



Best Practices in action: how to transfer, implement, and sustain effective health promotion interventions for children (0-12)

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Module 1

Transferability and sustainability of Best Practices in health promotion and childhood obesity prevention



Best Practices in action: how to transfer, implement, and sustain effective health promotion interventions for children (0-12)

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Unit 1.2.2

Health4EUkids: Overview of the context for supporting Best Practice implementation “Data overview from SWOT Analysis on Transferability, Sustainability and Scalability”

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Background

Childhood obesity is a critical public health challenge in the EU, especially in low-income communities. The Health4EUkids Joint Action seeks to address this issue through two best practices implementation: Grünau Moves and Smart Family. These initiatives aim to promote physical activity and healthy eating habits in children and responsive parenthood, especially in disadvantaged areas.

Objective

To identify **facilitators** and **barriers** that impact the successful planning, implementation and scalability of these BPs in diverse EU contexts

Methods



Qualitative SWOT Analysis



Online survey and Discussion Group



May-August 2023



EU member states of the Health4EUKids Joint Action (HADEA n.101082462)



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Methodological Overview

The analysis was conducted using a multi-level **participatory SWOT framework**, involving actors from researchers, local implementers to community representatives.

Target Profiles

Tailored questionnaires were administered to 4 groups:

- ☐ Best Practice owners
- ☐ Local implementation groups
- ☐ WP5 and WP6 leaders
- ☐ Municipal representatives (for Grünau Moves only)

Data Collection Tools

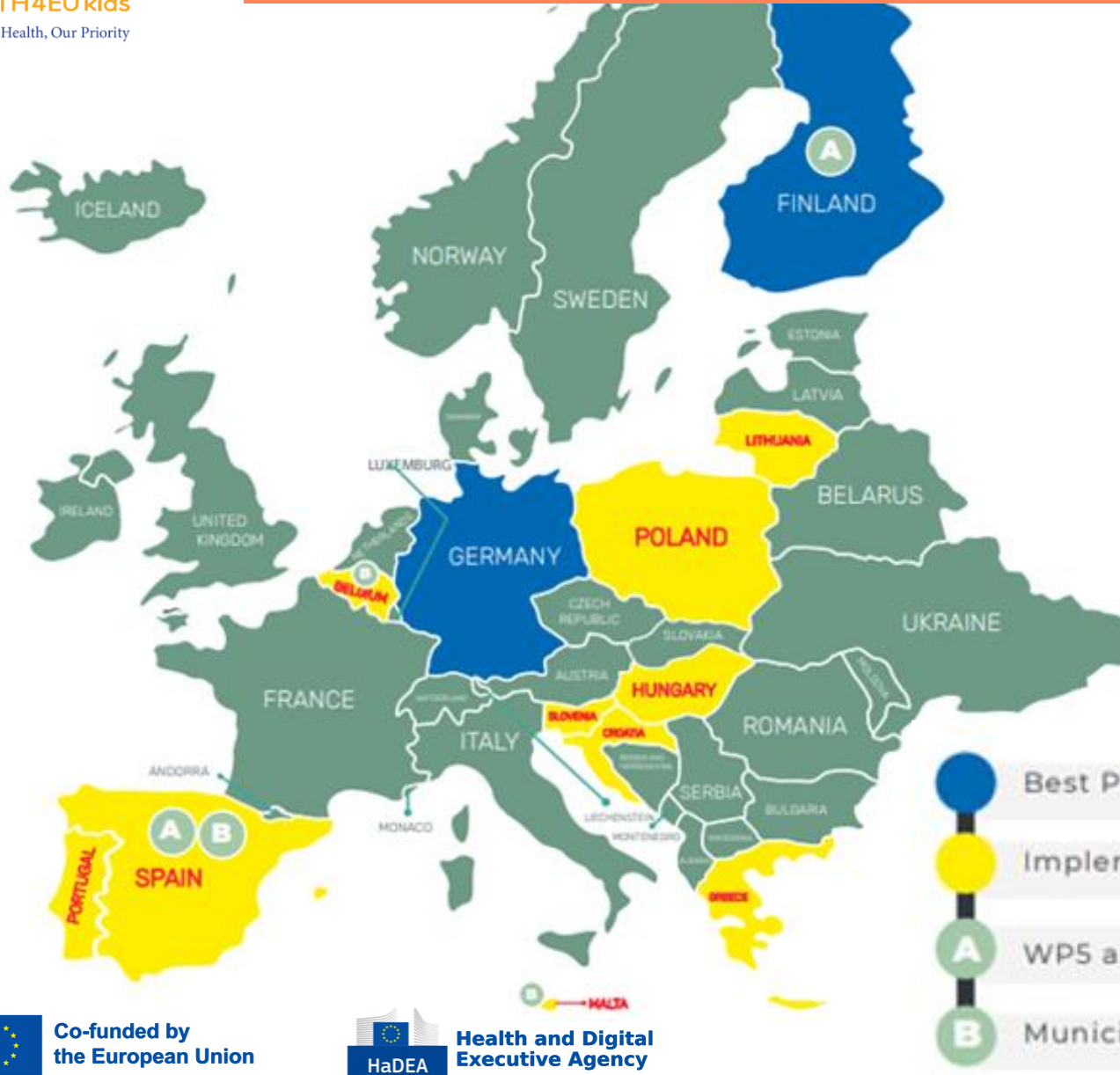
Online questionnaires covering 5 key areas: planning, implementation, evaluation, communication, and recommendations.

