

Research Report

Forum: Fourth General Assembly

Issue: Strengthening relevant national institutions for building capacity at all levels in particular in developing countries to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime (SDG16 target)

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Introduction

There is now emerging agreement in the development community that capacity development is the engine of human development. In the face of the current economic, climate and food crises, developing state and societal capacities to design and implement strategies that minimize the impact posed by these crises will remain critical for sustaining progress towards achieving development objectives including the MDG's.

Capacity development starts from the principle that people are best empowered to realize their full potential when the means of development are sustainable – home-grown, long-term, and generated and managed collectively by those who stand to benefit.

But what exactly do we mean by capacity development? Confusion around the term seems to have grown along with its popularity. For some, capacity development can be any effort to teach someone to do something, or to do it better. For others, it may be about creating new institutions or strengthening old ones. Some see capacity development as a focus on education and training, while others take a broad view of it as improving individual rights, access or freedoms.

Definition of Key Terms

Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), otherwise known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. These 17 Goals build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals, while including new areas such as climate change, economic inequality, innovation, sustainable consumption, peace and justice, among other priorities. The goals are interconnected – often the key to success on one will involve tackling issues more commonly associated with another.

Millennium Development Goals

In September 2000, building upon a decade of major United Nations conferences and summits, world leaders came together at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to adopt the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The Declaration committed nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty, and set out a series of eight time-bound targets – with a deadline of 2015 – that have become known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions (SDG 16)

Without peace, stability, human rights and effective governance, based on the rule of law – we cannot hope for sustainable development. We are living in a world that is increasingly divided. Some regions enjoy sustained levels of peace, security and prosperity, while others fall into seemingly endless cycles of conflict and violence. This is by no means inevitable and must be addressed. High levels of armed violence and insecurity have a destructive impact on a country's development, affecting economic growth and often resulting in long standing grievances that can last for generations. Sexual violence, crime, exploitation and torture are also prevalent where there is conflict or no rule of law, and countries must take measures to protect those who are most at risk.

The SDGs aim to significantly reduce all forms of violence, and work with governments and communities to find lasting solutions to conflict and insecurity. Strengthening the rule of law and promoting human rights is key to this process, as is reducing the flow of illicit arms and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance.¹

Developing country

A developing country, also called a less developed country or an underdeveloped country, is a nation or a sovereign state with a less developed industrial base and a low Human Development Index (HDI) relative to other countries. There are no universally agreed-upon criteria for what makes a country developing versus developed and which countries fit these two categories, although there are general reference points such as a nation's GDP per capita compared with other nations. Also the general term *less-developed country* should not be confused with the specific *least developed country*. The term "developing" describes a currently observed situation and not a dynamic or expected direction of progress. Since the late 1990s developing countries tended to demonstrate higher growth rates than the developed ones.

Capacity

The ability of individuals, institutions and societies to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner.

Capacity development

Refers to the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time.

Major Parties Involved

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP works in about 170 countries and territories, helping to achieve the eradication of poverty and the reduction of inequalities and exclusion. They help countries to develop policies, leadership skills, partnering abilities, institutional capabilities and build resilience in order to sustain development results.

United Nations Development Group (UNDG)

At the global level, the UNDG serves as a high-level forum for joint policy formation and decision-making. It guides, supports, tracks and oversees the coordination development operations

¹ SDG 16 <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-16-peace-justice-and-strong-institutions.html>

in 165 countries and territories. The results of the UNDG are organized according to the UNDG strategic priorities and strategic approaches, capturing what we do and how we do it.

The UNDG current strategic priorities are:

1. Support countries in accelerating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
2. Support national partners in implementing human rights obligations and integrate human rights principles and international standards into the work of the UN;
3. Help build resilient societies and deliver effective support for sustainable recovery in crisis and post-crisis countries.

The UNDG current strategic approaches are:

1. Promote coherent development results across the entire UN development system to improve transparency and accountability;
2. Functioning of the Resident Coordinator system as participatory, collegial and mutually accountable;
3. Accelerate simplification and harmonization of business practices;
4. Develop effective partnerships and multi-stakeholder engagement;
5. Strengthen capacity development as a core function of the UN development system;
6. Enhance integrated planning, programming and policy.

The implementation of the UNDG strategic priorities and work plan is driven by a core set of working mechanisms – working groups and task teams – with focus on fostering system – wide norms, standards and policies, as well as operational effectiveness.

