 40% of respondents did not know about it and only 8% reported using it in the build-up to PF2018. Only 10% of respondents reported using the Virtual Forum during PF2018; this could be due to very poor Wi-Fi service at the conference venue. People unable to attend the Forum in person might have responded to the Virtual Forum more positively, but they were not included in this survey.

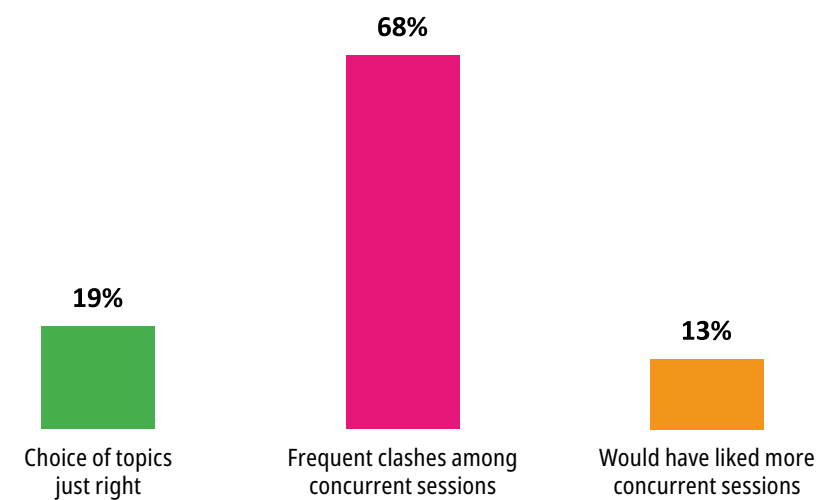


TABLE 2: Responses to statements about the Virtual Forum

Virtual Forum statements	%
I was aware there was a digital forum (webinars etc.) for preparation for the Forum	42
The digital forum was well communicated	19
I participated in the digital forum in the build-up to the Forum	8
I participated in social media in the build-up to the Forum	14
I participated in the digital forum while I was at the Forum	10
I didn't know there was a Virtual Forum	40
I like this method of engagement	21

Respondents were also asked to comment on plenary and concurrent sessions and on session length. Twenty-eight respondents said they would have liked more plenary sessions; 34 said they would have liked more concurrent sessions. There was high reporting among all respondents (69%) of clashes between concurrent sessions (Figure 3) and this figure increased to 85% of those who said they wanted more plenary sessions.

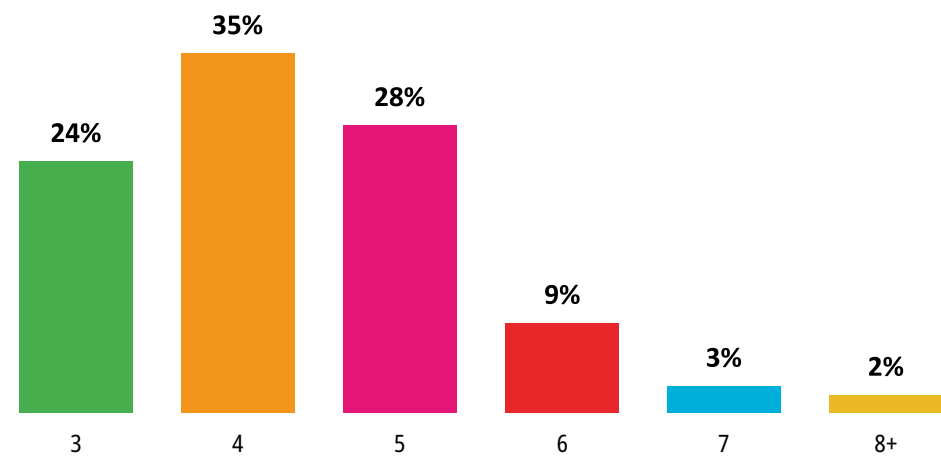
FIGURE 3: Percentage of respondents who reported clashes between concurrent sessions, N=117



Of 72 respondents who answered this question, 40% said that the 90-minute sessions were too long, 46% said they were the correct length and only 14% considered them too short.

Of 116 responses concerning the number of speakers per 90-minute session, most considered it effective to have either three (24%), four (34%) or five (28%) speakers, with very few respondents (14%) recommending more than five speakers per session (Figure 4). Some respondents thought the high number of speakers per session caused time overruns, delaying subsequent sessions.

