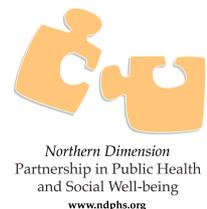


**NDPHS Regional Conference
Preparing health initiatives for 2014-2020
Vilnius, Lithuania
12 November 2013**



Reference	RC-PHI Info 6
Title	Conference concept paper
Submitted by	NDPHS Secretariat
Summary / Note	-
Requested action	-



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NDPHS regional conference on health projects

(A concept paper)

Introduction

With reference to the EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR) Technical Assistance Grant from 2012, the NDPHS has received funding to hold a regional conference aimed at supporting the organizations implementing projects in the Baltic Sea Region in the area of public health. The NDPHS has planned for the conference to be a side-event of the EUSBSR Annual Forum. The forthcoming EUSBSR 4th Annual Forum will be held on 11-12 November 2013 in Vilnius, Lithuania.

Background

All actors in the region have a role to play in reaching the goals and targets of the current NDPHS Strategy, which expires at the end of 2013. In shaping the future NDPHS Strategy, it will be important to take into consideration the needs of EU and non-EU BSR countries equally, including the goals and targets of the various Strategies each country takes part in implementing. Future programmes in the Region will include both EU Member States as well as non-EU countries. Consequently, it is crucial that all of them be involved in the discussions about policy and project priorities for the coming years.

Now that PA Health is no longer grouped under an umbrella 'social dimension' Priority Area within the EUSBSR but is a self-standing Priority Area, the visibility and opportunities for advancing the work have grown tremendously. At the same time, the level of responsibility and the accountability of the NDPHS have grown accordingly.

In taking advantage of this new profile, the conference aims to increase the visibility, understanding and appreciation of public health initiatives in the Region in the context of the various Regional strategies: the EUSBSR, the Strategy of Socio-Economic Development of the North-West Federal District for the period until 2020, and the NDPHS Strategy, among others. This will be achieved by making direct contact with relevant stakeholders, having relevant regional stakeholders attend the conference as well as by making the conference a part of the next EUSBSR Annual Forum, publishing the results of the conference, and disseminating information before, during and after the conference.

Proposed focus of the event and the rationale

The NDPHS, together with interested stakeholders, is and will continue to be in the process of developing a series of regional projects consistent with priorities for improving public health included in the various regional strategies. The aim is to **have project proposals ready for submission to funding programmes** already for the first calls for project proposals during the next programming period.

Whereas a number of financiers/financing instruments – including the EU with its various programmes – support numerous projects aiming to improve health in the BSR, the amount of funding is by far not sufficient to tackle the issues at stake as there are also other competing important needs. To that end, it is of utmost importance to **spend money effectively and in a focused way**. The NDPHS can and should help achieve this in our region.

Likewise, during the current programming period, some interventions by stakeholders operating in the BSR in the health and social well-being area, which were supported with EU funds, have been fragmented and not reinforcing each other. Thus, strategic cooperation and coordination in the design and implementation of projects during the next programming period is essential, with funded activities linked to **politically recognized and endorsed goals and objectives rather than random activities with limited strategic vision**. Increased cooperation and efficient partnerships are necessary to ensure complementarity among the activities as well as more effective utilization of the outcomes of these actions. Again, the NDPHS has a role to play to that end.

Thus, the focus of the conference should be on helping to prepare the activities in the area of health for the **2014-2020 programming period**. The conference should help find ways to reduce fragmentation among interventions by improving strategic cooperation and coordination in the design and implementation of projects, improving the flow of information among stakeholders, and better coordinating project and policy development efforts. When developing new projects, it is important not only to follow the priorities agreed on by the BSR countries and the European Commission, but also to **take into account both lessons learned from the projects implemented in the BSR thus far as well as the strategic priorities set out by the NDPHS**.

Consistent with the above, it is proposed that the theme of the conference **Preparing health initiatives for 2014-2020**.

