

Eurasian Coalition on Male Health

Regional Program

RIGHT TO HEALTH

Community Actions to Increase Access of MSM and Transgender People to HIV Services in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

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Recognizing the challenge of the disproportionately low access to HIV services of men who have sex with men (MSM) and trans*¹ people in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the Eurasian Coalition on Male Health (ECOM) has developed a regional program

Right to Health. Community Actions to Increase Access of MSM and Transgender People to HIV Services in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of this program is **to contribute to an increased uptake and retention across the continuum of HIV care for MSM and trans* people in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.**

The three objectives of the Program are:

Objective 1: To contribute to increasing MSM and trans* community participation in decision-making in national HIV responses.

Objective 2: To contribute to building the capacity of MSM and trans* organizations by strengthening organizational structures, technical competence and fundraising capacity.

Objective 3: To strengthen enabling environments for HIV services for MSM and trans* people, through fighting stigma and discrimination, promoting and protecting human rights, and removing legal and policy barriers.

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

Target Countries

The program will be fully implemented in 5 target countries Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Macedonia.

Expanded Engagement Countries

Though the target countries that are participating in this program are limited to those five listed above, participation in the program will be open, to a certain extent, to community representatives and organizations from the countries of so called “expanded engagement”: Azerbaijan, Estonia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, and Ukraine. There are several ways for expanded engagement:

- Community experts and organizations from the expanded engagement countries may serve as resources and will be engaged to share the experience and teach their peers. They may be also invited as technical support providers for specific topics
- Community representatives from the expanded engagement countries will be invited to regional capacity-building and advocacy events.
- Grassroots-level community groups from the expanded engagement countries will be eligible to apply for small grants for basic organizational support and capacity building.
- ECOM Steering Committee, Oversight Committee, and Regional Expert Group will pay

¹ The abbreviation trans* is employed here to describe transgender, non-binary, and gender nonconforming identities, including (but not limited to) transgender, transsexual, genderqueer, genderfluid, non-binary, agender, third gender, two-spirit, bigender etc.

attention to ensuring a region-wide utilization of program experience and products.

No programmatic activities of the Regional Program will be implemented in the expanded engagement countries.

ACTIVITIES

The program will span two of Global Fund's pre-defined modules: Community Systems Strengthening (Objective 1 & 2) and Removing Legal Barriers (Objective 3). Activities will be conducted both at the regional and national level.

Objective 1: To contribute to increasing MSM and trans* community participation in decision-making in national HIV responses.

Module: Community Systems Strengthening

1.1. Modular Intervention: Advocacy for social accountability

Activities under this intervention will have dual foci: (1) highlighting the need for improved quality of strategic information about the HIV epidemic among MSM and trans* populations, and the importance of community involvement in generating strategic information, and (2) developing advocacy frameworks to push for better HIV programming and financing for MSM and trans* populations.

Key regional activities:

- Develop regional advocacy framework strategy for MSM and trans* community engagement to improve HIV research and evaluations, program planning and service delivery, and financing
- Host regional meetings on overarching strategic information issues
- Develop a web-based resource portal of the Program
- Conduct regional events that integrate advocacy messaging alongside other capacity-building functions, including a regional meeting specifically devoted to sustainability of and community engagement in MSM and trans* health responses

Key national activities:

- Host annual national workshops on strategic information priorities for change, including capacity-building sessions on international standards for research and evaluation amongst MSM and trans* populations
- Develop national advocacy plans, based on regional-level strategy, for MSM and trans* community engagement to improve HIV research and evaluations, programming planning and service delivery, and financing
- Conduct advocacy actions according to national advocacy plan

1.2. Intervention: Community-based monitoring for social accountability

Activities under this intervention focus on developing and implementing community-led monitoring processes, which will both empower community actors with additional information and understanding of gaps in data and services, and also produce valuable information for informing advocacy efforts to improve services for MSM and trans* populations.

