

Handbook

on Social Participation for UHC



Chapter overview on necessary capacities for mutually beneficial government engagement with populations, communities & civil society.



What do we mean by this topic?

- Capacity-building is necessary on both government and civil society side for mutually beneficial government engagement with populations, communities, and civil society
- The aim of capacity-building for participatory processes should ultimately be to ensure a level playing field in terms of ability to give input and weight given to a constituency voice
- This means recalibrating the balance of power which is rooted in expertise, knowledge, and speaking skills
- For civil society, capacity-building is about bringing up those skills to be able to speak eye-to-eye with other participatory process participants
- For governments, capacity-building is about recognizing the added value of a level playing field, and leveraging participatory process results for decision-making.



Why is it important for policy-makers to address this topic?

- Certain key capacities are needed to engage effectively in a participatory process, both on government as well as civil society side
- The quality of exchanges are often determined by the competency and capacities of the participants
- Achieving a level playing field where all stakeholders/participants in the process are able to engage on an equal footing allows for more frank and fruitful discussions which can lead to real policy influence, the stated aim of many participatory engagement mechanisms at national level



Selected key messages

- Capacities depend on each other; capacity-building thus needs a holistic approach where all three dimensions (recognition, communication, and technical skills) need to be addressed simultaneously
- **Recognition** is the most **fundamental dimension** of capacities for equal interaction but is the most difficult to build
- **Communication** depends on **government's ability to create spaces** for participation
- A lack of technical skills impedes the participation process but governments can ensure that **technical skills can be compensated for** if lacking
- Capacity building needs to take into account **all aspects of people's lives**
- **Partnerships** between governments and civil society as well as within civil society are essential for capacity building and capacity maintenance
- Capacity building needs **sustainable funding**
- Capacity-building for government cadres should focus on the need for and added value of social participation for policy-making.



Questions

At this stage, do you have any comment on the content of this chapter?

How does this resonate with your organisation?

Are there any gaps?

