



Folkhälsomyndigheten  
PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF SWEDEN

# Checklist for high-quality implementation

FROM NEWS TO EVERYDAY USE – THE DIFFICULT ART OF IMPLEMENTATION

Name of the project: .....

Date: .....

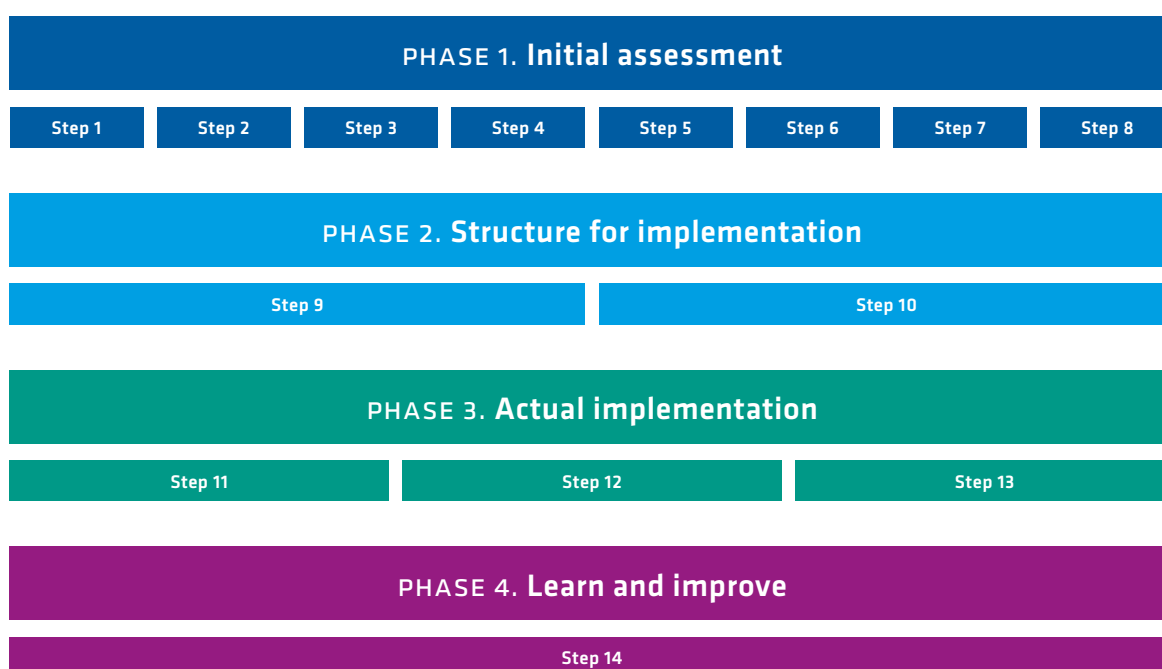


# Checklist for high-quality implementation

We have produced a digital “Checklist for high-quality implementation” as an aid to the practical work of implementation. The checklist is based on a synthesis of 25 theoretical frameworks for implementation, and created by three American researchers<sup>1</sup>. Taking key components of the 25 frameworks, the researchers have produced four overarching phases and fourteen critical steps to enable you to successfully plan, assess and undertake implementation processes. The checklist presents this framework phase by phase and step by step. You can use all or just parts of it when planning and evaluating implementation processes.

The checklist starts with three key questions: “What need has been identified?”; “What method is to be implemented?”; and “To what extent does the method have scientific support?” These are followed by specific questions over four phases and fourteen steps. The answers to the questions can be ‘yes’, ‘no’, ‘partially’ or ‘not clear’ and there is space to add comments.

Note that the *ten* first steps (Phases 1 and 2) of the framework for high-quality implementation are about planning, i.e. about thinking in advance. The actual implementation, following up and learning for the future do not feature until the final four steps.



1. Meyers D, Durlak J, Wandersman A. *The Quality Implementation Framework: A Synthesis of Critical Steps in the Implementation Process*. American Journal of Community Psychology. 2012;50 (3–4):462–80.

