

National expert to work on improving the quality of services related to sexual and reproductive health and rights among NGOs working with people who use drugs and people living with HIV

Location	Republic of Moldova
Application deadline	13.06.2014
Type of contract	Service provider
Languages required	English, Romanian, Russian
Duration of contract	6 months
Expected duration of assignment	up to 43 days

I. Background:

HIV is a significant public health problem in the world in general and in Moldova in particular. In 2013 the number of people living with HIV (PLWH) came close to 8620, and the real number according to estimations made by UNAIDS for the same period was estimated to be between 12-15 000.

Furthermore, the prognosis for the development of the epidemic show that the number of HIV cases among adults and children will amount to 19 000 in 2015¹.

The problem of psychoactive substance users (PSU), more precisely the inefficiency of the current approach in the system for treatment and care of drug users is connected to the HIV epidemic. According to the latest estimations only the number of injecting drug users amounts to around 31 000, and this group is still the most vulnerable to HIV infection.

PLWH and PSU encounter a whole set of specific problems in different areas of life, in particular problems with employment, access to health and education services, an increased risk of discrimination and violation of their rights. In particular, the social research project «[Socioeconomic situation of people living with HIV](#)», which was implemented by the SOROS foundation in Moldova showed HIV has a very negative impact on the quality of life. PLWH encounter significant emotional, psychological, and material problems. The majority of PLWH live on the poverty line and encounter a number of specific objective and subjective problems which makes access to services more difficult. The research results also confirmed that in the majority of cases it was NGOs working in this sphere that offered legal, psychological and social support services to overcome the specific problems encountered by PLWH.

“Inițiativa Pozitivă” is a network of seven member community organisations and three partner organisations, each with a rich experience in the field of HIV/AIDS and drug use in Moldova, focusing on Most at Risk Populations (MARPs). The network is led by people living with HIV, former drug users and women living with HIV and directly affected by HIV. They in turn are members of institutions at country level, regional level, and global level. Based on the experience of “Inițiativa Pozitivă”, civil society organizations offering services to PLWH and PSU, including social workers employed by them, do not have sufficient knowledge about sexual and reproductive health and rights, and there are only limited services in this domain, other than those connected directly to HIV prevention.

As part of the country program for the period 2013-2017, UNFPA will strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations to mobilize and empower community networks, deliver interventions aimed at preventing HIV and sexually transmitted infections, and encourage the use of sexual and reproductive health and HIV services.

To contribute to this objective, “Inițiativa Pozitivă” aims to contribute towards improving the services for people living with HIV and PSU in the sphere of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and sexual and reproductive rights (SRR). In 2013, the organisation conducted a study of the needs of people living with HIV and PSU in relation to sexual and reproductive health, as well as of the type of services already

¹ «Оценки и прогнозы эпидемии ВИЧ в Республике Молдова», В Плешка, А. Иофица, Т. Котельник-Харя, Ш. Георгицэ, С. Поповичь, И. Осояну, А. Гончар, Кишинэу, 2012

offered by NGO in this domain, with the aim to identify gaps in service provision². The study found that the NGOs which took part in the study partly covered the range of services in this field, but their engagement was of an uneven character and was not regulated. The level of awareness among the employee staff in the sphere of SRH rights and services is also assessed as incomplete and fragmentary, especially regarding the approach to service provision. It is especially important to note the prevalence of stereotypes which would indicate that only women need information about SRH.

In addition, the study showed a low awareness level among the beneficiaries in the sphere of SRH and SRR, as well as prevalence of a number of stereotypes which limit the rights of PLWH and PSU to freely take decisions in the sphere of sexual relations, on having children and on abortions.

