Healthyregions
When Well being Creates Economic Growth

Procedure Protocol

Introduction

The *Healthy Regions* project is an "action research" project, and is therefore highly process oriented and pragmatic in its approach. The main objective of the project is to develop different practical tools, within an overall concept for "Healthy Regions". The tools will be tested within the participating regions, in order to gain practical experiences. The documentation of the practical experiences that each region has gained through the testing of the tools, and the implementation of the project, is a very important part of the project results, as the documentation will be used to illustrate the degree and the scope of usefulness of the tools. As such, the documentation of the practical experiences is an important input to the final conceptualisation, in the form of recommendations, guidelines and good practice examples, that other regions can get inspired from.

The protocol is a living document throughout the rest of the project and will be the result of the work in progress that each region has carried out, based on its specific situation and needs. At the end of the project, the protocol will stand out as individual result of the project and will include a set of guidelines on how to use the tools in the different regions arisen from the practical activities implemented in the regions.

Its aim is also to give inspiration, recommendations and clarifications on how to use the tools to solicit fruitful discussion between social actors involved in the decision making process about health so as to make a region an "Healthy Region" that has the best foundations to reach the goals of the Lisbon Strategy.

Instructions to the partners to complete the Protocol:

Each partner completes the box/boxes corresponding to the tools used in the Region.

- Methods: when describing methods, please be concise and provide an answer to these questions:
    - Why did you choose that tool?
    - At which stage/starting point was your Region? Under which conditions was the tool used in you region? E.g. was the tool used within a bigger regional development process?
        - Please give reasons for the choice of a specific tool: e.g. 1) advantages/disadvantages, 2) structural, political and financial reasons, 3)
    - Who was the tool meant for? Did you use it mainly on a political level, practical level or both?
    - Which actions were carried out, according to which time frame?
    - How did you use it? (Techniques and procedures followed: i.e. use of focus groups or in-depth interviews or Delphi method; use of a glossary, definitions etc…)
- Target: description of the specific target group for the tools and the reasons for this choice.
- Results and effect: summary of results based on the information and evidences gathered by using the tools.
    - What are your concrete experiences from this work?
    - What kind of challenges have you met in your region in terms of the implementation - e.g. structural, political, practical?
    - What kind of difference has it made to your region to use the tools, if any?
        - In relation to e.g. awareness raising, new regional collaboration activities, strategies and / or practical activities / intervention
        - Can you say anything of which level you see any effects; e.g. practical level, political level, regional level, local level etc.
- Guidelines to the use of the tool: description of the best way to proceed when using the tool in the Region, taking into consideration YOUR specific structural, political and financial situation.

Dialogue Tool

Methods:

The thinking behind the development of the Dialogue Tool was to integrate the realities of the UK national and regional strategic frameworks and developments with the wider concepts presented by the Healthy Regions' Conceptual Paper while taking forward policy integration at regional level regarding health, wellbeing and sustainable economic regional development. So, the 'Tool' was developed as a 'methodology' that would provide the opportunity for key regional actors to examine their contexts with new perspectives that were nevertheless not disassociated from their own work and direction.

We believe that it is essential that European Project work is not presented as 'a project' but as an additional methodology to add value to working practice and planning.

The Healthy Regions project coincided with a number of key shifts in thinking at UK national and regional level regarding health, that involved greater:

- recognition of the issue of inequalities in developing health policy;

- emphasis on health *and wellbeing* linked to a fuller understanding of the importance of preventative rather than curative health measures;

- acknowledgement that there needed to be far more sophisticated understanding of the ways in which public behaviour cuts across the boundaries that health policy and targets artificially construct - for example, health and wellbeing in the workplace is not a discrete issue but is inextricably linked with community and family issues as well;

- preparedness that health professionals learn from the experience and good practice deployed in other countries and contexts.

There is little point, when designing 'Tools', to ignore the contexts within which they are to operate, and so it was necessary to:

- grasp the key shifts noted above;

- involve key people from contexts other than health, as prevention and wellbeing involves many more areas of service professionals than health alone - for example, education and culture and the arts.

In doing this it became evident that the Dialogue Tool was in effect *a sequence* of 'Tools' and so a methodological process. The purpose of this process was to maximise the impact of the Healthy Regions' project by clearly aligning its work with a major aim of regional strategy:

To develop cross-policy understanding and action on the relationship between health and

wellbeing and regional sustainable economic development.

