



The IQM-HE Project: Building Bridges with Implementation Science

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Background

- prevalent topic in the European Union: Competence-based teaching in HE and its evaluation
- HEI aiming to improve their quality in teaching need a systematic strategy: need to know...

How are they
already developed?

At which level?

Which
competences?

How could they be
enhanced?

How can this QDP be
implemented best?

Background

- This is **challenging!**
- ⇒ helpful to **consider frameworks that stem from implementation science**
 - ⇒ experienced as useful for guiding implementation of innovations in a variety of contexts (see Tabak, Khoong, Chambers, & Brownson, 2012 for an overview).
- ⇒ **Active Implementation Frameworks** (AIF; Fixsen et al. 2005) were chosen for IQM-HE project

Overview

- Implementation Science
 - What is it? Why is it useful?
- IQM-HE project:
 - How the AIF were considered
 - Applying the active Implementation formula
 - From Piloting (installation stage) to Erasmus+ project (initial implementation stage)
 - How AIF helped to build bridges between different stakeholder groups
- Discussion: possible applications of the AIF for quality development intentions in higher education institutions

Bad & Good News at first

- You won't learn something completely new! 😞
- But you might get a bigger picture how things are connected, why they work or do not work so well, how to improve quality developments etc. 😊

IMPLEMENTATION SCIENCE

What is it? When & why is it useful?

Implementation „defined“

- **To Implement** = To fulfill, to perform, to carry out

- **Implementation Science:**

“The study of factors that influence the full and effective use of innovations in practice.

The **goal** is not to answer factual questions about what is, but rather to determine what is required.” (NIRN, 2015)

Why is considering implementation science useful?

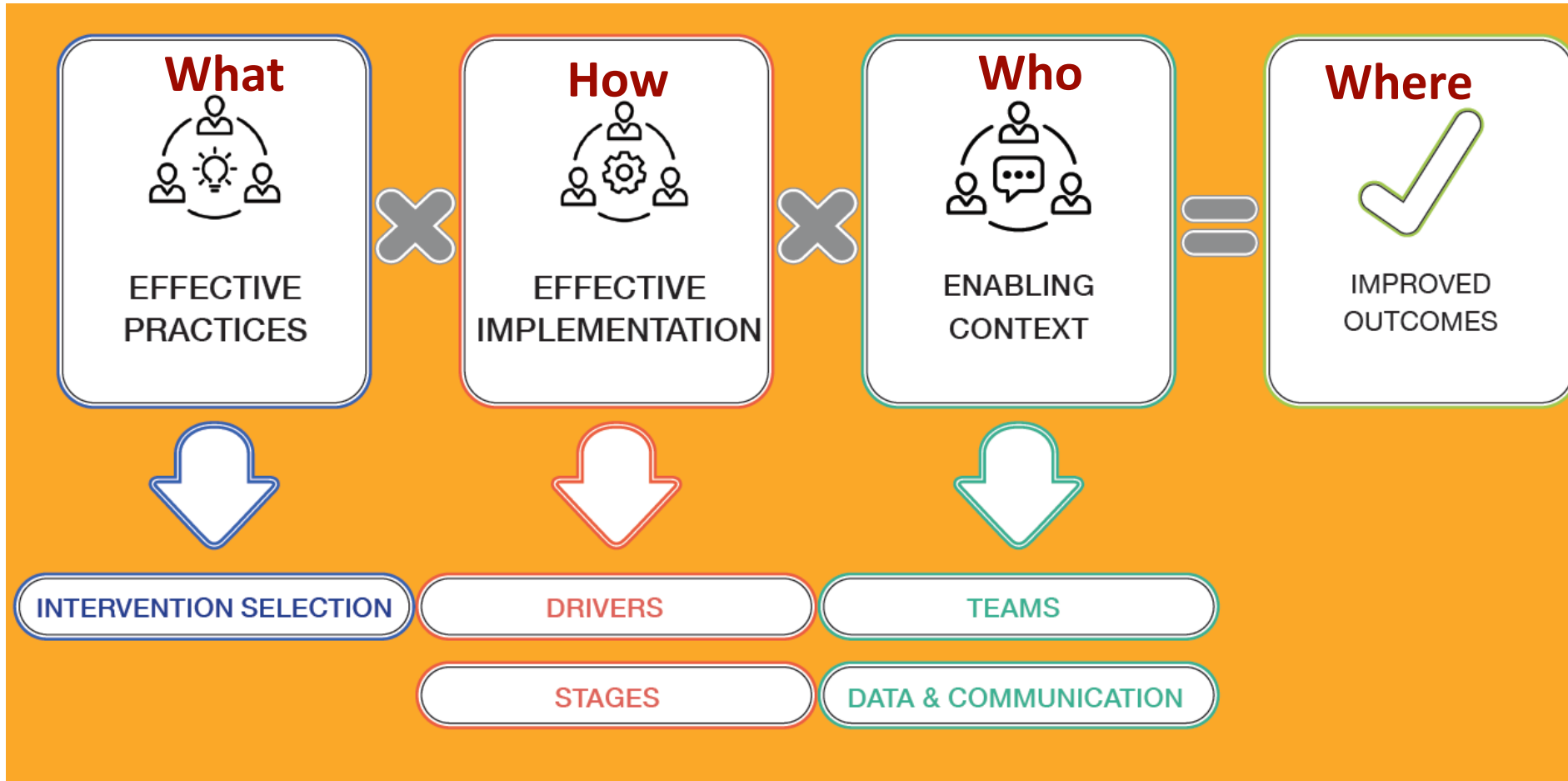
- **Starting point:** evidence based / evidence informed programs and practices
 - Science related to **implementing** these programs (with high fidelity) in real-world settings has lagged far behind
 - => lag time for translating research into practice: 20+ years
 - research-to-practice gap is a critical: students cannot benefit from interventions they do not receive (NIRN, 2018)
- Knowledge from implementation science can be useful for the implementation of any innovation, not only evidence based ones

