



TOOLS

Equity Action: work package 4 tools to improve the health equity focus in cross government policy making: Project brief

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EQUITYACTION

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**Objective:**

To promote a health equity focus in policy making through identifying tools to analyse and influence policy making processes such as Health Impact Assessment with equity focus and Health Equity Audit, as well as through learning from practice.

Aims:

- Promote health equity focus in policy making, supported through tools such as Health Impact Assessment (HIA)/Health Equity Audit (HEA)
- Build knowledge and skills through HIA training
- Provide methods to consider equity in the policy making process
- Develop a consensus and make recommendations on how to take forward a Health in All Policies approach (HiAP).

How will we do it:

- Review current practice of HIA with equity focus and HiAP by a literature review and semi-structured interviews with partners and key experts
- Develop consensus to an approach through consultation, active development with partners and dissemination of findings across Member States (MS)
- Provide partners with HIA training focusing on the equity aspect of HIAs through Ben Cave Associates
- Conduct at least one EU level HEA
- Provide methodologies to support MS i.e. questions that focus on equity in policy HIAs, and recommendations on how to take forward a HiAP approach
- Capture and share learning from partners through case studies and reports
- Disseminate findings through our partners and through the www.health-inequalities.eu website.

Description of work:

- The work package (WP) will develop a common understanding of terminology for HIA, HEA and equity.
- Partners will discuss and agree a framework for HiAP, at national and regional level, and consider the implications are for policy making (drawing on Finnish and Italian work, and recent work of the European Observatory)
- A review of literature and experience of involved MS in HIA with equity focus has been undertaken and a HEA on a European level policy will be commissioned
- WP partners will work collectively to develop a common framework for HIA with equity focus and HEA. Partners will trial the methodology for HIA with equity focus and HEA – undertaking either an HIA with equity focus or HEA. HEA for this project has been defined as a retrospective HIA, looking back at a policy and its health impacts.

Key learning from the HIA with equity focus review and feedback from the initial kick off meeting in April 2011, gave a strong steer towards MS undertaking an HIA with equity focus using their current HIA framework, rather than a HEA, as this has the potential to have greater impact on the policy. The methodology and training provided has therefore been developed to support MS in undertaking an HIA with equity focus and will be refined by participants, participating in the HIA training. HEA resources will also be made available for those participating in the HIA training. Key learning from participants will help refine the methods.



Participants in the HIA training are expected to attend all three HIA training sessions, as one builds on the other and HIA with equity focus/HEA should look at policy, and ideally national policy. It is intended that a number of country-to-country exchanges will take place to promote learning and offer support on processes used to include health equity in policy making across government (e.g. reviewing guidelines, processes, information sources for the effective consideration of health equity in developing new policies). Participants are able to share resources and experiences through the www.equitychannel.net and through <https://bcahealth.basecamphq.com> provided to participants of the HIA training. It is also expected that partners will share and disseminate learning within their own MS and report subsequent action back to the equity action programme.

The WP will agree the process and policy areas with the EC for at least 1 HEA and will commission and deliver it with the support of partners. A review will be made of HEA in developing policy with the aim of identifying learning points for improving the use of HEAs in the policy process in future.

A review of what has proved effective at country level of health equity in policy making across government will be undertaken. Links will be made to World Health Organisation HIA work and modelling tools currently being developed and WP6 to help support the identification of knowledge and evidence for HIA with equity focus and HEA.

The WP will produce a brief report on recommendations and findings for developing an equity focus across policies at the European Union (EU), MS and regional level for wide dissemination, and a consensus on the framework for undertaking HIA with equity focus.

Deliverables and milestones of the WP:

The WP has a number of deliverables and milestones identified below:

- An HIA with equity focus or HEA in 75% of MS involved and an EU policy level HEA, to be delivered within 24 months (**February 2013**)
- A project report on how to improve cross-government equity focus. The report will cover learning from the overall project, lessons from the tools and methodologies on the inclusion of health equity considerations into policy making, to be delivered within 36 months (**February 2014**).

Mile stones:

- A document describing the common understanding by project partners of HiAP approach to address equity and health inequalities, and its policy implications by **December 2011**
- A report on the current situation regarding HIA with equity focus and HEA in MS involved by **June 2012**.

Evaluation:

Overall evaluation of the EA will be undertaken in WP3 and will cover the following for WP4:

Process

- Meetings of WP4 have a clear focus

Output

- A framework will be developed, identifying key considerations in developing an HIA with equity focus and HEA
- Majority of WP members having undertaken an HIA with equity focus or HEA
- Increased awareness of what helps to ensure that HIA with equity focus is used in practice, within the frame of a HiAP approach
- A basic HIA course developed and delivered to increase understanding of HIA processes among project partners



Impact

- HIA with equity focus and HEA being used to inform health governance more widely
- HIA with equity focus and HEA being used to inform policy making in a number of EU countries and an agreement on the merits and barriers of future use
- Increase in the ability of MS to take account of health equity in policy making.

