

Minutes of the second SC Meeting 2020 - Session 1

Thursday, 22 October 2020: 14.00 – 17.00 h

Steering Committee Participants: Christos KRASIDIS, AIDS Solidarity Movement, Cyprus; Marios Atzemis, Positive Voice, Greece, Silke KLUMB, Deutsche Aidshilfe (DAH), Germany; Sini PASANEN, Positiiviset ry, Finland; Tanja DIMITRIJEVIC, Nova +, Serbia; Maka GOGIA, European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG)

AAE Office: Ljuba BÖTTGER, Communications Officer; Oksana PANOCHENKO, Communications Coordinator; Ferenc BAGYINSZKY, Project Manager; Michael KRONE, Executive Coordinator;

Apologies: Julia GODUNOVA, E.V.A. Association, Russia; Aigars CEPLITIS, AGIHAS, Latvia

1. Opening and follow up from previous SC Meeting

- The agenda for this SC Meeting session is approved.
- The report of last SC Meeting is approved without any changes.
- Follow-up on decision and action points:
 - HIV Outcomes: There are changes in governance, in particular regarding roles of current steering group members and general members. Sini as representative of AAE to HIV Outcomes will inform during the next sessions of this SC Meeting still to come in December.
 - AAE's strategic framework development has been worked on and will be part of this session's agenda.

2. Report from the Office

The Office reports briefly on key activities since last meeting in July:

- SGA 2021 evaluation was received with good marks.
- The CSF coordination team applications closed a week ago. The same 5 organizations that are currently on the coordination team applied.
- AAE conducted its own consultation process on the upcoming Strategic Framework
- AAE is working on the longer report on the impact of COVID-19 survey conducted with member organisations.
- A survey on impact of COVID-19 on testing is conducted by a broader consortium, including AAE, led by EUROTEST.
- The COBATEST SC meeting was conducted in September. On the agenda were the preparation of the COBATEST member meeting, the finalisation of the ToR of SC, the COBATEST membership ToR and the above mentioned rapids assessment on testing in community based and health care settings.
- Affordability: Despite the difficulties of this year to organize trainings or meetings, so far, AAE has signed 5 partnership agreements and 2 are in the pipeline to conduct the national trainings. Other interested organizations are still undecided mostly due to the impact of COVID19 on the organizations.
- EHLF: the policy paper on HIV-criminalization is ready, currently being reviewed by EHLF members, the office is working on the prison policy paper. The discrimination

in health care settings against PLHIV project is ready to launch, partnership agreements are being prepared and the kick-off meeting will take place in December this year, online. The data and information collection will take place in 2021.

- Communications: 4 newsletters have been published so far. Communication activities focused mainly on the consultation process and the member and partner meeting. A new website was put up for the consultation process. The AAE website relaunch is being prepared currently, with more highlight on the work done and being done by AAE. The website needs to be transferred to Drupal 8. The EHLF website is also being prepared, the idea is to have all the results together, presented in a more visual way with a responsive map. Also, future projects can be easily added to it. The plan is to launch the site by the end of 2020/January 2021.

3. Governance

With regard to upcoming SC Member elections, there are two issues to be decided upon: The number of SC member seats from 2021 on and the eligibility of EATG for the next round.

Number of SC members: The AAE SC ToR foresee a minimum 6 and a maximum of 10 members. There are 6 continuing for 2021. In the last years, we had 8 or 9 members on the SC. The exchange of arguments centres on amount of expertise, differences between a steering committee and a board and whether an odd or an even number should be selected and representation of geographical regions. After the discussion, the SC Members vote on the number of seats:

Decision: The present SC Members unanimously vote for 9 SC members to form the SC, which means there will be a call for 3 vacancies for 2021-2023.

Action Point: Based on the decision and the discussions on expertise, the Office will prepare a call and send it to the SC for review.

EATG eligibility: EATG is eligible as a partner for AAE. However, there is another rule in the ToR that after 2 terms, SC members cannot reapply. There is no reference whether an organisation/person can reapply after a certain period of time. The question this time is whether this applies to EATG (maximum 2 terms) or due to ending the fixed seat, this is a fresh start.

The discussion includes the presence of EATG members on the SC representing local organisations, the information that the ED of EATG reached out to current EATG members on the SC with regard to this decision, local organisations vs. regional networks represented on the SC and collaboration with other networks in other settings.

Decision: The SC decides unanimously that EATG is eligible for next call applications.

Action Point: In the next sessions of this SC Meeting in December, it needs to be decided whether organisations/persons are eligible after having served two terms on the SC to reapply in the future after a certain period of time. Moreover, the discussion on representation of networks as well as the collaboration with networks should be taken up.

4. Preparation of the AAE Member and Partner Meeting

The Office informs about the four phases of the member and partner consultation regarding the strategic framework development. After awareness and information activities in Phase 1, the online consultation survey was conducted and evaluated, working groups will take up on core thematic areas in Phase 3 and the upcoming member and partner meeting will conclude results and discussions in Phase 4.

During the AAE Member and Partner Meeting, according to the drafted agenda, after an introduction including the results of the first AAE Members survey on COVID-19, a presentation on strategic framework development for 2018 – 2021 will introduce the members to the overall idea of SF development 2022 – 2025, a presentation on human rights as general basis for our future work, a presentation on the results and conclusions of the survey on the SF will be followed by the reports from the working groups.

As for facilitation, Sini and Christos volunteer to take over. With regard to the drafted agenda, it is decided to extend the timeframe to have more time for discussions and to have a longer break.

Action Point: The agenda will be amended according to the suggestions and the Office will brief in a conference call Sini and Christos on facilitation of the meeting.

5. AOB

The last 2 sessions of this SC Meeting will be conducted on December 15 and 17, 2020. The time for the meetings is scheduled for 1pm to 4pm CET.