FIGURE 4: Optimum number of speakers deemed effective in a 90-minute session, N=115



Content of the Forum

This section of the questionnaire asked respondents to rate each session they attended on a scale from 1 (not good at all) to 5 (very good). The average scores for all the plenary and concurrent sessions ranged between 3.5 and 3.95. Given the proximity of the average scores (and the variation in individual scores of each) the difference between them is not statistically significant.

However, the aim of this question was to prompt respondents to consider the positive and negative aspects of each session. Respondents could give multiple reasons for their rating of a session. Tables 3 and 4 present the results in descending order of occurrence for ease of interpretation, although the questions in the survey were not asked in this order.

TABLE 3: Reasons for rating sessions highly

Reasons for rating sessions as <i>good or very good</i>	%
The discussion covered really interesting and pertinent points	67
The content was interesting, i.e. novel, innovative, avant-garde	65
There was a good balance of general information and specific case study detail	57
The speakers were well prepared and presented in an engaging manner	57
The speaker made the talk relevant to my work	54
There was a good mix of speakers and examples from health and outside health	48
It was a good example of evidence-based actions	45
The complex issues were made easy to understand	40
It was a true exchange with participants and not just a lecture-style talking at	33
I had sufficient opportunity to participate and contribute	21

TABLE 4: Reasons for rating sessions less highly

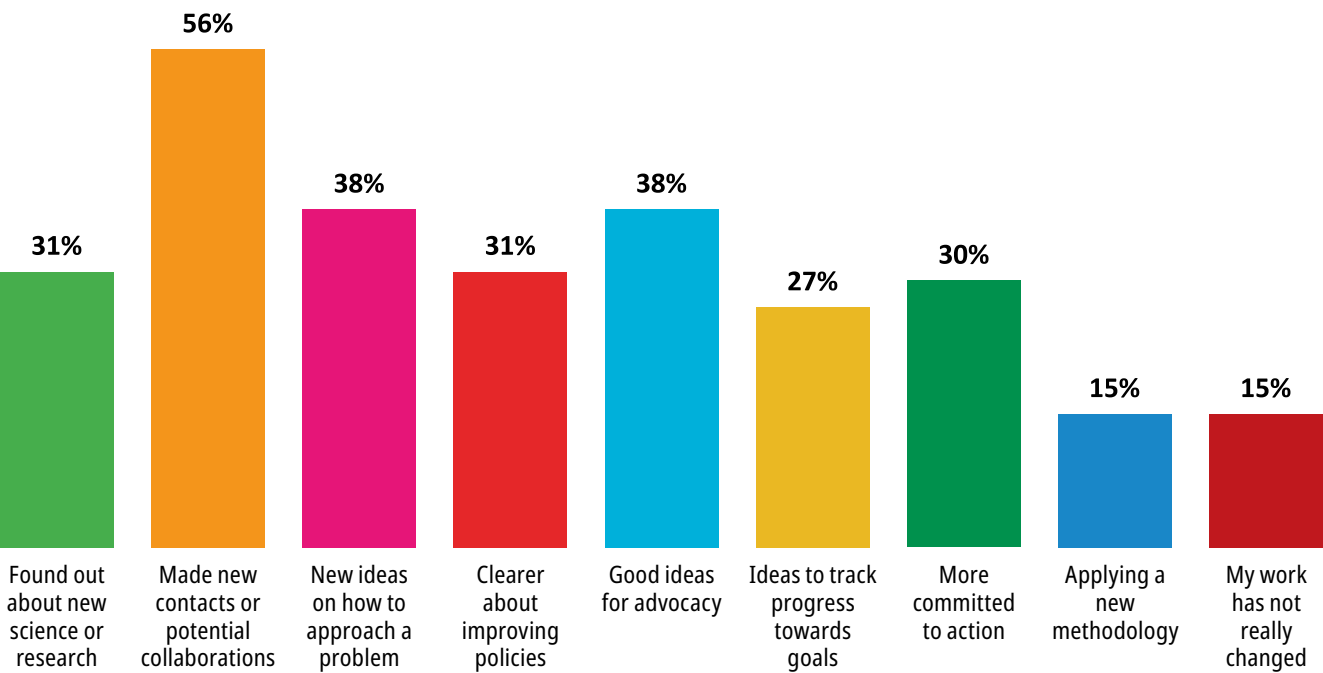
Reasons for rating sessions as <i>not good at all, all right or satisfactory</i>	%
Too much lecturing and not enough discussion time	46
The speaker/s were unorganized or spoke longer than their allotted time	28
I did not really learn anything new	23
I felt disconnected and bored	21
It felt rushed and under too much time pressure	19
The session method was not up-to-date in terms of engagement and interaction	16
The announced topic and what was actually presented did not match up	13
The speakers were all from the health sector and failed to link to other sectors	11
There was too much jargon and too many acronyms	10
It was after lunch and I was tired	5

