

**Terms of reference for the consultant/-s
on technical support for contingency planning of sustainable provision of HIV services to key
populations during and after COVID-19 in EECA countries**

1. Introduction

The International Charitable Foundation "Alliance for Public Health" (hereinafter - the Alliance) is a leading professional organization that, in cooperation with key civil society organizations, the Ministry of Health and other government agencies, is fighting the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Ukraine, ensuring leadership of prevention programs and the provision of high-quality technical support and financial resources to field organizations. All these efforts are aimed at achieving universal access in the country to comprehensive services in connection with HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and viral hepatitis C in Ukraine and an effective response to the epidemic at the community level, based on achieved results and best practices.

These Terms of Reference were developed within the framework of the regional project "Sustainability of services for key populations in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia".

The regional project "Sustainability of services for key populations in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia" (2019-2021) is implemented with the support of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria by a consortium of organizations from the EECA region under the leadership of the Alliance for Public Health in partnership with the All-Ukrainian Network of PLWH" (100% Life), the Central Asian Association of People Living with HIV, and the Eurasian Key Populations Health Network. The main goals of the project are as follows:

- Improving the financial sustainability and efficiency of HIV programs;
- Reducing existing legal barriers and respecting the most important human rights to access HIV prevention and care services;
- Improving the efficiency and accessibility of HIV service delivery models (testing and continued care) for key populations.

The project is being implemented in 14 countries of the EECA and SEE region: Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Montenegro. Particular attention in countries is paid to cities that have signed or are preparing to sign the Paris Declaration, namely: in Belarus - Minsk, Soligorsk and Svetlogorsk, in Kyrgyzstan - Osh, in Russia - St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad, Novosibirsk, Sverdlovsk, Chelyabinsk region, in Tajikistan - Dushanbe, in Uzbekistan - Tashkent and Samarkand region.

2. Feasibility justification

The COVID-19 pandemic is having a significant impact on the health care system in all countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The situation caused by the spread of the COVID-19 demonstrates the need for more resilient, flexible and results-oriented health systems around the world. This also applies to services for people living with HIV, people who inject drugs, sex workers, men who have sex with men, and trans* people: HIV services (such as prevention and testing, harm reduction programs, substitution maintenance therapy, ART) and related services (for example, diagnosis and treatment of tuberculosis, viral hepatitis C).

At all levels of service provision to these groups, changes are taking place in connection with COVID-19 - decisions are made at the legislative level, adjustments are made at the level of health facilities and social services, the approach to work is being revised at the level of donors and organizations funding the above activities, and initiatives and new formats for working with key populations are emerging at the level of non-governmental organizations and other service providers. For example, during the pandemic, many initiatives and programmatic changes have emerged to ensure the sustainability and continuity of preventive, treatment and support services. The demand for online services has increased, ranging from online or telephone consultations to ordering diagnostic and treatment tools. There was a

need to receive services in an independent format - self-testing, vending machines issuing consumables and diagnostic tools in public places.

However, there is no contingency planning for sustainable service delivery in EECA during and after COVID-19. Thus, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and difficulties caused by it, an assessment of the situation of the recipients of HIV services is needed. An action plan needs to be developed to enable an immediate response to the crisis and ensure the rights of key populations to receive timely and full-fledged HIV services, adapt planned activities to current emerging needs, and develop a new approach to longer-term interventions in the coming years.

It is expected that the developed Guide will contribute to: increasing the preparedness of countries to respond to new challenges; planning innovative activities to support full service delivery and outreach to end users; revising the formats and methods of service delivery to better meet the needs of the end user in unforeseen circumstances.

3. The goal:

Develop recommendations for ensuring the sustainability and cost-effectiveness of HIV services and provide a Guide to working with EECA countries, based on which changes will be made to national HIV strategies and the development of national HIV plans to provide cost-effective services in situations related to or similar to COVID-19.

The above goal suggests the following tasks:

1. Research the results of a study on the rate of HIV testing and the involvement of people living with HIV in antiretroviral therapy programs in the EECA region for use in this Guide (to be provided by the Alliance).
2. Examine the results of the study on the impact of COVID-19 on the sustainability of HIV and TB services in six countries in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Balkans for use in this guide (to be provided by the Alliance).
3. Analyze changes in service delivery in terms of funding, program and service budgets in connection with COVID-19 in 2020, and the impact of the pandemic on funding planning for 2021.
4. Study the international experience of providing services to key vulnerable populations of countries that have maintained all HIV services in full due to COVID-19 and, based on the experience gained, provide the participating countries specified in this Terms of Reference with adapted recommendations.
5. Provide guidance on how to adapt existing HIV service plans and develop long-term interventions for key populations in countries, taking into account the information identified during the work.
6. Provide technical support to develop a contingency plan for the sustainable provision of services to key populations during and after COVID-19 for each country participating in this ToR.
7. Provide guidance on how to ensure the sustainability and cost-effectiveness of HIV services in unforeseen situations for each country identified in this ToR.
8. Develop recommendations for an advocacy strategy for the project partner countries to change national HIV strategies and develop national HIV plans to provide cost-effective services in situations similar to COVID-19 for the participating countries identified in this ToR.
9. Prepare recommendations that can serve as a comprehensive Guide both for the participating countries specified in this ToR and for all countries of the EECA region on planning sustainable provision of HIV services to key populations during and after COVID-19.

