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Abstract:

The objectives of workpackage 5 were awareness-raising on outcome assessment, involvement of key actors, and stimulation of utilizing of the results of the EATS project. The EATS project adopted a strategy including:

- Establishment of national reference groups.
- Organising of national workshops
- Arrangements of an International Conference as base for future networking.
- Presentations and publications in connections with scientific conferences.
- Publications in journals and Web Site publication.

In addition, newsletters were published during the last period of the project. The establishment of national reference groups, being composed of users, different professionals, and representatives of agencies in the field, proved to be a success. This model ensured involvement of key persons outside the EATS consortium, resulting in awareness-raising also on decision levels. Another consequence was the initiating of several additional projects that could support the EATS field trials in different application areas. The EATS approach has also been implemented in other related studies. The International Conference received much interest. More than 100 persons attended the conference, and the conference provided a platform for future interaction with agencies like WHO, representatives of central agencies and institutions, professionals from the field of practice, and individual persons interested in the field. A proceeding from the conference is being worked out. The EATS partners have taken part in a number of conferences, and have produced several publications. The Web Site and the Newsletter served important functions.

A platform for future networking in Outcome Assessment has been provided.

Keywords list: Outcome assessment, effectiveness, instruments, network

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Executive Summary

The objectives of workpackage 5 were awareness-raising on outcome assessment, involvement of key actors, and stimulation of utilizing of the results of the EATS project.

The project has followed up the strategies given in the Technical Annex, involvement of key persons through national reference groups, national workshops, organising international conference, publications and presentations at conferences/journals, and Web Site. In addition, the project has published 3 newsletters. Much of the involvements have been interactive and process oriented.

The key actors involved include professionals in the AT and rehabilitation field, financing agencies, user organisations, decisions makers at different levels, politicians, experts on assessment studies, and others.

Active involvement of key persons and agencies proves to be important and effective, - for common understanding, for bridge-building between different stakeholders, and for the understanding of the importance of outcome assessment studies. Also, this involvement has paved the way for additional research projects supporting the EATS project, as well further developments in the field. The project partners have received valuable feedback from the actors/stakeholders having been involved.

A platform for future networking between institutions and organisations interested in outcome assessment work has been established. Several institutions have expressed interests in carrying field trials based on EATS instruments. The International Conference on Outcome Assessment in Assistive Technology proved to be effective in this direction.

1. Introduction

The end results of the EATS project are not assistive technology systems or devices, but rather methods of approaches in assessing outcomes of assistive technology and services. Therefore, the major efforts on the workpackage 05, Impact and implementation, were focusing on stimulation of awareness and utilisation of the results of the EATS project, including the knowledge base behind the project work. The objective was to identify strategies and tools for implementation of AT&S assessments, including awareness raising, involvements of key actors, publishing of methods and procedures for practical implementation and training.

Also, part of the workpackage was designed to establish platforms for receiving feedback from key stakeholders on methods and tool that were being developed and tried out in fieldwork.

The key actors to be addressed include; representatives of end-user organisations, professional service providers, civil servants, financing agencies, politicians, and industry.

The major verifiable objectives were.

- Active involvements of key actors, as mentioned above.
- Publication of methods, strategies and tools for implementation of AT&S assessments.
- Promotion of final results through the running of national workshops and an International Conference for special target groups.

As part of the above objectives, the partners were to establish national reference groups or other means to include and involve important stakeholders, and to organise reference groups meeting and/or national workshops.

In this Deliverable 5.3, we will summarise the strategies adopted by the EATS consortium, and we will present the different activities and achievements during the project period. Some initial parts of this information were presented in Deliverable 5.1. Deliverable 5.2 is reporting on the European Conference, which later in this report is denoted International Conference.