Taking these results together, three main conclusions can be drawn. First, respondents valued discussion and interaction more highly than presentations. Second, interesting or innovative content is highly valued. Third, respondents did not appreciate speakers who overran their allotted time or appeared unorganized.

A number of comments in response to the open-ended question support these conclusions. Respondents requested more interaction and engagement with panellists and presenters. Some respondents said that the lecture-style venue with terraced seating was not conducive to discussion. Concerning interesting content, some respondents noted a lack of attention to challenges or delayed implementation: “All we heard was how great things are, which we know they aren’t”. A number of respondents would have preferred more focus on global and other countries’ actions than on the host country.

Concerning the Forum’s impact on their work, 69% of respondents reported a positive change in the months following the event. This is a useful indicator of return on investment. Figure 5 shows how respondents reported enhancement of their work practice following the Forum. Over half (56%) of respondents reported making new contacts and forging potential collaborations as the key change. For an event intended to foster multisectoral action for results, this widening of networks and partnerships can be counted as a success. This re-emphasizes the point made above, that respondents want more opportunities for professional networking.

FIGURE 5: Reported enhancement of work practices following the Forum, N=97



Note: Respondents were asked to tick all applicable answers.

An impressive 38% of respondents reported having learned a new approach for solving a problem, and 38% said the Forum gave them good ideas for advocacy, reinforcing the findings in Tables 3 and 4 above that respondents valued interesting new content. Only 16% said their work had not changed significantly following the Forum.

The survey attempted to identify whether any plenary theme was particularly influential in changing work practices, but all themes were evenly spread in influence.

The opening and closing ceremonies proved popular, with many respondents describing them as impressive (72% and 44% respectively) or inspiring (48% and 39% respectively).

Logistics of the Forum

In this section of the questionnaire, respondents who *Agreed* with positive statements relating to logistics of the Forum were not given the option to comment, while those who *Disagreed* were invited to select from suggested reasons for their dissatisfaction, or to add their own. For three of the questions, a “not applicable” option was provided.

Overall, the survey found high approval rates with the organization of the Forum, with a high of 94% (for the accommodation) to a low of 69% (for availability of materials and the registration process). Table 5 summarizes these responses, presented in descending order of agreement (although questions were not asked in this order). It is followed by information about the logistics and some details from the small number of respondents who disagreed with the statements in Table 5.

TABLE 5: Feedback on logistics of the Forum

Statement	# respondents	% agreeing	% disagreeing
Accommodation was good	51 (+51 N/A)	94	6
Travel arrangements were smooth	41 (+61 N/A)	93	7
The team was helpful	103	86	14
The venue was suitable	104	85	15
The visa application process was smooth	40 (+62 N/A)	85	15
Session information was accessible	104	81	19
Communication about logistics was good	101	76	24
Registration was easy	104	69	31
Material was available	104	69	31

N/A=not applicable

Accommodation

In April 2018 PMNCH made block bookings at several hotels within 5 km from the conference venue. Participants were asked to reserve their room when registering online for the Forum. Of the 51 responses concerning accommodation, 94% reported that it was good.

Travel arrangements

Extensive arrangements were made to ensure smooth travel for international participants. Itineraries for sponsored participants were prepared well in advance. Dedicated buses were provided to transfer participants between the airport and the hotels, and between hotels and the conference venue. Although this question was only applicable to 41 respondents, 94% of them approved the travel arrangements.

The team

The conference team included PMNCH staff members and consultants as well as the conference management team hired for PF2018. The majority of respondents (86%) found the conference team helpful. Among the 14% who disagreed, 50% reported that there were not enough team members for the size of the event and 57% that the team members did not know enough about the event.