Japan

Japan is the number one contributor to the United Nations Development Programme. It has already spent \$382.512.041 dollars on projects of the UNDP in 2016. The top 6 countries who spent the most money on these projects can be seen below:

Top Contributing Donors

List of top donors is based on total income received for regular and other resources in 2016

	Regular	Other	Total
Japan			\$382,512,042
European Union			\$336,973,425
United States of America			\$311,960,165
Germany			\$258,760,239
United Kingdom			\$231,515,545
Argentina			\$150,529,620

Developing- and least developed countries

This issue is focused on the developing and the least developed countries in the world. In these countries it is most important to strengthen relevant national institutions for building capacity at all levels to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.

Least developed countries (as of November 2013)

Africa		East Asia	South Asia	Western Asia	Latin America & the Caribbean
Angola	Madagascar	Cambodia ^a	Afghanistan ^a	Yemen	Haiti
Benin	Malawi	Kiribati ^a	Bangladesh		
Burkina Faso	Mali	Lao People's Democratic Republic ^a	Bhutan ^a		
Burundi	Mauritania	Nepal			
Central African Republic	Mozambique	Myanmar			
Chad	Niger	Samoa ^{a, b}			
Comoros	Rwanda	Solomon Islands ^a			
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Sao Tome and Principe	Timor Leste ^a			
Djibouti	Senegal	Tuvalu ^a			
Equatorial Guinea	Sierra Leone	Vanuatu ^a			
Eritrea	Somalia				
Ethiopia	South Sudan ^a				
Gambia	Sudan				
Guinea	Togo				
Guinea-Bissau	Uganda				
Lesotho	United Republic of Tanzania				
Liberia	Zambia				

^a Not included in the WESP discussion because of insufficient data.

^b Samoa will graduate from the list of the least developed countries in January 2014.

General Overview

Decades of experimenting with development models have confirmed the value of local ownership and capacity. While financial resources are vital, they alone cannot sustain human development. Technical cooperation may be appropriate in some instances to address short-term needs, but tends to be donor-driven and expensive, and to rely unduly on foreign expertise while distorting national priorities. Strong capacity, locally generated and sustained, is essential to the success of any development enterprise. Without it, the integrity of development achievements can be compromised and progress can remain rootless and illusory, separated from the capacities that already exist and vulnerable to the increasingly severe and complex challenges facing the world today.

What are the barometers of capacity development? UNDP identifies three points where capacity is grown and nurtured: in an enabling environment, in organizations and within individuals. These three levels influence each other in a fluid way – the strength of each depends on, and determines, the strength of the others.

The enabling environment

This is the broad social system within which people and organizations function. It includes all the rules, laws, policies, power relations and social norms that govern civic engagement. It is the enabling environment that sets the overall scope for capacity development.

The organizational level

The organizational level refers to the internal structure, policies and procedures that determine an organization's effectiveness. It is here that the benefits of the enabling environment are put into action and a collection of individuals comes together. The better resourced and aligned these elements are, the greater the potential for growing capacity.

The individual level

At the individual level are the skills, experience and knowledge that allow each person to perform. Some of these are acquired formally through education and training, while others come informally,

through doing and observing. Access to resources and experiences that can develop individual capacity are largely shaped by the organizational and environmental factors described above, which in turn are influenced by the degree of capacity development in each individual.

There are four core issues that seem to have the greatest influence on capacity development at the different levels described above. These core issues are picked up from empirical evidence and UNDP's first-hand experience and it is in these four domains that the bulk of the change in capacity happens. They cover many contexts, and much of the work of UNDP and its partners fits naturally into one or more of these categories. The four core issues are:

1. Institutional Arrangements

The politics, practices and systems that allow for effective functioning of an organization or group. These may include 'hard' rules such as laws or the terms of a contract, or 'soft' rules like codes or generally values.

2. Leadership

Leadership is the ability to influence, inspire and motivate others to achieve or even go beyond their goals. It is also the ability to anticipate and respond to change. Leadership is not necessarily synonymous with a position of authority; it can also be informal and be held at many levels. Although leadership is most commonly associated with an individual leader, from a village elder to a country's prime minister, it also exists within the enabling environment and at the organizational level.