## Three preliminary questions

**What need\* has been identified?**

**What method\*\* is (potentially) to be implemented?**

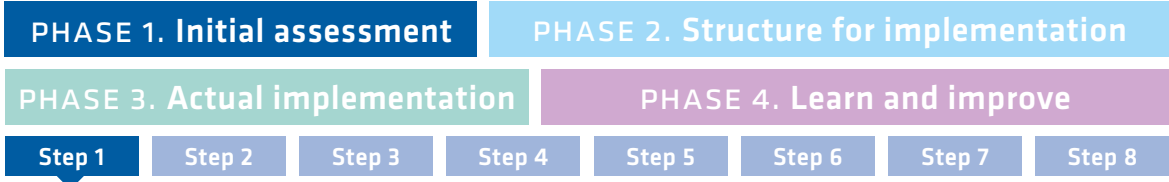
**To what extent does the method have scientific support\*\*\*?**

- \* Need means a problem to be addressed or a need to be met, e.g. reducing the proportion of young people who smoke or increasing the proportion of people in the population who are physically active.
- \*\* Method includes knowledge, initiatives, interventions, products or other things that might have to be implemented.
- \*\*\* Refers to the type of scientific support underpinning the choice of method, for example referencing a relevant, systematic review of the literature.

## PHASE 1

# Initial assessment

The first phase in the framework for high-quality implementation is about carefully assessing whether a new research-based method fulfils a real need and whether it is suitable for the organisation (e.g. a municipality, county council, region, county administrative board or association). You should also assess whether the method needs to be adapted to suit the organisation and whether this is possible in practice. Phase 1 consists of eight steps, each containing key questions that should be answered before moving on to Phase 2.



# Step 1. Why are we doing this? What are the needs that we think the new method can help us address?

Step 1 involves an assessment of the needs. What problems can be solved for which target groups? Who in the organisation would gain from implementation of the new method?

Methods that are both complex and resource-intensive are often offered to recipients who do not think that they have a greater problem that could be solved by the method in question. For example, school heads might feel that there is a greater need for educational activities than for tobacco control activities, even if they are aware that the Tobacco Act is also relevant to the school.

If those who are to undertake an implementation process do not consider that the method is needed, it is likely that there are only two alternatives: either to work to improve motivation or to abort the implementation process. Where work is to be done on improving motivation, there must of course be real needs that are clearly explained to those who will actually undertake any implementation.

### 1a. Have we completed a needs assessment?

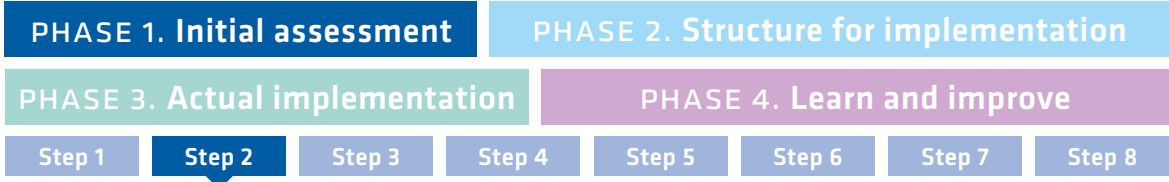
Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

### 1b. Have we assessed what resources are needed?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:



## Step 2. Does the new method fit our organisation, our culture, our needs and our values?

Step 2 considers the fit between the organisation and the new method, looking to ensure that the new method is consistent with the organisation’s culture, values and visions. Could there be ethical problems if the method is implemented? Can the method be adapted to suit our organisational culture? As political values and priorities vary, a specific method may fit at one particular time but not at another.

The method must also tally with the needs and values of the end user, and the implementation process will sometimes include a stage in which a method is adapted to suit a particular culture. However, it is important here to balance the need to adapt the method with the need to maintain fidelity to it (see Step 4).