The venue

PF2018 was held at Vigyan Bhawan, the most popular security-cleared venue for major conferences in New Delhi. Its main hall seats over 1,200 people and six smaller halls can accommodate between 65 and 375 people. It also has a large exhibition hall. However, being built in 1956, the venue has a formal and inflexible set-up with limited Wi-Fi connectivity. While 85% of respondents found the venue suitable, 81% of those disagreeing stated that its poor Wi-Fi service was a problem. One respondent wrote: “One day was lost in terms of advocacy due to no Wi-Fi”. Half of those who disagreed said that events were not adequately signposted and sessions were difficult to find. Another concern was that the fixed panel tables and seats could not be moved to facilitate greater interaction.



Visa application process

Forty respondents had applied for visas, of whom 85% found the process unproblematic. Invitation letters and detailed information about how to apply for a conference visa were emailed well in advance to all international participants. Indian missions/consulates in several countries were informed about PF2018 in advance in order to expedite the visa process. The Government of India was helpful in accommodating those facing problems, and in November 2018 adopted a new policy allowing conference delegates to apply for visas electronically. However, this may not be relevant to future events because each country's visa process is different and presents different challenges.

Session information

Most respondents were happy with the provision of information about sessions (81%). The most common reasons for dissatisfaction related to information not being downloadable (58%) and the absence of a Forum app (53%).

Communication about logistics

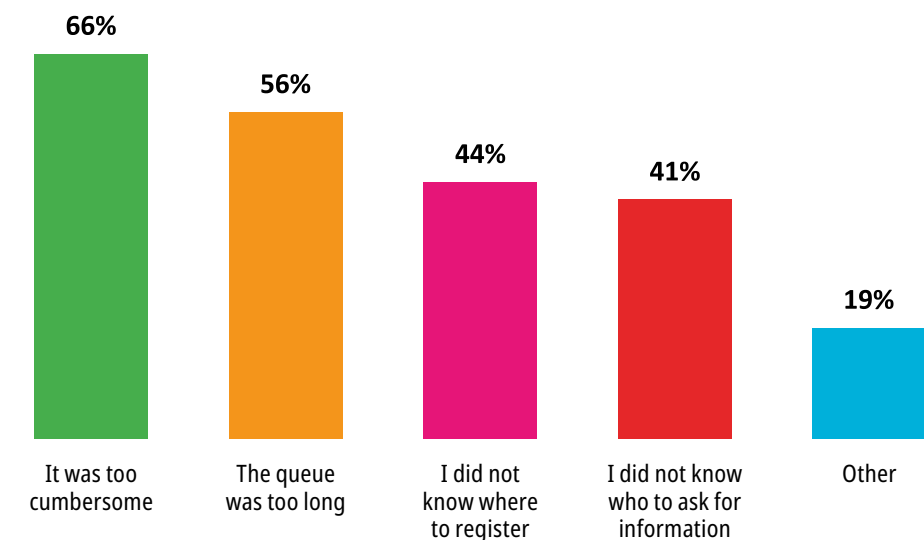
Over three quarters (76%) of respondents agreed that communication about logistics and the Forum was good. Of the 24% who disagreed, 75% reported that communication was provided too late, and 52% said it was incomplete. Four written responses to this questions cited confusion and lack of organization.

Registration

In June 2018, all PMNCH member organizations were invited to submit the names of up to two delegates. Acceptance of additional registration requests was communicated after 15 October 2018 on a rolling basis according to available space. Invitees were emailed by PMNCH and asked to register on the Forum website, which launched on 10 August 2018. In New Delhi, participants were able to collect their badge and conference bag either at their hotel on the day before the Forum or at the venue on the morning of the first day. Almost one in three respondents (31%) did not find registration easy: 67% of those said it was too cumbersome, 55% said the queue on the first day due to intense security was too long,

and others did not know where to register (42%) or who to ask (40%). These data are shown in Figure 6. Comments suggest that the registration desk was not effective enough, and that the pre-conference registration process was too complicated.

FIGURE 6: Reasons for dissatisfaction with the registration process, N=32



Note: Respondents were asked to tick all applicable answers.

Availability of materials

Although 31% of respondents were dissatisfied with the availability of materials, it should be noted that PMNCH and partners aimed to making the Forum as paper-free as possible. All participants received a conference bag with the programme, a summary of the 12 country case studies published in *The BMJ*, and invitations to the opening ceremony and the cultural evening. Although printed copies of the six publications launched during the Forum were not included, they were available on the Forum website or on a USB.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the survey findings, informal feedback from participants and partners, and the experience of PMNCH secretariat staff in organizing PF2018, the following recommendations should be considered when planning the next Forum.

