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HIV PLEDGE PROJECT

Penitentiary, Law Enforcement & Drug sectors Government Efficiency in HIV response

QUARTERLY REPORT # 6

Reporting period:

January 1, 2013 – March 31, 2013

Cooperative Agreement No.:

AID-121-IO-11-00001

Submitted by:

UNODC Program Office in Ukraine

15 April 2013

| 1. Context | |
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| Programme/Sub-programme | XCEA01 - Effective HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care among Vulnerable Groups in Central Asia and Eastern Europe |
| Project Title | Penitentiary, Law Enforcement and Drugs Sectors Government Efficiency in HIV response |
| Project Starting Date and Duration | 1 October 2011; 5 years |
| Location | Ukraine |
| UNODC Responsible Office | Regional Programme Office for Moldova and Ukraine |
| UNODC Regional / Country or Thematic Programme Outcome to which this programme/project directly contributes | 3.3. HIV prevention and care (as related to injecting drug users, prison settings and trafficking in human beings) |
| Executing Agency | UNODC Programme Office in Ukraine |
| Government Counterparts | Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, State Service on HIV/AIDS and Other Socially Dangerous Diseases, State Penitentiary Service and State Drugs Control Service. |
| Donor(s) | USAID/Ukraine |
| Project Summary | |
| <p>USAID/Ukraine is supporting the HIV PLEDGE project to reduce HIV transmission among most-at-risk populations (MARPs) through increased access to state-of-the-art HIV, AIDS and drug abuse services, including service delivery within pre-, in-, and post- detention settings. This will be achieved through advocacy and policy activities, strengthening the capacity of narcological services to integrate HIV/AIDS and substance abuse services, and expanding HIV, AIDS and drug dependence treatment services in detention and post-release settings. USAID's funding for these activities builds on and expands UNODC's existing work in Ukraine under its regional programme XCEA01 – "Effective HIV/AIDS prevention and care among vulnerable groups in Eastern Europe and Central Asia".</p> <p>The HIV PLEDGE project works with national stakeholders and other donors to ensure cohesiveness with US-Ukraine Partnership Framework goals. These partners include the Ministries of Health, Justice, and Interior as well as State Services of Ukraine on Drug Control and on countering HIV and AIDS. This project complements and adds value to existing and forthcoming HIV/AIDS initiatives, including those supported by the Global Fund and the United States Government (USG). The programme builds upon achievements and lessons learned from current HIV/AIDS interventions.</p> <p>The goal of the project is to build support among Ukrainian law enforcement officials and other key Government stakeholders for HIV/AIDS and drug dependence treatment services targeted MARPs, including service delivery within pre-, in-, and post- detention settings.</p> | |

2. Project objectives, outputs, main activities and achievement for the period under review

Objective 1: Create an environment supportive of evidence-informed and human-rights based HIV/AIDS and drug dependence treatment programs among MARPs.

Output 1.1: Relevant GOU stakeholders have knowledge and capacity to support development of comprehensive HIV programs for people who use drugs.

Output 1.2: The law enforcement sectoral policy framework regarding HIV/AIDS is developed in line with the international guidelines.

Outputs 1.3: The cooperative mechanism between law enforcement, public health and civil society partners is developed and piloted in selected regions.

Output 1.4: HIV/AIDS and drugs related modules of the training curricula, manual and materials at the police training institutions are updated with the state-of-the-art evidences.

Main activities and achievements

During the reporting period the HIV-LEDGE Project convened the meeting of the TWG on HIV/AIDS and Law Enforcement on 19 February. The meeting gathered key experts and representatives from the Ministry of Interior, National Police Academy, Police Trade Union of Ukraine, the State Drug Control Service, the State Service on countering HIV-infection, AIDS and other social dangerous diseases, the State Centre for Control of Socially Dangerous Diseases, local and international non-government organizations (20 participants in total) to discuss how the role and accountability of police can be adequately reflected in the National AIDS Programme for 2014-2018 in the best possible way.

Through collaborative efforts and following constructive discussions at the TWG on HIV/AIDS and Law Enforcement a set of recommendations and proposals have been formulated and submitted to the State Service on countering HIV-infection, AIDS and other social dangerous diseases.

Project advocacy efforts in raising awareness and enhancing better understanding of the role of law enforcement sector in national responses to HIV/AIDS resulted in the development of the sectoral law enforcement policy regarding HIV/AIDS. The Action Plan for Psychological Support and Preventive Activities among law enforcement staff at national and local levels for 2013 - 2017 was adopted by the Ministry of Interior. The Action Plan includes activities related to HIV/AIDS prevention among staff, updating of on-the-job training programme, development of curricula on the role of police in HIV prevention for cadets of police academies, development and dissemination of relevant informational materials for police officers.

