

Minutes AIDS Action Europe steering committee - BUDAPEST

Date : 17 and 18 September 2009

Present: Aisuluu Bolotbaeva, Ton Coenen, Wim Vandeveldel, Harry Witzthum, Yusef Azad, Ferenc Bagyinszky, Iva Jovovic, Martine de Schutter, Marija Subataite, Martine van der Meulen, Iti Westra (minutes)

Apologies: Ulrich Heide, Nataliya Salabai, Ilona van de Braak, Karlo Boras

Thursday 17 September 2009

1 HIV/AIDS in Hungary and the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union (HCLU)

Ferenc Bagyinszky presents the HCLU and informs the steering committee about the HIV/AIDS situation in Hungary, treatment guidelines and his concerns for the future.

2 Strategic discussion

In order to establish a longer term vision for AIDS Action Europe, the steering committee identifies the weaknesses, challenges, opportunities and treats of the network. The steering committee concludes that AIDS Action Europe is in most aspects right on track, but that alternative directions have to be investigated. Based on the brainstorm and discussion a draft strategic document will be prepared to be discussed at a later stage.

3 Mission statement

The steering committee agrees that the current mission reflects what has been identified as the added value of AIDS Action Europe in the strategic discussion. The steering committee suggests several changes in the phrasing and some additions to the current mission statement. The office will adapt the mission statement so it can be adopted by the steering committee.

4 Work plan 2009 & 2010 and projects update

4.1 International Council of AIDS Service Organizations (ICASO) Global Programme

The financial position of ICASO is still difficult, but there are some openings, also regarding the new global program. To finalize the global program a meeting with the regional coordinators and board members is planned later this year.

4.2 Update Civil Society Action Team (CSAT)

CSAT is an ICASO project implemented by the Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRN) on behalf of AIDS Action Europe. The project aims to increase the involvement of NGOs and communities in the Global Fund. The steering committee agrees that Ton Coenen (as representative of both AIDS Action Europe and ICASO) will travel to Vilnius to meet the new director of EHRN and discuss the continuation of CSAT.

5 Meetings and conferences

5.1 Update Eastern European and Central Asian AIDS Conference (EECAAC)

The conference will take place 28-30 October. To gain visibility of AIDS Action Europe the flyer will be enclosed in the conference bag. Aisuluu Bolotbaeva and Marija Subataite will attend on behalf of AIDS Action Europe.

5.2 Update HIV in Europe

The HIV in Europe meeting will be concerned with: testing and care; implementing the stigma index and; criminalization. To crystallize all planned activities, a meeting of stakeholders will take place in Stockholm early November.

6 Work plan 2009 and projects update

6.1 Update European Partners in Action on AIDS (EPAA) project

The financial completion and final payments are delayed because an external financial audit of the project has to be carried out. The audit will take place 26-28 October.

6.2 Update Project Community-based Advocacy and Networking to Scale-Up HIV Prevention in an Era of Expanded Treatment (PTAP)

The PTAP project has been successful, but there are no plans for continuation. The results of the monitoring and an inventory of outputs and outcomes are expected in the end of October.

6.3 New project: Capacity Development of HIV NGOs in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

Based on the applications the selection committee will decide which organizations to invite for an interview by phone. The interviews have to focus on previous experiences and ability to deal with project management and funding.

6.4 Work plan, budget and income for 2009

In general AIDS Action Europe progresses well. Some changes in the work plan and budget are caused by the rejection of the conference proposal and the slow development of the new European Communication on HIV/AIDS.

7 Advocacy

7.1 Civil Society Forum (CSF) and Think Tank (TT)

Both the CSF and TT were planned for November, but are postponed till December. The main agenda items will be the new European Communication on HIV/AIDS and universal access.

7.2 UNGASS and universal access

There is no clarity on the process.

8 Communication

8.1 ICASO communication strategy

Martine van der Meulen presents the results of the communication survey by the ICASO communication working group. The communication working group will develop a plan that fits in the new global program.

8.2 Clearinghouse and website

Based on the usability test the recommendations on content and navigation are to be implemented in 2009. The design of the AIDS Action Europe website will be addressed in 2010.

Friday 18 September

9 Advocacy (continuation)

9.1 Review of new European Communication on HIV/AIDS

The current draft of the new European Communication on HIV/AIDS prioritizes Eastern Europe and prevention, but also includes priority to most at risk populations. Due to time limitations, there is little possibility for AIDS Action Europe and the CSF to give fundamental input. The steering committee agrees to produce a 1-2 page "guide" to inform our members about the highlights of the communication as well as possible challenges.

9.2 Relations with other networks and key stakeholders

This agenda item will be prepared and discussed at a later stage.

10 Meetings and Conferences (continuation)

10.1 AIDS2010 Vienna

The focus of the conference is on human rights. The steering committee will urge the European Commission to organize a core meeting in cooperation with the CSF. A joint session on structuring the

debate between civil society and policymakers is a good practice for other global regions. The steering committee agrees to organise a meeting with the AIDS Action Europe members for both networking and content wise purposes. The office will also investigate possibilities to present AIDS Action Europe in the Global Village.

11 Governance issues

11.1 *Procedure to call for action/support*

The added value of AIDS Action Europe has to be key in considering how to support NGOs. It has to be clear what AIDS Action Europe can do within its expertise, guiding principles and resources (time). The office will finalize the suggested procedure.

11.2 *Call for 5 new steering committee members*

To become steering committee member one has to represent a European NGO. The steering committee decides that, if there is no conflict of interest, steering committee members that move job can stay on as voting member of the steering committee.

There are 5 vacancies in the steering committee. EATG is guaranteed a seat in the steering committee as is the CSF co-chair. Reapplying members do not take part in the selection procedure.

12 Work plan 2010 (continuation)

12.1 *Operating grant and/or Project proposal*

The office works with an Operating Grant that covers only the maintenance of the network. This gives limited possibilities to interact with members and to support capacity development. Soa Aids Nederland (host organisation of AIDS Action Europe) decided not to submit an application in the 2010 EC call for proposals for projects. The last project proved that the administrative burden of a European project is too heavy for the organisation. Soa Aids Nederland recommends investing in finding project funding outside the European Commission funding structure. The steering committee adopts this recommendation. The steering committee wants to lobby for simplification of European funding regulations. Martine de Schutter will consult with other networks whether they want to join and draft a public letter that summarises main concerns.

12.2 *Review draft work plan, budget and income for 2010*

The work plan is more or less set, since it is already approved in the Operating Grant for 2010.

12.3 *Fundraising strategy*

AIDS Action Europe has to open up to other kinds of fundraising strategies and alternative donors. Later this year the office will take up the funding strategy and write a proposal.

13 Other issues

13.1 *Date and place next meeting*

The next steering committee is planned 17-19 March in Kiev (2,5 days). The steering committee decides to use half a day for field visits to meet with local members and key people from Ukraine.

13.2 *Euro HIV Index by the health consumer power house*

The Euro HIV index by the Health Consumer Power House rates different countries on the offered treatment and care. The index will be presented in the European Parliament on 13 October.

13.3 *Evaluation*

The steering committee is extremely pleased with the hospitality and well organised meeting. The steering committee agrees the meeting was very constructive on both internal and external issues.