IMPRODOVA Policy Development Module Assessment Report (D4.2)

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Main Findings from Expert Interviews

During the assessment, VICESSE (Austria) conducted three, ISCPSI (Portugal) conducted three and THL (Finland) two interviews of national key experts of DV policy making from different sectors (law Enforcement, social sector and medical sector). Austria interviewed one expert from law enforcement, one from social sector and one from a perpetrator programme. Portugal interviewed one expert from social sector, one from law enforcement and one from medical sector. Finland interviewed one expert from law enforcement and one from social & medical sector.

In general, the interviewees felt that the tool could be useful for planning the policy feedback cycle and the idea of this kind of tool was warmly welcomed. Feedback provided by the experts was particularly positive regarding the tool's ability to contribute to capacity-building. Also, there were some ideas for further improvement. The feedback mainly focused on the following three aspects: The goal/intention of the tool, its language, and the possibility of integrating the tool in everyday professional practice.

Firstly, the interviewees felt that a short introduction for the checklist would be valuable for its users to understand when and how to use it. The current introductory sentences were seen as somewhat unclear, which caused misunderstandings as to who the target groups of this tool were and in what context should the tool be used. The respondents also stated that, although the Manual's introduction was useful, it nevertheless could be significantly improved if the envisioned application would be described on a practical level and in simple language.

The interviewees found some points in the Checklist and Manual clear, but not all. The experts' thoughts also varied. Some interviewees felt that some parts lacked an explanation of how they could or should apply them in practical contexts, as they are theoretical conceptualizations. Other interviewees found the examples of the Manual very practical and representing. Also, some missing parts were identified: two interviewees from different countries suggested adding also the perspective of working with perpetrators of DV to the tool. Another interviewee wished that the tool could be more adaptive, if the expert using the tool could add some extra parts to the Checklist, which could be developed according to the target group at hand. One interviewee wished that preventive measures should be taken more into account in the Checklist.

In the piloted Checklist, there were only two answering options: Either "Yes" or "In process". Some interviewees suggested adding a third option that would be:"No/Not applicable". Instead of using merely a tick there could be an empty space to present the justification or comments if the option is used.

The biggest shortcoming of the Manual was its length. Experts felt that the Manual should be shorter and less complex. On the other hand, the Manual's concrete examples were appreciated and they made the Checklist more understandable. Thus, the tool could be improved by making its application in practice more understandable and integrating the practical dimension of DV response more clearly. This could be achieved by offering practical examples for the relevance of specific

standards, describing best-practice cases from other countries or describing the negative issues which arise when specific standards are not met. In this vein, national adaptations (and translations) of this tool could include references to specific existing policies and practices on national and regional level to be more readily applicable to the practice of domestic violence response.

Main Findings from Online Questionnaires

During the assessment, Finland and Portugal also conducted Online Questionnaires as designed in the assessment work plan. Altogether 23 Finnish (out of 98 recipients) and 24 Portuguese (out of 65 recipients) DV experts answered the online questionnaire. The response rate was thus clearly better in Portugal than in Finland.

The survey feedback revealed that it is still relatively rare to use a structured model for planning a National or local action plan's implementation and maturity assessment. Only a few of the Finnish respondents (5%) had used structured models and about one fifth of the Portuguese experts (17 %) before.
In general, the majority of the respondents felt that they could use this tool when planning the next National Action Plan. For example, of the Finnish respondents, only 9 % saw themselves not using this tool in the future.

Most respondents agreed that the Checklist and Manual were useful in creating a nuanced assessment process. Especially gathering information from the grassroots' level was seen as a positive result from using the tool. For example, 86 % of the Finnish respondents agreed to this.
The tool was also seen useful in creating a multi-agency approach to the National work against DV. A clear and shared policy maturity assessment module may be able to contribute to the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in future policy-making processes. Nonetheless, one respondent commented, that the view of children as victims of DV should be further strengthened within the checklist and manual.

Only roughly half of the respondents saw the tool useful in allocating sufficient resources to support the implementation of the policy. The open-ended comments added, that the question of sufficient resources is a political one and thus cannot be solved by a tool supporting the implementation of a policy.

Altogether 35% of the Finnish and 38% of the Portuguese respondents felt that the tool was understandable, and 50% of the Finnish experts and 29% of the Portuguese experts disagreed. The rest of the respondents neither agreed or disagreed. In the open-ended remarks the language was commented to be too difficult and some of the phrases required further clarification. A few respondents commented, that the used language should be more concrete. Also, several respondents suggested using more real-life examples from different professional fields such as health care, school world etc.

The online survey results in fact confirmed the findings from the expert interviews concluding, that the Manual was considered too long. Furthermore, it was agreed,

that the Checklist needs an introduction, where it would be clarified, who are the target group(s) of the tool and when and how to use the Checklist.

Other suggestions for improvement were more detailed and minor, such as the titles of the checklist (could be clarified so that there is no need to look at the Manual), improving the used language (language was seen as too academic and theoretical) or expanding the Manual's examples from social- and health sector to include more variables such as police or school sector.

Conclusions for the Development of the Tool

Based on the feedback on the assessment process, during spring of 2021, THL will add a short introduction for the checklist to make it clearer and easy to understand, as to who is the target group of this tool, as well as when and how this target group should use the Checklist and Manual.
Both the interviews and online questionnaire results also suggested that the Manual needs to be shortened and clarified.
The assessment produced also a few new thematic ideas that should be considered adding to the tool (for example questions about perpetrator-work).

Next steps

The conclusions from the Assessment Process for the development of the tool will be taken into account and implemented in the Policy Assessment Module in the spring of 2021, as the the **Roadmap towards a European Response Platform & DV Handbook** is completed in Task 3.6.