National and international consultants are involved to provide relevant technical support for the Action Plan implementation. A national consultant was hired by the project to conduct assessment of the current HIV related modules of the police training academy curricula in Ukraine. The project international consultant is currently finalizing the draft International Training Guidelines for Police on HIV/AIDS and training modules on HIV/AIDS for the police. The deliverables of the consultants will be presented at the workshop with key stakeholders in June.

The Project team has developed a concept note for 1-week study visit of a group of Ukrainian law enforcement representatives to the United Kingdom (Glasgow) to be held in May and started organizational and logistical arrangements with close involvement of the UNODC HQS in Vienna and UK counterparts from Scotland Police Service.

Objective 2: Strengthen capacities of the State Penitentiary Service, public health and social services and civil society organizations to provide evidence-informed and human-rights based comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment and care services including drug dependence treatment in prison settings.

Output 2.1: Decision makers and prison management have adequate knowledge, attitudes and willingness to support comprehensive programs on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment in prison settings.

Output 2.2: Policies, guidelines and protocols for management of health, HIV/TB, drug dependence treatment programs in prison settings are revised and updated for the implementation of a comprehensive package of HIV/AIDS services.

Output 2.3: Comprehensive package of HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services including drug dependent treatment is piloted in selected prison facilities.

Output 2.4: Updated training curricula, modules and training manuals on evidence-informed and human-rights-based comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment and care in prison settings are available and used by the training staff of the prison training schools.

Main activities and achievements

On 31 January-1 February 2013 the HIV-LEDGE Project, in cooperation with Ukrainian Institute on Public Health Policy and State Penitentiary Service, organized a workshop on drug dependence treatment in prisons, discussing the challenges of introduction of OST in closed settings. The event gathered representatives from State Penitentiary Service, State Drug Control Service, General Prosecutor Office and local and international organizations. Also international consultants from Yale University and representatives from penitentiary service from Moldova, Poland and Kyrgyzstan attended the workshop to facilitate the discussion and share their local experiences and best practices of OST implementation. The meeting resulted in development of recommendations regarding following up on current OST implementation in prison settings in Ukraine, including monitoring activities on OST provision in pre-trial detention facilities, conducting research on the quality and accessibility of drug dependence treatment services in prisons and organizing trainings on OST issues for medical personnel and relevant penitentiary sector officials.

The project sponsored study visit of 2 representatives of the State Penitentiary Service of Ukraine to St. Petersburg (Russia). On 26 February-3 March 2013, the Deputy Head and Lead Specialist from the Health Care Department of the State Penitentiary Service of Ukraine visited St. Petersburg to explore the mechanisms, challenges and benefits of reforming the structure of medical and sanitary service within the Federal Penitentiary Service of the Russian Federation. The visit also highlighted the local experience of applying public health standards in penitentiary institutions (please see the mission report in annex # 1).

This study tour enabled the Ukrainian counterparts to explore and analyze the Russian reform and consider the possibility to conduct similar reforms in Ukraine. Through transferring more autonomy and competencies to the prison medical services it is expected that the quality and accessibility of the current health service delivery will improve. The proposition is under consideration of the Head of the SPSU.

The project team has been assisting the State Penitentiary Service to develop proposals on scaling up effective HIV interventions in prison settings for inclusion into the NAP 2014-2018.

Objective 3: Improve capacity of substance use treatment system to provide evidence-informed and human-right based integrated HIV prevention and drug dependence treatment services.

Output 3.1: Policy, legal and normative frameworks, technical guidelines and operational standards are in place to integrate HIV related interventions into the drug dependence treatment service system (narcology system).

Output 3.2: Conceptual framework and model of integrated and comprehensive package of HIV prevention and drug dependence treatment services system is piloted and documented for further replication at national level.

Output 3.3: Updated narcology training curricula in line with the best international practices.

Main activities and achievements

During the reporting period, the international consultant was recruited to undertake assessment of the needs and capacities of the selected drug dependence treatment facilities and to develop conceptual model of integrated and comprehensive drug dependence treatment and HIV prevention services in pilot localities (Kyiv, Poltava and Kharkiv).

