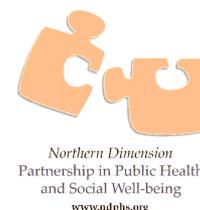


**NDPHS Strategy Working Group  
Second Meeting  
Brussels, Belgium  
2 March 2009**



<b>Reference</b>	SWG 2/4/8
<b>Title</b>	Proposals concerning evaluator's recommendations as regards strategies and policies, success indicators and criteria, funding of Partnership's activities, social well-being as well as other recommendations (PAC meetings and external evaluation cycles)
<b>Submitted by</b>	Poland
<b>Summary / Note</b>	-

### **Strategies and policies**

On the base of answers provided by Partners for the PAC in the questionnaires there are divided opinions on the future role of the NDPHS. Part of Partners expect the NDPHS to focus on policy and strategies, some prefer to focus on project facilitation or implementation. Even if we still think that there is a field both for continuing the work of the NDPHS on developing the strategies and policies as well as for projects facilitation/implementation by the NDPHS, there is a need to answer some important questions. Both kinds of activities can support each other, however the question is whether the Partner countries are willing to engage financial, political, personal, organizational resources. The most important and problematic issues are those connected with funding of the NDPHS and its activities. The dimensions of the NDPHS' development as well as the choice between "financier and facilitator" paradigm depends on the Partners' willingness and possibility to contribute to the NDPHS. Taking into account the available resources provided by the Partners, it seems that the NDPHS is likely to be a facilitator of projects rather than a financier.

Another important thing is to avoid duplication of activities and solutions provided by other organizations, institutions etc. NDPHS should focus on needs and activities which are not (cannot) covered by other solutions. This is related to the problem of efficiency and utility. We should consider which solutions are really needed and can really be used and realized in Partner countries' internal policies. The answers for these questions will give us a base for decisions on the direction of the NDPHS' development and of the scope of its functioning.

As I pointed during our last meeting, while focusing on developing strategies and policies Partners are asked to take into consideration following issues:

1) being responsible for providing necessary resources:

- nominating national experts to participate in NDPHS expert groups in order to work on strategies/policies (e.g. by developing recommendations)
- providing funds:
  - o for covering the cost of participation of national experts in the NDPHS Expert Groups works and meetings
  - o for organization of conferences and meetings aimed at promotion of strategies and policies which are developed under NDPHS
  - o for the preparation of documents eg. thematic reports including recommendations.

2) exchange of experience and best practices – while the nominated experts bring the best experiences from their own countries to the work in the Expert Groups and thus enables the learning process which is the added value of developed recommendations. The possibility of exchanging experiences and good practices is one of the most valuable benefit that the Partners can get from the NDPHS. While solutions like facilitating and funding of projects are provided by other organizations, the possibility to learn from each other and to exchange experiences is given by the NDPHS. This dimension should not be underestimated.

3) selection of the priority areas to be covered by the new NDPHS strategies and policies – two possibilities:

- suggestion to establish working group aimed to explore the needs of developing new strategies and policies of relevance to the priority objectives of the NDPHS concerning health and social wellbeing issues, in the Northern Dimension area, which are not covered by existing EU, WHO or other international strategies.

- monitoring the actual situation in the Partner countries by EG members or by the countries themselves and presenting their needs and proposals to the CSR or to the new working groups. Still we should have in mind the need to avoid of duplication of the work of WHO, EU etc.

4) establishing of task oriented expert groups – new approach to be discussed

- instead (or in supplementation) of permanent Expert Groups move to creation ad hoc Expert Groups or Working Groups set up to fulfill defined tasks within timeframe according to agreed ToR (eg. to develop strategy in certain field of NDPHS interest). This solution states more flexible and elastic approach.
- CSR shall first define priority areas, then agree on ToR and timeline of the new group.