1. Provide even more opportunities for networking and advocacy: Survey respondents found professional networking, advocacy and interaction with policy-makers among the most valuable benefits of the conference. This aspect of the Forum should be repeated and enhanced.

2. Continue to frame content around knowledge products: Multisectoral collaboration was a major theme of PF2018. The 12 country case studies provided substantive and interesting content, helped to frame one plenary and six concurrent sessions, and engaged new stakeholders. *The BMJ*'s acceptance of all 12 case studies was a major achievement for PMNCH, and the *BMJ* series has been well received by country partners. Framing future sessions similarly around a substantial technical body of work will bring new knowledge and innovative approaches to the next Forum, stimulate dialogue, build interest among partners, and foster follow-up activities after the Forum.

3. Foster increased learning by including more interactive sessions: Respondents valued the content of sessions highly and were appreciative of the programme; however, there were calls for more discussion and for more innovative content. In future, fewer lecture-style presentations, fewer speakers per session and alternative formats for concurrent sessions should be considered to promote knowledge sharing, participation and dialogue. Alongside successes, participants should be encouraged to share what has not worked, because important lessons can be learned from both.

4. Harness technology: The Forum website was designed to be mobile-, tablet-, laptop- and desktop-friendly. Launched in August 2018, it was used for pre-conference registration, communication and the Virtual Forum and to disseminate information on logistics and the programme. Development of a mobile app was deemed impractical due to time constraints and limited Wi-Fi service at the conference site. PMNCH needs to assess how best to use information technology in order to increase participation and engagement.

5. Make more content available online: The opening and closing ceremonies and the four plenary sessions were broadcast live and are available for viewing on the PF2018 website. However, given the number of survey respondents who would have liked to attend more than one concurrent session, future concurrent sessions could also be recorded for later viewing. Presentations, summaries of sessions and post-conference advocacy materials could also be made available online.

6. Expand the reach of the Virtual Forum: The Virtual Forum should be strengthened to maximize its potential. It can be used for learning and knowledge sharing, to galvanize momentum in the months leading up to the Forum, and to make future Forum events accessible to everyone interested in WCAH but unable to attend in person.

7. Ensure a clear division of roles and responsibilities among organizing partners: Partners' Forums are organized collaboratively by the PMNCH secretariat, partner organizations and the host country. Partners commit to leading on various teams and committees (programme development, communications, budgets etc.) that are formed up to two years before a Forum. Clarifying roles and responsibilities from the beginning is vital. So too is accountability: a successful Forum depends on all parties honouring their commitments.

8. Start planning logistics early: Aware of the complexities involved in convening 1,600 people from around the world for PF2018, PMNCH, with the support of its partners and the Government of India, began planning the logistics in September 2017. This resulted in a high satisfaction rate among survey respondents across a number of issues relating to logistics. The Government of India assisted by ensuring that all international participants were granted visas, even those who made last-minute applications. For the next Forum it is essential to work with a highly competent conference management company that can ensure a sufficient number of well-trained staff on site: this is key to providing a positive experience for attendees.

9. Choose an appropriate venue: Reliable Wi-Fi service is vital because the next Partners' Forum will rely heavily on digital technology. Unreliable connectivity at the venue for PF2018 caused widespread frustration and constraints for both participants and organizers. In addition, the venue must have a plenary hall with sufficient seating for all participants, as well as smaller rooms with flexible seating to facilitate participatory sessions and networking.

10. Improve the post-conference evaluation process. Designing the post-conference evaluation survey before the next Forum, so that it can be circulated immediately afterwards, and allowing delegates more time to complete it might increase the response rate. A separate survey for Virtual Forum users who do not attend the conference in person would also be helpful. A different questionnaire is needed to assess their experience and learn how to better meet their needs. An assessment of media uptake and interviews with a cross-section of participants would also be valuable.

In summary, return on investment is shown by the many positive responses to the survey questions. There were high levels of both satisfaction with the Forum and reports of positive post-conference impacts. The survey resulted in valuable feedback and will enable PMNCH, the host country and partners to deliver an even better Partners' Forum in 2022.



ANNEX 1: POST-2018 PARTNERS’ FORUM SURVEY

What follows is a Word version of the survey that participants of the Partners’ Forum 2018 were invited to complete. Although it looked different in Survey Monkey, the questions remain the same.

