



KEY PRINCIPLES AND APPROACHES FOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

CHANGE IS A CONSTANT IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL. THE ORGANIZATION EXISTS SOLELY TO ACHIEVE CHANGE, AND AS THE WORLD CHANGES WE TOO WILL CONTINUE TO ADAPT SO THAT WE CAN KEEP POSITIONING OURSELVES TO BE AS EFFECTIVE AS HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISM DEMANDS US TO BE.

Amnesty International's approach to capacity building and desired change is informed by a set of **key principles**. These should form the backbone of each and every capacity building **project** and **process**, and are the expression of the movement's core values at work within its capacity building efforts.

Amnesty International has established the following good practice principles and approaches which all actors involved in capacity building must aspire to observe.





APPLYING AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S CORE VALUES

Amnesty International's core values should be reflected in the way that capacity building work is designed and implemented. We seek to ensure that all actors involved in capacity building respect the movement's commitment to the principles of international solidarity, effective action for individuals or groups, the universality and indivisibility of human rights, impartiality and independence, democracy and mutual respect.

ENSURING OWNERSHIP

Amnesty International recognizes the complex and very personal nature of change processes which take place when capacity building interventions achieve their desired impact. We believe that all actors and stakeholders in any capacity building project must therefore play a role to facilitate human change. It is important from the outset to establish a framework that will allow capacity building participants to engage actively in an assessment

of their own needs and potential, and agree on all aspects of the project before it starts, including the capacity building objectives, capacity building providers, and other components. Creating an environment to empower participants is a priority, and enabling ownership is key to effective capacity building. The approach must facilitate initiatives, not impose them, and must be driven by clearly identified needs.

USE OF METHODS APPROPRIATE TO CONTEXT AND CULTURE

There must be a thorough understanding of the context and culture in which the capacity building intervention is to take place. An understanding and appreciation of how people think, feel, behave and change is crucial. Different cultures and contexts have different needs and require particular approaches and skills to address these appropriately and effectively. Amnesty International does not take "one-size-fits-all" approaches.

SEEKING GROWTH-RELATED RESULTS

Amnesty International's capacity building efforts are intrinsically linked to the organization's strategic approach to growth and mobilization across the globe. Every capacity building intervention must have as one of its objectives increased growth in one or a combination of the following: money, people, diversity, and activism.

SEEKING RIGHTS-RELATED RESULTS

Amnesty International's investment in strengthening the movement's capacity is motivated by its commitment to achieve improvements in the situation of human rights across the world. Every capacity building initiative should strive to clearly identify the contribution it is making towards this end.

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MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity building providers, supporters, donors and participants must fully understand the impact of interventions by taking a creative and committed approach to monitoring and evaluation. An integral part of all Amnesty International capacity building projects is to analyze outcomes in-depth to learn whether interventions are effective, and to explore the conditions that contribute to success and sustainability.

OUTCOME, IMPACT AND SUSTAINABILITY

It is crucial to have quality indicators for the outcomes or effects of Amnesty International's capacity building work with participating entities, at the level of their own organizational capacity, as well as for the longer-term impact on the external environment. It is essential that key actors in any capacity building project develop and define their **own project indicators** in terms of **goals, objectives and outputs/products**

related to the specific capacity building intervention. There will be an overarching emphasis on the **sustainability** of all capacity building projects. Projects need to ensure that built capacity remains within a section, structure or other Amnesty International entity, and is not tied to any one individual or individuals.

LEARNING AND CHANGE

Amnesty International is a learning organization. We are committed to promoting and sustaining a culture of organizational learning and to providing an environment open to reflection prior to, during, and after a capacity building project has taken place. We work towards ensuring that all stakeholders involved in Amnesty International capacity building projects and processes will learn from the experience.

CHANGE – AND HOW TO MANAGE IT

Capacity building necessarily involves change. All actors involved in capacity building must have an awareness of the implications of their interventions. This includes how to manage change and, in some instances, the discomfort that can follow a process of change. It is important that the participating entity is open to and prepared for change.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Amnesty International operates with multi-directional accountability; each actor within a given capacity building intervention is accountable for their part in the process.

GENDER AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Amnesty International recognizes that gender issues permeate all levels of capacity building. At each phase of design and implementation of capacity building projects we will ensure that all stakeholders are sensitive to issues of gender relations and power.

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FUNDING-SENSITIVE

Capacity building often needs backing from far-sighted donors and other organizations. It is important to ensure long-term benefits of change. Amnesty International recognizes that quality practice is more likely to occur when it is completely separate from any broader resourcing decisions or funding issues. Every effort will be made to ensure that donors are sensitive to the ways their position may influence the design, implementation and outcomes of capacity building initiatives.

THE CAPACITY BUILDING PROVIDER OR CHANGE AGENT

Capacity building providers bring themselves into the process.

Integrity is the key personal quality of the capacity building provider in ensuring a high-quality capacity building project and process. Capacity building providers bring intuition, wisdom, experience and judgement as they engage with this ever-shifting terrain. Self-knowledge and humility are key characteristics which contribute towards a quality practice, as are flexibility and the ability to work with a range of different intervention styles.

ADAPTIVE

Amnesty International does not work with ready-made packages of capacity building projects. We work with a “mixing bowl” approach whereby different elements are combined in different ways and approaches are adapted in a manner appropriate to the participating entity, purpose and context.

TIMELY AND COST EFFECTIVE

Amnesty International is investing considerable financial and human resources in capacity building. Appropriate pacing of capacity building interventions, appropriate scale and scope are key concerns that Amnesty International aims to take into account in the design and implementation of its capacity building projects.

NON-DETERMINISTIC

Amnesty International provides space for openness to recognize unexpected results. Emergent outputs and outcomes form an essential part of the capacity building process.

WHO IS INVOLVED IN CAPACITY BUILDING IN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL?

Capacity building providers: the people/organizations who deliver and facilitate capacity building initiatives.

Capacity building supporters: the people/teams who may contribute to the shaping of the initiative at various stages but who are not directly involved in its delivery.

Capacity building donors: people/organizations who fund the capacity building initiative. These might be internal to Amnesty International, or external.

Capacity building participants: those entities and individuals who are participating in the capacity building initiative – in most cases, Amnesty International sections and structures.

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