2. Strategies of approach

Based upon the experiences from the CERTAIN project, the EATS consortium identified awareness-raising on the impact of outcome assessment studies, and on active involvements of relevant stakeholders, as major challenges. The importance of involving key persons from the different arenas of AT and service delivery, at highest possible level, was identified. Such a strategy would support involvements and engagements in the project fundamentals and achievements, and thus facilitate later diffusion of methods of approach, and promote future networks. Another outcome success of such a strategy could imply funding possibilities of expanded field trials, applications of EATS fundamentals in other related studies, and paving the way towards an adoption of outcome assessment studies as means to support decision-making, and to facilitate quality assurance in service delivery.

Also, the EATS consortium has been searching for means of information transfer to wider target groups. The strategies chosen include:

- Organising workshops.
- Arrangements of an International Conference.
- Presentations and publications in connection with scientific conferences.
- Publications in journals.
- Web site publication.
- Newsletter.

3. National reference groups - workshops/seminars

National reference groups were established in Italy, Sweden, The Netherlands, and Norway. Members were recruited from different stakeholders, reflecting different professions in the rehabilitation and assistive technology field, but also reflecting user organisations, central institutions and agencies. This was done to ensure feedback from persons with different background on the one side, and to establish relations with different important stakeholders on the other. The members of the national reference groups are:

Italy

- Representative of local hospital.
- Expert of AT information service.
- Expert in effectiveness and utility scales.
- Representative of occupational therapists.
- Representative of physical therapists.
- Expert of service provision.
- Representative of end-user umbrella organisation.
- Policy maker.
- Expert in health service administration.

Sweden

- Administrator/service provider, Technical Aids Centre, Linköping
- Research Manager, Swedish Handicap Institute
- Representative of HSO (a major user umbrella organisation)
- Representative of Swedish Board for Health and Welfare
- Representative of SLF, Swedish industry

The Netherlands

The Dutch partners have chosen to include the members of the first national workshop as their members of the national reference group.

- Representative of SDI, Netherlands Foundation for Rehabilitation
- Representative of WOKS, Co-ordination of Organisations for Chronically Ill
- Representative of IPSO FACTO (a Research bureau)
- 3 representatives of VWS, Ministry of Health
- 3 representatives of RVZ, Advisory Council to the National Government on Health Issues
- Representative of Dutch Council of the Disabled
- Representative KBOH, Quality and Usability Research of Technical Aids
- Representative of Health Insurance Funds Council

Norway

- Deputy minister (Secretary of State), Ministry of health and social affairs
- Civil servant, Ministry of health and social affairs
- Representative of FFO (the major umbrella organisation of the user organisations)
- Representative of NHF, Norwegian Handicap Organisation
- Representatives of the Norwegian Insurance Institution and their Technical Aids Centres

The Deputy Minister of Social Affairs only took part during his period of service in office.

The partners have each run 4-5 reference group meetings and workshops with an extended audience in their countries. Some of these workshops have been organised in cooperation with other agencies, such as one organised by IRV in cooperation with the University of Maastricht and the Rehabilitation Centre in Hoensbroek. 80 persons took part in this workshop. In addition, there have been several discussions with individual persons of the reference groups on a bilateral level, through meetings, e-mailings and other means.

At the reference groups and the national workshops there have been ample opportunities to present and to discuss basic fundamentals of the EATS approach, the design of the methods being developed, and views on the final results. The meetings and the workshops were organised in a way to facilitate interactive communication, i.e. process oriented interaction. The partners have received valuable input reflecting the positions of the different stakeholders. Several of the proposals that have been provided have been taken into account in the final design of IPPA and EATS 2D.

