

**Project Steering Group  
Second Meeting  
St. Petersburg, Russia  
29 September 2014**

<b>Title</b>	Minutes from the 2nd Meeting of HIV Prevention Project Steering Group
<b>Submitted by</b>	NDPHS Secretariat and “Stellit”
<b>Summary/Note</b>	This document outlines the main discussion points and decisions made during the 2 <sup>nd</sup> meeting of the PSG.
<b>List of Annexes</b>	Annex 1 – List of documents submitted to the meeting Annex 2 – List of participants

### **1. Opening of the meeting and welcome**

Mr. Marek Maciejowski, Director of the NDPHS Secretariat, opened and chaired the meeting.

The Host, the Regional Public Organization of Social Projects in Sphere of Population’s Well-Being “Stellit,” welcomed the participants.

### **2. Adoption of the agenda**

The Meeting **adopted** the Provisional agenda (submitted as document PSG 2/2/1).

### **3. Interim report for submission to the EU**

#### **3.1 Narrative part**

With reference to document PSG 2/3.1/1, Dr. Olga Kolpakova introduced the narrative part of the interim report and emphasized the key aspects requiring the Partners’ attention and possible decision. She concluded that almost all planned actions were implemented and only the task to submit an article to a peer review journal and present the needs assessment results at the international conference require more attention.

The Meeting **approved** the document for submission to the EU.

#### **3.2 Financial part**

The Chair introduced the financial part of the interim report (cf. document PSG 2/3.2/1) and emphasized key aspects requiring the Partners’ attention and possible decision.

With few exceptions, the expenditure of the first year is close to the foreseen budget. Savings were made especially in travel costs and lump sums, which – the Lead Partner proposes – be



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reallocated to pay for expectably increased costs of the external audit and the Secretariat's staff (the latter due to the higher than expected demand of the Project Partners for its support and services). The Chair highlighted the importance of avoiding late or incorrect submission of documents and figures to enable the Secretariat to as much as possible stay within the expected working hours during the second year of the project implementation.

Ms. Inna Vyshemirskaya (YLA) noted that the Project Partners have learnt how to prepare and submit the required information during the first year of the project implementation and one should expect a more smoothly fulfillment of responsibilities by the Project Partners during the second year.

With regard to the conversion rates to be used during the second year, the Secretariat suggested that the Project Partners use the approach named "Alternative 1" in the financial file, which means they would convert all the money (to be) received all at once. This would make the calculations and reporting easier in the future. However, when deciding about the approach the Project Partners should keep in mind that this alternative allows for less flexibility and may be less advantageous in situation when there are serious currency fluctuations.

The Meeting **approved** the documents for submission to the EU, with the requested changes by the Social AIDS Committee Poland included. It also **agreed** that should the Project Partners notice some places where the corrections are needed, they would inform the Lead Partners within a few days of the PSG 2 meeting.

## **4. Implementation of the Project Work Packages**

### **4.1 WP 1 Project management**

The Project Partners were invited to share their concerns, information and/or questions regarding the project's management.

Ms. Inna Vyshemirskaya (YLA) introduced document PSG 2/4.1b/1 'Overview and explanations regarding the confirmations of payment' to the participants and explained how it needs to be filled in.

Dr. Olga Kolpakova (Stellit) asked, if the document should be submitted by month (including all employees) or by employee (including all month).

In response, the Chair noted, that this can be decided by the organisations themselves.

Ms. Outi Karvonen (THL) pointed out that filling in the form will be quite complicated due to the way how the employment costs are calculated by the THL.

The Chair remarked that, whereas he understands the Project Partners' concerns, providing an understandable and well explained information and documents is indispensable for ensuring a smooth and uncomplicated audit of the project.

The Meeting **confirmed** their understanding of the need to provide the requested information and **agreed** that the Project Partners would submit the filled-in documents during the week number 42.



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## **4.2 WP 2 Dissemination of project results**

The Chair explained that written evidence for the work done during the implementation of the project needs to be submitted to the donor (e.g. information where the project has been announced (events, the Project Partners' own websites, etc.), as well as reports, presentations made during various events, minutes/protocols from meetings and workshops, protocols of the needs assessment, etc.

The Meeting **agreed** that the Project Partners would submit the required information during the week number 42.

## **4.3 WP 3 Project evaluation**

With reference to the report from the interim project evaluation (cf. document PSG 2/4.3/Info 1), the Chair introduced the outcome of and conclusions from the evaluation.

Overall, the evaluation showed that all Project Partners are very satisfied with the progress of the project so far. The participants discussed one Project Partner's comment included in the evaluation report that the specific objective of the project to build capacity in HIV prevention targeted at risk in the Northern Dimension area might be only met partly, due to the different situations in the participating countries and limited number of persons involved.