3. Knowledge

Knowledge, or 'literally' what people know, underpins their capacities and hence capacity development. Seen from the perspective of our three levels (identified above), knowledge has traditionally been fostered at the individual level, mostly through education. But it can also be created and shared within an organization, such as through on-the-job training or even outside a formal organizational setting through general life experience, and supported through an enabling environment of effective educational systems and policies.

4. Accountability

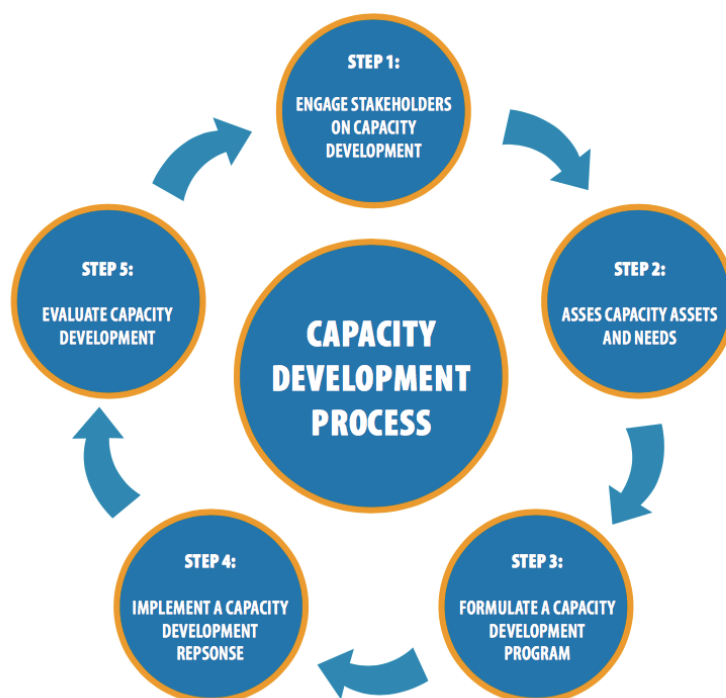
Accountability exists when rights holders are able to make duty bearers deliver on their obligations. From a capacity development perspective, the focus is on the interface between public service providers and its clients or service providers and oversight bodies. More specifically, it is about the willingness and abilities of public institutions to put in place systems and mechanisms to engage citizen groups, capture and utilize their feedback as well as the capacities of the latter to make use of such platforms.

Accountability is important because it allows organizations and systems to monitor, learn, self-regulate and adjust their behaviour in interaction with those to whom they are accountable. It provides legitimacy to decision-making, increases transparency and responsiveness, and helps reduce the influence of vested interests.

The five steps of the capacity development cycle

Supporting the functional capacities that help to guide development outcomes are technical capacities – those related to a given area of expertise. Whereas functional capacities may be described as all-purpose skills, technical capacities arise in context and are always associated with particular practice areas such as climate change, HIV/AIDS, legal empowerment, or elections.

As we have seen, developing capacity is a process of growth and evolution. It is useful to imagine the flow of that process as an upwardly spiralling cycle of events. The UNDP capacity development process uses a five-step cycle to organize programming work. The specific circumstances of a given situation determine the prominence of each step in the process.



Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

Development progress in numbers (2014-2016)



As you can see in the picture above, there has been some great progress in the last few years regarding development. All these improvements may have helped to solve the issue, but it is still not enough. Terrorism, crime and violence are major issues in this world right now. With improving development, we could in fact make the world a better and safer place to live. Therefore, there are still a lot of things that has to be done.

Possible Solutions

First of all, capacity development could be integrated in all programming efforts upfront starting from the analysis and then into all programming instruments and tools. Furthermore, there should be made time and effort to define capacity development actions and indicators and integrate them in the monitoring and evaluation framework.

For capacity development to be effectively integrated into the programmes, this integration should start at the analysis stage and continue throughout the entire programming process through programme development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. It should be part of a systematic support to national capacities for reaching development results, and not limited to inputs/activities.

Lastly, the UN Member States could offer direct support for services and management based on an assessment of existing capacity and gaps. The assessment can be quick and partial, but should provide an objective starting point for bringing in external expertise. If needed, external organizations could help with providing this support. They could know more about the development itself.

Timeline of Events

Date	Event
September 2000	United Nations adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration, including the Millennium Development Goals.
January 2016	Sustainable Development Goals came into effect.

Appendix

- The Millennium Development Goals Report (http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/MDG/english/UNDP_MDG_Report_2015.pdf)

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