

**NDPHS Strategy Working Group 2014
Fourth Meeting
Vilnius, Lithuania
17 October 2014**

Reference	SWG2014 4/5/1
Title	Definition of various types of projects vis-à-vis which the NDPHS plays a role
Submitted by	Secretariat
Summary / Note	<p>This document was originally submitted to the SWG 2 and 3 meetings. Due to time constraints, the SWG 3 Meeting did not look into the issue and the SWG Chair requested the SWG members to submit their possible comments in writing. As of 10 October 2014, the following comments have been submitted:</p> <p>Norway:</p> <p>1) On page 3, the box on top of the page, we would like to change the text in the box to the following:</p> <p>A “NDPHS project” is a project initiated by an NDPHS EG, one or more NDPHS partners or the CSR, and where the institution designated by the respective EG or the CSR, or the NDPHS Secretariat acts as a project beneficiary (a lead partner).</p> <p>2) Given that Norway, during the last 4 years only, has contributed more than 7 million EUROS for project support through the NDPHS pipeline, we would like the paper to say something about how the projects funded by us fit into this system.</p> <p>Estonia: there seems to be too many different NDPHS-related project classification options. It is very difficult to distinguish and understand differences between them. We prefer 1 option or maximum 2 options with clear definitions.</p>
Requested action	For discussion and decision

1. Background

According to the NDPHS Evaluation Report 2013¹ and the NDPHS Work Plan for 2014² projects will continue to play an important role in the NDPHS. At the same time, as noted in the NDPHS Evaluation Report 2013, “**the opinion about what actually can be called a ‘NDPHS-project’ varies**”. To address this problem, the Strategy Working Group (SWG) has been tasked to “define what a ‘NDPHS project’ is.” As decided by the CSR 22, it is for the CSR to “adopt a clear-cut definition of a ‘NDPHS project’”, whereas the SWG bears the main responsibility for proposing the definition.

¹ Available at: http://www.ndphs.org//documents/3726/CSR_22-6-1_Independent_Evaluation_%20of_%20the%20NDPHS_%202013.pdf.

² Available at: http://www.ndphs.org/internalfiles/File/About_NDPHS/Work%20Plans/NDPHS_Work_Plan_for_2014.pdf.

2. Definition of a “Project”

Before types of projects, vis-à-vis which the NDPHS plays a role, can be discussed, it is important to arrive at a common definition what constitutes a “project.”

As noted in the NDPHS Evaluation Report 2013, the lack of a definition of a “project” leads to a “fear that that the Expert Groups will only focus on the nitty-gritty of down-to-earth work with target groups”. Among the Evaluation Consultant’s recommendations supported by the CSR was that “the definition of a project should include the development of reports or documents, not only direct implementation of methods with the target-group”.

To address this recommendation, the Secretariat proposes to use the following definition of a project (also used by the European Commission):

“A project is a series of activities aimed at bringing about clearly specified objectives within a defined time period and with a defined budget.”

3. Types of projects vis-à-vis which the NDPHS plays a role

In the Secretariat’s view all projects, vis-à-vis which the NDPHS plays a role, can be divided into three groups described further down. To which group a given project belongs, or should belong, should depend exclusively on the NDPHS’s role vis-a-vis the project.

3.1. “NDPHS-labelled project”

This type of a project has already been well-defined by the CSR, which has already adopted a “NDPHS-labelled project” label³.

The “**NDPHS-labelled project**” label is a quality label, which is a seal of recognition that a given project corresponds to the quality criteria, set by the NDPHS. While all projects developed by the NDPHS expert level structures are labelled with the NDPHS label, external actors are also welcome to apply and benefit from it.

Whereas it serves well its own purpose, the definition “**“NDPHS-labelled’ project”** is **too narrow for the purpose of using it in situations where the NDPHS plays a more meaningful role vis-à-vis a project**. It excludes projects developed by external actors who have not applied for the NDPHS label, even in cases where the NDPHS has made a significant input to the project, e.g. by providing seed money funding or raising the findings of the project to a policy level. And the other way round – the fact that a given project of an external actor has been granted a NDPHS label does not automatically mean that the project or its results or impact were made possible, at least to some extent, thanks to the NDPHS involvement.

The Secretariat proposes that – **in situations where the NDPHS plays a more active role/is engaged in the project** – **one of the following terms be used** (again, depending on the Partnership’s role in it).

³ For more information see http://www.ndphs.org/?about_ndphs#Labelled_projects.

3.2. “NDPHS project”

The Secretariat suggests that, in publicly available NDPHS documents as well as during official interventions by the NDPHS representatives, the term “NDPHS project” would be used **only regarding the projects where the NDPHS acts as a beneficiary or, if applicable, a project partner.**

The only NDPHS body having a legal capacity and, therefore, able to assume the role of a project beneficiary (a lead partner) or a project partner is the NDPHS Secretariat. Consequently, the Secretariat suggests the following definition -

A “**NDPHS project**” is a project where the NDPHS Secretariat acts as a project beneficiary (a lead partner) or a project partner.