Participation in meetings and ways of working:

Participants of WP4 have been invited to participate in the Kick off Meeting in April 2011 and the first WP4 meeting in November 2011. Two further WP4 specific meetings have been planned, which will be the HIA training in May 2012 in Brussels and in October/November 2012 (venue to be confirmed) being immediately followed by a wider WP meeting.

Only those participating in the HIA training are asked to attend the second meeting in May 2012 and all partners are invited to the final WP meeting which will be held after the final HIA training session in October/November 2012.

The final meeting, following the last day of HIA training, will aim to share experiences, share key learning from the HIA with equity focus/HEA's, present the findings from the EU HEA and discuss the other deliverables i.e. the final written report.

The methodology to assess equity in the policy HIA process will be developed further by participants of the HIA training i.e. feedback on its use, practicality and usability. This will be an iterative process coordinated by the WP lead.

The EU level HEA will be commissioned, to be undertaken in 2012. The initial framework for deciding the policy has been developed in the WP4 meeting in November 2012 and a dialogue will be had with the EC to decide the final policy for review.

A follow-up questionnaire will be sent to WP4 participant countries covering the current use and knowledge on HIA with equity focus and HEA in **April 2013** to assess if there has been any impact of the programme in the understanding and use of HIA with equity focus and HEA in each participant country.

To develop the consensus on HiAP, we will build on the feedback given on the initial report presented in November 2011, where participants of the WP will be asked to comment on the second draft and the WP lead to glean views. A final draft will be circulated for further comment and final report written and published on the Equity Action website.

Communication will primarily be through email, the equity channel, BC-basecamp and WP meetings.

Further questions and enquires:

