

AIDS ACTION EUROPE: WORK PLAN 2008

The goal of AIDS Action Europe is to contribute to a more effective approach in Europe through joint advocacy, exchange of lessons learned and best practices, and by promoting better monitoring and evaluation of European HIV/AIDS policy.

In 2008 AIDS Action Europe will work specifically on the following subgoals:

- To influence European and international HIV/AIDS policy through advocacy
- To enhance the exchange of best practices and lessons learned, and to develop the skills of European NGOs via specific projects
- To improve exchange and cooperation between members by more strongly positioning AIDS Action Europe as 'matchmaker'
- To improve external communication between the network and the various target groups
- To secure continuation of the network and its activities by submitting a proposal for participation in the Second Programme of Community action in the field of Health (2008-13)

There is a growing HIV epidemic in Europe. In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, an estimated 1.7 million people are living with HIV, most of them infected by sharing needles during drug use. Only 13% of those in need have access to treatment. There is only limited access to prevention and harm reduction programs. In Western and Central Europe, 740,000 people are currently living with HIV. In Western Europe the epidemic is particularly growing amongst men who have sex with men, migrants and ethnic minorities.

In many countries, strong collaborations between interest groups of people with HIV and NGOs have led to effective programs. It has been shown that governments are usually more effective at fighting AIDS when they involve NGOs. In a number of countries this is not the case though. In addition, several countries are now dealing with cross-border issues like universal access to treatment, and with new trends like criminalization of people with HIV. Because people are travelling and migrating to an increasing extent, and also because of the political integration of EU countries, fighting HIV is increasingly becoming a joint European responsibility in which, for reasons of better effectiveness, EU neighbours are involved. All of these are reasons for better cooperation, not just nationally but at a European level as well. AIDS Action Europe is a partnership of some 200 AIDS-related, non-governmental organizations in Europe and Central Asia. In the three years since it was set up, it is clear that AIDS Action Europe is responding well to the needs of NGOs, the European Commission and other stakeholders in terms of closer collaboration and alignment, strengthening NGOs' capacity and joint advocacy. A recent survey amongst members and stakeholders in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia has more clearly defined AIDS Action Europe's role in these regions. Efforts will be focused on strengthening NGO networks in these regions and the development of partnerships. In addition, work will be done to strengthen NGO capacity in terms of issues indicated by members. AIDS Action Europe has adopted a key position as co-chair of the European HIV/AIDS Civil Society Forum and participant in the EU HIV/AIDS Think Tank.

In order to achieve its objectives, an important part of the work of the AIDS Action Europe secretariat consists of fundraising, both in Europe and the rest of the world, for specific projects

and activities. The work plan below is partly dependent on raising funds for expansion of the secretariat with one senior advocacy officer based in the Eastern Office in Vilnius.

Monitoring and evaluation of the program will be approached in various ways. The steering committee will meet twice a year to monitor planning and progress of activities. Specific indicators have been put in place for various projects. Best practice seminars are evaluated using a baseline measurement of participants before the seminar, an evaluation at the end of the meeting and a survey six months to a year after the seminar. The clearinghouse is evaluated in various ways: through user surveys, upload and download statistics, pre-testing with members and polls on the website.

1 Influencing European and international HIV/AIDS policy through advocacy

As co-chair of the European HIV/AIDS Civil Society Forum – an advisory body of the European Commission - AIDS Action Europe will organize two meetings for a group of 40 European NGOs and networks. The conclusions from this will be raised in the European HIV/AIDS Think Tank – a work group of representatives from European member states in which AIDS Action Europe has three seats. In this way, closer partnerships will be created between government bodies and NGOs for the fight against AIDS. At these meetings, AIDS Action Europe will table a progress report by the European Commission on the implementation of the Commission Communication on HIV/AIDS and the Dublin, Vilnius and Bremen declarations. Strengthening of the team with a new worker for Central and Eastern Europe will provide more support for advocacy and influencing of policy at a local and national level in these regions. In 2008, it is highly likely that as EU chairs, Slovenia and France will organize a meeting about HIV/AIDS or a wider health issue. AIDS Action Europe will make every effort to be involved in the organization and content of this meeting, so that the vision and priorities of civil society are included in political decisions and new policy. Here there will be strong pleas to table the issues of universal access to prevention and treatment (including harm reduction), respect for and promotion of the human rights of people with HIV, and combating stigma and discrimination. The Memorandum of Understanding between WHO Europe and AIDS Action Europe will be further developed through concrete collaboration on issues like testing and counselling, criminalization and human rights. As a regional partner of ICASO – the International Council of AIDS Service Organizations- AIDS Action Europe will contribute to worldwide policy development and advocacy. At the Eastern European and Central Asian AIDS Conference (EECAAC) and the International AIDS Conference (IAC) in Mexico, AIDS Action Europe will organize member meetings and share learning experiences with others through workshops and lectures.

