



Social Dialogue Forum

People-oriented approach in shaping local policies and services to vulnerable groups

WHAT IS SOCIAL DIALOGUE FORUM?

Many significant decision-making powers and responsibilities are being devolved to the municipal level. In part this has occurred because of a realization that citizens' needs can be better addressed when services are delivered by agencies closer to their recipients.

When the services are planned and delivered top-down by the authorities they often fail to identify and properly address the actual needs of the vulnerable groups in the municipality. This in turn impedes the effectiveness of the targeted services towards those that are left behind and leads to inefficient use of already scarce municipal resources.

Consequently, many vulnerable groups such as Roma and other ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, children and youth at risk, elderly etc. not only suffer from poverty and long-term unemployment but they are also excluded and deprived from having a voice in shaping the services that are supposed to serve them.

People-oriented, bottom-up municipal approaches in shaping local policies and services to vulnerable groups enable the municipality to properly serve those left behind but at the same time to empower them to participate and benefit in the local development.

The Social Dialogue Forum is such participatory platform based on the premises of non-discrimination and acknowledgment that the citizens, including the vulnerable groups know best their problems and needs. It provides the municipalities with a framework to properly identify and shape long-term solutions to social inclusion, alleviating poverty and reducing inequalities engaging with the communities it aims to serve.

The Social Dialogue Forum is based on the "Leave No One Behind" principle and seeks for multidisciplinary, client-centred and evidence-based intervention to help people to integrate/reintegrate, socialize and include in the community and society itself. The ultimate goal is to assist persons to integrate into the community and to achieve the greatest possible functioning and coping capabilities, independence and participation in society. It consists from a number of interventions, in which various actors co-operate to assist users/beneficiaries in their own efforts. This involves actors/stakeholders from many different professions, organizations and sectors of the society. Depending on the type of welfare system, the Social Dialogue Forum usually includes different health and social services, employment services, education services and social or private insurance. In addition, employers and trade unions are often involved as well as the individuals concerned.

The approach is needs-based and its success lies in the multi-disciplinary approach that requires cooperation between the local institutions, civil society organizations and the local private sector. The Social Dialogue Forum by definition requires cross-sector collaboration and is most successful when it includes variety of relevant stakeholders coming from different areas (education, employment, social protection, etc.). Often, the coordination role and logistics support of the Forum is entrusted to a local non-profit organisation which works in close cooperation with the municipality, the social protection centres and local community groups.

HOW WILL THIS ONLINE COURSE HELP YOU?

This course will provide sufficient knowledge to its participants, with which they could embrace the idea of local government working for provision of community-based services in particular of people-oriented approach in shaping local policies and services to vulnerable groups.

The main goal is to improve the knowledge of professionals from the local government units in setting up and scaling up Social Dialogue Forum at local level as a mechanism necessary for tailoring local social services for vulnerable groups.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Understand the concept of Social Dialogue Forum, its purpose, objectives and benefits in provision of community-based services,
- Recognise the key steps of the process of setting up Social Dialogue Forum as an approach involving multi-sector stakeholders for support to vulnerable groups and their link to Agenda 2030 and SDGs,
- Identify key factors that ensure successful administering the process of Social Dialogue Forum,
- Outline the features of the concept of Social Dialogue Forum, necessary for advocating of the concept to local authorities.

TARGET AUDIENCES

The course is designed for professionals working in the units of local self-government and Local Government Associations who are responsible for social protection and have certain initial knowledge on the topic.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course is divided in four modules:

- Module 1 - Concept of participatory decision-making and increased cooperation between stakeholders;
- Module 2 - Key characteristics and steps for multi-sector approach to social services, and links with Sustainable Development Goals;
- Module 3 - Process of development and setting up of Social Dialogue Forum as multi-sector group for Social Services (Social Mapping, Identification and mobilization of members; Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders; Developing protocol for action; Defining needs and actions)
- Module 4 – Monitoring, Evaluation and Financial support and Sustainability of the work of the Social Dialogue Forum;

Each module will be delivered in the period of one week, therefore, the entire period for the course delivery and completion is one month.

LEARNING METHODS

This course is facilitator-guided and offers online learning methodology and tools including readings, case studies, videos, guided discussions, assignments and quizzes. These interactive tools will enable you to share your views, discuss with others and receive feedback. Vivid forum and online discussions and exchange of ideas and thoughts will encourage you to establish a permanent network of practitioners who work in local governments on social protection.

HOURS OF STUDY

For successful completion of the entire course, you will need to devote 12 hours in total, or 3 hours of learning per module, per week.

EVALUATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND CERTIFICATE FOR COURSE COMPLETION

In order to get certificate for course completion, you should complete all the readings, actively contribute to the discussion forums, responding to the specific assignments, and complete the quizzes. Each of these tasks is scored with maximum of 100 points, while the threshold for successful completion of the course is 70 points.

LANGUAGE

This course is available in English language.

COURSE DELIVERY

The first delivery of the course will happen from 17 May 2021 until 13 June 2021 in collaboration with NALAS member Local Government Associations. To express interest for the course, please contact the Local Government Association in your economy or NALAS at info@nalas.eu

THIS COURSE IS PART OF NALAS e-ACADEMY

NALAS e-Academy is an online platform which enables dissemination of relevant regional knowledge to each municipal employee in SEE, in the same time offering opportunity for an interesting, creative, step by step learning. NALAS e-Academy provides a superb knowledge on topic relevant for local government professionals in the areas relevant to their work. Taking advantage of new technologies, the learning experience provided by the NALAS e-academy is affordable, innovative and practitioner focused.

COURSE FACILITATOR

Mrs. Kristina Hadzi-Vasileva



Mrs. Hadzi-Vasileva has been involved in the design, implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation of development programs and projects, for more than 15 years. She holds a Master Degree in Gender and Ethnic Studies from the University of Greenwich, London, UK. She has worked with local governments and civil society organizations and managed programs and projects in the areas of good governance and decentralization. For almost 10 years she managed the “Community Forums Program” which supported citizen participation in local government decision-making as well as local government transparency and accountability. During her career she has delivered trainings for CSOs and local government representatives on gender equality, participatory decision-making, project development, outreach skills, advocacy and lobbying.