II. Main objectives of the assignment:

Based on the assessment of NGO services and the need of PSU and PLWH in the sphere of SRH and SRR, the assignment includes the development of the manual for NGO staff on SRH and technical assistance for NGO to implement the manual in practice, and will be directed towards the following goals and objective:

1. Improved institutional commitment and capacity of NGOs providing services to PLWH and PSU in the field of SRH and SRR.
 - a. All NGOs participating in the project have regulations and/or guidelines regulating services in the field of SRH and SRR and/or such regulations are incorporated in existing regulations and guidelines;
 - b. All organisations have established contact with public and other service providers in the field of SRH and SRR;
 - c. NGOs have knowledge and capacity for practical implementation and integration SRH/R services for PLWH and PSU in existing service package, including integration into NGO's M&E systems.
2. Improved capacity of NGO personnel in the field of SRH and SRR.
 - a. The knowledge of SRH and SRR among NGO staff providing services to PLWH and PSU has increased as a result of the advanced training;
 - b. NGO staff has access to up to date information and guidance for consultation and referral on questions concerning SRH and SRR.
 - c. Development and integration of indicators on SRH services and counseling into the overall Monitoring and Evaluation system of services provided by NGOs.

III. Scope of work

The expert will perform the assignment in close collaboration with "Inițiativa Pozitivă" and is expected to report on a regular basis to the organisation about the progress according to the timeline. The scope of work will include:

a) Development of the manual. The expert will develop a practical and accessible manual for NGO personnel (outreach workers, social workers, psychologists and other staff working directly with clients) for effective consultation and referral regarding SRH and SRR, including guidelines for thematic self support groups on SRH and SRR. The manual will draw on existing guidelines and manuals available locally and internationally.

² Initiativa Pozitiva (2013) "Services in the sphere of sexual and reproductive health for PLWH and PSU: availability, awareness and needs" <http://positivepeople.md/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/REPORT-eng.pdf>

b) Advanced capacity building training. Together with the international expert, the national expert will develop and implement a four days training for NGO personnel (outreach workers, social workers, psychologists and other staff working directly with clients, as well as coordinating staff) for effective consultation and referral in questions regarding SRH and SRR, including training of trainers elements. The training will primarily address the knowledge gaps identified in the needs assessment and the programme will be developed in close collaboration with *Inițiativa Pozitiva*, UNFPA, and international expert. The training will be based on the manual developed by the expert, and will also serve to test and revise the manual. The local expert is responsible for providing input to the planning of the training and for participating in its implementation, under guidance of the international trainer. The local expert is also responsible for submitting a revised version of the manual, with input gathered during the training.c) Technical support to NGOs. The expert will furthermore provide technical support to NGOs to improve services in SRH and SRR for PLWH and PSU. As part of the technical support, the expert shall:

1. Analyze together with the NGO's focal points the existing services of the organisations and develop concrete guidelines/regulations or implement the guidelines detailed in the manual with the aim of improving and expanding services in the field of SRH and SRR, and/or improvements to existing guidelines, and draft a list of concrete objectives to be reached during the year;
2. Support the NGO's focal points in implementing at least four thematic mutual aid groups on SRH and SRR.
3. Provide support online and by telephone throughout the year to focal points on implementation of their tasks.
4. Analyze together with the focal points progress towards objectives at the end of the implementation period.
5. Take part in a follow up meeting with participating NGOs to be organized by *Inițiativa Pozitiva*.

IV. Deliverables and time line:

Deliverables	Deadline
1. Practical manual for NGO personnel (outreach workers, social workers, psychologists and other staff working directly with clients) for effective consultation and referral in questions regarding SRH and SRR, including guidelines for thematic mutual aid groups on SRH and SRR. First draft.	8 days
2. Implementation of training	4 days
3. Input to training report delivered by international expert	2 days
4. Final version of manual	2 days
5. Field visit report for all participating NGOs, together with clear objectives/plans of implementation for each NGO.	18 days
6. Analysis of progress towards NGOs objectives.	9 days

The training will take place in the **end of July 2014**.

V. Monitoring and reporting requirements

The consultant will report directly to “*Inițiativa Pozitivă*”.

VI. Experience and qualifications requirements

- At least 3 years university education in health or a related field;
- Thorough practical and theoretical knowledge of reproductive health and reproductive rights, especially concerning people living with HIV and people who use drugs;
- Thorough knowledge of the Moldovan health system, especially concerning sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- Experience of working for or with non-governmental organisations;
- Excellent communication skills;
Normal/Medium IT skills;
- Flexibility and ability to work independently

VII. Terms of payment

Payment will be made in two instalments. The first on completion of the manual and training, and the second on completion of the analysis of progress towards NGO objectives.