### 2a. Does the method meet our needs?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

### 2b. Is the method suitable for our objectives and remit?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

PHASE 1. Initial assessment

PHASE 2. Structure for implementation

PHASE 3. Actual implementation

PHASE 4. Learn and improve

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

Step 5

Step 6

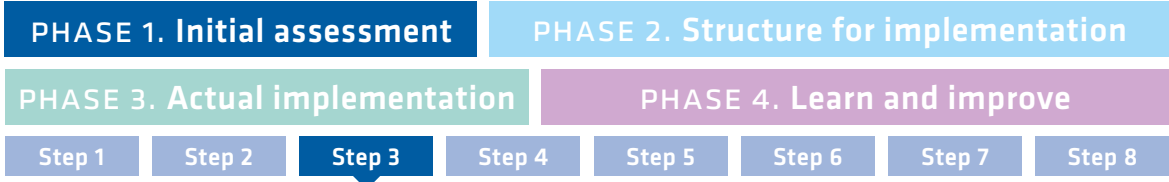
Step 7

Step 8

**2c. Is the method consistent with our values?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:



# Step 3. Is our organisation ready for the new method and are we ready for change?

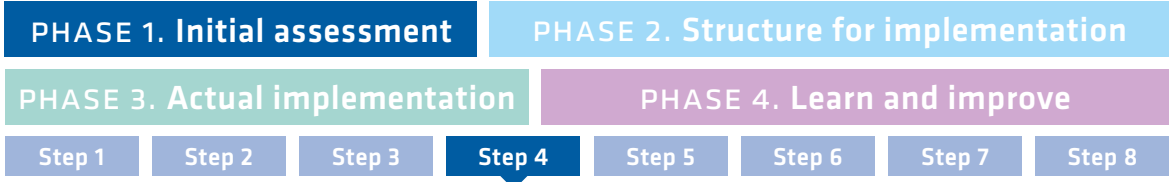
Step 3 involves an assessment as to whether the organisation is ready for the new method. Is there a will to undertake the implementation process and are there the means, e.g. adequate resources, knowledge and motivation? Is the organisation ready for change? Is the organisation's management ready for change?

## 3a. Have we assessed how ready we are for change?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:





# Step 4. Should and can we adapt the new method to suit our organisation?

*Note that question 4c is significant in terms of fidelity to the method.*

In Step 4 you should assess whether the new method can and should be adapted before the start of a potential implementation process. In order to be able to assess this, all those involved must be aware of the new method’s “active ingredients”, i.e. its core components. Only then will potential users be able to have an opinion on whether a specific element needs to be adapted.

One example of an adaptation could be simplifying or shortening a comprehensive parental support method so that it is a little less costly. If the users request adaptation, it is important that those providing the new method know which components can be adapted and which cannot be changed (i.e., the core components). It is important not to “adapt out” the elements of the new method that are designed to have positive effects. Overall, it is important to balance the need for adaptation with the need to comply with the method.

## 4a. Does the method have components that we would need to adapt? If the answer is ‘no’, go to Step 5.

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

## 4b. Do we know what components in the method could be adapted to suit our organisation?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

PHASE 1. Initial assessment

PHASE 2. Structure for implementation

PHASE 3. Actual implementation

PHASE 4. Learn and improve

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

Step 5

Step 6

Step 7

Step 8

**4c. Do we know what components in the method should not be adapted?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

**4d. Do those undertaking the practical implementation have the opportunity to suggest adaptations of the method?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

**4e. Is there a system for keeping track of and documenting any adaptations of the method?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

**PHASE 1. Initial assessment**

**PHASE 2. Structure for implementation**

**PHASE 3. Actual implementation**

**PHASE 4. Learn and improve**

Step 1

Step 2

Step 3

Step 4

**Step 5**

Step 6

Step 7

Step 8

# Step 5. Does the new method have the support of key people in our organisation, i.e., decision-makers, managers, practitioners etc.?

(Questions 5b-5d include space to enter various relevant stakeholders)

In Step 5 you will need to assess whether there is a supportive climate in the organisation for the implementation of the new method. This involves ensuring that the right stakeholders are active in the implementation process and that they feel that it will be worthwhile implementing the new method and that it will benefit the organisation. If, for example, you want to introduce various types of health promotion initiatives into a school, it will be helpful if the initiatives can be integrated with the school’s core mission. In this step it is also important to identify any factors that obstruct or promote implementation.

Those responsible for the implementation should ensure that the new method is aligned with the organisation’s visions and values and establish policies that support its use (and counter non-use). It is also important to identify stakeholders who can stimulate and support the use of the new method.