As stated, the South West UK region was not short of strategies regarding health and wellbeing - and there was increasing evidence that sectors other than the Health sector were developing strategies that acknowledged the impact of health and wellbeing on their work. What was not clear was the degree to which strategies were being translated effectively into consistent tactics and effective actions; and the extent to which the Health sector and other sectors were 'speaking to each other' when developing these strategies.

For these reasons the South West UK regional partners decided that the Dialogue Tool in the first instance should engage with **Target Stakeholders** *operating at strategy and planning levels* and that these should be from the range of sectors related to themes set out by the Verona Benchmark, in particular:

- The Strategic Healthy Authority
- The SW Department of Health
- The Regional Observatories
- Primary Care Trusts
- Local Authorities
- Education
- Employment and Skills
- Arts and Culture
- The Third Sector (Voluntary and Community organisations)

- and that these, where appropriate, should include the private (commercial) agencies as well as the predominant public agencies.

The process methodology required a clear timeframe and sequence, as the stakeholders involved were all at 'different starting points' regarding the aim of developing cross-policy understanding and action on the relationship between health and wellbeing and regional sustainable economic development. The progress and feedback for the progress across the timeframe then developed how each successive 'Tool' in the overall 'Dialogue' was designed and implemented:

Timeframe Stage 1 (March - July 2008)

The Conceptual Paper, developed earlier in the Healthy Regions project, was used in summary form, with an annex that included the South West UK regional research publication *the State of the South West* to 'position and relate the regional context' and to 'set the scene' for the approach of Stage 2. This was distributed and discussed with key stakeholders, to brief them and gain a response to the direction of the subsequent work.

Timeframe Stage 2 (June 2008 – July 2008)

This stage involved a mapping exercise carried out by desk research and interviewing a range of key stakeholders across the following Verona Benchmark-related Themes of:

- Health and Health promotion
- Health and Learning
- Health and Culture
- Strategic Health Approaches
- Empowerment and Equalities
- Mainstreaming
- Health as an Economic Growth Factor

The focus was on assessing the level and nature of regional strategy and its translation into action on each Theme. At Theme level the process was designed as appropriate, but as an example in Health and Learning the regional-level strategies and practice were examined across a framework of *five* areas, the:

- creation of supportive environments for learning;
- development of personal skills development relating to health and wellbeing;
- strengthening of community action to manage and facilitate learning;
- building of skills strategies that acknowledge alignment with health and wellbeing;
- fostering of informal learning and cultural activity.

- to provide an overview that focused on:

- the broad infrastructure for learning;
- individual level contexts;
- community level contexts;
- work-based and employment-related contexts;
- a wider view of learning activity.

- and it included looking at existing :

- regional strategies;
- sub-regional strategies;
- regional delivery frameworks;
- case studies of regional, sub-regional and local practice.

- and this was correlated with those national-level strategies and policies explicit in terms of requiring regional actions relating learning, health and wellbeing.

This mapping work across the seven Themes was then analysed and fed into a 'Thematic Summary Tool' in which the key findings were extracted from the detailed mapping results and then a provisional score was assigned to each of the Themes. The scores were represented on a spidergram to give a visual representation of all of the scores combined.

The purpose of the resulting SW Regional Health Competencies Mapping Discussion publication, with its incorporation of a 'Traffic Light system' (see below), was designed to promote regional dialogue and led directly to the next Phase of the Dialogue methodology:

Timeframe Stage 3 (September 2008 – December 2008)

This Stage concentrated on widening stakeholder contact and dialogue and re-focussing on the core aim of developing cross-policy understanding and action on the relationship between health and wellbeing and regional sustainable economic development.

A regional level event, engaging senior representatives across agencies and organisations, was designed to provide the opportunity for them to develop:

- greater recognition of the importance of healthy public policy at a regional level, how we can ensure the Single Regional Strategy is a piece of healthy public policy and how this relates to local action;

- better understanding of the gaps in relation to healthy regional public policy at a regional level (this is the mapping exercise undertaken);

- tangible actions that the Regional Development Agency, NHS and Department of Health and regional and local partners can work on together relating to health and economic growth through a healthy public policy approach. This might be in relation to health impact assessment, healthy procurement, healthy workplaces etc. One idea has been production of a ten high impact changes document for healthy public policy.