Field mission of the consultant was held in January. Series of meetings and structured interviews have been held with local officials, heads of narcological and AIDS treatment clinics, NGOs, school psychologists and social support service officials, clients from IDU rehabilitation and MAT programmes and outreach workers using research instruments developed by the consultant. The assessment helped identify the strengths and weaknesses of the drug dependence treatment facilities, including deficits or overload of staff responsibilities, role and impact of sectors of Narcology service system on HIV/AIDS and drug use prevention and treatment and the accessibility and completeness of the services in overall. Preliminary report has been developed and shared with key stakeholders for comments in mid-March 2013.

The action plan to implement comprehensive and integrated service provision system at local level is expected to be finalized by the international consultant and then approved by the local implementers by the end of April 2013. The approval of the action plan will be followed by technical assistance, provided by the project, to the selected local drug dependence treatment clinics. Further trainings will be offered for medical doctors and health care managers in the framework of the action plan.

Consultations were conducted with TWG on narcology operational standards regarding the modality and possible topics for scientific studies to be supported by the project's research grants. Final decision will be made based on the conclusions of the international consultant's report. The TWG members suggested that Narcology Department of Kharkiv Medical Academy of Postgraduate Studies and Ukrainian Medical Monitoring Center on Alcohol and Drugs to provide monitoring support in the implementation of the local action plans.

Negotiation were held with the Head of MoH Center for Expertise and Chief Narcologist of Ukraine to start revision of narcology operational standards in accordance with the newly adopted MoH order on Guidelines for development of medical operational standards. Follow up support will be provided to identify, review and adapt state-of-the-art operational standards.

In cooperation with stakeholders, the project also identified key persons from MoH and research institutes who will be selected to participate in the study visit to the USA (rescheduled from May to August 2013). The concept note on the study visit is developed and submitted to USAID for approval and clearance.

3. Staffing, management and coordination arrangements

Over the reporting period the project team was fully staffed with Programme and Administrative Assistant (Lina Levenshtyan) and National Project Officer on HIV/AIDS and Prisons (Valeryi Lazebnyi).

The HIV-PLEDGE team used the revision of the Annual Implementation Plan as an occasion to coordinate its HIV related activities with another USAID supported project RESPONSE. During the coordination meeting, held on 8 of February 2013, it was identified that the activities of both projects are not overlapping, but they are rather complimentary to each other, and potential fields/modes of cooperation will be further identified during ongoing consultations.

The HIV-PLEDGE team was actively participating in the process of the National AIDS Programme development. Our contribution is focused on the promotion of key concepts related, but not limited to, HIV PLEDGE project. Thus, our team has been advocating mainly the following issues:

- Ensuring more active involvement of the law enforcement and penitentiary sectors in the development and implementation of the National AIDS Programme that should facilitate stronger partnership to provide universal access to HIV services for people who use drugs and prison inmates;
- OST access for at least 35% of opiate IDUs (including ensuring infrastructure for it);
- Access for opportunistic infections treatment for prisoners who are in need;
- Delivery of prevention package (9 services) for PWID under national funding starting from 2015;
- Delivery of prevention package for prisoners under national funding.

At the same time we should note that the process of NAP development, which is led by State Service for countering HIV-infections, AIDS and other socially dangerous diseases, could be assessed as non-transparent with regard to inclusion of HIV prevention among MARPs into the draft NAP (version as of April 1, 2013, which was shared with USAID). We shared our concerns with other UN Agencies and initiated drafting of joint position letter to the Minister of Health, Vice-Prime Minister that clearly states the utmost importance of including full-scale prevention among MARPs (especially IDUs) to the programme in order to achieve steady decrease of HIV incidences.

The HIV-PLEDGE Project also consistently promotes OST as a part of the comprehensive HIV Package for PWIDs. In this regard, we are cooperating with national stakeholders in improving the MoH Order #200, and in particular those articles which regulate inclusion criteria and conditions of OST continuation while travelling, being hospitalized or incarcerated. The State AIDS Service, which is responsible for Order #200, has been somewhat reluctant to take all the necessary steps to make Order#200 the working instrument for OST implementation and scale up. Thus, the project team drafted and submitted the letter (on April 3, 2013) to the State AIDS Service expressing the UNODC concerns and offered the PLEDGE Project's technical assistance to improve the Order and ensure OST accessibility for most at risk patients.

4. Major problems encountered and steps taken to solve them

The State Penitentiary Service has initiated the reform of health care system as a part of the Prison System Reform, and UNODC observes that the reform process is lacking transparency and systematic public involvement. This might potentially influence on the modality of piloting

of the HIV services for prisoners. In this regard, UNODC will enhance the discussion with the relevant Penitentiary staff on technical assistance in the prison reform's processes.