

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 We do not publish this information unless you agree.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).

Quality Action, 26 European member states

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).

Christiana Nöstlinger (cnoestlinger@itg.be) and Bea Vuylsteke (bvuyksteke@itg.be), Institute of Tropical Medicine, Antwerp, Belgium

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..).

Al-Baghdadi, Sayneb, Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA), Germany; Chiotan, Cristina, EuroHealthNet (EHN), Belgium; Gallinat, Anna, EHN, Belgium; Hammerstedt, Lennie, Swedish Institute for Communicable Disease Control (SMI), Sweden; Hales, David, consultant, USA; Kaura, Claudia, BZgA, Germany; Nardone, Anthony, Public Health England (PHE), United Kingdom; Reermann, Helene, BZgA, Germany; Seery, Deirdre Sexual Health Centre (SHC), Ireland; Urwitz, Viveca, SMI, Sweden; Vierneisel, Carolin, Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe (DAH), Germany; von Rüden, Ursula, BZgA, Germany; Wentzlaff-Eggebert, Matthias, BZgA, Germany.

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).

Quality Action is the EU-wide 'Joint Action on Improving Quality in HIV Prevention'. The project, which brings together 25 associated and 20 collaborating partners from 26 Member States, started on 1 March 2013 and runs for three years. Quality Action contributes to the implementation of the EC Communication: 'Combating HIV/AIDS in the European Union and neighbouring countries (2009 – 2013)'.

Quality Action aims to increase the effectiveness of HIV prevention in Europe by using practical quality improvement tools. Quality Action develops and adapts tools especially for use in HIV prevention. The project will train at least 60 trainers and facilitators to support at least 80 HIV prevention programmes and projects across the EU that will be applying the tools.

Quality Action has a strong practical focus. Its primary target group is stakeholders who plan, manage and conduct HIV prevention programmes and projects targeting priority populations identified in current surveillance reports: MSM, PWID, migrants from countries with generalised epidemics and PLWH. In summary, target groups include: 1) HIV prevention implementers (NGO/CBO and GO actors who work with priority populations, including representatives from these populations) 2) HIV prevention programme managers and coordinators 3) HIV policy makers 4) organisations representing priority populations affected by HIV/AIDS 5) academics and experts in HIV prevention and quality.

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 goal of applying quality improvement tool was to reflect on the project's process and achievement in a systematic way using one of its tools.

Because the project aims to promote quality improvement tools, it also aims to apply its principles and tools to the project itself.

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).

Succeed:

The selection and application of the tool was a participatory process led by WP 3 (evaluation work-package), included all other work package leaders and was based on criteria described in the tool selection guide. This choice was made to fit the available resources and time.

The application of Succeed took place during a regular steering group meeting (duration: two half days).

The Succeed tool was selected because it seemed to be the most useful for the purpose of applying a quality improvement tool to the Quality Action project itself since it uses a straightforward questionnaire to capture how project stakeholders perceive the quality of the project. It assesses whether the project has a reasonable structure and is steered in a way that will lead to good quality results. It also identifies, with comparatively little time invested, any relevant shortcomings.

Steps of the application of the tool:

1) WP leaders were asked to prepare their answers to the important indicators listed in the Succeed tool before the workshop; 2) Based on these answers, ITM prepared a PowerPoint presentation for the group discussion (session 1) during the Succeed workshop; 3) ITM facilitated and led the first group discussion during the workshop and used an electronic voting system, the Turning Point system (Turning Technologies, LLC, Ohio, USA), for participant voting on selected questions. Voting was done on the question how well participants thought the project was doing concerning the respective indicators. Participants could assign the following scores: great (no further action needed), good but could be improved, it needs improvement and I don't know. 4) In order to come up with concrete suggestions for the "next steps" for each part and related specific sub-sections, a second group discussion was held in order to come up with a list of items that participants believed could be improved within the Quality Action project.

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).

The first discussion resulted in a comprehensive list of strengths and weaknesses, based on the scores obtained by voting on the different quality criteria. The second discussion resulted in a prioritised list of items that participants believed could be improved within Quality Action.

Important insights were gained and shortcomings were detected that otherwise would perhaps not have become clearly visible during routine project implementation.

A detailed report was compiled listing the respective action points. These insights will contribute to improving the project's quality.

Results included specific action points, such as:

improve the networking with European key stakeholders; improve the knowledge about the needs of Quality Action's target groups; integrate evidence on quality improvement in the e-learning tool and the website; several suggestions for dissemination of interim results; making realistic adjustments to the time line and project management as many steering group members reported work overload; develop a sustainability plan and make first contacts for promoting the project's policy components.

Due to time constraints, there was no time to follow-up at subsequent steering group meetings to which extent such actions actually were implemented. However, through common efforts of the WPs and regular project management, most of the actions were taken care of in the course of the project.

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).

The voting method was, to our knowledge, used for the first time to assist an application of the Succeed tool. We detected some major advantages of this method and would recommend it for future use:

- The method is 100% participatory as all participants vote and express their opinion, avoiding that people who are used to speak out in groups dominate the discussions and exert the biggest influence; this method may thus contribute to reducing a potential bias in group-based decisions. It also makes it possible for all to see the distribution of answers within the group. It makes it possible for the facilitators to invite people with minority opinions to share their reasons.
- The original questions are constructed to allow only for Yes or No answers. However, this system of graded answers made it easier to prioritise action points.
- The buy-in from the participants was very high and most participants liked it a lot, apparently participants perceived it as "fun".

In general, the questions were clear and straightforward. We encountered some difficulties in defining the target population in some questions, as it was initially not clear whether the question was about the primary target population (NGOs, public health services,...) or about the secondary target population (the key populations such as MSM, PWID, sex workers ...). This difficulty was resolved by duplicating the questions concerned to capture the answers for both types of target populations separately.

- Sufficient time should be allocated in future to repeat the application and monitor whether the previously identified action points were able to be implemented.

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

Thank you!