

HEALTH EQUITY 2020 TOOLKIT

APPENDIX 2

Interview guide capacity assessment

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July 2015

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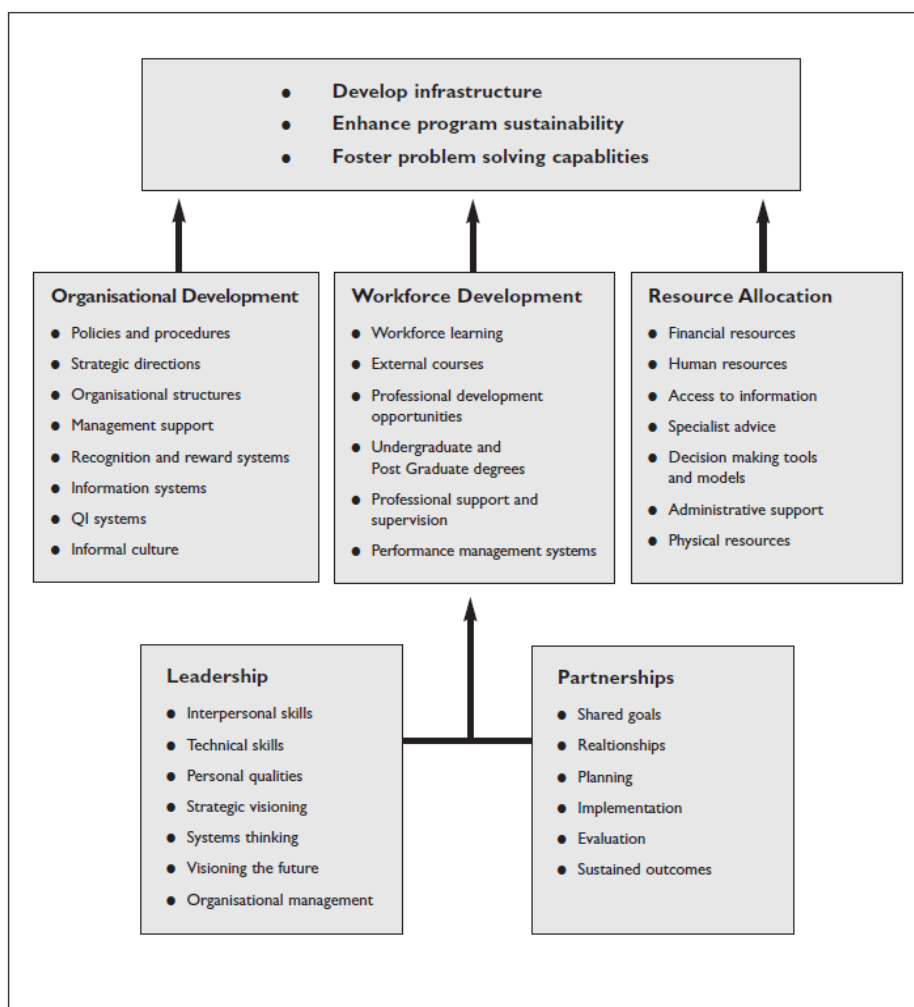
Maastricht, the Netherlands

This document arises from the project HEALTH EQUITY 2020 which has received funding from the European Union, in the framework of the Health Programme

Reducing health inequalities (HI) – preparation for regional action plans and structural funds projects. Questions related to the 5 domains of the Capacity building framework key action areas.

This interview guide compiles a range of possible questions that can be used when conducting interviews for Capacity Assessment / Audit. They have to be adapted to specific settings, style of interview, the professional background of the interviewee, and they must be used in a practical manner.

Capacity building framework key action areas



(NSW Health Department, 2001)

Questions – Organizational development

Element	Possible questions / topics	Answers / Examples
Organizational development	<p>How would you characterize the capacity of the Health System to address health inequalities?</p> <p>To what extent is your organization / region developing and implementing effective organizational strategies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) reduce health inequalities b) address upstream social determinants of health? 	
Organizational structures	<p>What is the structure of the organization?</p> <p>Do different bodies work together towards a common goal?</p>	
Policies and procedures / Strategic directions	<p>What are the main influences and drivers of current action on HI (goals such as balanced regional development agendas)?</p> <p>Do you consider that your government / sector / organization can contribute to a reduction in HI?</p> <p>Is there an explicit commitment in your government / sector / organization policies to address HI?</p> <p>Is there broad based support for addressing HI at all levels (national, regional, local) of government?</p> <p>What does this support look like?</p> <p>Is there any cross-sectoral action and commitment to HI?</p> <p>How is this being done and how is policy coherence achieved across all government levels?</p> <p>Are there any formal mechanisms for the planning and implementation of cross-sectoral co-operation?</p> <p>Is reducing HI promoted by health professionals and institutions in regional development agendas and policy making?</p>	