The role of and the impact of the reference groups and national workshops proved to be a success. Besides providing important inputs to the development of the EATS instruments, the members and participants also gave advice on potential complementary studies, which resulted in several parallel projects. Some of these reflected other interesting application areas (different groups of assistive technologies), while some provided added value to the EATS project in the areas originally chosen by the EATS consortium. Thus the new knowledge from the EATS project resulted in additional projects as indicated below:

- Regional programme for the assessment of assistive technology and services for disabled persons in Sweden. Financed by the Research Council of Southeast Sweden. Objectives: to establish a regional network of actors in the Southeast region of Sweden and hereby implement methodology for assessments.
- Socio-economic evaluation of measures regarding post- and telematics services for disabled persons. 1999-2001. Financed by the National Post and Telecom Agency of Sweden. Objectives are to develop a socio-economic model for assessment of services commissioned by the Agency.
- A study into the effectiveness of outdoor mobility provisions in three municipalities in The Netherlands. The study investigates which solutions are being provided, how effective they are in reducing the mobility problems of the clients, and how satisfied users are with the solution and the service delivery process. In this study the IPPA instrument is used. It is a study at the university of Utrecht, in collaboration with IRV.
- A study into the cost-effectiveness of the MANUS robot manipulator in The Netherlands. This is a study in use of a MANUS robot and people with comparable disabilities who do not have a MANUS robot. There is also a separate study in a small number of new users. In this latter part the IPPA instrument as well as the EATS-2D are used.
- A study that aims at developing an overall methodological framework for assessing possible opportunities and barriers for a successful innovation of assistive technology. In a pilot phase of this project, the EATS instruments were used in 36 people with mobility aids (wheelchair and staircase lift). The judgements of 2 manufacturers were used as proxy measures in this study. This study is carried out in The Netherlands by TNO Prevention and Health (TNO-PG).
- Field trials study the EATS instruments of 40 users in the hearing area in Norway. The Norwegian Ministry of Health and Social Affairs financed the study.
- A study of 40 users in the field of stair lifts carried out in Norway. The study was based on the fundamentals behind IPPA instrument developed by the EATS project. The project was financed by the DELTA Centre, an agency under the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in Norway.
- SIVA has implemented EATS fundamentals as a strategy to improve final quality of AT service delivery (Counselling work).

The EATS project has also stimulated the initiation of a new project proposal, - SEAMATE – Social and Economic Analysis Methods for Assistive Technologies in Europe. A proposal has been sent to the programme Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources, 1999, planned for 2000-2002. The overall aim of the project is to provide methodology for cost-effectiveness analysis of assistive technology for persons with disabilities, investigate societal costs and user benefits for assistive technology in a number of European countries, and to achieve maximum “value for money” and viable products in the area of assistive technology for disabled persons.

The EATS consortium has experienced a rapid growing interest in the outcome assessment area during the last three years, from different stakeholders. The above projects reflect this situation. Also, we have observed statements and supports from central political and public agencies, stressing the needs for such studies to be carried out. The positive support and cooperation with the Norwegian Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in organising the EATS International Conference on Outcome Assessment in Assistive Technology in Oslo, November 1999, reflects this trend. Further, we can refer to statements by the Norwegian Deputy Minister of Social Affairs during his speech at this Conference, as well as statements of representatives of the Dutch Ministry of Health at the same conference addressing these issues.

4. *International Conference*

An International Conference on Outcome Assessment was organised November 24-26, 1999 in Oslo, Norway.

The objectives of the Conference were several:

- To promote the final results of the EATS project.
- To receive feedback on the instruments having been developed, as support for the modifications in the final stage of developments.
- To promote awareness about outcome assessment for important stakeholders in the field, decision makers as well as professional service providers.
- To inform about new trends in the understanding of rehabilitation, and in AT service provision.
- To inform on other outcome assessment strategies, and to identify synergy effects between different approaches.
- To facilitate a platform for further cooperation and networking between experts working in the field.

As part of the EATS consortium strategy, it was important to cooperate with high-level decision makers in the organising of the Conference, to ensure that the partners of the consortium move in the direction of the interests of these stakeholders. This also would support the credibility of the EATS work. Further, it was important to invite experts from different scientific milieus to identify potential impacts of the EATS approach, as well as facilitating a platform for further cooperation with such expert centres. Thus, the EATS consortium decided to organise an international conference rather than a European.

