



PROCESS DOCUMENTATION FOR ADVANCING UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE POLICIES

A COMPENDIUM OF RESOURCES

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Before using this compendium

Purpose

This compendium presents a set of products and tools on the process documentation (PD) approach that have been developed through the African Collaborative for Health Financing Solutions (ACS) project. By developing this paper, we aim to promote prospective policy analysis to strengthen universal health coverage (UHC) processes that take place in sub-Saharan African health systems.

In this compendium, we provide the reader with a compilation of resources that help to understand and implement this approach.

The reader should gain an understand of the ACS project's process documentation approach and the rationale behind the development of each tool. Additionally, we provided links to enable the reader to easily access each tool.

Who is this compendium for?

This compendium primarily targets various actors involved in UHC policies and processes in sub-Saharan Africa such as policymakers, policy implementers, public and private health service providers, civil society organization actors, academics/researchers who would like to undertake and/or generate knowledge around process documentation activities. It could also be useful for documenting the processes related to any health policy.

How to use this compendium?

This compendium is made up of three sections:

- The first section “**Understanding UHC process documentation**” presents some key concepts relating to process documentation. It highlights the objectives and importance of undertaking PD to solidify UHC processes.
- The second section “**Overview of PD resources**” presents the different tools that have been produced by the ACS project for whomever who would like to implement PD and provide guidance for its operationalization.
- In the third section “**Application and lessons learned**”, the reader will find lessons learned from ACS' experience of implementing process documentation in select Sub-Saharan African countries.

For applying the PD approach, you may utilize each of the above-mentioned resources independently, depending on your objective. After reading the introduction to the compendium, we recommend that you click on the map below or browse the table of contents for the section or the specific product or tool you are interested in. After reading the brief presentation of each resource, you can access its full version by following the specific link provided.

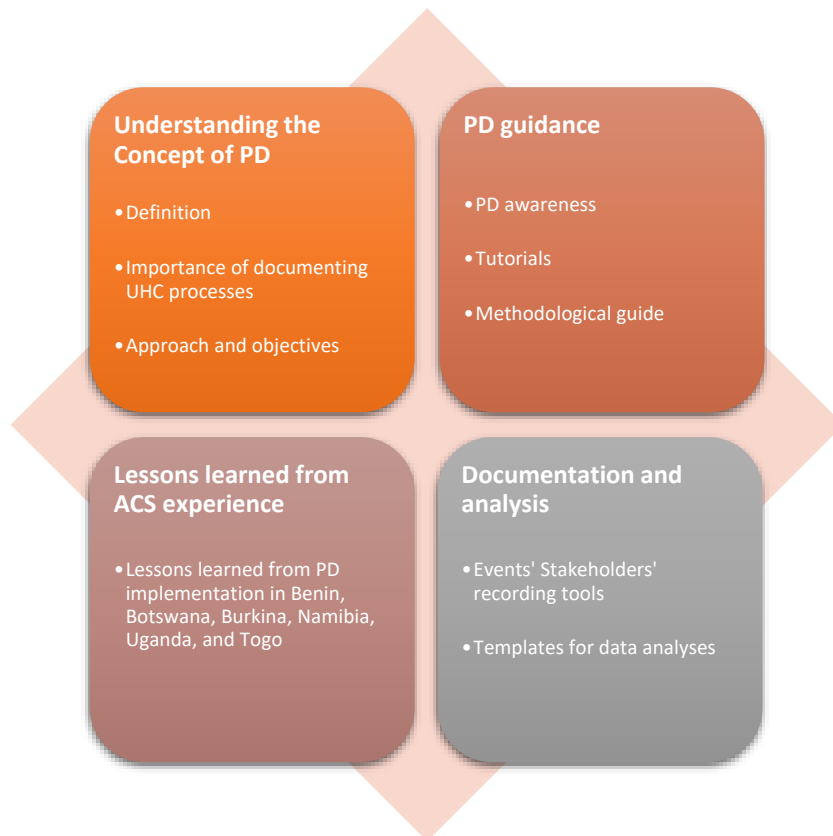


Figure 1: Mapping of ACS PD products and tools

When is it relevant to use this compendium?

Whis this compendium, we intend to help users to know more about how to perform UHC process documentation and how it can be improved. Users may adapt and use the various tools in their own context. Here are few situations in which these resources can be used:

- The sensitization video explains some of the challenges that face health system reforms for UHC when focusing progress tracking on quantitative data only. It shows how process documentation allows policymakers to embrace additional dimensions of the complex nature of health systems reforms to better understand the influential factors of UHC processes. This sensitization video can be used as advocacy material to raise awareness on the value-add of process documentation combined with other monitoring and evaluation tools.
- Tutorials, methodological guide and data collection and analysis templates provide technical tips and practical tools for those who are interested to implement process documentation.
- Lessons learned from ACS experience of applied process documentation in Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Namibia, Uganda, and Togo can serve as valuable considerations that the reader can use to inform their process documentation strategy.