	<p>Is there commitment in your government / sector / organization to Health in All Policies with specific emphasis on the reduction of health inequities?</p> <p>How does policy development on HI look at a regional level?</p> <p>Who is involved in the policy process</p> <p>a) from within the health sector</p> <p>b) cross-sectorally and why?</p> <p>How are different groups, such as NGOs, civil societies engaged in this process?</p> <p>Is there any enabling policy / guidance / legislation in place to develop and nurture social capital, solidarity, cohesion, and informal support networks across the community?</p> <p>Is there a clear community consultation process on how decisions are made, what public policy decisions have been taken and why?</p> <p>Do opportunities exist for the public concerns on HI to be raised with policy makers?</p> <p>Is there a clear audit trail on how decisions are made, what public policy decisions have been taken, and why? (Appropriate audit process?)</p> <p>Are industries and other work organizations accountable for the HI impacts of their products or services?</p>	
Management support / measures and commitment	<p>Who are the key players in sustaining political commitment within your organization?</p> <p>Are there any management measures in place to ensure coherence of cross government actions in achieving HI reduction goals and targets?</p>	
Recognition and reward systems	<p>Are there any formal / informal systems / practices that acknowledge the contribution of non-health sectors to wider health gains?</p> <p>Are there any formal / informal systems / practices that</p>	

	<p>acknowledge the contribution of the health sector investments to wider development gains?</p>	
<p>Information systems, relevant stakeholders in Health Intelligence, monitoring and evaluation</p>	<p>Does the Ministry of Health require health care service providers to regularly monitor and report on HI of their services?</p> <p>Are there clear mechanisms and a clear line of accountability for the reduction of inequities in health status</p> <p>a) within health b) health care sector c) outside the health sector?</p> <p>To what extent is there a health intelligence system?</p> <p>Is it based on a range of information sources and analytical frameworks in order to understand the true magnitude, pathways and trends of HI?</p> <p>Is it clear who is responsible for:</p> <p>a) implementing a Health Intelligence System b) monitoring effectiveness c) reporting its outcomes?</p> <p>Which stakeholders are relevant at a regional level (research institutes, data collection mechanisms, public health institutes, etc.)?</p> <p>To what extent do Health Impact Assessments cover HI?</p> <p>Are they systematically used across sectors?</p> <p>Are there any clear targets or goals in place in relation to the implementation of government policies and strategies to reduce HI?</p> <p>Are there any targets and goals with regard to HI?</p> <p>Is there a continuous monitoring process?</p> <p>Is the monitoring systemically linked to legal, fiscal and other mechanisms to ensure coherent action?</p> <p>If so, in which field and how are they applied?</p>	

Quality improvement systems	What can you tell about the system making use of (i) available good practice tools (ii) evidence for health gain work across the social gradient?	
Informal organizational culture	Are there any informal networks for intersectoral co-operation to address HI?	
Shared values	Is there a shared (societal) value to tackle HI in your organization and among civil society, professional associations, etc.?	
Regulation, incentives, legislation	Are the HI criteria backed up by: a) regulation b) incentives and c) legislation?	
Public Communications Strategy / Advocacy	Do mechanisms and requirements exist for public reporting, communications and debate on the HI aspects of policies, services and programmes? Is there continuous advocacy for HI? By whom (who are local, regional, national champions)? What mechanisms exist to ensure that HI has a high profile and that related decisions and responsibilities are publicly communicated in a timely and appropriate manner? Are there any mechanisms in place to educate and sensitize the public / vulnerable groups in HI issues?	
Reporting System	Do formal and informal mechanisms exist to share, discuss and report on options related to HI?	

Questions – Workforce development (training)

Element	Possible questions	Answers / Examples
Workforce development	<p>Is your government / organization / sector supporting workforce development (workforce learning, external courses, degrees....)?</p> <p>How high is the percentage of workforce</p> <p>a) within the health sector</p> <p>b) outside the health sector</p> <p>aware of HI issues?</p>	
On-the-job learning including incidental and informal learning opportunities	<p>Do you know how to collect ideas and good examples from the experience you have in your job and use them afterwards?</p> <p>Can you give an example?</p>	
Course development / external courses	<p>Did you / your colleagues receive special training on HI?</p> <p>If so where and who from?</p>	
Professional development opportunities	<p>Is there any support for continuation of studies?</p> <p>Are these studies relevant to developing / maintaining sustainable regional public health systems?</p>	
Undergraduate and Post Graduate degrees	<p>Is there any dissemination of information about graduate and postgraduate opportunities?</p>	
Professional support & supervision	<p>Do you have access in your organization to professional support or supervision to improve working practice (e.g. counselling, workshops, 'in service' programmes)?</p>	
Performance management systems	<p>Is there a performance management system in place?</p>	
Profile of workforce	<p>What is the profile the workforce is most aware of HI (politicians, experts, nurses, doctors, social workers, extension workers, hotel owners, etc.)?</p>	