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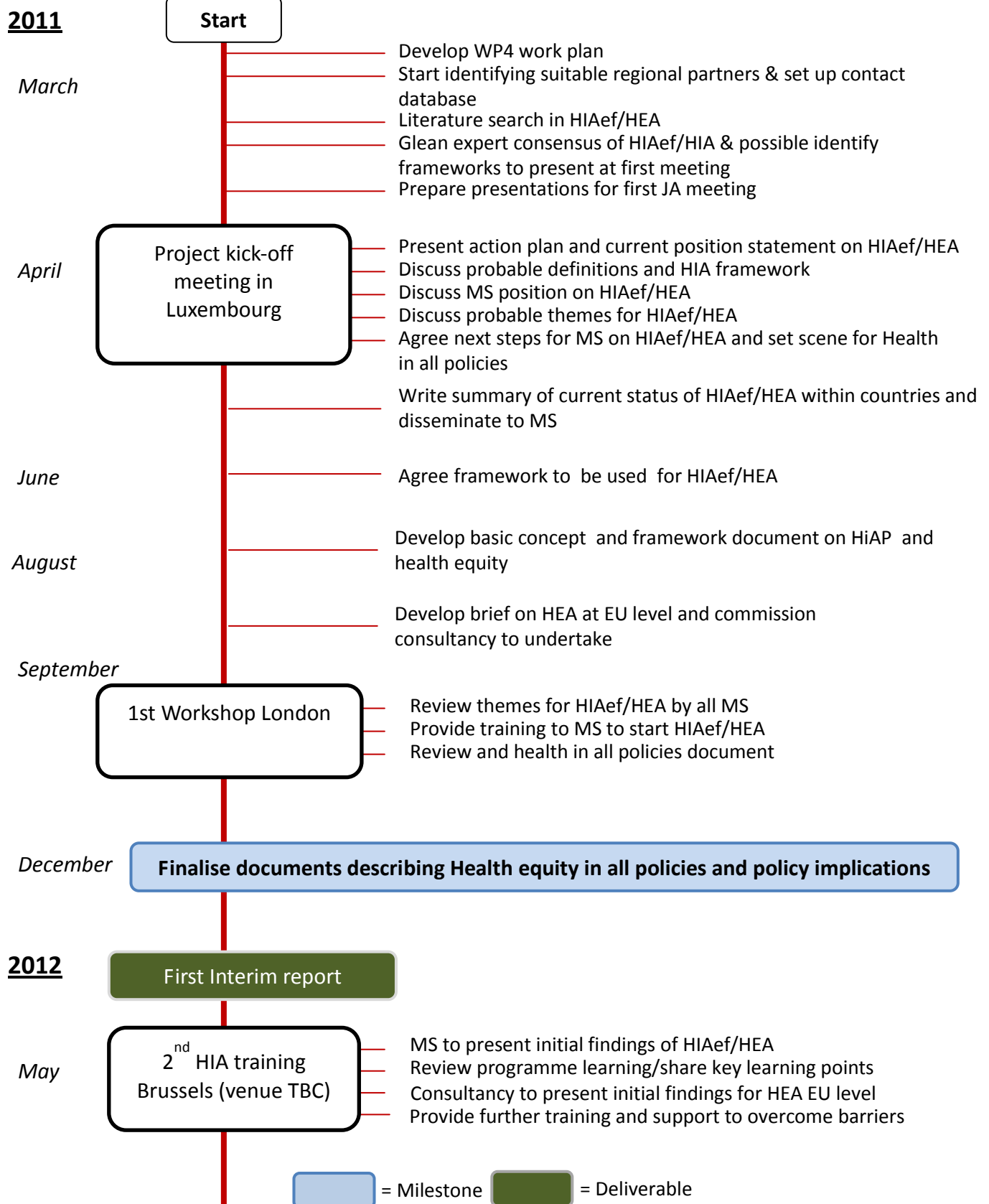
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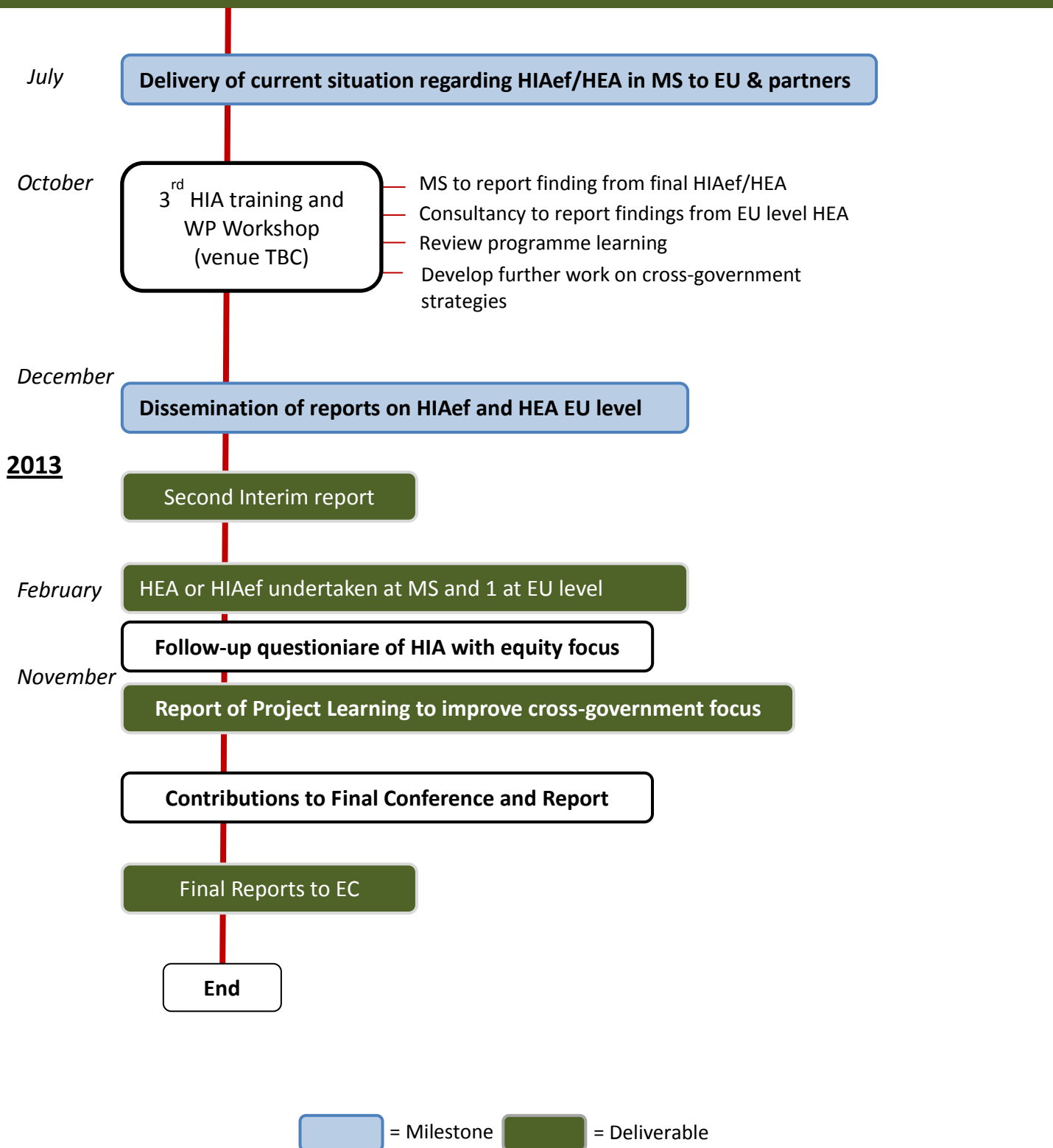
Annex 1. Timeline and milestones

Joint Action – WP 4 – Tools for Cross-Government Working Timeline, Deliverables and Key Milestones





Joint Action – WP 4 – Tools for Cross-Government Working
Timeline, Deliverables and Key Milestones





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