The event was 'headlined' by the region's most senior representatives from 'either end' of the strategy organisations addressing the core aim - the SW Strategic Health Authority and the SW Regional development Agency.

The Thematic Summary Tool from Stage 2 was central to the event design, and also integral to the design of the Tool to be used in Stage 4 of the Dialogue methodology - Scenario Planning. The key findings and the provisional scores were used as the basis for the workshop discussions. Participants divided into 7 groups of 5-6 and each group worked with short statements from two of the eight themes. Participants mapped the short statements on a 2 x 2 matrix according to:

- their significance for making the region grow and develop; and

- the level of agreement within the group on the significance of the statement
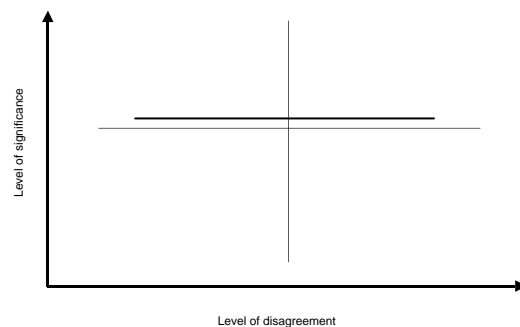
Focusing on the strong signals (statements with a high level of significance and low level of disagreement about that significance), participants then identified:

- the issue represented by the statement;

- its significance for / impact on making the region grow and develop;

- consequent objectives and goals for the SRS;

- the timescale for action;

- success measures;

- key areas for working in partnership; and

- no brainers, imaginative and heroic ideas for delivering the next steps.

This led to a process of analysis that enabled a final selection of key priorities for the regional stakeholders to identify as those requiring particular attention in terms of the single regional strategy and a report was written summarizing this and setting out the direction for further, more detailed work.

Timeframe Stage 4 (January 2009 – April 2009)

This Stage was developed to:

▶ Widen the range of stakeholders potentially involved with progressing the core aim of developing cross-policy understanding and action on the relationship between health and wellbeing and regional sustainable economic development.

▶ Utilise the outcomes of Stage 3, further examining key priorities and the medium and longer-term contexts within which such priorities might operate.

The Tool developed for this purpose was a scenario planning process, designed to explore the factors that might affect integration of health and wellbeing policy into sustainable regional development. The Tool was implemented through a regional event, bringing together senior staff from regional agencies and organisations (and some EU regional partners), some of whom had been engaged in Stage 3 and some of whom were new to the process. The common factor underpinning the process was that all the agencies and organisations now engaged would be contributing to the formation of the Single regional Strategy. *The Scenario Tool is further detailed below*. The outcome was a detailed report, setting out four scenarios for the way in which health and wellbeing and regional economic might play out in the future and highlighting key policy points that strategic actors in the region might wish to reference for their work in developing a Single Regional Strategy. The Scenario Tool is fully documented and able to be tailored for application in other contexts.

Target Groups:

As described, the target groups were at senior strategic and tactical level. The assessment had been made that to affect the direction and content of the Single Regional Strategy would require 'leaders and influencers' to be fully appraised of the cross-policy issues involved in develop understanding and action on the relationship between health and wellbeing and regional sustainable economic development. Engagement at this level would also be required in understanding the action to be taken in aligning regional-level strategy with central Government targets and priorities. However, while the primary target was senior strategic level people, the various Tools also involved people operating at tactical level so that debate could be widened and 'bottom-up' information and knowledge could be contributed.

Results:

The concrete results have been:

- Publication of a range of Tools that made up the overall process, designed to identify a conceptual position, clarify policy focus, prioritise strategic direction and examine possible consequences.

- Definitive impact on the key regional agencies responsible for the development of the Single Regional Strategy.

- Formation of specific regional actions that have brought together cross-sectoral alliances, in particular the SW Healthy Workplace Strategic Alliance.

- Influencing a range of other regional and sub-regional developments contributing to the core aim of developing cross-policy understanding and action on the relationship between health and wellbeing and regional sustainable economic development, in particular the development of the Lead Accountable Bodies and the Total Place.

The main challenges have been:

- The complexity of regional-level political structures and the range of independently constructed strategies across the agencies populating those structures.