Further, the Chair recalled that one of the Lead Partner's conclusions from the first year of the evaluation was that most of Project Partners need to pay greater attention to meeting the deadlines as it comes to submitting documents required (timesheets, confirmation of project costs, etc.).

The Meeting **agreed** that it will be done so in the future.

## **4.4 WP 4 Assessment of needs of young people at high risk of getting HIV and AI and description of best practices on HIV and AI prevention in Northwest Russia and other participating countries of the NDPHS**

Dr. Olga Kolpakova (Stellit) briefly updated participants on the progress of implementation of the WP4. At the moment main activities left within this work package are the development and submission of the article with an overview of the needs assessment results to the peer-reviewed journal, presentation of the research data at the scientific conference and collection of German best practices in the field of HIV and AI prevention among young people at high risk of getting HIV and AI.

Regional NGO Stellit staff has proceeded the data obtained at the needs assessment stage and develops the draft of the article. The draft of the article is being discussed with professor Anita Raj who represents Division of Global Public Health of the Department of Medicine of the University of California, San Diego, USA. Professor Anita Raj has a many years experience of development and evaluation of sexual health interventions for vulnerable populations and agreed to be a volunteer expert for the project. The article is being discussed by the Regional NGO Stellit and prof. Anita Raj by Skype. All interested Project Partners are welcome to join



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these Skype discussions. It is planned that in coming few months Regional NGO Stellit staff will develop a draft of the publication and will contact Project Partners and ask for their contribution in explanation of the needs assessment results (especially Social AIDS Committee and Baltic HIV Association that expressed their interest in taking part in publication development during the workshop conducted in Helsinki in June 2014).

After that Project Partners discussed scientific conferences where the needs assessment results could be presented. The following suggestions have been made:

Mrs. Aleksandra Skonieczna (Social AIDS Committee) informed the participants that on 10 – 11 October 2014 in Warsaw the European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG) is organizing a conference “Increasing Capacities, Achieving Novelty (iCAN): Pan-European Conference on Community Empowerment and Sustainable Response to HIV/AIDS.” The conference is co-funded by the European Commission and is run in collaboration with UNAIDS, AIDS Healthcare Foundation, Apoyo Positivo, ECUO, Quality Action and SKAIDS. The project will be mentioned at the conference in presentation by Mr. Tomasz Malkuszewski. Nevertheless, Project Partners will not have enough time to present needs assessment results at the conference.

Ms. Outi Karvonen (THL) reminded Project Partners that in November an Annual NDPHS Conference on drug and alcohol abuse is going to be organized in Moscow, Russia. Project partners concluded that the conference might not be very relevant for the presentation of the needs assessment results because its main focus is on drug and alcohol abuse and not on HIV/AIDS and AI.

Ms. Inessa Vyshemirskaya (YLA) suggested Project Partners to present needs assessment results at the International Harm Reduction Conference. But after the discussion Project Partners concluded that the audience of the conference is not relevant for the project because its main focus is more on prevention than on harm reduction

Mrs. Victoria Osipenko (YLA) told that a conference organized by UNICEF could be one of the options to present the needs assessment results.

Dr. Maia Rusakova (Stellit) informed the participants that on 25-26 May 2015 XIII International Conference on HIV and AIDS is going to take place in London, United Kingdom. One of the priority topics for the conference is going to be Social Strategies for HIV and STDs Prevention. Abstracts submission is open until November 25, 2014. Project Partners agreed that it might be a good option to present the needs assessment results.

Dr. Olga Kolpakova (Stellit) reminded the Project Partners to inform the NDPHS Secretariat and Regional NGO “Stellit” about all conferences and meetings where the project is being presented so that this information could be reflected in reports.

Further steps which are going to be undertaken by THL to collect the best practices on HIV and AI prevention among children and young people at high risk of getting HIV and AI in Germany were proposed. Ms. Outi Karvonen (THL) is going to arrange the visit to Germany until the end of 2014 to identify best practices on HIV and AI prevention among children and young people at high risk of getting HIV and AI. In January 2015 German best practices will be described using the form developed within the project and filled in forms will be sent to the Regional NGO Stellit.



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#### **4.5 WP 5 Identification of best practices on HIV and AI prevention among children and young people at high risk of getting HIV and AI which could be spread in the region**

Dr. Olga Kolpakova (Stellit) briefly overviewed activities implemented within the WP 5. The decision was made to discuss at the end of January – beginning of February 2015 which best practices identified in Germany could be recommended for the further spread in the region so that they could be included in the Guidelines which will be developed during the second year of the project.

