

2nd NDPHS Strategy Development Workshop
10 November
Online



Title	Minutes from the 2 nd NDPHS Strategy Development Workshop
Submitted by	Secretariat
Summary / Note	<p>Outline of the main discussion points of the 2nd NDPHS Strategy Development Workshop.</p> <p>The list of participants is available on the meeting page on the NDPHS website.</p> <p>During the meeting a working document was developed aimed to accumulate the ideas expressed during the meeting and after it. The document is available on https://docs.google.com/document/d/1v4n9jS-aniTysli871L-4sLetaA8PUqCElhDazADtpU/edit?usp=sharing.</p>

1. Welcome and opening of the Strategy Development meeting

The meeting was opened and chaired by Ms. Silvija Geistarte, Senior Adviser of the NDPHS Secretariat.

Dr. Ülla-Karin Nurm, Director of the NDPHS Secretariat, welcomed the participants to the Workshop.

2. Introduction to the Strategy

Ms. Bettina Rafaelsen, Strategy Consultant, introduced the first draft of the Strategy, the structure of and the goals for the Strategy, the strategic action areas, the tools/activities of the Strategy, the four cross-cutting themes, the NDPHS institutional framework and users, and the logic and targets of the Strategy.

The attendees raised some comments about the first draft of the Strategy:

- The new vision and mission of the NDPHS should be drafted without being bound to the contents of the Oslo Declaration. The need for revising the Oslo Declaration should be evaluated along with writing the new Strategy.
- The mechanisms of external relations as well as internal communication should be mapped out in the Strategy. In particular, the mechanisms of coordination with and support to other International Organisations, such as the WHO, CBSS and ILO, and the NDPHS stakeholders should be defined.
- Limiting the NDPHS work to specific Sustainable Development Goals is beneficial. However, the relevance of Health in All Policies -principle to all SDGs should be briefly reflected on.
- The Strategy should provide a situational analysis of all the current challenges in the Northern Dimension region. The EGs should be allowed to identify the most relevant challenges to their work and link them to their activities.

3. Joint Discussion on Pre-determined Questions

Dr. Ülla-Karin Nurm commenced the discussion by asking the participants to elaborate on the different users of the NDPHS work. The participants identified the NDPHS governing bodies, Ministries of Health and public health institutions of the Partner Countries, other relevant Ministries, such as the Ministries of Justice and the Ministries of Labour, other International Organisations, such as BEAC and CBSS, academia, local and municipal level actors, and NGOs as potential users.

Dr. Ülla-Karin Nurm introduced the following questions and opened the floor for discussion.

3.1 What do we want to achieve?

Some of the views expressed were:

- As an inspirational goal for the NDPHS work, all work should contribute to longer and healthier lives. Due to the challenges of identifying measurable indicators to this, more concrete goals should be formulated. These could include improving health status of population in different age groups and improving the conditions for health and well-being.
- The NDPHS should function as a platform for enhancing regional collaboration and finding new ways for inter-sectoral cooperation in the Partner Countries. This should include tackling emerging threats to public health, such as COVID-19. Furthermore, the new Strategy should capture the uniqueness of the NDPHS in distinction to WHO Europe and other regional organisations functioning in the field of health and social wellbeing.
- The NDPHS should aspire to be a body of excellence and knowledge exchange in the Northern Dimension region. This would include transferring knowledge and successes between partners, producing evidence-based policy briefs, and connecting with the networks in the region. The new Strategy should clearly identify the mechanisms for disseminating the NDPHS outputs to the users.

3.2 What types of actions should be included?

The participants identified the following means and types of action: policy briefs, popular briefs for wider audience, policy-level forums, seminars and conferences for the expert-level audience, rapid communications, workshops, online webinars, publications based on scientific findings, joint projects with other Northern Dimension structures, social networks, study visits, and field exchange visits.