### 5a. Do the relevant decision-makers and managers feel positive about the method?

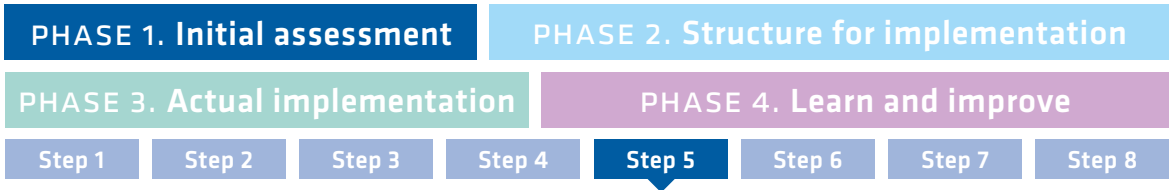
Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

### 5b. Is ..... [name of stakeholder] positive about the method?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:



**5c. Is ..... [name of stakeholder] positive about the method?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

**5d. Is ..... [name of stakeholder] positive about the method?**

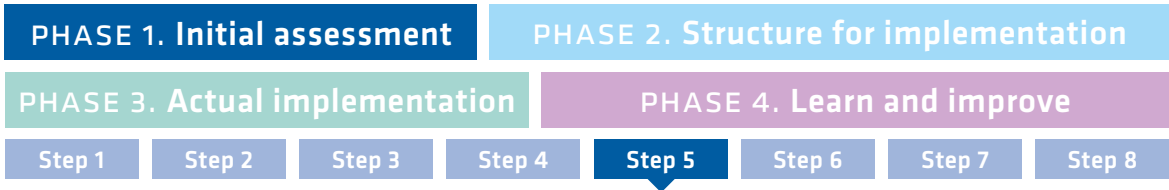
Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

**5e. Have you identified any stakeholders who are particularly positive and able to drive the implementation process?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:



**5f. Have you taken action to deal with any opposition to the method?**

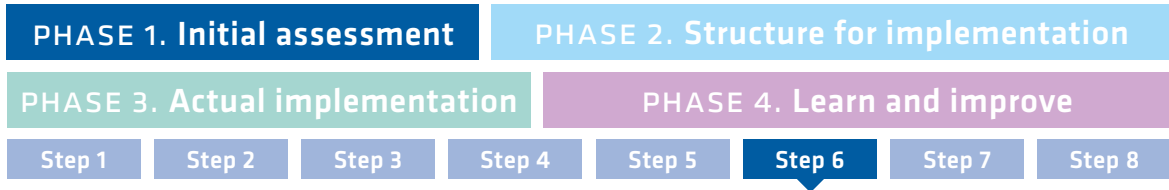
Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

**5g. Have you taken action to deal with any obstacles to the implementation?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:



## Step 6. Do we need to strengthen our infrastructure and motivation, or raise the level of expertise in the organisation?

Step 6 is about building organisational capacity. Before proceeding to the next step, you should answer the following questions:

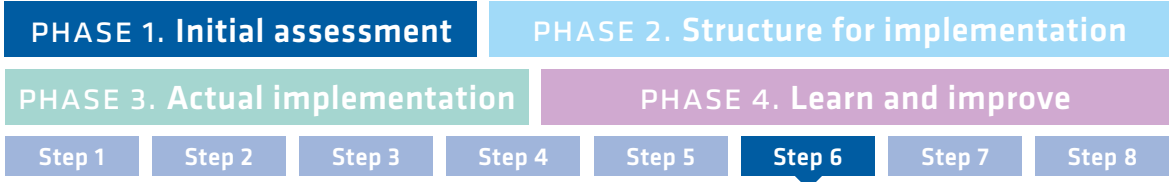
- Can the new method (in original or adapted form) work in our organisation?
- To what extent do those who are to undertake the implementation process understand the implications of the new method?
- How will the organisation manage any needs that arise as a consequence of the new method?
- Are the implementers ready to support and use the new method?

If the answers to these questions are mainly positive, the organisation probably has the capacity to implement the new method. If not, the infrastructure, motivation and level of expertise of the organisation should be reviewed before initiating an implementation process.

