

Minutes AIDS Action Europe Steering Committee

Date: 2 and 3 March 2009 (Amsterdam)
Present: Aisuluu Bolotbaeva, Ton Coenen (day 1), Ulrich Heide, Karlo Boras, Ferenc Bagyinszky, Nataliya Salabai, Wim Vandeveld, Yusef Azad, Harry Witzthum, Iva Jovovic, Martine de Schutter (MdS), Martine van der Meulen (MvdM), Marija Subataite, Iti Westra (minutes)
Apologies: Ilona van der Braak, Ton Coenen (day 2)

1. Opening, agenda

A special welcome to Ferenc and Iva at their first AIDS Action Europe steering committee meeting. There are no comments regarding the minutes of the steering committee meeting in Paris.

2. Work plan 2009

Adjustments concerning the 2009 work plan: plans for a conference have been altered due to a lack of funding; Glaxo Smith Kline put up funding for seminars in Russian (to be discussed later).

3. Projects update

3.1 *European Partners in Action on AIDS (EPAA)*

The AIDS Action Europe office is writing the final report to close the EPAA project. In general the project has been successful. AIDS Action Europe is invited by the European Agency of Health and Consumers (EAHC) to present EPAA as good example on project managing on the information day for the new call.

3.2 *Community-based Advocacy and Networking to Scale-up HIV Prevention in an Era of Expanded Treatment (PTAP) 2009 and ICASO Global Program*

2009 is the last year of the PTAP project. PTAP is led by ICASO and implemented in 5 regions. It is unlikely PTAP will continue in 2010, but the results of PTAP will sustain.

For its new Global Program, ICASO focuses on advocacy work and key populations. It is expected that finding funding for our region is difficult. In the development of the new global program AIDS Action Europe is involved on board-, directors- and communication levels of ICASO.

4. Communication

4.1 *ICASO communication strategy*

ICASO's communication group works on an international communication strategy which will be part of the new Global Program.

4.2 *Clearinghouse*

AIDS Action Europe has expressed its concerns about the content and execution of an initiative to develop a quality assurance platform for policymakers, since it potentially interferes with our clearinghouse.

5. Eastern Europe/Central Asia

AIDS Action Europe has not been successful in recruiting an advocacy officer. We need to investigate alternative strategies to strengthen advocacy in Eastern Europe and to invest the received funding.

5.1 *AIDS Action Europe's strategy for Eastern Europe*

Advocacy in Eastern Europe is currently failing because NGOs are divided by their focus on different key populations and topics. There is a need for impartial organisations that can unite NGOs and act corporately.

5.2 Proposal on Russian seminar series

Now that the EPAA project ended, AIDS Action Europe misses out on possibilities for capacity building and networking, especially in Eastern Europe. AIDS Action Europe sees possibilities to connect Russian capacity building seminars and the function of an (Russian speaking) advocacy officer. The topics to start the series of seminars with are: resource mobilisation and advocacy.

6. Advocacy and public policy dialogue

6.1 Civil Society Forum (24-25 March) and Think Tank (25-26 March)

Main agenda items of the Civil Society Forum: EC communication 2010-2014; Preparation for the XVIII; International Aids Conference in Vienna 2010; ECDC: monitoring the Dublin Declaration in 2010; civil society involvement in UNAIDS; NGO code of good conduct, and; Deutsche AIDS Hilfe campaign on HIV prevention in MSM: "Ich weiss, was ich tu" www.iwwit.de.

6.2 Development of new EC Communication

The European Commission will circulate a non-paper (i.e. a non-official draft of a text only for insiders) on the new communication to be discussed at the Civil Society Forum and Think Tank. AIDS Action Europe planned an online consultation among its members in April, but since the new EC communication is delayed, we will advocate for more time once there is a document that is suitable for consultation.

6.3 HIV in Europe

Follow up after the 2007 meeting is in progress.

6.4 EECAAC

AIDS Action Europe needs to decide if and how it wants to be involved in the conference.

7. Plans for 2010 and beyond

7.1 Vienna International AIDS Conference (July 2010)

ICASO is officially one of the co-organizers, but AIDS Action Europe is not involved in any commission yet. Ideally AIDS Action Europe wants to make a substantial contribution. AIDS Action Europe (together with EATG) will contact the International AIDS Society to ask how they see the involvement of pan European networks.

7.2 EC call for proposals

The steering committee agrees that the AIDS Action Europe office writes an operating grant proposal for 2010 with a focus on the development of the Clearinghouse, involvement in Civil Society Forum and the Vienna conference. At its next meeting the steering committee will decide whether or not to (also) apply for a project grant in 2011. Given the successes of EPAA and PTAP it would be a shame not to continue.

7.3 Other funding opportunities

At its next meeting the steering committee will have a broader discussion on AIDS Action Europe's strategy, specially regarding funding opportunities and image(building).

8. Exchange IPPF Europe on areas of collaboration

On several topics there are possibilities for collaboration between the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and AIDS Action Europe, such as capacity building (seminars) on persecutions, sexual and reproductive health of PLHIV or, the criminalisation of HIV-transmission. The steering committee decides to invest in cooperation with IPPF and work on joint proposals.