Active Implementation Frameworks

- help to define **what** needs to be done to accomplish positive outcomes,
- **how** it can be established in practice,
- **who** will do it and
- **where** effective innovations and effective implementation could thrive.

(Fixsen et al., 2005)

Active Implementation formula



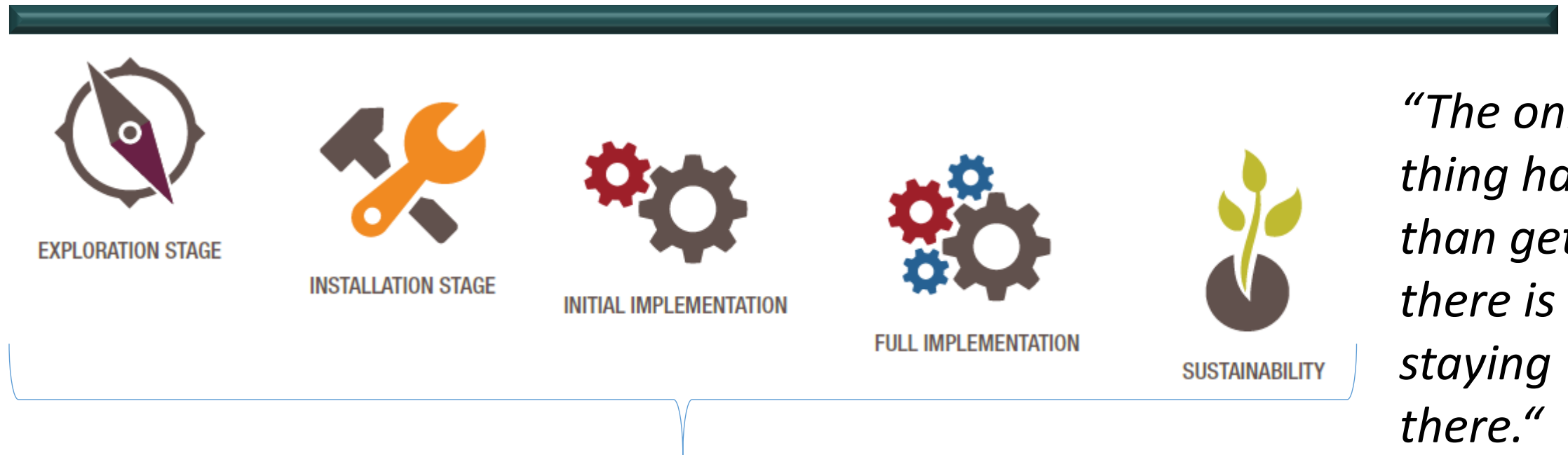
From: Allison Metz, Leah Bartley & Melanie Maltry (2017). *An Implementation Science and Service Provider-Informed Blueprint for Integration of Evidence-Based / Evidence-Informed Practices into New Jersey's Child Welfare System*. NIRN & University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Implementation drivers

