**Learning challenges on UHC: view from AfHEA survey and evaluation tools**

*Pascal Ndiaye, Felix Obi, John Ataguba, Chris Atim*

**Background**

Learning challenges is gaining significant interest in capacity building for health activities, especially for new health interventions or policy implementation. The objective is to share AfHEA’s experience in assessing learning challenges for high-level officials on universal health coverage (UHC). Within a 3-year project on UHC, AfHEA organized 7 international workshops including a webinar for Francophone and Anglophone countries on UHC related issues. Also, AfHEA implemented a large online survey for feedbacks on stakeholders’ capacity building needs and priorities for trainings. AfHEA applied three of the four levels of the standard evaluation[[1]](#footnote-1) framework: i) the ‘reaction’, ii) the learning evaluation performed during workshops and iii) the behavioral or transfer evaluation to assess skills, knowledge and likely impact. This paper presents some of the findings from these activities.

**Method**

We analyzed 1694 self-administered questionnaires using both open- and close-ended questions. The tools were sent directly to participants during training and through social media routes. A Likert scale was used to assess participants’ opinions and level of knowledge of UHC before, during and after the training. Participants’ discourses, official institutional communications and internal reports were also analyzed using QSR NVivo™ so as to capitalize their opinion on the course content, training design and organizational processes. Also, some potential impact of the skills acquired was assessed.

**Key findings** *(analysis ongoing)*

The results of the first survey (knowledge need assessment) provided AfHEA with valuable input to design an elaborate multidisciplinary approach with contents that match the needs and priorities of various stakeholders at different levels. Participants reported a knowledge need on all dimensions of the health systems building blocks, especially in relation to health financing issues. Thus, transversal issues such as quality of care, communication, institutional design, training programs, cross-sharing activities were addressed during the reaction evaluation especially in relation to UHC.

Overall, there is a general acceptance of the course and the adequacy of the course content. However, many expressed that the complexity of UHC will require more than short courses to provide the knowledge and skills to implement UHC. General knowledge increment was recorded however, more follow-up support at both individual and institutional levels have been expressed by participants.

Challenges included course management, follow-up and networking. Factor influencing the success of the design included a rigorous identification and selection process of key resource persons, strong coordination mechanism and communication to elaborate the contents. Also building institutional strategic partnerships were challenging and produced low results: partnering with academic institution, creating fruitful collaboration between regional and international bodies for supporting capacity building activities and maintaining alumni networking.

A lesson learned is a need to enlarge the course content with some academic accreditation. There was also an expressed interest in including cross functions and cross borders experience sharing.

**Conclusion**

As many West African countries are undertaking a thorough health system reform for UHC, the findings of this initiative show that there is skills shortage, a need to update skills and a limited capacity within countries for effective implementation of UHC. Thus, a systematic and comprehensive training for monitoring and sharing experiences coupled with an effective assessment of learning challenges will be needed in the region. This can help to, among other things, better tailor training contents to stakeholders’ needs and strongly contribute to accelerating a successful implementation of UHC.

1. Kirkpatrick, D. L. (2009). Implementing the Four Levels: A Practical Guide for Effective Evaluation of Training Programs: Easyread Large Edition. ReadHowYouWant. com. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)