4. Target populations:

Representatives of non-governmental organizations, specialized health facilities, donor organizations, government agencies and /or National Coordination Mechanisms in the country who are directly involved in the provision of HIV services and/or make decisions about their provision to people living with HIV and key populations in countries EECA.

5. Geography:

Country level: Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Montenegro.

6. Methods and sampling

The Guide development methodology involves two components:

1. Analysis of documentation, materials from open sources, secondary analysis of research results on the specified topic in:
 - a. The EECA countries
 - b. Other countries whose experience can be used and adapted for the participating countries specified in this TOR.

This paper should build on research findings on the rate of HIV testing and the involvement of people living with HIV in the ART programs in the conditions of COVID-19 pandemic and research on the impact of COVID-19 on the sustainability of HIV and TB services in six Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Balkans to be completed in January 2021 and provided to the consultant/s by the Alliance.

2. Qualitative component - holding meetings, group discussions, interviews, organizing data collection with representatives of organizations from EECA countries specified in paragraph 4.

A more detailed methodology for collecting and analyzing data, tools for working within this ToR should be developed and proposed by the consultant/s.

It is planned that the developed Guide will be reviewed by international experts, whose involvement will be ensured by the Alliance. The consultant/s will have to make changes to the final version of the document based on the comments and suggestions received on the document.

7. Activities and expected results:

№	Activities	Expected results
Preparatory stage		
1	Protocol and toolkit development	Protocol and toolkit agreed with the Alliance
2	Developing a list of informants	List of informants in the regions included in this ToR as agreed with the Alliance
Desk study stage		
3	Collection and preparation of materials for the analysis of documentation in the countries specified in this ToR	Data array indicating the name, source and country
4	Collection and preparation of materials for the analysis of documentation in other countries	Data array indicating the name, source and country
5	Processing and analysis of available information in accordance with the tasks specified in this ToR	Analytical report section
Qualitative stage		
6	Organization of data collection and meetings, group discussions, interviews with the target group	Transcripts/data array
7	Analysis of the completed meetings and interviews and comparison with the results of the data obtained through the results of the documentation analysis stage	Analytical report section
Final stage		
8	Development of recommendations for each country specified in this ToR.	Recommendations
9	Preparation of the Performance Manual	Guide
10	Finalization of the Guide taking into account comments from international experts	Final version of the Guide

11	Presentation of work results for ICF "Alliance for Public Health"	Materials of the presentation and the actual event
12	Presentation of the results of the work for the participating countries and international partners	Materials of the presentation and the actual event

8. Timeframe: February 2021 – May 2021.

№	Task	Deadline
1	Preparatory stage	2 weeks from the contract date
2	Desk study stage	6 weeks from the contract date
3	Qualitative stage	14 weeks from the contract date
4	Final stage	18 weeks from the contract date

9. General requirements to the consultant/s with regard to this assignment:

- Experience in the development of protocols and tools for qualitative research;
- Experience in conducting desk studies and secondary analysis of results;
- Experience in analyzing research data and preparing reports on its results;
- Experience in national study management (experience in coordinating international research would be an advantage);
- Teamwork experience;
- Experience working in the field of HIV/AIDS, including with representatives of key populations, government health agencies, non-governmental organizations and government decision-makers;
- Relevant specialized education (sociology, public health, health care management, etc.);
- High level of knowledge of Ukrainian, Russian languages and level of English proficiency not lower than Upper-Intermediate;
- High level of computer literacy.

10. Competition procedure:

The competition participants should provide the following package of documents:

- A summary indicating the list of studies, written analytical reports, developed tools for assessing situations carried out from 2016 to 2020;
- A letter of motivation indicating relevant experience and expected remuneration for the job;
- A short proposal for the implementation of the study (description of the main stages and terms, if they differ from those indicated in the terms of reference);
- Examples of reports on the results of research and/or other publications created by the participant/s of the competition and/or with their participation (indicate the degree of involvement).

The Alliance and the consultant/s will sign the contract for the provision of consulting services, the consultant/s shall provide the services agreed upon by these Terms of Reference within the agreed period of time. A comprehensive Planning Guide for the Sustainable Delivery of HIV Services to Key Populations during and after COVID-19 will be the final confirmation of the consultant/s fulfillment of their commitment hereunder.

Payment terms: payment will be made in full after the submission of the report on the results of the work and after the signing of the acceptance certificate for the services provided. The preliminary budget for this assignment is USD 25,000, however, the amount is negotiable once the consultant submits a suggested cost calculation for the tasks indicated in the ToR.

The package of documents must be sent to lukianenko@aph.org.ua by 6:00 p.m. on January 27, 2021. In the subject line of the letter, indicate which position you are applying for: "Consultant on Guide Development".

Only the candidates shortlisted upon preliminary consideration of the submitted package of documents will be invited to the interview.

ICF "Alliance for Public Health" abides by the equal opportunities policy, therefore, it hires qualified specialists from different sectors of society, regardless of their socio-demographic characteristics, HIV status and individual preferences.