- Core principles that enable the success of innovations in practice
- Assure the development of
 1. relevant **competencies**
 2. necessary **organization supports**
 3. engaged **leadership**

(Blase, Van Dyke, Fixsen, & Wallace Bailey, 2012)

Implementation stages



Implementation takes time: 2-4 years

From: Allison Metz, Leah Bartley & Melanie Maltry (2017). *An Implementation Science and Service Provider-Informed Blueprint for Integration of Evidence-Based / Evidence-Informed Practices into New Jersey's Child Welfare System*. NIRN & University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Implementation team

- Group of stakeholders
- minimum of 3 persons with expertise in:
 - Innovation
 - Implementation
 - Organizational change
- Important:
 - Creating a sustainable teaming structure
 - Ensuring effective team coordination and communication
 - Establishing and promoting team capacity to support and improve the evidence-informed practices

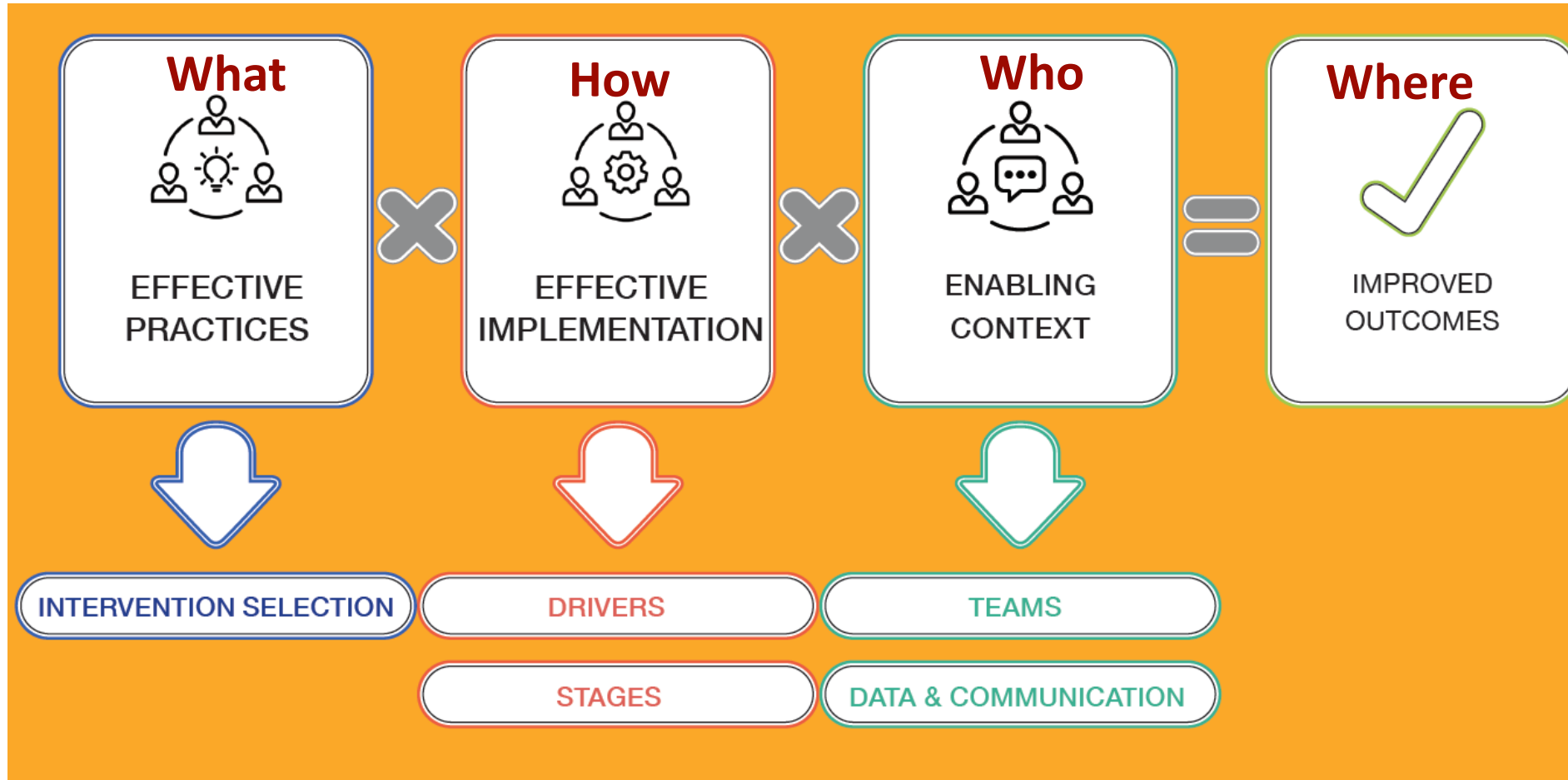
(Metz et al., 2017)