Getting to know you

Please tell us a bit about yourself and your experience of the Forum

- 1. Are you: Male, Female, Other?
- 2. How old are you?
- 3. What country are you based in?
- 4. What is your work position? (Options: Consultant, Manager, Field worker, Activist, Youth, Health-care professional, Academic /trainer/researcher, Other)
- 5. What is your constituency? (Partner government, Inter-governmental organization, Global financing mechanism, NGO, UN agency, Donor or foundation, Health-care professional association, Private sector, Academic/research/training unit, Adolescent and youth, Other)
- 6. Please close your eyes for a few seconds and think back to the time you were in New Delhi for the Forum. Remember being there, the city, the conference centre, the people, the sessions. Please give us two words that summarize your experience there.

Word 1:

Word 2:

The structure of the programme at the Forum

Please tell us about your preferred mix of plenaries and concurrent sessions and how you wanted to spend your time in New Delhi

- 7. Again, think back to your time at the Partners’ Forum in India. Overall, what did you want to spend more time doing, what aspects of the programme inspired you? Please tick TWO things you think the Forum could have had more of. (The next question will ask you what you want less of.)

	More of (tick two)
Learning about technical content in sessions	
Opportunities for professional networking	
Plenary sessions	
Concurrent sessions	
Youth engagement	
Advocacy/interaction with policy-makers	
Pre-Forum events	
Special evening events	
Exhibitions	
Social media	
Spending time on the Virtual Forum	
Partners’ Forum Newsletter updates	
Sponsorship opportunities	
Dedicated “meeting times” during each day so that people did not have to miss sessions due to meetings	

- 8. Again, think back to your time at the Partners’ Forum in India. Overall, what did you want to spend less time doing? Please tick TWO things you think the Forum could have had less of.

	Less of (tick two)
Learning about technical content in sessions	
Opportunities for professional networking	
Plenary sessions	
Concurrent sessions	
Youth engagement	
Advocacy/interaction with policy-makers	
Pre-Forum events	
Special evening events	
Exhibitions	
Social media	
Spending time on the Virtual Forum	
Partners’ Forum Newsletter updates	
Sponsorship opportunities	
Dedicated “meeting times” during each day so that people did not have to miss sessions due to meetings	

- 9. How was the balance between plenary and concurrent sessions? I prefer ...

... more plenary sessions	... the same mix we had	... more concurrent sessions
---------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------------

- 10. Now please consider the concurrent sessions that happened after plenaries.

- 10.1. For me, the choice of topics was right
- 10.2. I frequently felt there were clashes among sessions I wanted to go to
- 10.3. I would have liked more concurrent sessions to choose from

- 11. The duration of the sessions (90 minutes) was...

... too short	... exactly right	... too long
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- 12. How many speakers do you deem effective in a 90-minute session?

(Options between 3 and 8+)

- 13. Please tell us whether you knew there was a Virtual Forum and whether you used it. Tick all the statements that are applicable to you:

- 13.1. I was aware there was a digital forum (webinars etc.) for preparation for the Forum
- 13.2. The digital forum was well communicated
- 13.3. I participated in the digital forum in the build-up to the Forum
- 13.4. I participated in social media in the build-up to the Forum
- 13.5. I participated in the digital forum while I was at the Forum
- 13.6. I did not know there was a digital forum
- 13.7. I like this method of engagement

The content of the Forum

Please tell us your views on which sessions were good and bad and what you learned at the Forum

14. Below is the list of all the plenaries and concurrent sessions. Please rate any of them that you attended by ticking one option to indicate a very good session (5) through to one that was not good at all (1). Leave blank the sessions you did not attend.

