STAIRS

Stakeholders together adapting ideas to readjust local systems to promote inclusive education

CHANGE MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT

Tool No. 4.

Ana Paula Silva

Lisbon, March, 2022

Tool #4. Feasibility of a policy implementation

Target group (who can use it)

Policy makers envisaged in the NAPs

Short description

This tool is a check list provided by Viennet and Pont (2017) for agents of change in education to help them to develop a coherent strategy in the implementation of educational policy. To use the respective template, do first read throughly the detailed description below.

Detailed description of the tool and required material, attachments

According to Viennet and Pont (2017), a well-designed strategy is not sufficient to guarantee effective implementation. Even if the NAPs present the most thoughtful recommendations it will be necessary to keep in mind while presenting a framework that is directed to policymakers, that implementing education policy is multidirectional as the diagram below shows.
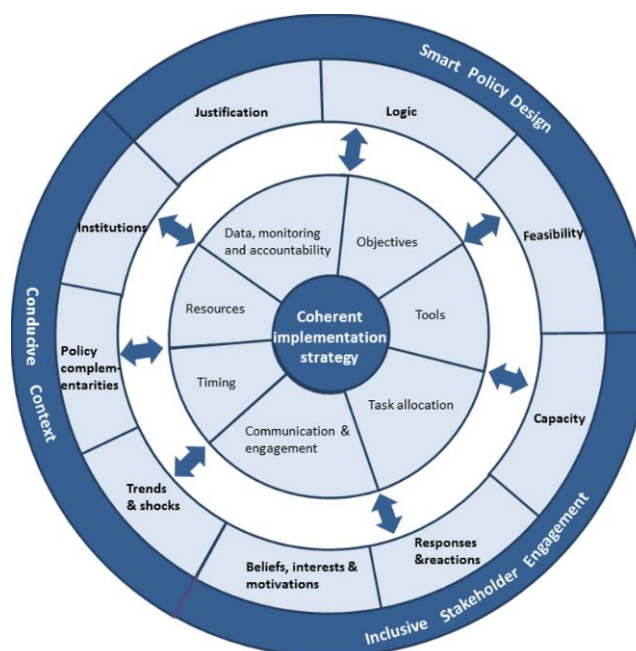
Source: Viennet and Pont (2017, p. 43)

The process must be piloted by a group of actors close with or mandated by policy makers to reach specific objectives, but it can be influenced by actors at various points of the education system, such as schools, parents, local or regional education authorities. It must also be noted that education policy implementation always needs to be contextualised: the process' features vary because it is embedded in the structures of a given education system at a given time, with particular actors, and around a specific educational policy. The central role of context shows that 'there is no one-size-fits-all model' for implementing education policy. One must thus pay attention to the specificity of the policy, stakeholders and local context to analyse or make recommendations about the process. Yet a common framework can help to structure the analysis, and guide the implementation process. With a generic framework, we hope to provide a tool that helps identify and analyse the determinants of success in education policy implementation.

Vinnet and Pont (2017) provided a definition of education policy implementation and proposed a generic framework to guide thinking, analysis and action in this area. The table below (Feasibility of a

policy implementation template) translate this framework into a set of questions and principles for action, to help policymakers go from speech to practice and adjust to the realities of complex systems. This framework is proposed for an implementation advisor or for policymakers who would intervene at the national or regional level when an education policy must be implemented. It can be used as a starting point for analysis and support in the process of launching and implementing an education policy to ensure it reaches schools. The table builds on the four dimensions for effective education policy implementation (smart policy design, inclusive stakeholder engagement, conducive context, and coherent implementation strategy) with questions and principles for action. To analyse the first three dimensions (in the horizontal entries in the Table), column 2 proposes as set of guiding questions. To make it actionable, column 3 proposes principles to guide the development of a coherent implementation strategy.

This table can be the base for a Google Forms or Excel page to facilitate gathering actors insights, opinions, sugestions, etc.

Users' guide, equipment

Equipment	Quantity
Google Forms	1
Excel	1

Level of difficulty (easy, medium, advanced)

Easy

Tags

Planning for action

Feasibility of a policy implementation template

		Coherent implementation strategy
Smart policy design	What is the purpose of the policy? What problem does it aim to respond to? What is done elsewhere / has been done in the past about this problem?	Use knowledge that is relevant to the policy and to the local setting
	What is the vision? What are the goals? Are the vision / goals shared or are they conflicting?	Agree on a small number of simple, ambitious and measurable objectives
	Who are the targets? Are the policy targets aware they are expected to change / do they agree?	Set up a monitoring system to get frequent and reliable data without interfering with the implementation process
	What is the policy supposed to change to achieve the vision? Is the causal theory coherent? How have other government carried out similar policies concretely?	Adjust the implementation process based on the data and feedback collected — Agree on the relevant tools to carry out the policy
	How feasible is the policy? What are the existing resources? Is it enough?	Set up a realistic timeline — Secure the resources and plan for the whole duration of the implementation process

Inclusive stakeholder engagement	Who are the key stakeholders affected by the policy? What are the relationships between key actors? Can they work together? How to get them to collaborate? Who is needed to implement (steer the process, deliver a service, train the staff, etc.)? Who was instrumental in implementing this type of policy elsewhere? Are they capable of fulfilling the task? (resources, skills) If not, how to build their capacity? How will implementers be held accountable to the public (accountability mechanism)? Who are the actors who might interfere with / facilitate the implementation process? How to get them on board?	Engage key stakeholders and take into account their vision (if not done during policy design) Use their knowledge to make the implementation strategy more practical engagement Agree on the distribution of tasks and responsibilities Work with the key actors to build their capacity Adapt the accountability mechanisms to the local context Set up simple ways to communicate between actors Communicate clearly about the policy (use shared vision, adapt the level of speech)
Conducive context	What is the institutional setting already in place to support education policy implementation? Do the mechanisms needed for this policy fit with the existing? If not, how to make them fit? What are the trends and likely shocks outside the implementing system that could affect the process (social, economic, political, demographic; on the local, national and global levels)? What can help the implementation effort and how to harness it? What can hinder the process and how to cope with it? Are there any other policies that tackle this problem? How could they interfere with / complement each other?	Make use of the existing setting before creating new institutions, or create institutions that fit well with the existing (especially for incremental policy changes) Prepare several scenarios of what could happen and the plausible strategies and resources to face it Avoid overlap and inconsistencies between policies Use the complementarities that exist between policies

Adapted from Vinnet and Pont (2017)