5) coherence of the NDPHS strategies / policies and project development and implementation

- both areas could support each other, e.g. initiating projects which aim is to develop strategy paper/ thematic paper or on another hand propositions of project shall be in line with the NDPHS strategies and policies

### **Success indicators and criteria**

Polish proposals and ideas presented during the previous meeting remain the same. Establishing specific and concrete indicators is the work of external consultant as it is a matter that requires specific methodological knowledge. Our position is that the NDPHS should reflect and consult itself about the indicators and criteria by which it wants to measure its own success as an organization. There will be need to differentiate between the cumulative “results” of all Expert Groups and the Secretariat and between the impact of the organization itself, which is supposed to be more than just the addition of its components. Possible indicators could be reflection about the NDPHS-activities in the issue-oriented media, invitations to international fora and conferences, instances of advice-seeking and advice-giving from governments or international organizations, projects implemented through the project-pipeline, amount of users accessing the database etc. Future evaluations might benefit from a self-definition of success- factors and it will be important for impact-monitoring by the Secretariat and for reporting purposes.

Below you can find proposed indicators:

Action Line 1: NDPHS Database Project – any indicators (end of the activity)

Action Line 2: Financing NDPHS’ and other parties’ undertakings

- amount of money submitted and made available via the pipeline per a year (eg. 1,5 mln euro)
- amount of funds provided by the Leading Partners for the expert groups (eg. ...)
- amount of money submitted to Appropriations Account by Partners per a year (eg. ...)
- number of Partners submitting their yearly fee to the NDPHS budget (eg. 90%)

Action Line 3: NDPHS Expert Groups

- number of Partner countries participating in the work of EG
- number of projects (including the “flagship projects”) developed and implemented by EGs under NDPHS framework (in cooperation with other organisations)
- number of official papers (e.g. recommendations, thematic reports) per a year developed by EGs, publicised and disseminated

Action Line 4: Ensuring coordination of regional efforts to fight trafficking in human beings

- no need for indicators (one action)

Action Line 5: Cooperating with non-Partner Countries and Organizations

- number of the meetings with participation of non-Partner Countries and Organizations
- number of Bialorus experts collaborating and participating in the EG meetings
- amount of funds provided by NDPHS for developing activities in above countries (eg. in Belarus)

Action Line 6: Continuing efforts to further increase the visibility of the Partnership

- total number of enews , e-Newsletter, fact sheets developed and disseminated
- number of speeches at international for provided by NDPHS high representatives
- number of articles about NDPHS-activities in the issue-oriented media (international and national) – to be monitored by ?
- number of invitations to international fora and conferences in relevance to the fields of NDPHS activities (participation, speeches, providing information by NDPHS representatives)

Action Line 7: Follow-up of the Partnership evaluation – no need for indicators

Impact criteria:

Examples:

- database – number of new records added
- pipeline – number of application submitted

**Funding of Partnership's activities**

The article 6 of the Oslo Declaration covers different possible ways of financing. The problem in implementation is related to the structure and form of the NDPHS, which is not an organization but a voluntary partnership, which determinates the attitude of the Partners towards providing funds.

Still we are not in position to present solutions but to present the preliminary ideas on the financing issues concerning the NDPHS.

Specific solutions should be developed and proposed by external expert as they need to be based on specialist knowledge and expertise. To Polish proposals and ideas presented previously, I would like to add that we should be aware of the necessity of establishing clear rules on funding NDPHS and its activities. There should be clear rules on funding as well as on building the budget. What is needed at the beginning is a clear and honest declaration of each Partner state about its willingness and possibility to contribute to the NDPHS' budget. This declaration is needed when it comes to making decisions on funding but it will also influence answers for the questions about the dimensions and the scope of NDPHS' activities.

Below you can find reviewed proposals which already were presented previously:

Taking into account the available resources provided or possible to be allocated by the Partners it seems that NDPHS is not likely to be a financier or to be a financer in a limited scale, but rather it is to be a facilitator of projects.

The Partnership should, in particular, seek to mobilise funding for activities from International Financing Institutions and the private sector – this can be useful (or even necessary) if we decide to develop project funding/facilitation dimension within NDPHS.

As Finland proposed (*Question 2*) the Secretariat could administer, manage and monitor pipeline projects and be a centre for advice for all ongoing project implementation activities.