		1	2	3	4	5
Plenary Session 1	Political leadership in uncertain times					
Concurrent sessions:	Role of women in political leadership					
	Innovative financing for better health and nutrition outcomes					
	High-quality health care: the importance of political leadership					
	Harnessing the transformative power of young people					
	Working together to tackle violence against women					
	Towards UHC, throughout the life course					
Plenary Session 2	Multisectoral collaboration: from rhetoric to reality					
Concurrent sessions:	Achieving the best start to life through multisectoral action					
	Adolescent health: sectors, services and the path to success					
	Making multisectoral action work to improve SRHR					
	Making multisectoral action work to empower women and girls					
	Addressing determinants of health in humanitarian and fragile settings					
	Catalysing joint actions to deliver quality care with equity and dignity					
Plenary Session 3	Accountability for action					
Concurrent sessions:	Leaving no one behind: the role of evidence and data innovation					
	Improving financial accountability to achieve the Global Strategy's objectives					
	We the people					
	Private sector accountability for health and nutrition					
	Parliamentarians' role in holding governments to account					
	Accountability in humanitarian emergency settings					
Plenary Session 4	The power of partnership: working better and smarter together					
Concurrent sessions:	People-centred partnerships to drive impactful advocacy					
	Harnessing partnership and innovation to improve health					
	Partnership and accountability for maternal and child health in challenging contexts					
	Using multisectoral collaboration to drive progress					
	Strengthening partnerships for sustainable financing for MNCH					
	Demystifying digital technologies and their application for MNACH					

15. Looking at the sessions you rated highly (that is, 4-5), what made them good? Please tick as many reasons as you like.

Aspects of sessions you rated 4-5 above	Tick if you agree
The content was interesting, i.e. novel, innovative, avant-garde	
The discussion covered really interesting and pertinent points	
The speaker made the talk relevant to my work	
There was a good balance of general information and specific case study detail	
The complex issues were made easy to understand	
It was a good example of evidence-based actions	
The speakers were well prepared and presented their issue in an engaging manner	
I had sufficient opportunity to participate and contribute	
It was a true exchange <i>with</i> participants and not just a lecture-style talking <i>at</i> participants	
There was a good mix of speakers and examples from health and outside of health	

16. Looking at the sessions you did not rate so highly (1-3), what made them bad?

Aspects of sessions you rated 1-3 above	Tick if you agree
The speaker/s were unorganized or spoke longer than their allotted time	
Too much lecturing and not enough discussion time	
The announced topic and what was actually presented did not match up	
I did not really learn anything new	
It was after lunch and I was tired	
There was too much jargon and acronyms	
I felt disconnected and bored	
It felt rushed and under too much time pressure	
The session method was not up-to-date in terms of engagement and interaction	
The speakers were all from the health sector and failed to make links to other sectors	

17. Now you are back at home and work, and the Forum was a few months ago. Did your attendance at the 2018 Forum change how you do your work in any way? Have you learned anything that you can use? Please tell us what impact, if any, the Forum has had on your work. Please tick as many of the following sentences as you like.

The Forum has changed my work in the following ways:	Tick if you agree
I found out about new science or evidence or research that I am using or considering using	
I made some new contacts or potential collaborations	
I have new ideas on how to approach a problem I have been having	
I am clearer now about policies that need to be improved	
I have some good ideas for advocacy messages	
I have a better idea about how to track progress towards goals	
I am more committed to action or activism	
I am applying a new methodology I learned	
My work has not really changed	

18. Looking at the previous question, which part of the programme was most influential to the change in how you do your work? Use the arrows at the side up and down to show how influential each of these were to you.

1	Political leadership
2	Multisectoral collaboration
3	Accountability
4	Partnerships
5	Informal exchanges and networking

19. What did you think of the Opening Ceremony? Tick as many as you like.

Opening Ceremony	Tick if you agree
It was impressive	
It was inspiring	
I learned something from it	
It was too long	
I would have preferred listening to my peers	

20. What did you think of the Closing Ceremony? Tick as many as you like.

Closing Ceremony	Tick if you agree
It was impressive	
It was inspiring	
I learned something from it	
It was too long	
I would have preferred listening to my peers	

Logistics of the Forum

Please give us some tips about the venue, accommodation, and arrangements. In this section, you will be asked to agree or disagree with statements about the logistics and if you disagree you will be given options to say what you did not like.

Note: The format on Survey Monkey differs from the following. In Survey Monkey, each aspect below was a separate question; if the respondent ticked 'Agree' they were taken to the next question. If they ticked 'Disagree' they were taken to a new page with the set of options listed under 'Disagree' below. This format was repeated for all the logistical questions.

