



# DOMAIN 6 PARTICIPATION, INFLUENCE AND VOICE

**THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL INEQUALITY FRAMEWORK:  
THE OXFAM TOOLKIT**



**OXFAM**

This domain covers inequalities in the capability to participate in decision-making and have a voice and influence in political, social and family spheres of life. It refers to participation in democratic processes, the political representation of different groups, the ability to join workplace associations and community action groups, or involvement in decision-making in the family.

## DOMAIN 6 – PARTICIPATION, INFLUENCE AND VOICE

Inequality in the capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence

The multidimensional inequality framework allows you to measure inequalities in seven domains that matter for human life, through a number of suggested indicators, measures and variables of disaggregation.

This paper contains a brief description of the participation, influence and voice domain and the list of sub-domains, indicators and measures suggested to measure and assess inequalities in the capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence. Please, remember that the MIF is flexible and it is up to you to decide how to use it, based on what makes sense in your unique context.

### Brief description

The capability to participate in decision-making, have a voice and influence, affects **political, social and family spheres of life**. Different forms of participation covered in this domain, include, **participation in democratic processes** such as voting in general and local elections, **representation** of different groups in national and local government, the **ability to join workplace associations and community action groups**, and **involvement in decision-making in the family**. In addition to participation this domain also looks at differences in influence and voice.

In terms of inequality, it is recognised that it is possible for some individuals to have **'too much' influence** as well as 'too little'. Too much influence by some individuals and groups can have a negative effect on other people's capabilities. There are growing concerns that economic inequality has led to **political capture** by elites, eroding democratic governance, influencing policy making in their favour and to the detriment of others. **Unequal influence and power also exists within families** which leads to forms of **gender domination**, mainly by men.

The **sub-domains** covered in the participation, influence and voice domain are:

**6.A:** Participate in and have influence over democratic and other decision-making processes at any territorial level, and including indigenous, customary or community decision-making processes

**6.B:** Participate in decision-making and make decisions affecting your own life independently within your household and family

**6.C:** Have freedom to form and join civil organisations, social movements and solidarity groups, including trade unions; freedom of assembly and association and enjoy active citizenship

### Indicators and measures

It is highly unlikely that you will find data for your city, country or region for *all* measures across *all* domains. What is suggested here is a relatively comprehensive list of indicators and measures, presented by each sub-domain. You can choose priority measures from this list and add or adapt measures to suit your context.

**To find data** related to this domain, as well as using any national surveys and sources available, you can consider the following global data sources (please, visit the [online Oxfam toolkit](#) for updated global and regional data sources):

- Barometer Surveys
- [Sustainable Development Goal Indicators](#) Global Database
- [World Values Survey](#)

**Remember make the framework yours! You can choose priority measures from this list and add or adapt measures to suit your context**

### Sub-domain 6.A. Participate in and have influence over democratic and other decision-making processes at any territorial level, and including indigenous, customary or community decision-making processes

#### **Indicator 6.1: Political participation**

Measure 6.1.1: Percentage of the population entitled to vote

Measure 6.1.2: Inequality in voter turnout in national or local elections

Measure 6.1.3: Percentage of seats in (a) national parliaments and (b) local governments by sex, age, disability status, privately educated, family background and population groups (e.g. ethnicity) (as above)

#### **Indicator 6.2: Political activity**

Measure 6.2.1: Percentage who have formally contacted local representatives /national government representative/political party in last 12 months

Measure 6.2.2: Percentage who have exercised their right to petition or protest in last 12 months

Measure 6.2.3: Percentage who attended a political rally, meeting or speech in last 12 months

Measure 6.2.4: Percentage who have been involved in any official consultation, town- hall meeting and/or any other official governmental practice in rulemaking (national, regional and/or local level)

#### **Indicator 6.3: Perceived influence**

Measure 6.3.1: Percentage who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area

### Sub-domain 6.B. Participate in decision-making and make decisions affecting your own life independently within your household and family

#### **Indicator 6.4: Decision-making within families**

Measure 6.4.1: Who makes final decision within the family on key aspects such as where to live, children's education, work, finances etc.: (a) decisions are made jointly; (b) decisions are made by head of family (specify gender)

### Sub-domain 6.C. Have freedom to form and join civil organisations, social movements and solidarity groups, including trade unions; freedom of assembly and association and enjoy active citizenship

***Indicator 6.5: Taking part in civil organizations, social movements and other collective actions***

Measure 6.5.1: Percentage who are a member of a local decision-making body  
(town/village council, local association, local education or health bodies)

Measure 6.4.2: Percentage of employees who are a member of a trade union or workplace organisation active in relations and conditions of work

Measure 6.5.3: Percentage active in a campaigning group, social movement or political party (can be via social media)

## Oxfam 2019

This Oxfam toolkit was written by Claire Kumar. The Multidimensional Inequality Framework and online toolkits are free resources which have been developed as part of a collaboration between academics in the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) at the London School of Economics (LSE) and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), led by Abigail McKnight, and practitioners in Oxfam, led by Alex Prats. The initial project was funded by the LSE's International Inequalities Institute's Atlantic Visiting Fellows Programme.

The project team was formed by Abigail McKnight (project lead, Associate Director CASE, LSE), Alex Prats (Inequality Lead, Oxfam Intermón), Ana María Claver (Policy advisor, Oxfam Intermón), Polly Vizard (Associate Director CASE, LSE), Pedro Mendes Loureiro, (Research Officer, PhD candidate SOAS), Claire Kumar (Senior Consultant), Patricio Espinoza-Lucero (Research Assistant, CASE, LSE), Laurie Mompelat (Research Assistant, CASE, LSE) and Cara Leavey (Research Assistant, CASE, LSE). As advisors: Ricardo Fuentes-Nieva (Executive Director Oxfam Mexico), Ben Fine (Professor of Economics, SOAS), Chiara Mariotti (Policy Advisor Oxfam GB), and Naila Kabeer (Professor of Gender and Development, LSE).

This paper is part of a series of papers written to inform public debate on development, poverty and inequality. For further information on the issues raised in this paper please email [inequality.toolkit@oxfam.org](mailto:inequality.toolkit@oxfam.org)

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Oxfam Intermón, Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes, 641, 08010 Barcelona (Spain).

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