

HEALTH EQUITY 2020 TOOLKIT

Drawing up evidence based action plans to address socioeconomic health inequalities

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

Introduction

Within the Health Equity 2020 (HE2020) project, the aim is to assist regions in drawing up evidence based action plans to address socioeconomic health inequalities. An important element is the development and introduction of the HE2020 toolkit. This toolkit follows a structured approach in which four main phases can be identified: (i) needs assessment, (ii) capacity assessment, (iii) entry points (setting priorities and choosing actions), and (iiii) impact assessment (see figure 1).

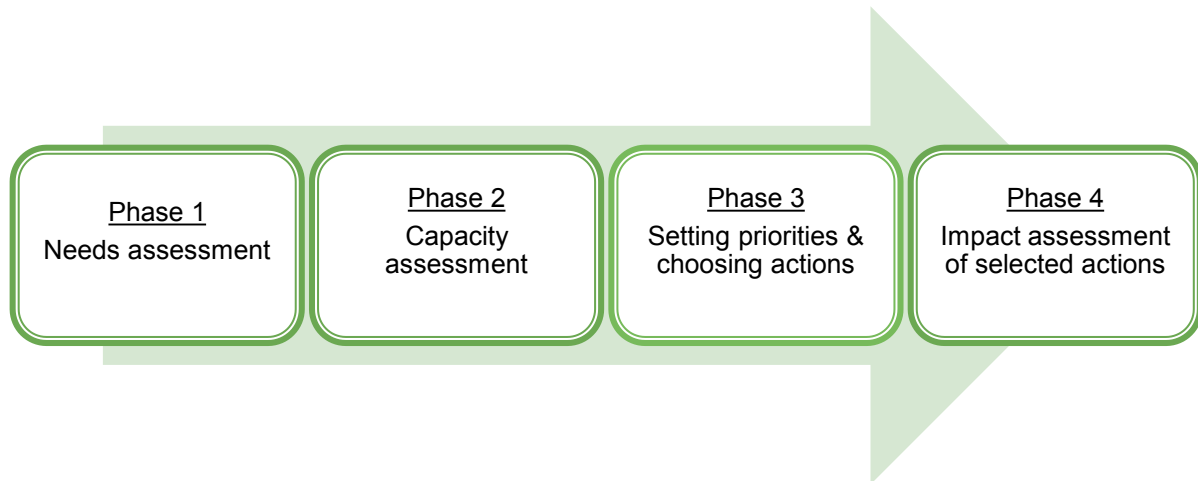


Figure 1: The process towards evidence-based action plans

The final goal of these phases is to draw up evidence based action plans that address socioeconomic health inequalities in the region.

The Health Equity 2020 toolkit assists regions in all these phases.

Phase 1: Needs Assessment

Phase 1 focuses on needs assessment: what is the current situation in the region with respect to socioeconomic health inequalities (health outcomes and determinants) and what are the desired outcomes? The gaps between these two represent the needs with respect to socioeconomic health inequalities and these needs inform the entry points for action to address these socioeconomic health inequalities.

TOOL 1.1: Guide on how to do a needs assessment on health inequalities

This tool is a guide on how to do a needs assessment on regional health inequalities and addresses which data to collect, where and how to collect it and how to present and interpret this data (figure 2).