#### **4.6 WP 6 Training on implementation of evidence-based HIV and AI prevention**

The training on implementation of evidence-based HIV and AI prevention, which was going to be held on 30 September – 3 October 2014, had been briefly overviewed. All the Project Partners were invited to briefly introduce the experts from their regions who were going to take part in the training. Some practical details were clarified.

The decision was made to download handouts for the training participants developed within the project to the training web page.

#### **4.7 WP 7 Piloting of best practices on HIV and AI prevention among children and young people at high risk of getting HIV and AI in Northwest Russia**

Dr. Olga Kolpakova (Stellit) briefly reminded the procedure of piloting of best practices described at the project proposal. The decision was made that the procedure of piloting and the schedule will be discussed in details with experts from Kaliningrad and St. Petersburg during the additional training day on 3 October 2014.

#### **4.8 WP 8 Development of Guidelines on the best practices on HIV and AI prevention among children and young people at high risk of getting HIV and AI**

The Meeting discussed further steps in the development of the Guidelines on the best practices and **agreed** that it would be more reasonable to discuss the content of the Guidelines and share responsibility in its development at the end of January 2015, when there will be more information on piloting of best practices in St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad.

The Meeting **decided** that Stellit would arrange a Skype discussion of the WP 8 with other Project Partners at the end of January 2015.

### **5. General discussion and conclusions**

In response to a question posed by one Project Partners, the Chair explained that – as explained during agenda item 3.2 – the reported unused money foreseen within lump sums would be reallocated to other budget items, if the EU agrees. In such case the respective amounts would be deducted from the next prepayment to a given Project Partner, as appropriate.



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Ms. Inna Vyshemirskaya (YLA) noted that a correction of the date of the first prepayment made to her organization needs to be made in the excel file<sup>1</sup>.

## 6. Next PSG meeting

As foreseen in the Grant Contract, the next (third and last) PSG meeting will be held via Skype. It will take place in August 2015. The Project Partners **agreed** that the exact date of the meeting would be decided in spring 2015, when they see what progress has been made in the second year of the project implementation and what their own plans are.

## 7. Any other business

No issues were discussed under this agenda item.

## 8. Adoption of the PSG 3 meeting minutes

The NDPHS Secretariat proposed that it would send out draft PSG 2 meeting minutes to the participants on 13 October 2014 and that comments on the draft would be due, at the latest, on 18 October 2014. The revised minutes would be distributed on 23 October 2014 to be adopted *per capsulam* provided that no further comments are submitted until 30 October 2014.

The Meeting **agreed** to the proposed procedure.

## 9. Closing of the meeting

The Meeting terminated on 29 September 2014 at 13:10 hours. The remaining time was used by the interested Project Partners for bilateral consultations with the Lead Partners regarding the finalization of the narrative and financial report for submission to the EU as well as other project related matters.

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<sup>1</sup> YLA has subsequently confirmed in their email of 16 October that the respective information included in the excel file had been correct.



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<b>Reference</b>	Annex 1
<b>Title</b>	List of documents submitted to the meeting

### Main documents

<b>Code</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Submitted by</b>	<b>Date</b>
• PSG 2/2/1	Provisional agenda	Secretariat and Regional NGO Stellit	04/09/14
• PSG 2/2/2	Provisional annotated agenda	Secretariat	04/09/14
• PSG 2/3.1/1	Interim narrative report	Regional NGO Stellit and Secretariat	15/09/14
• PSG 2/3.2/1	Project financial file including the Interim financial report, Forecast budget for the following period, Amendment of the budget, and other financial information	Secretariat	26/09/14
• PSG 2/4.1b/1	Overview and explanations regarding the confirmations of payment	Secretariat	26/09/14
• PSG 2/4.3/Info 1	Outcomes and conclusions from interim project evaluation	Secretariat	04/09/14

### Auxiliary documents

<b>Code</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Submitted by</b>	<b>Date</b>
• PSG 2/Info 1	Practical information for participants	Secretariat and Regional NGO Stellit	03/09/14
• PSG 2/Info 2	Preliminary timetable	Secretariat and Regional NGO Stellit	04/09/14
• PSG 2/Info 3	List of documents	Secretariat	04/09/14
• PSG 2/Info 3/Rev 1	Revised list of documents	Secretariat	15/09/14
• PSG 2/Info 3/Rev 2	2 <sup>nd</sup> revised list of documents	Secretariat	26/09/14
• PSG 2/Info 4	Preliminary list of participants	Secretariat	15/09/14



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<b>Reference</b>	Annex 2
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**Baltic HIV Association**

*No participants*

**Project Partner 6**  
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*Project Partner has withdrawn from the project*

**Invited guest**

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