Proposed activities and outcomes of the event

Activity	Outcome
<p>The conference in general - in bringing together a wide range of stakeholders for presentations, discussions, and networking</p>	<p>Increased visibility, understanding and appreciation of public health initiatives in the Region; direct contacts with relevant stakeholders; disseminating information; encouraging more regional stakeholders to contribute to initiatives the NDPHS is a part of; help facilitate project-to-policy cycle for projects implemented during the current EU financial period; promote and facilitate involvement and dialogue of stakeholders in the entire macro-region and support them in the implementation of the regional strategies by informing them about the politically recognized and endorsed goals and objectives as well as the role of and possible support they can receive from the NDPHS.</p>
<p>Extended breaks, lunch</p>	<p>Strengthen interaction, dialogue and cooperation among regional stakeholders within the area of health;</p>
<p>Panel - Health Projects 2009-2013</p> <p><i>Project leaders will give a short presentation on the successes and challenges; jointly</i></p>	<p>Disseminate information, best practices, lessons learned from projects implemented (specifically those which should be taken into account by future projects); convey relevant results and recommendations from selected projects to the policy level; provide an outlet for leaders of regional projects to contribute to the implementation of regional targets and goals for public health; promote</p>

<p><i>address questions from the moderator and the audience.</i></p>	<p>sustainability and visibility of the Flagship Project results; identify common steps towards successful development, facilitation and implementation of projects in the area of health; identify and address possible obstacles to the effective implementation of projects in the area of health; inform about the role of and possible support from the NDPHS in this context.</p>
<p>Panel - Policy Perspectives</p> <p><i>Policy makers will give short opening statements and then address questions from the moderator and audience; discuss the opportunities and challenges from their perspective.</i></p>	<p>Facilitate project-to-policy cycle for projects implemented during the current EU financial period; discuss project themes and areas recommended by the NDPHS for future projects; identify and address possible obstacles to the effective implementation of projects in the area of health; promote sustainability and visibility of the Flagship Project results; identify common steps towards successful implementation of projects in PA Health; inform about the role of and possible support from the NDPHS in this context.</p>
<p>Presentation - Financial Instruments update</p> <p><i>Up-to-date information will be provided about various funding opportunities building on the information provided during the NDPHS “Seminar on project development and funding” held in October 2010.</i></p>	<p>Disseminate preliminary information on the opportunities offered by various financial instruments for the implementation of the EUSBSR in the next financial period.</p>
<p>Breakout Roundtables – 2014-2020: What’s next?</p> <p><i>Participants will break up into thematic groups to discuss the development of potential projects, how they contribute to the EUSBSR, and next steps.</i></p>	<p>While keeping in mind the information provided earlier during the conference (such as the project themes and areas recommended by the NDPHS for future projects as well as lessons learned from previous projects and available funding opportunities) identify and discuss topics/thematic areas of shared interest between the participants of each roundtable group. Further, discuss and agree on common steps towards the development of joint project(s) within the identified and agreed topic/thematic area. Propose actions to promote macro-regional approach in developing new projects and cooperation activities in order to identify and jointly work in areas of mutual interest.</p>
<p>Closing session</p> <p><i>The breakout roundtables will come back to the plenary to share the outcomes of their discussions. Overall conclusions</i></p>	<p>Present and discuss the outcomes of the breakout roundtables; Seek commitment of the participating stakeholders to taking the project ideas forward and developing them into fundable project proposals for submission for funding. Discuss and agree on actions to be taken by those present in the event to support the development of new projects and other regional cooperation activities.</p>

from conference will be drawn before the conference is closed.

Anticipated follow-up

Where appropriate, the development of projects needs to be matched to the policy development needs in order to be effective and guarantee broad and sustainable impact. To that end, it is proposed that the conclusions and recommendations from the regional conference be discussed by the NDPHS expert level bodies (Expert and Task Groups, as appropriate) and be subsequently presented for consideration by the NDPHS Committee of Senior Representatives and/or the ministerial-level NDPHS Partnership Annual Conference. The aim is to help convey relevant results and recommendations from a project level to a policy level. In addition, this approach will facilitate the sustainability of the Flagship Projects' results.