

## **Abstract**

### **Background**

Since 2001 efforts have been made in Upper Austria to implement health goals, and the Institute for Health Planning (IGP) was founded to support these activities. For some of the goals there are long-term strategies that also try to achieve sustainability but for others hardly any activities are noticeable. Findings show that health goals have been agreed on but that implementing effective and sustainable measures and programmes to achieve these goals appears difficult. Other countries have encountered similar experiences.

### **Aims**

To evaluate the current situation of leadership in relation to implementing the health goals and to provide suggestions as to how decision makers could become more involved in implementing these goals and how the process of management could be made more effective.

To find out how continuous learning and further developments are assessed by decision makers and to provide suggestions for improvements – e. g. on how to build up know-how and the capacity required.

To present quality criteria for the projects and programmes carried out to reach these health goals by giving examples.

### **Methods**

Analysis of literature concerning the implementation of health goals (e. g. WHO documents; examples of good practice from Finland, New Zealand, Australia; analysis of policy).

Conducting semi-structured interviews with decision makers and experts concerned with health goal implementation.

### **Findings**

Decision makers are open-minded when it comes to measures for implementing the health goals. The necessary basic structures exist (Institute for Health Planning, health conferences, working parties are established for each goal) ; however, the existing structures have to be used more efficiently and are in need of further development.

A long term strategic programme has to be developed and must be adopted in close cooperation with those in power. Health problems must be tackled at the basis (taking an upstream approach and taking the determinants of health into account).

The topic of the currently insufficient leadership has to be discussed and a solution must be found. Programmes for implementing the goals should be accompanied by a broad and transparent process of consultation.

Special attention should be paid to capacity building – that means developing the necessary knowledge, management skills and processes. This task has to be done parallel to measures for implementation.

The actors work practically in isolation and the work is fragmented. Strong and supportive networks need to be established.

In the future the Institute for Health Planning could contribute more to reaching the health goals if they are assigned to concentrate more on coordinating and implementing the health goals than on reporting health status.