People to contact

We would like to receive your feedback and comments on these products and tools, as well as on the whole PD methodological approach since this approach is undergoing continuous improvement. Should you need further clarification, please contact one of ACS team or partner members through the addresses below:

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Section I: Understanding UHC process documentation

Definition of process documentation

Process documentation is a prospective policy analysis approach that consist of (i) systematically documenting all relevant events and stakeholders that could potentially influence or be influenced by a given UHC process; (ii) continuously analyzing them; and (iii) using the lessons learnt to adapt and improve the process.

Importance of documenting UHC processes

The journey towards UHC in Sub-Saharan African countries is not just a technical process; it is also a highly political one. Addressing challenges identified along the journey towards UHC is a complex process. Rigid protocols that do not take into account this complexity have limited application or can even be counterproductive. Consensus on what to do and how to do it can be limited since stakeholders come to the table with various ideas, interests, networks and institutional references. The UHC process also happens in an open system, whereby unpredictable influences from various sub-systems impact (and are impacted by) the policy change process. The PD approach helps to address these various challenges by continuously collecting and prospectively analysing information about a given UHC process, for continuous adaptation and improvement.

PD also provides the way for a systematic “learn-by-doing” strategy whereby one collects information systematically about a process at a given period of time, analyses the problem to draw lessons that are incorporated into the process, continuously, until the desired outcome is reached.

The African Collaborative for Health Financing Solutions’ (ACS) approach for process documentation

At the inception of the African Collaborative for Health Financing Solution (the ACS project), there was a need to develop an approach to better capture and manage the challenges that face policymakers and implementers when designing, implementing, and assessing policies and strategies to advance their UHC journey. The PD approach was developed through a collaboration with various partners under the leadership of the Benin’s “*Centre de Recherche en Reproduction Humaine et en Démographie*” (CERRHUD), to help country UHC process facilitators with real-time documentation and prospective policy analysis. This technique was first tested by ACS in Uganda and then progressively adopted and enriched in other countries.

Objectives

The PD approach seeks to:

- map the various steps of the “journey” towards UHC;
- identify the factors that influence the UHC process and understand how these influences shape policies;
- discern the motivations and decisions of stakeholders in advancing towards UHC;
- draw learnings that will inform UHC decision-making.

Section 2: Overview of PD resources

This section introduces and describes the products and technical resources that have been developed by the ACS project.

PD awareness

The video presents the rationale behind the development of the PD methodological approach and why its application is relevant for any strategies and policies aiming at advancing UHC in sub-Saharan Africa countries. This video also highlights its application in various countries in the region such as Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Namibia, Uganda, and Togo, as well as some key results already achieved. ACS team members and partners share their experience in the recording in French accessible [here](#).

Tutorial videos

This series of videos is an online tutorial-style training on the PD methodological approach. It explains in detail what the PD approach is and how it can be applied for UHC process monitoring and prospective analysis. The course is organized into four (4) modules with a video for each one.

[Module 1: This introduction](#) presents the definition of the PD concept and its utility. The conceptual framework (Walt and Gilson policy triangle) on which the PD approach is built is also explained. Finally, the different steps of a PD cycle are also described as follows 1) the preparation, 2) the recording of events and stakeholders, including immediate analysis, 3) the periodic analysis of a set of records, and 4) in-depth analysis based on a research question. Each of these steps is described in detail in the following modules.

[Module 2: The preparation](#) starts by defining some key concepts involved in the PD approach, for which an understanding is necessary before starting its application. Then, it presents the resources needed for implementing PD, with a focus on human resources. Various actors involved in with PD implementation are presented, and their respective roles and responsibilities explained including the functional relationships among the “PD team”, “coaches” and “mentors”.

[Module 3: The data recording](#) module addresses the question of how information about events and stakeholders is collected and recorded through specific the tools presented below. It first describes the various sources of information regarding events and stakeholders in a specific process. These sources include policy documents, interviews, observations, focus group discussions, online or printed media articles, audio-visual products, etc. The video finally describes the storage of events and stakeholders in practice and how the immediate analysis is performed in each case.

[Module 4: The data analysis](#) module presents the analysis of recorded information. First, the principles of PD analyses are explained, including flexibility and adaptation, iteration, saturation, triangulation, and reflexivity. Compliance with these principles provides the PD approach with its value, relevance and soundness. Second, the types and steps of analysis are described: immediate analysis, periodic analysis of a set of records, and in-depth analysis based on a research question. This module focuses on the two last types, the first one having been presented in the Module 3.

Methodological guide

The methodological guide is the foundational document to understand the PD approach. It provides explanation about the concept of PD, and how to apply that approach. It also answers the frequently asked questions about PD. The guide is organized into three main sections:

- The first section, “**What is important to know about PD and how to get started?**”, explains the rationale for performing PD, specific objectives of the methodology, and structure of the PD team.