3.3 How can the NDPHS deliver value to the user?

Some of the views expressed were:

- Networking with those actors who are not actively engaged in the network but present users of the NDPHS work could enhance the Partnership's outreach. This presents an opportunity to swiftly exchange information and generate evidence for robust policy advice. Simultaneously, the existing network should be strengthened for the same purposes.
- The communication and dissemination of the NDPHS work could be improved through building a stronger social media presence, tailoring products to different users and having the NDPHS network actively promote the Partnership in their work and online communications. These measures could help increase the visibility of the NDPHS to all users.
- Cooperation and collaboration with the other Northern Dimension structures could help promote the principle of Health in All Policies. The workshop "The Art of Staying Healthy – Can Culture Improve Our Well-being?" is a great example of successful collaboration.

3.4 What are the measures of our success?

Following means were identified:

- A comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan with clear and appropriate key performance indicators is needed for measuring success in a wide range of different projects.
- Public-private joint financial mechanisms could be developed.

The Meeting **took note** of the comments made during the discussion.

4. First Reflections on the NDPHS Vision and Mission

Ms. Silviya Geistarte introduced the vision from the NDPHS Strategy 2020 and the mission adapted from the Objectives of the Partnership as defined in the Oslo Declaration and asked for first reflections on their relevance and content.

The vision presented in the NDPHS Strategy 2020 stands as follows:

“The NDPHS, as a highly valued and innovative regional network, significantly contributes to the improvement of people’s health and social well-being in the Northern Dimension area.”

Some of the comments the participants made were:

- The vision should be as succinct and focused as possible, as this will best assist the planning of activities.
- The vision and mission should remain as two separate sections, as they serve different purposes. The NDPHS vision statement is future-oriented and should articulate what the Partnership strives for. The mission is more focused on the present and should describe how the vision can be realised in practice.

The following mission was adapted from the Objectives of the Partnership as defined in the Oslo Declaration:

“The overall objective of the Partnership is to promote sustainable development in the Northern Dimension area through improving human health and social wellbeing. The Partnership aims at contributing to intensified co-operation in social and health development and assisting Partners and Participants in improving their capacity to set priorities in health and social wellbeing, as well as to enhance co-ordination of international activities within the Northern Dimension area. The activities by Partners and Participants in a Partnership should contribute to greater political and administrative coherence in the area, narrowing of social and economic differences, and to a greater improvement of the quality of life and the demographic situation.”

Some of the views expressed during the discussion were:

- The mission should emphasise its focus on the field of health and social well-being throughout the statement in addition to stressing the geographical scope of the Partnership.
- The users should be defined in the mission statement along with identifying how the Partnership can bring added value to the users.
- The NDPHS mission should be to intensify cooperation, to assist the Partners in capacity building, to enhance international policy coordination, and to provide policymakers with recommendations for narrowing social and economic disparities and improving people’s overall quality of life in the Northern Dimension area.

Dr. Ülla-Karin Nurm requested the participants to elaborate on what the NDPHS is **not**. Following thoughts were voiced out:

- The NDPHS is neither a donor nor an implementing actor.

- Due to its niche specialisation on the chosen thematic priority fields in the Northern Dimension area, the NDPHS is not simultaneously working on a variety of different challenges but on a few carefully selected ones.
- The NDPHS works in collaboration with other International Organisations working in the field of health and social wellbeing, such as the WHO and the EU. Instead of competing with these organisations, the NDPHS seeks to translate their recommendations and policies to the Northern Dimension region.
- The NDPHS does not have a traditional composition of representatives solely from Ministries of Health, contra other regional organisations in the field of health and social wellbeing. It has a unique composition of policy-level practitioners and scientific experts, which enables the development of realistic and targeted policy recommendations.

Ms. Bettina Rafaelsen wrapped up the meeting, asked the Expert Groups to provide their comments on the first draft of the Strategy by 21 November 2020 and notified that the strategy will be presented to the CSR on 27 November 2020.

The Meeting **took note** of the comments made during the discussion.

5. Closing of the meeting

The Meeting terminated on 10 November 2020 at 12:00 CET.