Data use and communication

- Creating a **sustainable** Continuous Quality Improvement Process (CQI process)
 - Clear accountability, support for those accountables, CQI activities built into routine practice
- Carrying out **meaningful** CQI efforts
 - Determine your question
 - Determine what data will help answer questions
 - Determine the simplest way to gather the data
- **Sharing** and **learning** for improvement

(Metz et al.,2017)

Reflection question



Just think on any innovation you tried to implement in your institution: which factors were (not) well developed?

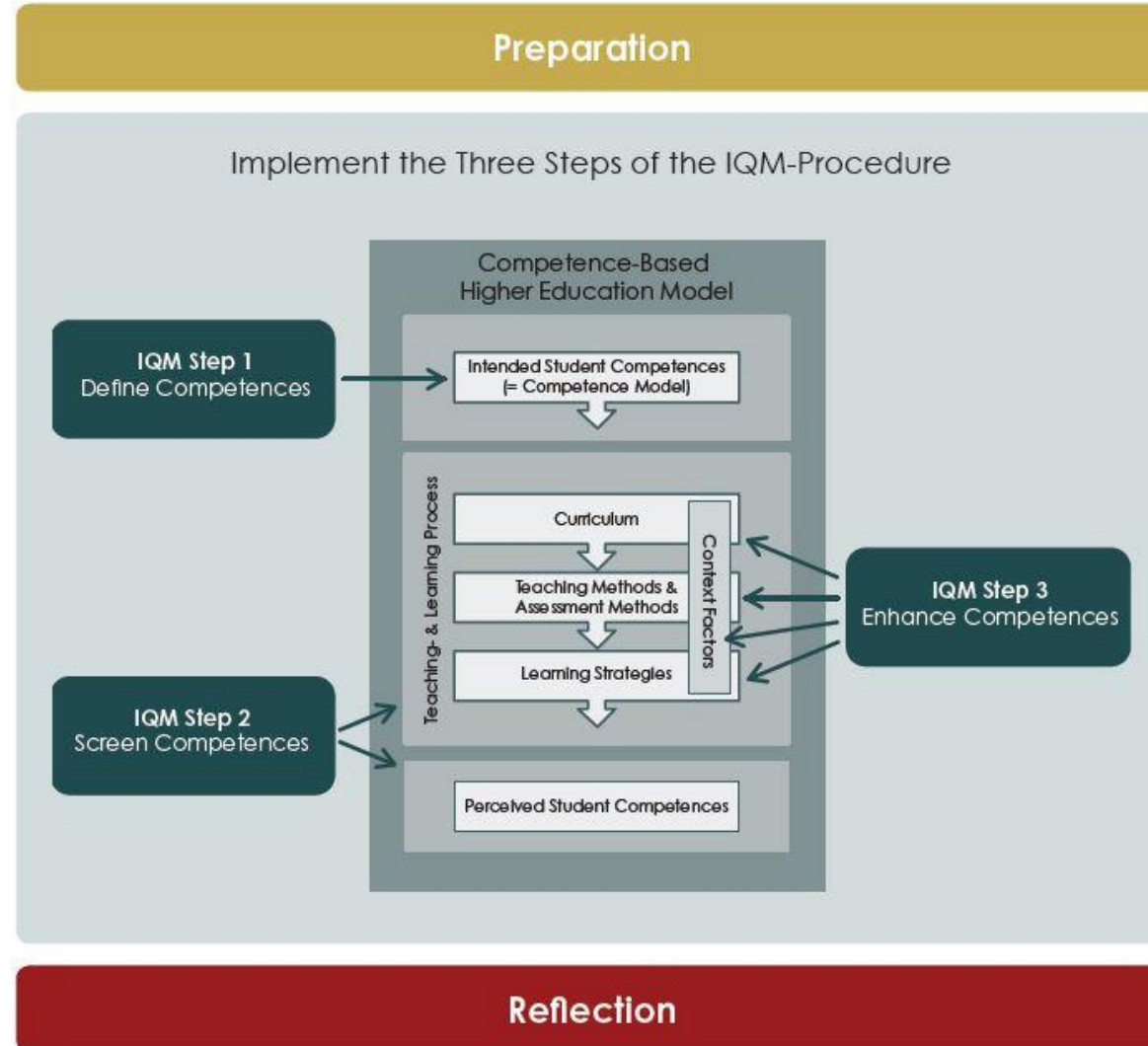
IQM-HE project

How the AIF were considered

How it was useful for participation and building bridges between different stakeholder groups

What procedure was developed and is proposed to be implemented?

What





What was done to enable the context?

- Implementation teams were created at each participating university with relevant stakeholder groups
- The stakeholder representatives also talked to their stakeholder group in between the workshops
- Communication structure and plan was established



What was done for an effective implementation?

How were the implementation drivers considered?

Just one example...

1. Competence drivers

- Representatives of all stakeholder groups were selected and formed the implementation teams
- Team leaders were trained in advance and coached during the whole implementation process



What was done for an effective implementation?

How were the stages considered?



EXPLORATION STAGE

Get Ready

- Understand needs in the community or setting
- Examine degree to which the innovation meets the needs in the settings identified
- Determine the readiness of the institutions



INSTALLATION STAGE

Prepare

- Creating conditions necessary for implementation: establish resources needed to do the work ahead (e.g. select staff, training)



INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION

Get Started, Get Better

- time when innovation is being used for the 1st time
- Important: Learn from mistakes, problem-solve quickly, continue “buy-in” efforts



FULL IMPLEMENTATION



SUSTAINABILITY

Experiences so far? Some impressions...

- Framework helps structuring the work packages
- In some institutions: Scientific approach to implementation facilitates the dedication of resources to the implementation process
- Starting discussions about competences (levels that should be achieved, levels that are supported by the programme etc.) and building a competence model is fruitful but not easy
- Concerning participation:
 - positive feedback especially from students that are involved in the IQM-team
 - Employees are also asked about their needs
- There are critical minds –this is not only a burden but also helpful
- Screening questionnaire is long but results are good for stimulating discussions
- Time, persistence and patience is needed like in every other quality improvement initiative

How were the AIF helpful for providing participation?

