



Capacity building: basic concepts

Definition



English sources contain great amount of definitions of “capacity building” / “capacity development”, but in general all of them say that capacity building is development of knowledge, skills and competences to form sustainable ability to achieve set targets.



Please, note that two definitions can be highlighted – capacity building and capacity development. We use first definition when we mean capacity building from the beginning without any basic knowledge, second definition is used what there is something to work with.

Levels of capacity building



UNDP defines individual, organizational and social levels of capacity building. To build capacity on individual level it is necessary to create conditions for development of knowledge and skills, on organizational level – modernization of existing organizations and their support in forming of sustainable policies, organizational structure and effective methods of management and revenue control. Capacity building on level of society – creation of state administration more focused on dialogue, ready to receive feedback from society, more responsive and responsible.

Capacity building is both theoretical education and practice. You increase you capacity independently, by learning literature, getting experts' consultations, taking part into learning events (full-time, electronic, individual or group) and by implementing your professional activities, using new methods and skills.



Five functional capacities



In accordance with UNDP, you can distinguish five functional capacities, which are core to determine results of development efforts:

1. capacity of involvement of stakeholders,
2. capacity of situation evaluation and vision determination,
3. capacity of forming policies and strategies,,
4. capacity of budgeting, management and implementation,
5. capacity of assessment.

This classification completely correspond with our aim – provision of more active and effective involvement of representatives of civil society and all communities into the process of response to epidemics on all levels and works as a basis for our work to inform you and show right vector to increase your personal capacity.

Building of communities' capacity is strengthening of skills, competencies and abilities of people to overcome reasons of their exclusion and suffering. Capacity development determines who, how and when makes decisions, conducts management, provides services, supervises and assesses results. Civil society and communities often lack knowledge, skills and experience for meaningful participation in response to epidemics. Achievement of such result is possible only with complex approach and use of all the above mentioned functional development directions.

You can read more about capacity building in **Capacity development: a UNDP primer**.