Quality Action
Improving HIV Prevention in Europe

Quality Action
CASE STUDY

1. Name and country of the organisation

(Please state the name and the country of the organisation that implemented this practical application of a QA/QI tool as part of Quality Action. We do not publish this information unless you agree. You can remain anonymous by adjusting the settings at the end of this form).

Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH), Switzerland

2. Authors of the case study and contact details

(Please provide then name of the author(s) of this case study and any contact names, Email address or websites where readers can access more information about this practical application of a QA/QI tool).

-Evaluation and Research Unit of the FOPH, Heuer Christine: Midterm-Check (MTC) , National Programme on HIV and other STI (NPHS) 2011-2017, Summary Report on Sub-projects 1 and 2, October 2014
-Sub-project 1: Matthias Gnaedinger, Communicable Diseases Unit; Prevention and Promotion Section of the FOPH
-Contact: matthias.gnaedinger @bag.admin.ch
-Website: http://www.bag.admin.ch/evaluation/01759/02062/15106/index.html?lang=en

3. External support (facilitators/partners/technical assistance)

(Please list the names of other organisations and/or people who were involved in this practical application of a QA/QI tool, e.g. project partners, technical assistance, external stakeholders etc..).

-Sub-project 2: external contractor, Public Health Promotion GmbH, Worb

4. Project/Programme and key population/target group addressed

(Please describe the project/programme to which you applied the tool and the key population/target group addressed).

Switzerland has a national strategy for prevention as well as diagnosis and treatment of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, including syphilis, gonorrhoea and chlamydia, amongst others. The National Programme on HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (NPHS) 2011–2017 is based on scientific evidence and was prepared during 2009-2010 with the participation of various stakeholders. The Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) leads and manages the programme and works closely with other federal departments, cantonal authorities and NGO umbrella organisations.

At the end of June 2014, the halfway point of implementing the NPHS 2011–2017, the FOPH decided to make a provisional assessment of the programme. The results are being used to assess the degree to which goals have been achieved, to guide programme implementation in the second half of the term and plan for the period after 2017. This assessment was termed the "Midterm-Check of the National Progamme on HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (NPHS) 2011–2017. Or, in short, the Midterm-Check NPHS 2011–2017.

5. Goals/aims of applying the QA/QI tool

(Please list the goals you wanted to achieve with the practical application of the tool).

The Midterm-Check NPHS 2011–2017 aimed to respond to the following questions:

1. How do central stakeholders assess the state and quality of implementation thus far, as well as the degree to which NPHS 2011–2017 goals have been achieved?

2. How do stakeholders assess the lifespan of the NPHS 2011–2017? Can and should it be extended?

3. How do stakeholders assess the need for an HIV&STI follow-up programme and/or the feasibility and relevance of integrating HIV&STI in a sexual health programme for Switzerland?

Furthermore, by applying the Shift tool, the FOPH counted on receiving a number of recommendations and tips for the second half of the NPHS 2011–2017.

6. Tool and methodology used

(Please indicate which of the five tools you used (Succeed, QIP, PQD, PIQA, Schiff) and briefly sketch out the steps and measures of how you applied it).

The Midterm Check included two sub-projects:
In sub-project 2, semi-structured interviews were conducted amongst 42 experts in the Swiss field of HIV and other STI.

In sub-project 1, the Federal Office of Public Health and the operational stakeholders used the Shift tool to assess the quality of NPHS 2011–2017. The core element of subproject 1 was a workshop with 23 stakeholder representatives and two accompanying experts from Quality Action, Chantal De Mesmaeker from the Luxembourg Red Cross Society, and Matthias Wentzlaff-Eggebert from the German Federal Centre for Health Education. Beforehand, the FOPH shortened and adapted the Shift questionnaire. In their organisations and using desk work, subproject 1 attendees prepared the workshop, which was held 2-4 y 2014 in Montezillon, canton Neuchâtel. At the Workshop, work was mainly done in two groups (regional and national stakeholders of the NPHS 2011–2017) but also in a plenary session.
The FOPH shortened and adapted the Shift questionnaire because it was perceived as far too extensive for the provisional assessment of the existing programme. The original questionnaire included some points that were not relevant for the assessment, or not relevant in the Swiss context. Furthermore, for practical reasons, the FOPH could not afford to invite stakeholders for a workshop longer than two working days. The FOPH offered board and lodging, but no financial remuneration. To assure that we could do the whole assessment during the workshop, we compromised by shortening and adapting the Shift questionnaire to our needs, and let stakeholders read the questionnaire and prepare some chapters in advance.

7. Results and benefits of applying the QA/QI tool

(Please describe what resulted from applying the tool and if and how your project/programme benefitted).

By letting the stakeholders read the questionnaire and prepare some chapters in advance, they attended the workshop well prepared and no time was lost with time-consuming explanatins of the questions. Furthermore, the division of the workshop into two groups, regional and national stakeholders, proved to be a good process: After work and discussion with similar organisations, all stakeholders regularly met in plenary sessions to exchange and discuss their results. Daily business and circumstances are often very different for regional stakeholders than for national ones. The regular exchanges in plenary session showed where broad-based consolidation was possible.

Two working days of workshop were enough to answer the main questions and work through the Shift questionnaire. The attendees judged the quality of the programme as a national strategy document as “good”. Respondents did not see any need for adjustments to the NPHS 2011–2017 document. In their opinion, the strategy remains sound. They also indicated that various goals are “permanent tasks” that cannot be achieved by a specific date. The question regarding quality and degree to which goals have been achieved gave rise to a wealth of suggestions and tips for the second half of programme implementation.
In a summary workshop, the results of the two sub-projects were reviewed, discussed and formulated as an formal report to the Federal Commission for Sexual Health (FCSH), which in turn prioritized the recommendations for the FOPH and the stakeholders for the second half of programme implementation.

8. Recommendations

(Please describe the lessons learnt from positive and negative experiences during the process of using the tool itself and about the quality of projects/programmes like yours).

We highly recommend the Shift tool to assess programme quality. One should not be shy to use it as a “construction kit” and adapt it to one's needs. It is a very vast tool that covers every aspect in the field of programme development, making it virtually impossible to overlook an aspect that might be relevant in developing a programme. In assessing the programme quality, however, it might be too extensive in certain aspects that are not relevant in a paticular national context.

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(who will then forward it to their WP 6 contact).

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