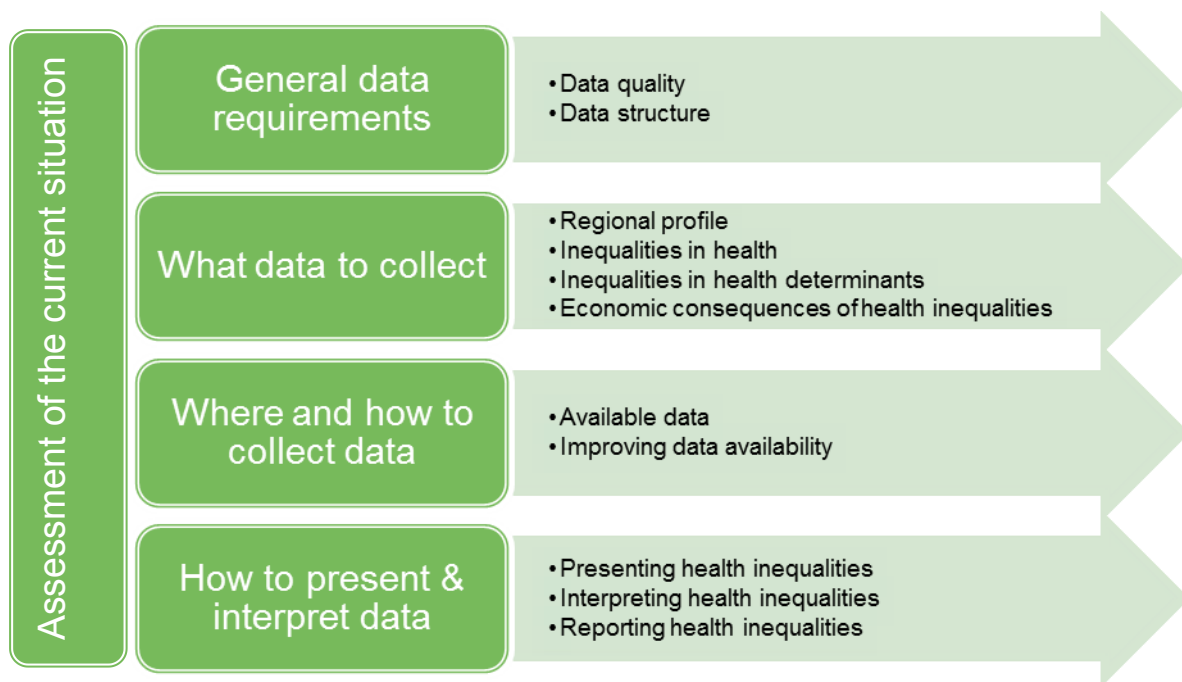


Figure 2: Elements of this Needs Assessment tool

TOOL 1.2: Report format for the Needs Assessment results

This tool is a report format that can be used to report about the findings from the Needs Assessment. It follows the main steps in the Needs Assessment tool (TOOL 1.1) on regional profile, inequalities in health, inequalities in health determinants and economic consequences of health inequalities.

Phase 2: Capacity Assessment

Phase 2 focuses on the capacity audit and addresses capacities needed to address health inequalities

TOOL 2.1: Assessing capacities: Fundamentals and tools

Part 1: Capacity building and capacity development
Part 2: Capacity assessment and capacity audit

The first part of the guide aims to address capacity building and development at the level of capabilities to coordinate, plan and implement programs and projects to address health inequities, specifying which kinds of changes and developments are necessary, useful and promising. It presents two working frameworks for analysis: the Capacity Building Framework from NSW (2001) and the UNDP (2008) Capacity Development Framework. The second part describes and delivers recommendations on how to prepare and conduct capacity assessment and audits.

TOOL 2.2: The NSW (2001) framework: Interview guide for a regional capacity assessment

This tool consists of a table of questions related to each element within the five key action areas of the NSW (2001) framework: organizational development, workforce development, resource allocation, partnerships and leadership. These questions can guide the regional capacity audit.

Phase 3: Setting priorities and choosing actions

Phase 3 focuses on setting priorities and choosing actions. With the information obtained in the needs assessment and the capacity audit, entry points for action can be identified. Entry points for action are those health inequalities and/or determinants of health inequalities that were identified in the needs assessment as important priorities in the region. After these entry points are identified, actions (e.g. policies, interventions) can be considered that address these entry points.

TOOL 3.1: Guide on setting priorities and choosing actions for entry points

This tool contains information on:

- main mechanisms for action and general strategies to address health inequalities,
- setting priorities and considering appropriate actions, and
- translating actions to regional action plans

TOOL 3.2: Health Equity 2020 Action Database

→ *in progress (Erasmus MC)*

database so far is included as preliminary version

Associated document: policy matrix

→ *in progress (UM)*

not included yet, presented at workshop 4 (Brussels)

The Health Equity 2020 Action Database contains a range of policies, interventions and programs that aim to reduce socioeconomic health inequalities. Both effective actions and good practices are included. The database is created through literature review and by evaluating evidence from other existing overviews. (In progress)

The Policy Matrix merges Europe 2020 commitments with determinants of health inequalities at local level. It seeks concrete policy interventions by exploring the case of life style, the elderly population, chronic diseases and the Roma population and merges them with concepts such as innovation, citizen empowerment or social inclusion. The aim is to show there are opportunities to address health and health inequalities under the ESIF framework. (In progress)

Phase 4: Impact Assessment

Phase 4 focuses on impact assessment. An impact assessment of these selected actions can provide more information on the potential impact of the different actions and can therefore help in the decision making process of which action to take to address health inequalities.

TOOL 4.1: Guide on Health Impact Assessment methods



This tool provides information on methods to assess the potential impact of actions on health and health inequalities. It provides information on:

- what a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) is,
- what are the main steps within a HIA,
- how to ensure an equity focus within an HIA,
- and how economic impact can be evaluated.

This document also provides suggestions for freely available guides and frameworks on how to do a HIA and sources where to find examples of finished HIAs.

TOOL 4.2: Health Equity 2020 quantitative tool (in excel, two versions)
Associated document: User's Guide

This simple, user-friendly quantitative modelling tool is specifically designed to estimate the impact of policies and interventions in inequalities in health. In this model, a shift in risk factor distributions (for example a decrease in smoking of 15%), can be modelled in order to obtain estimates of these shifts on mortality and socioeconomic inequalities in mortality. Information on how to use the tool and the methods used by the modelling tool, are described in the user's guide.

Note: Several other tools that are developed by others, such as the Structural Funds Guidance Tool, are included in the toolkit as online links. They can be accessed by clicking on the link in the respective documents they appear in.