- The tensions between central Government targets and control and the regional contexts and requirements for devolution and regional-level decision-making.

- The scale of Government initiatives and policy announcements relating to health, wellbeing and economic development.

- The increasingly constrained economic conditions, militating against opportunities to 'spend to save'.

The Healthy Regions project and the Tools it has developed and deployed have had a range of impacts. It is not always possible to demonstrate directly causal impact, particularly when issues of qualitative and organisational behaviour are concerned; however the following impacts resulting from the Healthy Regions work and the methodology of assembling a range of Tools to form a definitive process of influencing key actors are in evidence, in:

- Progress at a strategic level, acting as a catalyst for the Coalition of Interest proposal going to the Strategic Health Authority Board and the formation of the new Strategic Alliance for Workplace Health.

- The development of the Single Regional Strategy for inclusion of health and wellbeing correlating to the core brief of addressing sustainable economic development.

- The progress of regional agencies gaining further involvement with EU countries and regions to better inform their information and knowledge concerning health and wellbeing issues and practice.

- The conduct and progression of a number of strategic and policy developments aligned with the wider view of the value of health and wellbeing cross-sectoral policy development; notably in the work of the National inquiry into the Future for Lifelong Learning and in the development of Lead Accountable Body strategy.

Guidelines to the use of the Tools:

As stated, the South West UK developed a range of Tools for use within the overall context of a carefully thought-out process, designed to introduce policy concepts and then examine directions that could be taken to examine and implement factors that arose from that thinking. The South West UK is, like any region, unique - it is not appropriate to adopt wholesale the overall methodology that was developed for this region. However, there are a number of 'guideline points' that are relevant more widely:

- Gain awareness of the strategic and policy contexts within which any Tools are to be operated.

- Provide a 'close focus' initially for any Tools to be tested, rather than attempt a wider implementation.

- Establish clear and effective briefing mechanisms when involving a greater number of agencies and stakeholders.

- Do not use the Tools in any rigid way, but ensure that through testing and discussing potential methodologies the Tools can be rendered 'fit for purpose'.

	Region: South West UK

Mapping Tool

This Tool was not used by the South West UK, *but see the 'Mapping element' in the Dialogue Tool above.*

Methods:

Targets/Stakeholders:

Results:

Guidelines to the use of the tool:

	Region: South West UK

Traffic Light Matrix

This Tool was *not* used separately by the South West UK partnership, but its thinking *incorporated* in the Dialogue Tool process methodology and publications (*see Dialogue Tool above*).

Methods:

Targets/Stakeholders:

Results:

Guidelines to the use of the tool:

Health Barometer

This Tool was *not* used on any discrete basis by the South West UK; but the concept of using an indicator for measuring, summarising and displaying progress regarding practice around strategic aims was used in the Mapping process and in the documentation and the Scenario Tool for developing discussion on prioritisation for the Single Regional Strategy.

Methods:

Targets/Stakeholders:

Results:

Guidelines to the use of the tool:

Verona Benchmark

In the South West UK, the Verona Benchmark was used within the overall Dialogue Tool process, to provide a matrix for each of the Dialogue Tool's eight themes. This provided a structure for the key findings resulting in matrices against which a provisional score was assigned to each of the themes that

gave an analysis of the regional position designed to be a simple 'at a glance' guide to the comparative positions, across area of policy responsibility and also of course potentially between the partner regions. The value was also in focussing strategic-level discussion regarding performance and priorities for action within the Scenario Tool methodology.

Methods:

Targets/Stakeholder

Results:

Guidelines to the use of the tool:

The Healthy Regions project is partly financed by the EU Public Health Programme.
www.healthyregions.eu

Working Partnership

The South West UK view of the 'Working Partnership' was that it acts as a means through which the Tools and methodologies can be agreed, developed and deployed. The use of working partnerships has been based on:

▶ **A 'core group' of representatives at senior level from each of the main regional agencies concerned with the policy issues.**

▶ **A wider group of stakeholders, representing policy development, implementation and tactical practice.**

▶ **A range of 'key disseminators/mainstreamers' acting at regional level and able to portray and discuss the work of the project, its methos and messages.**

This view and management of Working Partnership has been successful, resulting in the impacts that are described above.