Deliverable 5.2 is reporting on the EATS Conference. Therefore, only some highlights will be presented in this deliverable:

- The Conference was organised in cooperation with the Norwegian Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.
- The Norwegian Ministry of Health and Social Affairs sent out invitations to governmental agencies in Europe.
- The EATS consortium sent out invitations to their networks in their countries. Rehab-Nor sent invitations to several hundred persons and institutions in Europe, but also in North-America, Australia and Japan. The Conference was announced in the EATS Newsletter and by AAATE.
- A wide target group was invited, including: Politicians and civil servants, researchers, user organisations, interdisciplinary groups of service providers, financing agencies, manufacturers and dealers.
- 9 speakers from Europe and North America, from ministries, WHO, research organisations, user organisation, and clinical practice were invited.
- A large part of the programme was focusing on EATS, but also other themes and instruments were presented, for examples: Presentations from ministries of health and social affairs in Norway and The Netherlands, ICIDH-2 of the World Health Organisations, assessment instruments such as CAPA, QUEST and others.
- 110 participants were pre-registered. More than 100 persons took part. 40 persons outside Norway, and more than 60 persons from Norway. Much interest was recorded from persons who were unable to attend.
- Examples of results: The EATS approach aligns with new policies of WHO. Important to liaison with WHO in future work. The EATS instruments represent new advancements, but need further refinements and testing. Several agencies are working on outcome assessment R&D work. Several proposals for refinements and directions were received.

According to feedback from the participants, the atmosphere of the conference was appreciated. Also, according to the feedback, the programme seemed to meet the interests of the participants. This includes the holistic approach of analysing outcome assessments as part of rehabilitation interventions, as well as the concrete instruments and procedures.

Decision makers confirmed the needs to develop reliable assessment instruments, - to assess outcomes on individual levels, to ensure quality of service delivery, and to assess outcomes and costs for future prioritising.

The conference served well as a promotion platform for the EATS project, and as bases for further work and future networking in this area.

5. *Presentations and publications*

The EATS consortium has taken part in several scientific meetings, and has written reports and papers. Appendix 1 gives an overview of publications (deliverables, journals and books, reports), and conference and workshop abstracts.

In addition to the above, partners have given lectures on different occasions. Some examples: SIVA has presented EATS at their annual postgraduate course on AT “Postgraduate Course on Assistive Technology”, addressing therapists, physicians, and educators. TNO has given lecture on the EATS approach at a conference organised during the national science day. Rehab-Nor has been lecturing on EATS approaches on several occasion concerning fundamentals in rehabilitation to service providers in municipalities. The IPPA approach is being presented as an example of assessment strategies in a course on rehabilitation fundamentals, to be tested on the web by the TELEMATE project.

National articles have been written reporting on the Conference in Oslo.

Planned activities include publication of a proceeding from the Conference in Oslo by Rehab-Nor, and two abstracts by TNO about IPPA and EATS-2D at the ISTAHC conference in 2000.

The partners are prepared to translate the final version of EATS instruments into local languages, and are looking for new opportunities to publish the EATS results, international and national.

6. *Newsletter and Web Site*

During 1999, three newsletters have been produced by TNO, with inputs from the other partners. The newsletters were produced as a media that could reach out to a wider range of interested persons and organisation with information about the EATS project, the background, the instruments, some experiences, and about events. The second newsletter served as a good flyer informing about the International Conference in Oslo, and the third newsletter provided a report from this conference.

SIVA has been responsible for and has been hosting the EATS Web Site. The address is www.siva.it/research/eats. The Web Site presents overviews of the project, all the approved deliverables and the newsletters.

The Web Site has served as a valuable information reference for individuals and organisations requesting information about the EATS project.

7. *Some experiences on methods and strategies*

Active involvement in projects such as the EATS project, of different professions, representatives of central organisations and agencies in the field in R&D work, proves to be important and effective.

