6th Steering Group Meeting  
Ministry for Labour, Health and Social Affairs  
of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (MAGS)  
May 18th 2007,  
9:00-14:00

Attendees:  
Dr Gertrud Bureick, Institute of Public Health NRW  
John Davies, University of Brighton  
Ixhel Escamilla, Institute of Public Health NRW  
Kieran Hickey, The Health Boards Executive  
Dr Eleni Jelastopulu, University of Patras  
Dr Regine Kämmerer, MAGS  
Dr Reli Mechtler, University of Linz  
Shouka Pelaseyed, WHO-RHN  
Dr Marianna Penzes, Public Health Office  
Dr Peter Schröder-Bäck, Institute of Public Health NRW  
Dr Jaroslav Volf, National Institute of Public Health

1. Welcoming  
The session was opened by Dr Regine Kämmerer, from the Ministry for Labour, Health and Social Affairs of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, who welcomed the members of the steering group and remarked the importance of the evaluation of regional health programmes.

2. Report of the last activities  
Ixhel Escamilla informed that the clustering of the regions participating in the BEN II-project was presented at the Final Conference of the project ISARE (Indicateurs de santé des Régions Européennes) on April 26th-27th in Prague.

3. Data collection  
The delivery of information from the project participants was examined. It was agreed that in order to get the missing information, the regions which have not fully sent the products of the project, would be contacted by the WHO-RHN and the project Secretariat. They will inform the regions of a new and definite deadline (June 5th 2007) for the corresponding delivery of data.

Using a short questionnaire, the participants will be consulted after this date about the data availability in their region and the difficulties they have by collecting and processing regional information.
4. **Finances**  
It was discussed that the regions belonging to the WHO-RHN will receive the second and third payments according to the performed work.

5. **Project deliverables**  
The objectives and outputs of the project were checked. The Secretariat of the project pointed out that most of the planned tasks have been successfully fulfilled. However, the identification of good practice models for each tracer is still missing.

The Steering Group urged to define a way to systematically identify good practice using the analysis tools developed in the project (e.g. organigraphs, reference frameworks, HPI’s, etc). With this purpose, it was recommended to examine different methodologies, like the Template Methodology.

Members of the Steering Group also recommended the organisation of a working session whose aim would be the analysis of the information and the methodical recognition of good practice models.

6. **Final report**  
The list of contents of the final report was examined and discussed by the Steering Group. The Group gave numerous recommendations about the structure and contents of the report. The Secretariat will send a new version of the list containing the recommendations to the Steering Group for its revision.

Members of the Steering Group will directly collaborate in the drafting of the final report. They will develop diverse sections of the report like: “Complementarities with other EU Projects”, “Lessons learned from BEN II for the Open Method of Coordination (OMC)”, "BEN II – and links to the Future Work of the WHO/EURO Regions for Health Network in Europe” etc.

7. **Publications**  
Dr Jaroslav Volf confirmed that the Central European Journal of Public Health is able to publish a thematic issue with the results of the project. Nevertheless, the issue could not be published until the number 4 of the journal of this year. Possible Papers of this issue could be a paper with the final results prepared by Dr Gertrud Bureick, a case study prepared by Dr Matthias Schröter, a paper on the clustering analysis developed by Ixhel Escamilla, as well as an analysis of ethical aspects of measles immunization which could be prepared by Dr Peter Schröder-Bäck.
John Davies suggested the preparation of a paper for the BMJ with a “health policy perspective”. In addition, Shouka Pelaseyed recommended publishing the project as a RHN issue. Shouka Paleseyed pointed out that the WHO-RHN could make funds available for supporting the drafting.

8. Future activities
All members of the Steering Group would welcome the idea to participate in other project thematically close to BEN. The Institute of Public Health NRW could act as a coordinator.

John Davies recommended a “policy level” project. He suggested the evaluation of regional capacity building and the development of regional public health indicators.

In addition, Shouka Paleseyed pointed out that projects regarding the evaluation of health systems could be another option since one could obtain funds from DG REGIO for that purpose.

Finally, Dr Jaroslav Volf recommended the benchmarking of health promotion initiatives and programmes.

These suggestions remain to be discussed.

Ixheli Escamilla
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