Discussion group with selected MS representatives for in-depth exploration of emerging topics.

Analysis Dimensions

For each area, internal and external factors were examined across domains such as funding, human resources, context analysis, integration, indicators, stakeholder engagement.

Results



Responses collected

Respondents [N=31]	WP5 Grünau Moves	WP6 Smart Families
Member States involved	12	5
WP leaders	1	1
Best Practices owners	1	1
Municipalities	10*	/

* Only from the implementation of *Grünau Moves*

Discussion Group participants [N=13]	WP5 Grünau Moves	WP6 Smart Families
	8	5





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Overview of BP's Strengths



STRENGTHS Internal Factors Supporting Success

- **Transdisciplinary approach:** leverage expertise from various sectors, which fosters an integrated approach to health promotion and ensures a broad perspective
- **Existing local networks:** open to the integration with established community structures and partnerships
- **Participatory planning:** facilitate the involvement of stakeholders and community members in planning actions
- **Flexibility in local adaptation:** ensure the scaling up of the actions



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Overview of BP's Weaknesses



WEAKNESSES Internal Challenges

- **Funding limitations:** reliance on EU project funding limits the sustainability of the interventions, especially beyond the initial project period
- **Coordination and alignment:** coordination can be hindered by conflicting interests and misaligned goals among the large amount of stakeholders
- **Limited human resources:** the shortage of dedicated personnel, affects the interventions' continuity and scalability
- **Top-down approaches:** limits adaptability of actions and community empowerment

Overview of BP's Opportunities



OPPORTUNITIES External Conditions to Leverage

- **Additional funding streams:** availability from national or EU sources, as well as forming partnerships with private or public sectors
- **Growing public awareness:** foster political will and public support for health promotion programs
- **Synergies with other programs:** enhance sustainability and scalability by pooling resources and increasing the interventions' impact

Overview of BP's Threats



THREATS

External Barriers to Overcome

- **Bureaucratic obstacles:** can impede the smooth implementation and scaling of the interventions
- **Data gaps:** the lack of updated epidemiological data limits the ability to accurately assess the needs of target populations, making it difficult to effectively tailor interventions
- **Resistance to change:** can result in resistance to new health promotion models, particularly in areas where more traditional health care approaches dominate



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Key Insights – Planning Phase

- **Community & Stakeholder engagement:** early in both design and delivery phases, to foster collaboration and long-term commitment.
- **Community-centered needs assessment:** to understand local health needs and tailor interventions accordingly.
- **Resource planning:** from the start, to secure adequate human, financial, and technological resources.
- **Structured implementation plan & Accountability:** defining clear roles and aligning goals among participants helps reduce conflict, delays and ensure accountability.
- **Institutional and political integration:** aligning with policies and local strategic plans strengthens the integration of interventions into community systems.
- **Equity focus:** include marginalized groups, address infrastructure gaps and cultural barriers in vulnerable areas in order to prevent the widening of health inequalities.