### 6a. Can we adapt the organisation in order to successfully implement the method?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:



**6b. Can we strengthen motivation in order to successfully implement the method?**

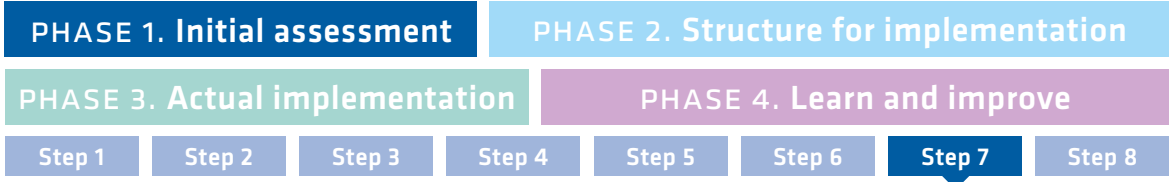
Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

**6c. Can we increase the level of expertise in the organisation in order to successfully implement the method?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:



## Step 7. Have we identified who will undertake the practical implementation work? How can we support them?

Step 7 is about identifying both the people who will undertake the actual implementation work and those who will provide support during the process. In this step, you will also need to clarify what needs for support there are and provide the right kind of support in relation to the new method. Those undertaking the implementation process require knowledge of the new method itself and how it will be used. This means that they must first be helped to acquire the necessary knowledge and be given practical training in the new method, and this must be followed up with continued support and supervision for as long as is necessary.

The people – either internal or external – who will be providing support to the implementers should have knowledge of the new method but also knowledge of implementation processes and evaluation.

### 7a. Have we identified and recruited people to undertake the implementation?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

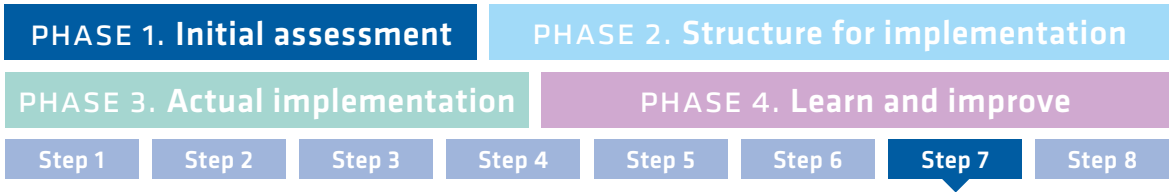
Comments:

### 7b. Are we able to provide support to those who will be using the method in practice (i.e., specifically relating to the method)?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:





**7c. Are we able to provide support to those who will be undertaking the actual implementation (i.e., specifically relating to the implementation process)?**

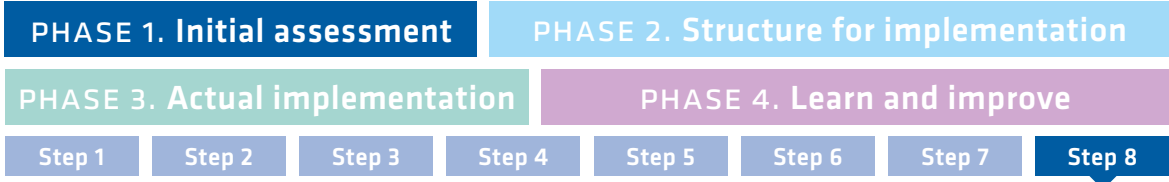
Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

**7d. Are we able to provide support to those who will be evaluating the implementation process?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:



## Step 8. Are we able to provide adequate training for those who will be undertaking the implementation process?

Step 8, the final step in Phase 1, is about practical training. The organisation must be able to provide adequate, effective training so that those who are going to implement the method feel they have the necessary expertise and are confident in its use.

### 8a. Are we able to provide adequate practical training in the method?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

### 8b. Are we able to provide adequate theoretical training in the method?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

Phase 1 and the first eight steps are, then, merely preparing the way for the actual implementation stage. The preparations continue in the next phase, but focus on structure.

