Summary of e-tools workshop

Bilbao, 21-22 September 2016
Purpose and format of the e-tools workshop

**Purpose:**
- To share information on all aspects of OSH e-tool development
- To stimulate thought and debate on the process
- To network – build the links to those with a common position or interest

**Format:**
- Expert presentations followed by workshops using an existing publication as a basis for the theoretical development of a tool

An OSH e-tool is an electronic, interactive tool that receives data and provides an output tailored for the end-user that focuses on health and safety issues.
Why ..... OSH e-tools?

- “To keep with the times”
  - As part of a “natural” / technological evolution:
    - from local PC without / with limited internet connection
    - to PC / Mobile / Tablet (Web) fully connected;
  - Fast increase over the years of the percentage of the population using
    Mobile / Tablets / PCs connected to internet.
- To “close the gap between complex/abstract regulation and practice”
- Because associated with “innovation”, “new”, … (more attractive)
- Because associated with words like: “simple”, “practical”, “facilitate”,
  “easy”, “engaging”
- Because of their pedagogic dimension:
  - to show how (e.g. of carrying out a risk assessment, of measuring noise);
  - to guide,
  - to inform,
  - to help fill the gaps of OSH knowledge.
Why ..... e-tools?

- To empower end-users to properly manage OSH in general or one specific risk in a more autonomous way ("external help (OSH experts / consultant) can be expensive and not sustainable")
- To reach specific target audiences, particularly:
  - Young people (because very fond of these kind of tools)
  - Micro and Small companies (because of their big number)
- To "engage" end-users in a different way ("interactive", "help to identify / understand the problems but also provides solutions")
- To be part of a bigger programme (along with training, counselling, information services / instruments)
- To maximise the use of existing information / databases (in this sense can be a very powerful way to put existing information at the disposal of end-users)
Stages in the development of an e-tool

- **Conception / development**
  - Needs analysis
  - Technical development
  - Content development

- **Implementation – Dissemination / promotion**
  - Launch
  - Promotion

- **Sustainability**
  - Support
  - Upgrades

The workshop discussed the life-cycle of an e-tool following this broad framework.

The following slides highlight issues raised during the presentations and discussions.
Conception / development 1

- Market research is essential, in particular:
  - Does this type of e-tool already exist? If so,
    - What is the user interface?
    - What is the technology base?
    - What is the content source?
    - For whom is the tool intended?

- Can we build on the existing tools or do we need to develop them from scratch?
  - Can a tool be translated?
  - Can a tool be adapted to a different target audience or use?
    - E.g. taking a tool designed for environmental protection and adapting it to worker protection
Conception / development 2

- Essential to “scope the market”:
  - Do such e-tools already exist?
  - What do they look like?
  - Can we build on the existing tools (just translate, introduce small changes) or do we need to develop them from scratch?

- Is it really an e-tool that is really needed?

- What is also needed as part of the package?
  - Awareness campaign?
  - Labour inspection intervention?
  - Economic incentives?

- Clearly define the aim of the e-tool
- Identify the added value of the e-tool
- Recognise the barriers, limitations, and obstacles to the tool development and use

New technologies are not a panacea: e-tools alone will not fix an existing problem
Conception / development 3 – Business Plan 1

- To produce a (“good”) business plan, the following should be addressed:
  - Who is the target audience?
    - Legal duty holders?
    - Micro-enterprises?
    - OSH professionals?
    - Young workers?

- What are the specific objectives for the tool?
  - To raise awareness of a specific problem?
  - To provide information to support decision-making by the end-user?
  - To provide a means of compliance with a legal obligation?
Who is going to:
- Provide and validate the OSH content?
- Do the technical (software) development?
- Carry out the dissemination and marketing?
- Provide technical support?
- Carry out an evaluation?

How user input / feedback will be ensured and monitored?
- To ensure the e-tool has reached its target audience
- To ensure the e-tool works and is being used in practices

In case of outsourcing the technical development, the issue is:
- Who sets the priorities and budget?
- How can control be kept over the priorities and the budget?
Within the Business plan, it should be clear if the tool a stand-alone product or part of a larger package.

Potential elements of a package containing e-tools include:
- Training for end-users
- Workshops and information sessions
  - Supported by trusted intermediaries (e.g. chambers of commerce, Unions)
- Help-desk (phone/e-mail)
- Coaching visits
- Information campaign
- Inspection initiatives
- Economic incentives
What kind of e-tool(s) are we going to develop?
- A native application? (works on a phone and does not need internet)
- A web application? (requires internet but can also be tailored for mobile devices)
- A hybrid application?

What is the e-tools policy of your organisation?
- Now may be a good time to develop such a policy!

All applications have their benefits and disadvantages, so depending on the resources, the needs, the organisation’s e-tools policy a decision will have to be taken.
Data protection

- The protection of end users privacy has to be taken very seriously.
- Data protection issues (what information is stored, how it is used) have to be considered from the beginning of the project.
- Data protection issues (or simply the need to overcome the reluctance from end-users to use the tools) may determine:
  - the access to the tool: is it open or there is a need to open an account?
  - the statistics that will be developed (very important to monitor the use / success of the tools)

The perception of confidentiality is important. Users who believe that a tool is collecting and sharing data (e.g. to the labour inspectorate) will not use it – even if it is not.
In Member States with different official languages e-tools are normally developed in a way that multilingualism is supported, but this is not general practice.

- When thinking about the development of a tool the multilingual dimension needs to be addressed:
  - For usability reasons (possibility of reaching a bigger number of end users)
  - To facilitate sharing (for supporting its adaption in other member states / languages)
Implementation – Dissemination / Promotion

1. Promotion strategy

For an e-tool to be successful (reach its target audience) it is not enough to be good, it must be actively promoted.

When developing a promotion strategy the following dimensions will need to be taken into account:

- The objectives
- The messages
- The target audience
- The resources / Budget
- Partners / intermediaries / networks to be involved
- Communication channels & products
Implementation – Dissemination / Promotion
2. Communication channels & Products

- Promotion is easier when the e-tool is part of an information package
- Promotion routes can include:
  - Web promotion (Institution home page or paid advertising)
  - Apple / Google Play / Windows stores
  - Through intermediaries: Insurance companies, regional reps, self-employed associations
  - Printed material (e.g. brochures)
  - Articles in magazines and newsletters
  - Banners and posters
  - Health and safety training sessions
  - Promotion at events
    - E.g. trade fairs
  - Advertising campaigns on mass-media (e.g. TV)
  - Target-specific advertising (e.g. sector-specific media)
Implementation – Dissemination / Promotion
3. Communication channels & Products

- **Uptake of a tool can depend on the credibility of the tool provider and promoter**
  - Tool provided or backed by the labour inspectorate may be more credible than one developed commercially

- **Institutional promotion channels can be very effective in raising awareness and promoting use**
  - Social security offices
  - National institute website
  - Labour inspection branding

- **Supporting a community around the tool can prolong the continued use of a tool**
  - Allow users to provide feedback
  - Respond to comments and criticism

- **Provide appropriate support**

- **Use social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, …)**
Sustainability – Support and upgrades

- Development and support for an e-tool is a long-term investment
  - Sustainability and life-span of tool should be discussed and budgeted from the outset in the business plan

- Hosting and maintenance
  - Hosting in-house or outsourced?

- Need to regularly upgrade the technical structure (operating systems)
  - Costs that need to be taken into account

- Monitoring and evaluation is vital
  - Is the target audience being reached?
  - Is the e-tool being downloaded AND used
  - Is the e-tool being used on an ongoing basis?

- Statistics are a vital monitoring tool
  - There may be a conflict over data security