GOAL	ACTIVITY	RESULTS
To influence European and international HIV/AIDS policy through advocacy.	Co-chair of the European Civil Society Forum and representative of European NGOs in the European Think Tank (two meetings in 2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more active role for European NGOs in implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the European HIV/AIDS policy plan • Advocacy with European institutes
	Tabling HIV/AIDS at	HIV/AIDS NGO vision will

	European and international forums and European institutes like WHO Europe	have a prominent position on the European health agenda of EU conferences Slovenia and France, EECAAC, IAC Toronto, WHO meetings
	Support for NGO advocacy in Central and Eastern Europe	NGOs will have developed more capacity in terms of advocacy in a national and local framework
	Contribution to European and international policy documents and advocacy	Interests of NGOs and European HIV/AIDS sector included in European and international advocacy

2 Enhancing the exchange of best practices and lessons learned, and developing the skills of European NGOs via specific projects

In 2008, the project European Partners in Action on AIDS will further develop the information clearinghouse (a central HIV/AIDS information point for European NGOs) into an interactive tool. Three European best practice seminars will be organized on the themes of voluntary testing and counselling, fundraising and a yet-to-be-decided theme. At the same time a follow-up application will be developed for the period 2009-2011. The project Prevention & Treatment Alignment will continue to mobilize NGOs to accelerate treatment in Russia and Ukraine coupled with advocacy and prevention. At least three workshops will be organized. These will deal with advocacy, new prevention technologies, stigma and discrimination and partnership between the medical sector and NGOs. This exchange will create more cohesion between prevention and care.

GOAL	ACTIVITY	RESULTS
To enhance the exchange of best practices and learning experiences between European NGOs by implementing the project European Partners in Action on AIDS (EPAA)	Development of a more interactive clearinghouse	Increase in uploads, downloads and users by 20% compared to 2007
	Clearinghouse users survey	Results of the users survey will be translated into objectives for the follow-up application
	Organization of three best practice seminars	Capacity of 120 NGOs strengthened
	Organization of two meetings of the AIDS Action Europe steering committee	AIDS Action Europe steering committee will have guided, monitored and evaluated the EPAA project

	Development of follow-up application for the project	Follow-up application granted
To develop the skills of European NGOs by implementing the project Prevention & Treatment Alignment (P&T)	Organization of three workshops in Ukraine and Russia on advocacy, stigma and discrimination, new prevention technologies and partnership with the medical sector	NGOs in Ukraine and Russia will have developed skills in advocacy, combatting stigma and discrimination and developed an advocacy agenda
	Meetings of HIV/AIDS platform in both countries	Exchange via platform will have led to more cohesion between prevention and the care sector

3 Improving exchange and cooperation between members of AIDS Action Europe by more strongly positioning AIDS Action Europe as ‘matchmaker’

In 2008 AIDS Action Europe will make use of several existing big international events to bring together its members face to face and improve exchange and cooperation amongst them. In this respect, AIDS Action Europe will host a session at EECAAC in Moscow and organize a members meeting at the IAS in Mexico. Further exchange and cooperation will be facilitated through the members section of the website.

GOAL	ACTIVITY	RESULTS
To improve exchange and cooperation between members by more strongly positioning AIDS Action Europe as ‘matchmaker’	Preparing and leading a skills building session for the ECAAC conference in Moscow and organising and hosting a members meeting in Mexico.	130 minutes long skills building session, focused on “Monitoring and Information Exchange during the ECAAC conference. Members meeting attended by maximum 50 members of AIDS Action Europe in Mexico
	Promoting contacts by encouraging active use of the member profiles on the website	All new members and 90% of existing members will present themselves via their member profile on the website

4 Improving communication between the network and the various target groups

In 2007, a strategic communication policy has been developed. Proactive communication is an important part of this. This will be further implemented in 2008. As a result, the network will be more strongly positioned and the interests of its members will be better promoted. At the same

time, there will be efforts to recruit new members . As the primary communication channel, the website will be subject to a users survey and constantly updated. In addition, various other communication channels will be employed such as e-news and direct mail.

GOAL	ACTIVITY	RESULT
To improve communication between the network and the various target groups	Implementation of a proactive communication policy by carrying out activities in the communication plan	A constantly up-to-date website, dispatch of various direct mailings, promotion of seminars, discussion forums and other activities, development and distribution of four digital newsletters, development and distribution of seminar reports, website users survey, recruitment of new members etc.

5 Securing continuation of the network and its activities

One of AIDS Action Europe's main projects (European Partners in Action on AIDS, funded by the European Commission) is coming to an end in 2008. AIDS Action Europe depends on (project) funding to carry out many of its activities (including the organisation of best practice seminars and the activities related to the Clearinghouse/Pan-European database on HIV and AIDS) and therefore it is important to develop a new proposal for the European Commission's second Programme of Community action in the field of Health (2008-13).

GOAL	ACTIVITY	RESULT
To secure continuation of the network and its activities	Consultation with members on themes to be addressed in the proposal, identification of objectives, activities, milestones and deliveries for each theme, follow up and coordination with potential partners, development of budgetary outline including securing of co-funding and finally actual proposal writing.	Submission of project proposal and/or proposal for operating grants at the EC's Public Health Executive Agency before the deadline of 23 May.