Not only informing them but involving them!

By considering some core principles of AIF:

Enabling context:

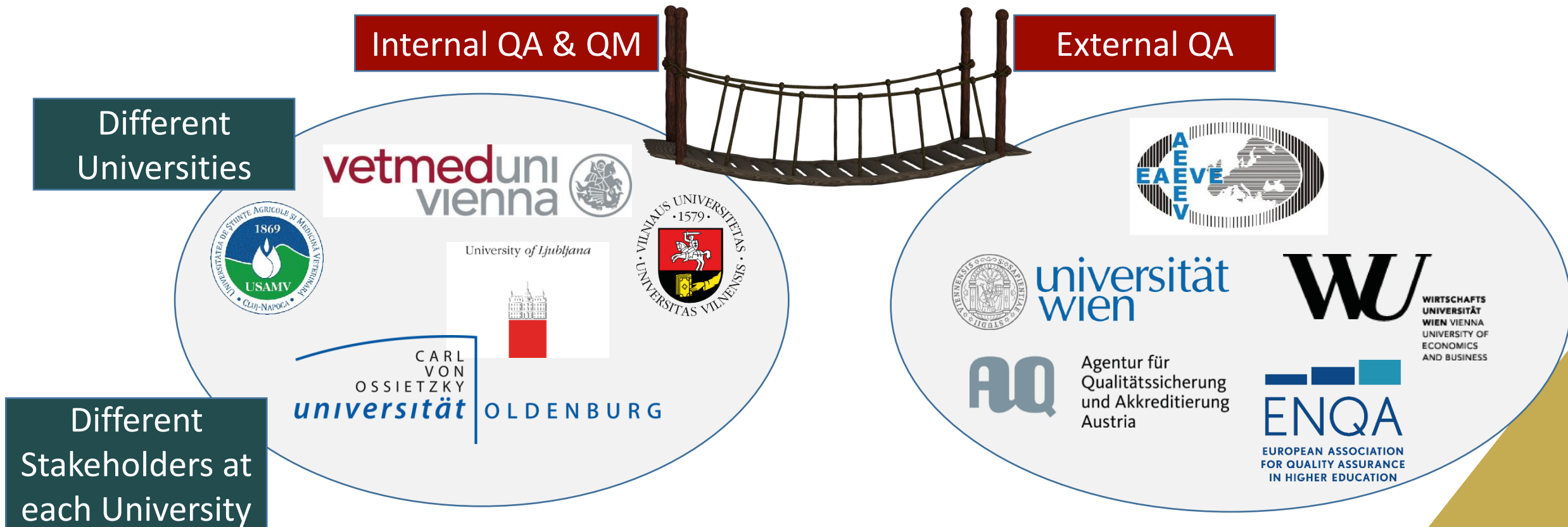
- **Involvement of relevant persons in ONE Team**
 - IQM-HE project: Representatives from the rectorate, quality management unit, teaching faculty and students are involved in the process as well as stakeholders/ decision makers
- **Data use and communication**
 - Perspectives of students and teaching faculty are considered
 - Discussions within IQM-Team and stakeholders/ decision makers

How were the AIF helpful for providing participation?