Close interaction with different professionals, also representing the practice field of rehabilitation and AT service delivery, and representatives of user organisations, facilitates bridge building between theory on the one side, and the practical experiences and the user perspectives on the other side. This interaction between theory, practice and user perspectives and needs, provides a potential “grinding and

polishing” arena to develop tools and methods that are applicable and accepted by different stakeholders.

Process oriented interaction between stakeholders, where final solutions are not presented just for information, but rather posing issues for interactive discussions, provides a platform where the different participants get involved, and may get a “feeling of ownership” of the final results. This provides a setting where larger groups can inform about methods and results to their networks, and possibly with some enthusiasm.

The active participation of persons from more central agencies, even decision makers close to the political scene, makes it possible to discuss implementation strategies and additional studies that may complement and add to the initial studies. In the EATS projects this involvement resulted in additional studies as reported earlier in this deliverable.

When the Norwegian partner Rehab-Nor approached the Norwegian Ministry of Health and Social Affairs about possible cooperation in organising the International Conference, the Ministry knew about the EATS project due to their involvement. This made the decision of the Ministry easier.

One difficulty in organising reference groups is to find a balance of involvements. On the one side it is important to ensure continuity, while on the other hand many reference group meetings may be a burden to the participants. It seems important to restrict to few but essential meetings, having substantial issues and good discussions on the agenda. In between such meetings it proves valuable to inform the participants by short information letters, newsletters, e-mail messages, phone calls, and discussions with individual persons on special topics.

The experiences explained above reflect also the experiences from running process-oriented workshops.

The International Conference turned out to receive much attention and interest. A larger audience signed up as participants than expected. A larger number of persons and organisations regretted that they did not have the possibility to attend a conference late in the year. We received requests of interest from Europe, North-America, Australia and Japan. There is a rapid growing need for information about effects and outcomes on the one side and costs on the other. Likewise, there is a growing need to ensure better quality of AT service delivery. In addition, new principles of rehabilitation as expressed by ICIDH-2, demands new methods and tools to facilitate practical implementation of these principles in practice.

The organiser could have had a larger audience if the announcements had been disseminated earlier, and if the Conference had been held earlier in the year, when travel and conference funding is more readily available.

The organisers did made some extra efforts to provide a setting for interaction and fellowship in the running of the conference, to promote future interaction and networking between the participants. The Norwegian Ministry of Health and Social Affairs supported this by inviting all participants for an evening dinner. The outcome

of the Conference can serve as a platform for networking between interesting parties in the field, including participants indicating their interest in taking part, and all the requests from those not being able to attend the conference. Thus, a first framework for networking has been established also as basis for a potential new project, SEAMATE.

Seen from the EATS experience, Web Sites serve important functions in information dissemination, - to search for information in specific topics and activities, and to have access to reports, articles, newsletters and others.

Publishing of newsletters can serve valuable functions. They are informal of nature, they are not resource demanding, and they make interested parties informed and updated. Newsletters seem to serve special functions to establish and to “fertilize” relations with interested parties. In our opinion it is important to have a strategy for the timing of sending out newsletters, to ensure impact continuum. The experience from the EATS approach is good. The EATS consortium chose to work out newsletters when concrete results could be referred to, about basic frameworks, about methods of approach, about field trials, and about the International Conference. Thus, the newsletters could present material of concrete interest. On the other hand, some newsletters during the first phases of the project could have provided more continuous information to members of the reference groups. However, the newsletter was not originally planned in the EATS project and came in as an additional effort in the later phase of the project.

In conclusion, the experiences from the EATS approach on impact and implementation are good. In setting up new projects having similar objectives as the EATS project, a similar approach would be chosen. Some minor adjustments would be introduced, related to keeping the reference group members involved on more continuous bases, by more informal contacts, by information letters and newsletters. The partners have also gained more experience on running process-oriented interactive meetings and workshops to ensure proactive engagement and involvements of the participants.

Publications

Project deliverables:

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