Key regional activities:

- Develop HIV service cascade analysis tool, tailored to MSM and trans* needs
- Develop web-based reference space for HIV service cascade analysis tool and supporting materials on ECOM website (hosted as part of above-mentioned resource portal)
- Host regional workshop to introduce cascade tool and supporting materials, including capacity-building sessions on low-threshold programming (i.e. PrEP, self- and express-testing, mobile outreach)
- Host side-event intensive training for select community leaders on HIV service cascade tool, including special topics of community engagement in research and analysis (capacity in this area supports activities in "Advocacy for social accountability" intervention, above)
- Consolidate results of national cascade analyses on an annual basis, for purposes of regional sharing, sharing national reports and brief summary of findings (gaps in data and proposed programming changes) on ECOM website

Key national activities:

- Conduct community-based monitoring using HIV service cascade analysis tool on an annual basis
- Host national-level workshops with stakeholders to present and discuss results of analysis and identify priorities for change, including improved data sources (where data are not currently available) and improved programming options to reach and retain more MSM and trans* people across the cascade

1.3. Intervention: Social mobilization, building community linkages, collaboration and coordination

Activities under this intervention focus on sharing best practices and experience to increase community participation in the HIV response, with a focus on governance and planning of services.

Key regional activities:

- Develop online resources on successful engagement of community advocates involved in HIV governance
- Develop webinars and online technical support platform to assist partners in replicating successes related to community engagement in governance
- Host regional meetings where community representatives can share experiences and coordinate advocacy messages

Key national activities:

- Map and analyze community engagement on an annual basis
- Support increased quantity and quality of community participation in national governance bodies of the HIV response (CCMs and others)
- Provide mentoring from regional and local experts on community leadership and

participation, focusing on appropriate representation of community constituency and improved communication, advocacy and coalition-building skills

Objective 2. To contribute to increasing MSM and trans* organizations' capacities by strengthening their internal structures, building technical capacity, and improving fundraising skills.

Module: Community Systems Strengthening

2.1. Intervention: Institutional capacity-building, planning, and leadership development

Activities under this intervention focus on building capacity through organizational self-assessment, and increasing capacity for fund-raising and budget-related advocacy efforts.

Sub-granting:

- Support Subrecipients in the five target countries (annually).
- Support the Ukrainian Expert Group on Gay and Other MSM Health Issues as a resource center for best practice documentation.
- Provide competitive small grants for organizations and initiatives in need of basic organizational support and capacity-building, focusing particularly on trans* groups, groups of PLHIV MSM and trans*, MSM sex workers and other underrepresented sub-groups.

Key regional activities:

- Adapt existing Modified Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (MOCAT) for MSM and trans* organizations
- Prepare cadre of trainer-mentors on use of adapted MOCAT
- Develop and administer online training module on fundraising skills

Key national activities:

- Utilize MOCAT at organizational level amongst all SRs to identify needs in technical support from PR
- Provide/receive technical support on identified priorities, with special emphasis on strategic planning, organizational capacity for analysis and development of advocacy messages and materials, documentation, and strengthening communications with both community members and government officials.
- Provide technical support for funding applications for SRs

2.2. Intervention: Advocacy for social accountability

Activities under this intervention focus on building community capacity and understanding of financing issues, and supporting communities to directly generate data on funding trends to inform national-level advocacy.

Key regional activities:

- Develop a methodology for assessing funding gaps for MSM and trans* programming based on the 90-90-90 targets

- Consolidate findings from national gap assessments for integration into regional advocacy messaging and regional meeting on sustainability and financing

Key national activities:

- Conduct national reviews of legislation governing funding sources (i.e. public, private, individual)
- Implement national funding gap assessment
- Conduct national fora on financing and sustainability for the LGBTI NGO community
- Integrate results of national funding gap assessments into national advocacy actions

2.3. Intervention: Social mobilization, building community linkages, collaboration and coordination

Activities under this intervention are limited and relate directly to building capacity for improved community mobilization and engagement in decision-making, as outlined under Objective 1.

Key regional activities:

- Develop manuals / position papers on Community Leadership and Representation; and Development and management of effective volunteer programs as a mechanism of meaningful community involvement.
- Host special workshops at regional meetings on leadership and volunteerism

Objective 3: To strengthen enabling environments for HIV services for MSM and trans* people, through fighting stigma and discrimination, promoting and protecting human rights, and removing or mitigating legal and policy barriers.