- The second section, “**How to record events and stakeholders?**”, discusses the operational definitions of the key concepts of “event” and “stakeholder” among others. It also explains the main items to record for each event and stakeholders and where to source the information.
- The third section, “**How to perform analyses of records in process documentation**”, addresses questions related to the general principles of analysis in PD and the different types of analysis.

The PD methodological guide is accessible [here](#).

Events and stakeholders data collection tools

Two data collection tools help to systematically record all the relevant information on the events related to the process being studied and the stakeholders involved. An event is a elementary unit of the process studied, about which a structured set of information can be collected to shed light on a step of the process of interest. It may be related to the policy context, content, process, or actors. A stakeholder is a person or an organization who has impact on or is impacted by the process of interest. It is an actor or a group of actors who has an interest in an issue under consideration and who has or could have an active or passive influence on the decision-making and/or process implementation.

These data collection tools are made up of a set of questions that deepen the understanding of a given event or stakeholder and its relationship with and impact on the process being studied.

A few questions at the end of each form help to perform an immediate analysis, a first step of the data analysis process. The immediate analysis allows the documenter to have better reflexivity while drawing interpretation and lessons from individual events or stakeholders. You may access these forms through [this link](#) for the events’ tool and [this one](#) for the stakeholders’ one.

Analysis templates

ACS developed two analysis templates for events and stakeholders. These templates have been designed as tools to help PD teams to structure the periodic desk analysis of the events and stakeholders they have documented. They are intended to be flexible and can be adapted according to specific needs and context. Each template is made up of four (4) main sections:

- **Context:** where the PD approach and the context of its implementation is briefly presented;
- **Methodology:** where the methods for data collection and treatment, as well as ethical concerns are stated;
- **Results:** this is the portion for descriptive analysis of data collected;
- **Intrepretation:** this portion is for the explicative analysis. It identifies the successes and the challenges of the process being studied, and draws lessons and recommendations for further process adaptation.

Section 3: Application & Lessons learned

Application

After two years of PD implementation, ACS has collated lessons learned from its experiences in Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Namibia, Uganda, and Togo (report is accessible [here](#)). Data used for this analysis came from 1) Minutes of regular check-in calls with ACS team members and PD reviews; 2) PD reports, ACS knowledge products and project activity reports; 3) documenters' feedback provided through two online surveys (August and November 2020), Zoom calls and face-to-face discussions from November to December 2020.

Key achievements include the successful documentation of the UHC roadmap development process in Uganda, rapid learning cycles to support the pilot phase of the social health insurance scheme "AM-ARCH"¹ in Benin, and stakeholder analysis for supporting the development of a work plan to accelerate UHC progress in Togo.

Challenges raised from the PD implementation are mainly related to:

- ethical considerations limiting the sharing of data with external actors,
- reduced ability for documenters to access accurate and timely information when they are not part of the policy dialogue around the studied process,
- overlaps with other monitoring approaches during the events documentation,
- significant time investment for the documenters to capture and record events as much as possible,
- the management of stakeholders' sensitivity to the exploitation of their opinions, viewpoints given the political nature of some findings,
- data management constraints due to limited edit functionality leading to a low convenience for data analysis, unavailability of the database in poor connectivity settings.

Lessons learned

Lessons learnt through PD implementation include the following:

- PD is a promising approach for understanding and navigating the complex processes related to UHC. However, one should clearly define the boundaries of the process studied in order to increase its feasibility.
- There is a need for an appropriate technology for qualitative analysis to facilitate data collection and data management.
- PD implementation is time-consuming, due to the work involved in data recording and periodic analysis. One strategy to mitigate this challenge is to involve field actors as documenters for getting first-hand information and increasing timeliness.
- Clearly articulating the added value of PD in improving the process at hand is crucial, even for the staff involved in the documentation.
- Maintaining a certain degree of flexibility helps to adapt the PD technique to specific country contexts.
- Ethical issues and confidentiality remain among most important challenges in the PD implementation.

To access all ACS production around learning to catalyze UHC processes, please follow this link <https://r4d.org/acs-learning-together-to-catalyze-uhc/>.

¹ The ARCH (Insurance for Building Human Capacity) project is a social protection scheme in Benin with four components: health insurance (AM), occupational training, microloans, and pension. The AM component is being implemented through a pilot since July 2019, with gradual generalization starting from January 2021.

Section 4: Resources

- [Description of process documentation approach](#)
- [Lessons learned from ACS experience of documenting UHC processes](#)
- [Introduction to process documentation](#)
- [Preparatory phase of process documentation](#)
- [Data recording in process documentation](#)
- [Data analysis in process documentation](#)
- [Process documentation methodology guide](#)
- [Event recording form](#)
- [Stakeholder recording form](#)



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