Minutes of the second SC Meeting 2020 - Session 2

Thursday, 17 December 2020: 13.00 – 16.00 h

Steering Committee Participants: Christos KRASIDIS, AIDS Solidarity Movement, Cyprus; Marios Atzemis, Positive Voice, Greece, Silke KLUMB, Deutsche Aidshilfe (DAH), Germany; Sini PASANEN, Positiiviset ry, Finland; Tanja DIMITRIJEVIC, Nova +, Serbia; Maka GOGIA, European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG); Julia GODUNOVA, E.V.A. Association, Russia; Aigars CEPLITIS, AGIHAS, Latvia

AAE Office: Ljuba BÖTTGER, Communications Officer; Oksana PANOCHENKO, Communications Coordinator; Ferenc BAGYINSZKY, Project Manager; Michael KRONE, Executive Coordinator;

1. Opening and follow-up from previous SC Meeting

- Due to late arrival of some SC members, the agenda has changed. Items on the agenda stay the same but will be covered in a different order.
- The SC Members are reminded that this session is still part of the second SC meeting. There are no minutes to be approved.
- The Office will send the EHLF HIV-criminalisation deliverables.

2. HIV Outcomes

- Sini as representative of AAE in the HIV Outcomes initiative explains the change of governance structure in HIV Outcomes. HIV Outcomes will hold an introductory meeting to introduce the new structure in January 2021: While there has been so far only a Steering Group, there are now members asked to join the initiative and members who want to become Steering Committee Members need to apply. AAE remains a general member but if AAE wants to continue to be on the SC for the following 2 years, there is a need to apply.
- The HIV Outcomes initiative has been discussed frequently in AAE SC Meetings. Most recently a new experience at national level in Germany can be added. Germany is one of the five countries where the initiative goes national. The quite critical assessment of the initiative has been confirmed here as well when representatives of pharm companies were part of the discussions among physicians and patient representatives / NGOs. At national level as well as at international level there is no funding for the contribution to the initiative. That was the reason why in Sweden organisations refused to participate in the initiative. Usually, if AAE receives money from pharma it is for project implementation and comes with no strings attached.
- It is suggested to have another online SC meeting at the end of January and discuss HIV Outcomes again against the background that quite a number of SC Members are still missing at this point of the meeting.

3. Governance

3.1 SC elections

There were six candidates interviewed by the panel in 30 min sessions each. It is stressed that the main basis for the elections is the handed in documents. The interviews are conducted in order to check on communication skills and experiences addressed in the call. Other issues to create gender balance, geographic representation, consideration as PLHIV etc. also need to be added to the decision. In the following, every applicant is shortly discussed, and the impressions of the interviewers are shared. There is no doubt that all six are very strong skilled candidates.

As for the election procedures, it is asked whether all current Steering Committee Members are able to cast their vote by 15.00 h CET of the following day. There is a 50%+1 threshold to get on the SC. In case of several 2nd or 3rd places, a second election round might be needed. This would make things easier with regard to timelines in case a second election round is needed. The link to the election tool will be sent out after the end of this meeting.

3.2 Discussion on re-application of SC Members after having served 2 terms on the AAE Steering Committee

It is explained that there is a loophole in the AAE SC ToR regarding the maximum terms and reapplication on the SC that needs to be closed. With regard to the provided backgrounder the following question needs to be discussed: Should former AAE Member organisations / individuals be eligible to serve on the SC again after a period of time? And if so, how long should the temporary interruption be? The exchange of opinions contains following aspects:

- Reapplication would give organisations and individuals the opportunity to stay connected with AAE in a stronger way. Nevertheless, AAE should on top of this consider an extra body where people who served on the SC could be consulted, in the sense of an alumni group.
- Re-application gap could be different for individuals and organisations, for instance two years for the organisation and three years for the individual.
- It needs to be considered that with a network of more than 400 organizations, AAE aims to have at a turnover of SC members.
- Most of the SC members stay in contact with AAE, via conferences, meetings and projects. The only SC members who we have totally lost contact with are those who left the field of HIV and went on to work somewhere else.

Decision: The SC Members vote with 8 YES for the possibility to reapply. The Office will prepare the proposed change for the ToR with 2 options for the gap.

3.3 Discussion on representation of networks vs. local or national organisations on the AAE SC

AAE, besides their member organizations, also has partner organizations (regional networks or institutions that are GOs etc.). A backgrounder with the list of partner organisations was provided. Until now, partners are also eligible to apply for the SC. Following opinions are exchanged:

- There should be as few networks as possible on the SC.
- A GO should not be able to become a partner organisation, much less an SC Member.
- The representation of networks within the SC can be useful but to see more organisations working on the ground represented would also be of advantage.
- Ferenc adds that the ToR includes partners currently and GOs are partners so they could apply. We should either revise the ToR language or revise the partner definition.

Conclusion: The Office will get in touch with the one governmental organisation that is listed as partner. There is a good chance that they don't exist anymore. In any case they should be excluded. Moreover, the partner list should be revised. The issue should due to time constraints be discussed again during the net SC Meeting.

4. Planning of 2021

The Office suggests having the usual planning of meetings and TCs during another meeting towards the end of January 2021. We don't know how the next year will evolve and also, there are going to be 3 new members who should also have a voice in the planning. Yulia offers to create a chart of regional events and conferences.

The January meeting is agreed on and is scheduled for Monday – January 25th, 2021 – 13:00 – 16:00

5. Closure of the meeting

This was the last SC Meeting for Aigars and Maka. Aigars served six years on the AAE SC, always on a voluntary basis. Maka was for a shorter time SC Member due to the closure of the fixed seat of EATG. We hope for a possibility to thank both on a non-virtual meeting.