Methods:

Targets/Stakeholders:

Results:

Guidelines to the use of the tool:

Scenario Planning / Creating Dilemmas

Methods:

The wider Working Partnership involved in the Healthy Regions project was involved in scenario planning process to explore the factors that might affect integration of health and wellbeing policy into sustainable regional development. This was designed to build on work conducted at the close of the Mapping process, as part of the overall Dialogue Tool process, where regional stakeholders had worked with the Mapping results and begun to prioritise policy areas for the Single Regional Strategy's progression.

The Scenario Tool was designed to assist stakeholders involved with regional strategy to imagine and manage the future more effectively. The scenario process highlights the principal drivers of change and associated uncertainties facing organisations today and explores how they might play out in the future. The result is a set of stories that offer alternative views of what the future might look like. Then, through discussion, the stakeholders can explore what they would do differently in each scenario. They can identify success criteria, suggest new ways of working and define new relationships. Generally, these differ in each scenario and the discussion can help participants build a shared understanding of how the increasingly complex changes taking place in the world are likely to affect their activities.

The great strength of scenario planning is that it can be used to look at today's challenge from a different perspective. Quite often, participants find that the impacts are going to be bigger - or happen sooner - than they had previously realised. Ultimately, stakeholders use scenario planning to help them anticipate, prepare for and manage change.

Scenario planning is a flexible process that can be tailored to different circumstances and different needs, and for the purposes of the Healthy Regions project and the overall Dialogue Tool process, it had to achieve 'a fit' with the sequence of activities and involvements that stakeholders had to date. It had to be seen as something of a summative process, which then defined the subsequent trajectory of the work. It also had to be designed to be managed within a tight timeline, with the 'core event' lasting just one day. The methodology for the day involved for stages:

Stage 1:   Identification and analysis of change drivers;

Stage 2:   Identification of predetermined elements and critical uncertainties;

Stage 3:   Construction of the scenario matrix;

Stage 4:   Construction of the scenario narratives.

Following Stage 4 the completed scenarios were used for stakeholders to explore how they would act in the different futures, evaluating different policy options, identifying different success criteria and determining the effect of different policy instruments.

The Scenario exercise was written up on the basis of 'key messages' for future strategy and distributed both to the stakeholders who directly participated and more widely to others in the South West UK region. The messages in particular were used to inform the progress of:

▶ The Regional Coalition of Interest group; and,

▶ The Regional Healthy Workplace Strategic Alliance.

Targets/Stakeholders:

As stated, the target group(s) in this case was the wider regional stakeholder group from agencies and organisations involved, across policy sectors, with the issues of health, wellbeing and sustainable regional economic development. Also, at the Scenario event, a number of the Healthy Regions EU project partners were present and participated - addressing the aim of gaining further involvement with EU countries and regions to better inform the South West UK's strategic-level personnel regarding knowledge, ideas and perspectives concerning health and wellbeing issues and practice.

Results:

As described, the Scenario Tool's deployment resulted in a detailed report that was widely distributed. In particular it resulted in the development of 'headline messages' concerning conditions that, if in place, might make it easier to integrate health and wellbeing into sustainable regional development:

▶ Shared awareness of the environmental and economic challenges ahead;

▶ Increased awareness in the general population of individuals' responsibilities to themselves and to each other (on a global level);

▶ A shift away from thoughtless consumerism to thoughtful, ethical and responsible consumerism … supported by regulation of trade to ensure that markets operate fairly; and

▶ Stronger regional identities and stronger links within communities.

Guidelines to the use of the tool:

The guidelines concerning the Scenario Planning Tool are essentially the same as for the Dialogue Tool:

- Gain awareness of the strategic and policy contexts within which any Tools are to be operated.

- Provide a 'close focus' initially for any Tools to be tested, rather than attempt a wider implementation.

- Establish clear and effective briefing mechanisms when involving a greater number of agencies and stakeholders.

- Do not use the Tools in any rigid way, but ensure that through testing and discussing potential methodologies the Tools can be rendered 'fit for purpose'.

But there are two additional, important points:

- Engage a horizon scanning/scenario planning professional to develop the Tool and its use.

- Plan the ways in which the results of the scenario planning are going to be deployed and utilised; otherwise it will result in what happens with a great deal of scenario work, regardless of how high quality it may be, that those involved cannot work out how to take the results that concern long-term thinking into the current context to then affect and effect the trajectories of current policy.