Module: Removing Legal Barriers

3.1. Intervention: Legal and policy environment assessment and law reform

Activities in this intervention aim to establish a base of information that will inform further action and advocacy related to rights and legal frameworks. This modular intervention is a necessary foundation for the subsequent interventions.

Key regional activities:

- Design assessment protocol for national-level assessments of legal environment, focusing on available tools and instruments to protect rights and drive positive change
- Consolidate main findings from national-level assessments for development of best practice guidance documents, and for use as part of advocacy plans

Key national activities:

- Conduct legal environment assessments
- Produce and present national assessment report to relevant decision-makers and allies (as part of advocacy, as further described in Policy advocacy on legal rights, below)

3.2. Intervention: Legal aid services and legal literacy

Activities under this intervention seek to support rights activists with advanced skills on MSM-

and trans*-related issues. Training on legal literacy will focus on topics including human rights promotion and protection for MSM and trans* people, with a particular emphasis on taking practical steps to reduce stigma and discrimination; ensuring access to legal services for MSM and trans* people whose rights have been violated; and increasing the social accountability of public officials.

Key regional activities:

- Conduct rights sensitization training for identified activists, building rights literacy and activism skills
- Maintain regional database of legal providers and other legal resources (mainstream LGBTI and human rights movements) who can help with rights claims related to HIV and health services

Key national activities:

- Map MSM and trans* communities to identify activists for further capacity-building
- Maintain national database of legal providers and other legal resources

3.3. Intervention: Community-based monitoring of legal rights

Activities under this intervention aim to activate the activists trained (above), in supporting rights protection for MSM and trans* populations, including the communication of violations to the regional level for redress support and advocacy.

Key regional activities:

- Facilitate ongoing regional information and experience exchange between national activists
- Consolidate national-level rights violation reports into an annual national report, for use in regional-level advocacy

Key national activities:

- Monitor, document and assist in redress of violations of right to health for MSM and trans* populations, supporting national GF grant actors
- Produce annual national summary report of rights violations specifically against MSM and trans* people, for presentation and discussion with national decision-makers for medium- and long-term improvement of legal and policy barriers

3.4. Intervention: Policy advocacy on legal rights

Activities under this intervention are aimed at affecting policy change for rights that are not adequately protected by current policy and legislation, and assuring that appropriate laws and policies are enforced to protect MSM and trans* people.

Key regional activities:

- Establish guidelines on practices for increasing social accountability of high level public officials
- Develop a regional framework advocacy strategy to address key legal and enabling environment priorities including but not limited to:
 - Raising awareness of CCM members, national and local authorities, Ministry of Health officials, police, and other decision-makers on issues of SOGI;

- Actively working with international structures, such as the European Union and international human rights organizations;
- Proposing model laws on SOGI to countries ;
- Promoting the reduction of mutual stigma and discrimination between LGBTI and PLHIV;
- Countering religiously and politically motivated anti-LGBT movements, promoting legislation based on human rights;
- Increasing awareness on issues of sexuality and HIV among specialists, including doctors, psychologists, journalists (including bloggers), teachers, students.

Key national activities:

- Develop and implement national advocacy plan to address key legal and enabling environment priorities based on regional framework advocacy strategy

3.5. Intervention: Training on rights for public employees

Activities under this intervention focus on creating a training resource to reduce stigma and discrimination imparted by public employees, including officials, health care workers, law enforcement, etc.

Key regional activities:

- Develop a training module on fighting stigma and discrimination against MSM and trans* people for use in training public employees
- Conduct regional training of trainers (TOT) to prepare national-level trainers

Key national activities:

- Adapt training module to country context, and promote module to relevant institutions and Global Fund implementing partners for inclusion in their activities
- SRs may choose to conduct trainings directly, using TOT-prepared trainers, as budgets allow

HIV SERVICE PROVISION

The Regional Program does not support direct provision of HIV services.

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