

Co-creation: An innovative approach for improving multi-sectoral collaboration and coordination for accelerating progress towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in Togo

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COUNTRY OVERVIEW

- **Population:** 8,448,699 (World Bank 2022)
- **GDP:** 8.341 billion USD (World Bank 2022)
- **GDP per capita:** 942.6 USD (World Bank 2022)
- **Total Health Expenditure (THE) per Capita:** \$51.16 (World Bank 2022)
- **THE as a percentage of GDP:** 5.73% (World Bank 2019)

CONTEXT

- Throughout the last decade, Togo has been making important strides to reach universal health coverage (UHC).
- In 2011, the Togolese government established a mandatory health insurance scheme targeting public servants.
- In 2018, the Togolese government established its National Development Plan with delivering high quality health services to the entirety of the population as a cornerstone of the plan.
- Other strategies such as the National Health Policy, the National Plan for Health Development, and the National Health Financing Plan for UHC were also established to improve access and financing of high-quality health services as well as the domestic financing of those services.
- Despite the existence of UHC laws, policies, Togo's still faces significant barriers towards achieving health for all.
- Challenges include the lack of coordination among stakeholders and across sectors, insufficient domestic resource mobilization for UHC, persistent issues relative to access to high quality health services particularly in rural regions and continued high levels of out-of-pocket payments and catastrophic health expenditures.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

- To meet the challenges of the UHC process in Togo and develop contextualized solutions, Togo's Ministry of Health, Public Hygiene, and Universal Access to Care adopted a co-creation design and implementation approach
- Co-creation consists of bringing multiple stakeholders together to develop new practices that traditionally would have emerged only from a bureaucratic, top-down process
- Six co-creation events were held between August and September 2020. Through these sessions, the facilitation team (Ministry of Health and the Accelerator) guided about 60 main UHC actors in Togo, from 29 different governmental and non-governmental institutions, to analyze UHC challenges, identify their root causes, and develop solutions through open, inclusive dialogue and based on evidence.

ACTIVITY IMPACT

As a result of the co-creation process:

- An integrated national plan UHC was collaboratively designed
- A monitoring and evaluation mechanism was designed for the integrated plan for UHC, to facilitate its implementation and promote accountability
- A learning mechanism was developed to address key knowledge gaps to support effective policy implementation
- A new health insurance law has been finalized and adopted
- Co-creation has contributed to better communication between stakeholders in Togo, including representatives of the Presidency and Prime Minister, technical decision-makers, civil society, service providers and development partners.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Government leadership is essential for achieving systems changes for UHC and for sustained stakeholder engagement
- Co-creation is a promising and innovative approach that can be used by policy process facilitators at all levels (governments, civil society, funding and technical partners, etc.) to generate sustainable and contextual solutions to address implementation challenges.
- Ongoing communication, monitoring and accountability mechanisms are needed to maintain gains and momentum
- Ongoing documentation of results and a learning mechanism could continuously improve UHC processes in West Africa

CHALLENGES

- Not all participants participated in all subsequent co-creation sessions and meetings. The facilitators therefore had to reinforce communication with them between sessions.
- The organization of the sessions is made difficult by the multiple conflicting agendas of the actors. The facilitation team therefore took care to adapt to the availability of the actors. Facilitators also tried to simplify the task for the actors by producing easy-to-read material.