An example of such a project is the recently completed Alcohol and Drug Prevention among Youth (ADPY) project.

NB: The Secretariat has taken a restrictive approach in proposing the above definition, as it advises careful approach to claiming the ownership rights of a given project. In an unlikely, but theoretically possible worst-case scenario, wrong labelling may even give rise to an intellectual property rights dispute. Depending on the applicable legislation, the intellectual property rights over a project are usually vested in the beneficiary or the beneficiary and project partners. For example, Article 7.1 of the General Conditions of the ADPY project’s Grant Contract stipulates as follows: “Ownership of, and title and intellectual and industrial property rights to the Action’s results, report and other documents relating to it shall be vested in the Beneficiary.”

The Secretariat proposes that – **in other cases, i.e. when the existence, subsequent results or impact of a project is a direct outcome of the NDPHS’ work, but the NDPHS Secretariat is neither a beneficiary nor a partner of a given project – the following term should be used.**

3.3. “NDPHS-facilitated project”

The Secretariat proposes to **reinforce the term that was used in the NDPHS Strategy 2010-2013 – a “NDPHS-facilitated project” - to indicate that a given project is attributable to the NDPHS** (i.e. that the existence, subsequent results or impact of a project is a direct outcome of the NDPHS’ work). The NDPHS Strategy 2010-2013 stipulates as follows:

“The facilitation of a project by the Partnership should be understood as:

- Taking the initiative to formulate project proposals in collaboration with suitable implementing agencies;
- Taking note of developments within these projects by receiving and scrutinizing monitoring reports from the implementing agencies;
- Evaluating the impact of these projects by either
 - a) conducting its own evaluations, depending on funding or

- b) facilitating external evaluation by others, depending on funding or
 - c) receiving and scrutinizing evaluations already planned and conducted and putting all three of these into a common framework
- Raising the findings from project-level to a policy-level with the aim of being not only a facilitator of projects, but foremost a facilitator of ideas and concepts, working and functioning as a mainstreaming and dissemination agency into the level of political decision-making in all of its member-states.”

In Secretariat’s view, the **definition quoted above is a good starting point, however, some improvements would be required:**

- 1) It is proposed to delete the second and third bullet points, as it is not entirely clear how and to what extent the activities mentioned there influence the results and impact of a given project. While these activities would be important in the context of 4th bullet point (project-to-policy cycle), taking note of developments and evaluation in itself does not facilitate a project;
- 2) It is proposed to add to the definition of a “NDPHS-facilitated project” also NDPHS-implemented and NDPHS-(co-)financed projects. Even though it is very rare that the NDPHS finances projects, the NDPHS seed money recently provided by the German Ministry of Health is one example and the NDPHS contribution should be duly recognized in such cases;
- 3) Two additional problems mentioned in the NDPHS Evaluation Report 2013 that should be addressed in the context of defining a “NDPHS-facilitated project” are as follows: (i) the lack of a common understanding of a “project” (this has already been addressed in item 2.) and (ii) whether the project can be called NDPHS-facilitated if only one or few members of one EG/TG are somehow related to it (this is discussed further down, under “NDPHS-element” in a project).

Finally, for the reasons discussed in item 3.1 above the Secretariat suggests that a “NDPHS-labelled project” would not be automatically regarded as a “NDPHS-facilitated project”. In many cases, a “NDPHS-labelled project” would also be a “NDPHS-facilitated project”, but this should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

“NDPHS-element” in a project

In the context of the below-presented definition of a “NDPHS-facilitated project” it is important to have a common understanding of what the “NDPHS-element” in a project means, e.g. whether a project can be called NDPHS-facilitated if only one or few members of one EG/TG are somehow related to it or the whole group needs to be actively involved. The following excerpt from the NDPHS Evaluation Report demonstrates that, at least between the Expert and Task Groups, the opinions differ:

“Is it sufficient to call a project "NDPHS-project" if only one or few members of one EG/TG are somehow related to it? (only one answer possible)

	Number of replies	%
Yes	26	44,1
No	29	49,2
No reply	4	6,8
Total	59	100

This complements with the rift going through the Partnership related to the general role of projects: if one finds projects not that important, it is easier to escape the issue by being happy with the fact that at least a few members are somehow involved, and others can concentrate on more worthwhile efforts.”

In Secretariat’s view, focusing on the number of NDPHS Partners or structures directly involved and setting a certain threshold would be a too restrictive approach. Rather, **it is important to determine that the objectives, specific products or results in question have been achieved because of its involvement have been made possible through the cooperation within the NDPHS network.**

Having in mind the foregoing, the Secretariat proposes as follows:

A “**NDPHS-facilitated project**” is a project which is made possible through the cooperation within the NDPHS network, i.e., where one or more NDPHS structures play a role vis-à-vis it by (one or a combination thereof):

- Taking an initiative to formulate a project proposal in collaboration with project partners;
- Contribute in a meaningful way to the implementation of the project or at least one of its work packages (the achievement of the objectives and/or results, development of specific products, etc.);
- Contribute in a meaningful way to raising the findings from the project-level to a policy-level;
- Finance or co-finance the project.