While taking into account acting NDPHS as a facilitator of projects we would like to note:

- is helpful for increasing the role of NDPHS in the implementation of its strategies and actions
- using pipeline as the useful tool in implementation of acting NDPHS as a facilitator of projects
- to enhance the role of Experts Groups in the providing information and expertise for potential donors on which areas and activities the available funds shall be allocated
- Expert groups can play an important role in the process of projects financing by:
  - o initiating of the projects and implementing if funds are available in cooperation with partner organization having legal capacity
  - o defining areas which would be preferably covered with NDPHS projects
  - o using and exploring the results of realized projects

Other issues to be eventually discussed within SWG:

- maintenance and features of the pipeline (is it sustainable in the future? the geographical and political criteria of potential recipients of funds provided via pipeline (the problem with limiting the projects applicant to the donor countries, eg. by Sweden, Norway)
- who shall be responsible for the maintenance of the pipeline (NDPHS Secretariat – the necessity to increase the employment??? Additional cost to be covered by)?
- the future engagement of Russia in the NDPHS activities/projects in the region ?

Referring to the possible way of the financing presented in the article 6 of the Oslo Declaration:

- national financing – it is related to the member status and obligation to pay contribution to the NDPHS budget on the annual base, as well as other kinds of contribution depending on the individual preferences (e.g. For financing projects or certain kind of NDPHS activities as EG Groups)
- bilateral or multilateral financing, for instance through contributions towards specific projects lists (a good example is a NDPHS Database Project – although it may face

some difficulties, e.g. Shall Secretariat conduct such a list? Who shall submit the propositions of projects? ...)

- Multilateral financing through a voluntary Partnership fund, to be managed as a separate account by an international financing institution (IFI). Multilateral financing through a voluntary Partnership fund, to be managed as a separate account by an international financing institution (IFI). The CSR is to consider and make recommendations on the possible establishment of such a fund to the PAC in 2004. – Appreciation Account is in use and enables providing funds by Partner countries for specified actions under NDPHS.

### **Social well-being facet within the NDPHS:**

As I stated before the problem with developing the social well-being dimension is that it requires the involvement of Ministries of Social Affairs. Every Partner country should consider if the social aspect of the Partnership is important enough to involve the Ministries responsible for social affairs. Another question is whether they are willing to participate in the NDPHS' activities and to include the outcomes of these activities into their policies. In many Partner states it might not be a problem as one Ministry holds the responsibility for both health and social issues, but for some countries it can be problematic.

Another question here is whether a broader scope of activities would not have a negative impact on the efficiency of the NDPHS. Involving too many actors and too many issues might influence the quality of the NDPHS' activities in a negative way. In light of shortages of financial resources, the issue of efficiency becomes even more apparent.

Because of the doubts mentioned above maybe it is worth to consider whether we should focus only on the social issues directly related to health issues. An explanation of the difference between social issues directly connected with health and broader social issues can be the following example: one of important issues in the field of social policy is the problem of policy towards malfunction families and vulnerable children and of institutional and foster care. Partner countries differ from each other when it comes to their practices in this area. Exchange of experiences and solutions would be helpful and useful and searching for new measures to deal with this problem is needed. However, regarding to the doubts mentioned above it may not be appropriate to involve all this issue in NDPHS' activities. Instead the NDPHS could limit its interest in this area to supporting, promoting and developing solutions connected with health policy like family education, psychological support and counseling for families, health services for families and children etc. These

issues are important for the policy towards problem families and children at risk and strongly related to health area.

To sum up the Partnership should focus more on vulnerable social groups and individuals but it will be more efficient if we limit this focus to improving health services and assistance for these groups and individuals. The proposals of possible areas for cooperation in the social dimension presented by Denmark (SWG 2/4/3 *A note on social well-being*) seem to correspond with Polish statement and can be a base for developing specific solutions in this area.

**Other recommendations:**

When it comes to the recommendations about the shape of PAC and evaluation of the Partnership, Poland supports the idea to repeat external evaluation every four or five years as it helps to monitor efficiency of the NDPHS' functioning. Poland also considers that there is a need to specifically design and prepare PAC to allow the generation of political legitimacy and endorsement of the best possible quality. When it comes to holding PAC every second year and establishing the last CSR meeting of a non-PAC year as officially mandated to decide on behalf of the PAC we do not see what difference it really makes for the functioning of the NDPHS.