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Key Insights – Implementation Phase

- **Engaging the community:** meaningful activities helps increase participation and community cohesion.
- **Flexible and adaptive approach:** tailor tools and activities to contexts to improve relevance and acceptance, while maintain flexibility to adjust strategies based on emerging challenges.
- **“Keep it simple & scalable”:** small and tangible actions (e.g. environmental improvements) can have broad community impact and be scaled up.
- **Leverage existing resources:** build on local facilities to support activities and to strengthen ownership and sustainability.
- **Capacity building:** ongoing training for local professionals to ensure effective delivery and integration with local services.
- **Leadership & Support:** to maintain consistent motivation, empower local teams and ensure implementation success.



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Key Insights – Evaluation Phase

- **Early definition of Key Performance Indicators:** to ensure alignment with project goals and track progress effectively.
- **Long-term perspective:** plan multi-point evaluations over time to accurately measure change, especially for complex outcomes (e.g. obesity reduction)
- **Comprehensive & Mixed-method evaluation:** for a holistic assessment of impact and implementation.
- **Participatory & Context-sensitive evaluation:** involve community stakeholders in identifying relevant and adequate indicators, and ensure ethical approval for clinical data to protect participants' rights.
- **Continuous monitoring & Quality improvement:** evaluate progress and adapt strategies based on emerging findings to improve implementation in real time.



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Key Insights – Internal Communication

- **Structured internal communication:** Use regular meetings, shared platforms, and clear processes to ensure team coordination, transparency, and goal alignment.
- **Online tools & Digital channels:** Leverage online meetings, email, and social media to improve efficiency, reach, and adaptability, especially for dispersed teams.
- **Consistency & Standardization:** Provide templates and unified messaging across the consortium to ensure coherent communication and reduce duplication.



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Key Insights – External Communication

- **Local-level communication focus:** to boost awareness, trust, and participation.
- **Dissemination & Knowledge sharing:** share widely, to support learning across communities and contribute to public health knowledge.
- **Ongoing communication with stakeholder:** through regular updates and feedback opportunities, to reinforce trust, support and project alignment.
- **Tailored & Consistent messaging:** to different audiences (e.g. communities, policymakers, professionals) using various channels (e.g. reports, social media, workshops).
- **Inclusive & Diversified channels:** use both physical and digital communication tools to reach diverse audiences, addressing digital divides and inclusivity.
- **Use of existing local channels:** e.g. local media, networks, and community events instead of creating parallel structures.



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Key messages

Transferability: To ensure effective transferability, it is crucial to conduct a participatory context analysis and adapt the interventions to local socio-economic and cultural factors. Early stakeholder engagement during the planning phase is key to aligning goals and building ownership.

Sustainability: Sustainability depends on securing long-term funding and establishing local management structures that can carry the initiative forward beyond the initial project period. Capacity building for local professionals and community members is also critical to embed the interventions within the existing systems and maintain their impact over time.

Scalability: Interventions are more likely to scale successfully when first implemented in smaller community or at the city-level. Flexible frameworks and pilot projects should be used to assess feasibility before expansion, ensuring the adaptability of the interventions across different settings.



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Conclusion



Participatory planning



Leverage and empower existing resources



Pilot programs & Comprehensive assessment



The **identification of facilitators and barriers in the Best Practices implementation** can **support the definition of strategies** to ensure **more effective and sustainable outcomes** in future health promotion initiatives across different European regions.



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Thank you all for your participation!



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