21. Please rate the venue by ticking whether you agree or disagree that the venue was suitable for the event.

Agree	Disagree
	Too big
	Too small
	Could not hear well
	Could not see the screen/stage well enough in plenary
	Limited Wi-Fi
	Uncomfortable / inadequate
	Not well signposted and hard to find sessions
	Other

22. Registration was easy

Agree	Disagree
	It was too cumbersome
	The queue was too long
	I did not know where to register
	I did not know who to ask for information
	Other

23. Material (printed, digital, etc.) was available

Agree	Disagree
	I did not see any printed material
	The material was available but ran out before I got there
	I could not access the digital material
	High printed material wastage
	Other

24. Information on sessions was accessible

Agree	Disagree
	There was so much info about the event, I did not know how to find what I needed
	Info should be downloadable
	No conference app guiding participants
	I wanted more biographical and work info on who was presenting at each session
	Other

25. The team was helpful

Agree	Disagree
	There were not enough team members for the size of the event
	They did not seem to know enough about the event
	They were not attentive or helpful
	Other

26. If your travel was sponsored, your travel arrangements were smooth

Agree	Disagree
-------	----------

27. My accommodation was good

Agree	Disagree
	Too far from the venue
	Transport to and from the venue was not well organized
	I felt unsafe
	It was dirty
	Other

28. My visa application process was smooth

Agree	Disagree
	I received insufficient info on how to apply
	I received the invitation letter too late
	It was too difficult to access a consulate (geographical location)
	It remained unclear how to proceed
	Other

29. Communication about logistics and the Forum from PMNCH was good

Agree	Disagree
	It was difficult to navigate the Partners' Forum website
	Communication came late in the day
	The communication was incomplete, lacking important bits
	There was too little information on social media
	I did not know what hashtag to use to follow the conversation
	I felt bombarded by information that was not relevant to me
	Other

30. Do you have any other comments you wish to share with us?

The end. Thank you very much for your time. Have a good day!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Partner organizations involved in PF2018

Abt Associates, USA	Government of Malawi
African Population and Health Research Center, Kenya	Government of Malaysia
Aga Khan University, Pakistan	Government of Nigeria
Alianza Nacional de Organizaciones de Mujeres Indígenas por la Salud Reproductiva (ALIANMISAR), Guatemala	Government of South Africa
American Heart Association	Government of Tanzania
American University of Beirut	Government of Uganda
Barcelona Institute for Global Health	Grand Challenges Canada
Becton Dickinson	Guttmacher Institute
Bernard van Leer Foundation	Hospital for Sick Children, Canada
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	Independent Accountability Panel
Breakthrough Trust, India	International Confederation of Midwives
Chemonics International	International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics
Child Health Initiative, UK	International Food Policy Research Institute
Child to Child, UK	International Planned Parenthood Federation
Children's Investment Fund Foundation	Inter-Parliamentary Union
Civil Life Association, Turkey	Jhpiego, Johns Hopkins University
Columbia University	Johnson and Johnson
Concept Foundation	Laerdal Foundation
CORE Group	London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine
Countdown to 2030	Maternal Health Taskforce, Harvard University
Devex	Management Sciences for Health
Duke Global Health Institute	Medair
Every Woman Every Child	Merck
Every Woman Every Child Latin America and Caribbean Communications and Advocacy Working Group	National Centre for Early Prevention, Federal Centre for Health Education, Germany
Family Planning 2020	Nutrition International
Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance	Palestinian Family Planning and Protection Association
Girls Not Brides	Pan American Health Organization
GIZ Cambodia	Partners in Population and Development
Global Financing Facility	PATH
Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria	Population Council
Gogontlejang Phaladi Pillar of Hope Project	Public Health Foundation of India
Government of India	Red Cross
	Results for Development
	Royal Phillips

Save the Children

Scaling Up Nutrition

Society for Health Alternatives, India

Socio-Economic Rural Advancement Committee Bangladesh

South Africa Civil Society Coalition for Women's, Adolescents' and Children's Health

Swasti Health Catalyst, India

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

The BMJ

The YP Foundation

Uganda Youth and Adolescent Health Forum

UNAIDS

UNFPA

UNICEF

UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean Office

UN Women

United Nations University, International Institute for Global Health

University of Amsterdam

University of Chile

University of Manitoba

University of Western Cape

USAID

Village Reach, Malawi

WaterAid

White Ribbon Alliance

Women Deliver

World Bank Group

World Health Organization

World Vision International

Youth Coalition of Sexual and Reproductive Rights

Y-PEER, Tajikistan

PMNCH donors in 2018

Bernard van Leer Foundation

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Botnar Foundation

Children's Investment Fund Foundation

Ford Foundation

Global Financing Facility

Government of Canada

Government of Germany

Government of India

Government of the Netherlands

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