Questions – Resource allocation

Element	Possible questions	Answers / Examples
Resource allocation	Are there any guidance and incentive mechanisms in place at local / regional level to prompt local action on HI (resources)?	
Financial resources (including Structural Funds)	<p>Are there joint budgets for common cross-sectoral actions addressing HI?</p> <p>Is there explicit political / policy commitment to investing / allocating funds for reducing HI?</p> <p>Is there a long-term commitment to funding HI activities? Who from?</p> <p>Is there a broad base of support for investing in health equity? (e.g. trade unions, employers, professional associations, NGOs)</p> <p>Is there a long term commitment to fund actions tackling HI in your government / sector / organization?</p> <p>Is there a flexible approach that can respond to changing circumstances?</p> <p>How are measures for reducing HI funded? How was this done in the past and were any lessons learned from this?</p> <p>Is there a systematic application of HI criteria for funding decisions?</p> <p>If so, are they systematically applied?</p> <p>Are there explicit mechanisms for reorienting / redistributing financial and human resources to address social determinants of health inequities between social groups and across society?</p>	
Human resources	<p>Are (health) professionals trained to analyse and plan action on HI?</p> <p>Are health professionals motivated to tackle factors</p>	

	contributing to HI outside the health sector?	
Access to information	<p>Does your organization / do other authorities have enough data and evidence on health, social determinants of health?</p> <p>Is the information available at a regional or national level?</p> <p>What are the opportunities and barriers to accessing information?</p>	
Specialist advice & expertise (knowledge, skills)	Are you aware of any specialist advice & expertise available in your region?	
Tools / models / best practice	Are models or best practices accessible / used in your organization?	
Administrative support	What kind of administrative support do you receive for EU financial mechanisms?	
Information, data, indicators & evidence	<p>Do health care service providers measure indicators for HI?</p> <p>Is evidence-based policy used in your region?</p> <p>Is information on health inequalities used to influence investment in your government / sector / organization?</p>	
Physical resources	Is there an existing infrastructure and technology available?	
Time	Do you face challenges regarding time allocation?	

Questions - Leadership

Element	Possible questions	Answers / Examples
Leadership	<p>Is there strong leadership (interpersonal, technical skills, personal qualities, strategic and system vision...) to support reducing HI in your government / sector / organization?</p> <p>What is missing?</p> <p>Who do you see as a leader for HI (the development sector, health sector...)?</p>	
Interpersonal skills	Does this leader demonstrate strong interpersonal skills (communication skills, listening to the others, problem-solving and decision-making abilities, and assertiveness)?	
Technical skills	Is he/she able to apply leadership principles to a technical environment (e.g. health system, project management, applying / negotiating funding)?	
Personal qualities / growth and learning	<p>A leader is in the position to illustrate how the field is growing and changing. Is the leader committed to ongoing learning and growth in the field?</p> <p>Does he/she share his/her knowledge with new people / organizations / partners entering the field and take his/her role seriously in sharing knowledge and good practice?</p>	
Visioning the future	<p>Is there a clear vision in your organization / region with regard to health, health equity?</p> <p>Who is the promoter?</p>	
Strategic visioning Systems thinking	How much does evidence matter in decision making? Are strategies evidence based?	
Creative collaboration	<p>Is leadership necessary in group collaborations?</p> <p>(e.g. in selecting the best members; providing a</p>	

	supporting environment for the collaboration, breaking rigid hierarchies between members)?	
Communications skills	Is there continuous advocacy for HI? Who from? Who are the local, regional, national champions?	
Organizational management	Does the leader have an important role / contribution in management (setting a clear vision, formulating plans; organizing people to achieve the goals through execution of plans)?	
Political and social change strategies	Can the leader put the needs of the organization / region onto the political agenda and pursue social change, community development? Can you give any examples?	
Team learning	What is the influence / effect of the leader / leadership style (transformational vs transactional) on the development of learning as a strategic resource within the team / organization?	

Questions – Partnership working

Element	Possible questions	Answers / Examples
Shared goals	Is your organization involved in partnerships that address HI (sharing goals, planning and implementation of projects, co-financing)?	
Relationship	Are there any informal mechanisms, networks with other sectors that influence HI?	
Planning	Are there any barriers / lack of capacities to engage cross-sectoral planning and action within or outside the health system? Are health services routinely designed and implemented to take account of different factors affecting social groups (e.g. vulnerable populations, those at risk of poverty, minority groups)?	
Implementation	Are there any mechanisms to formally support professional planning and implementation of cross-sectoral action for health equity?	
Evaluation	Are there evaluations performed on: a) partnership activities or programmes b) partnership working (assessing the impact of a joint initiative)? What was the result, what did you learn?	
Sustained outcomes	Do partners plan / implement / monitor the progress / evaluate the outcomes of a joint project? Is there a shared, long-term commitment to achieving better outcomes?	
Incentives	Are there any ongoing mechanisms to identify synergies and develop incentives for intersectoral work? What do they look like? If not, what are the barriers / missing capacities?	

	Which resources are missing (funding, infrastructure, formal mechanisms, time or human resources)?	
Third Sector	<p>Is there co-operation between public and third sector (private commercial providers, faith-based organization, social marketing enterprises)?</p> <p>Is there a strategy to involve these entities in policy development?</p>	
Social support system	Are NGOs contributing to social support systems with action relevant to HI?	