## PHASE 2

# Structure for implementation

The second phase in the framework for high-quality implementation is about developing a structure for the implementation of the new method, including in the long term. By the time Phase 2 is complete, there should be a clear plan of what needs to happen and when. It should also be made clear who has responsibility for the various aspects of the implementation process.

## Step 9. Appoint people with organisational responsibility and support providers, and detail roles, responsibilities and processes

This step involves the establishment of an implementation team with a clear responsibility and mandate to plan, undertake and evaluate the implementation process. This includes allocating responsibility for different elements of the implementation process to individual members of the team. Who has overall responsibility? Who provides support to the implementers? This step thus includes the specification of the roles and allocation of roles between those responsible for the implementation process and those providing support.

The members of the team should have good knowledge of the issue at hand, the new method and the organisation's work. It is also a major advantage if the members of the implementation team have the confidence of colleagues within the organisation.

Where possible, the team should be given feedback during the course of their work to ensure that they can comply with the implementation process and adjust as necessary. What's working? What isn't working? What action needs to be taken?

### 9a. Have we appointed an implementation team or equivalent?

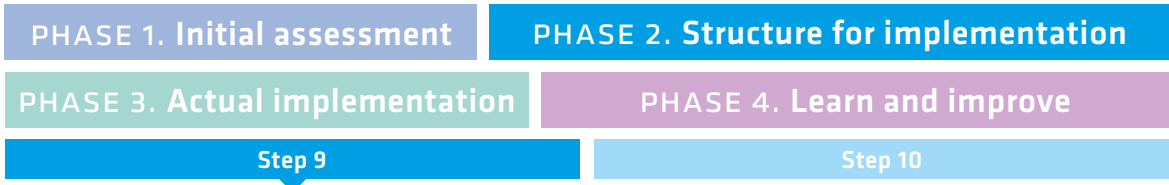
Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

### 9b. Have we designated a person to be in charge of the team?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:



**9c. Have we recruited subject matter experts and method experts to the team?**

Yes    No    Partially    Not clear

Comments:

**9d. Have we defined roles, processes and responsibilities within the team?**

Yes    No    Partially    Not clear

Comments:

## Step 10. Establish an implementation plan to include concrete tasks and a timeline including in the long term

Step 10 involves producing an implementation plan. The plan will set out the different elements of the implementation process, when they need to be complete and who is responsible for ensuring that the work gets done. A clear plan will make it easier to foresee any difficulties or obstacles, so that these can perhaps be avoided or can be dealt with in timely fashion. The plan will clarify what actions need to be taken before the implementation of the new method can begin in earnest, for example education and training for staff and the development of tools and local procedures. It should also include details of monitoring and evaluation procedures.

### 10a. Have we produced an implementation plan with clearly defined tasks?

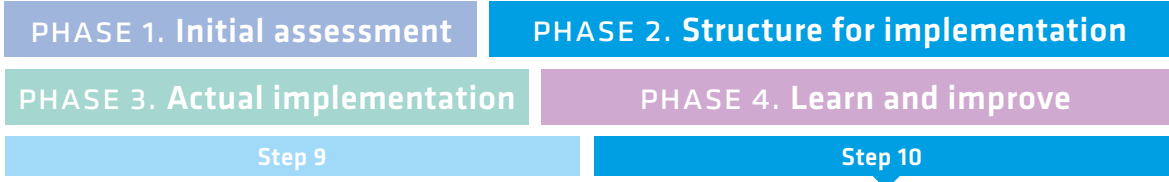
Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

### 10b. Have we produced a clear timeline that includes long-term sustainability?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:



**10c. Have we allocated the tasks in the implementation plan to the relevant team members or implementers?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

## PHASE 3

# Actual implementation

The actual implementation of the method is not arrived at until the third phase, which is what the following part of the framework for high-quality implementation is about. Structure and support for the work are important elements here. Phase 3 includes practical and technical support for the implementers, evaluation of the implementation process and feedback to all those involved.



## Step 11. Provide support, e.g. supervision and technical assistance, to those undertaking the implementation

Step 11 comprises concrete support, coaching and supervision during the implementation process itself. Concrete support means helping the implementers solve practical problems, for example with materials, scheduling or resources. It could also mean helping with any new education or training needs that may arise, or with the continued adaptation of the new method. If the implementers lack knowledge and support, implementation will naturally be more difficult.