■ Concerning the implementation stages:

- Innovation was “tested” at first at the Vetmed (AIF were considered)
- Other universities actively participate in improving the procedure and implementing it
- Expertise of other relevant stakeholder groups of higher education institutions (*expert partners*) was included in the improvement of the IQM-HE procedure
- *Expert Partners* are also important for providing feedback and expanding perspectives during implementation phase

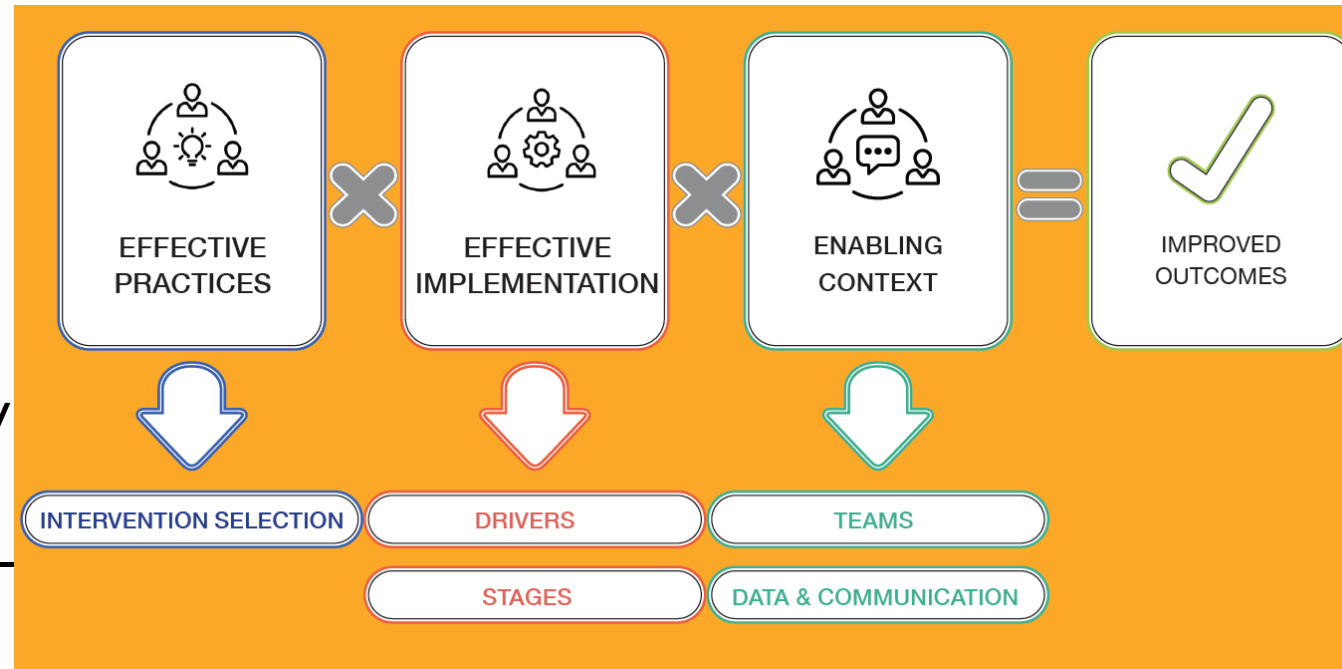
How were the AIF helpful to build bridges?



Discussion

Possible discussion points

- What are (possible) applications of the AIF for quality development intentions in your higher education institutions?
- Which one do you already use? How are your experiences - what works - what is difficult?
- How do you try to involve stakeholders?
- ...



Further reading

- **Implementation:** <http://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/learn-implementation>
- **IQM-HE Project:** www.iqm-he.eu

Project consortium

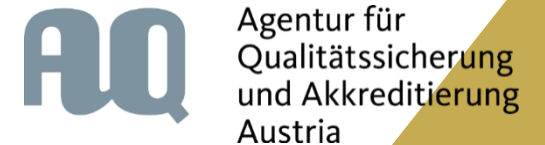
Higher education institutions / implementation partners:



University of Ljubljana



Researchers and experts in the field / expert partners:



IQM-HE

Internal Quality Management: Evaluating and Improving
Competence-Based Higher Education

Background information

This presentation was developed in course of the project
'Internal Quality Management: Evaluating and Improving Competence-Based Higher Education.'

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Further information on the project is available on the Erasmus+ platform for project results:

- Go to <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects>.
- Enter the project title 'Internal Quality Management: Evaluating and Improving Competence-Based Higher Education' in the search bar to get to the project homepage.