### 11a. Have we designated someone to provide practical support if problems arise during the implementation process?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

### 11b. Does the person who will provide the practical support have good knowledge of the method?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

PHASE 1. Initial assessment

PHASE 2. Structure for implementation

PHASE 3. Actual implementation

PHASE 4. Learn and improve

Step 11

Step 12

Step 13

**11c. Does the person who will provide the practical support have good knowledge of local circumstances and resources?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

PHASE 1. Initial assessment

PHASE 2. Structure for implementation

PHASE 3. Actual implementation

PHASE 4. Learn and improve

Step 11

Step 12

Step 13

## Step 12. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation process

Step 12 involves the evaluation of the implementation process and of the effects of the new method, which requires a plan for evaluation and data collection. What has worked well? Have any weaknesses emerged that should and can be attended to? You will need to gather and collate information about how the various parts of the implementation process have been undertaken.

### 12a. Is there a plan for evaluation?

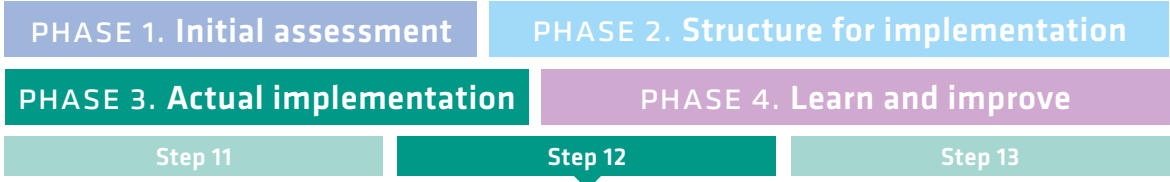
Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

### 12b. Have variables been identified for the evaluation?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:



**12c. Is there a plan for the evaluation of long-term sustainability (institutionalisation)?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

## Step 13. Provide feedback to all those involved

Step 13 involves continuously feeding back the results of the evaluation of the implementation process and the impact of the new method to all those involved. The results of interim and final evaluations should be communicated and discussed and any necessary actions taken. There can often be a large number of people involved in an implementation process, e.g. decision-makers, administrators, practitioners and support staff, which means that feedback may need to be provided in several different ways. The aim of evaluation and feedback is to ensure the quality of the method and to enable further development.

### 13a. Are there channels for the dissemination of evaluation results to those involved?

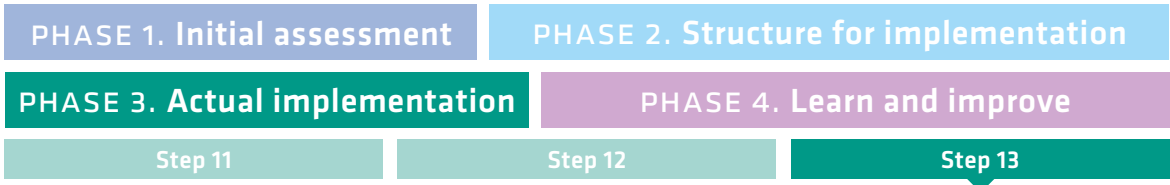
Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

### 13b. Are there opportunities for discussing the evaluation results with those involved?

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:



**13c. Are there opportunities to take action in response to the evaluation results, i.e., quality development?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

## PHASE 4

# Learn and improve

The fourth and last phase of the framework for high-quality implementation comprises just one step; it is about learning from experiences.

## Step 14. Learn from experience to improve future implementation processes

(Questions 14a-14c include space to enter various relevant stakeholders)

Step 14 is about the need to learn for the future, i.e., about implementation generally, not specifically about the current implementation process. What has our work taught us about high-quality implementation that we can share with other people?

**14a. Have we obtained information about the experiences of [name of stakeholder] .....**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

**14b. Have we obtained information about the experiences of [name of stakeholder] .....**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:



**14c. Have we obtained information about the experiences of [name of stakeholder] .....**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments:

**14d. Has the information obtained been shared with relevant stakeholders?**

Yes      No      Partially      Not clear

Comments: