
International Charitable Foundation “Alliance for Public Health” announces extension of an open Call for Proposals to prepare a policy brief on price reduction of ARV drugs in EECA with dissemination among influential stakeholders to facilitate change

1. Background

International Charitable Foundation “Alliance for Public Health” (hereinafter – APH) is a leading professional organization which in cooperation with the key civil society organizations, Ministry of Health and other governmental bodies participates in combating the HIV/AIDS and TB epidemics in Ukraine, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA), managing prevention programs and providing high quality technical support and financial resources to local organizations. All these efforts are aimed at achieving the universal access to comprehensive HIV/AIDS services and efficient response to the epidemic at the community level based on the achieved results and best practices.

APH is scaling-up its activities to the EECA and SEE regions for the last 15 years. In 2019-2021, APH was the Principal Recipient of the grant from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to implement the regional program “Sustainability of Services for Key Populations in the EECA region”. It covered 14 EECA and SEE countries and was aimed to ensure sustainability of HIV responses in counties. As result of successful implementation, APH was awarded second regional grant for 2022-2024, which has currently started.

Costs paid for HIV medicines in EECA are way above the international average and pose a significant burden to the transitioning health systems. EECA activists and professionals were advocating for ARV price reduction and have achieved significant progress on ART access and reducing procurement prices in the region. Based on the analysis of expenditures for procurement of ARVs in 9 EECA countries, the average cost per patient decreased from 605,76 USD in 2019 to 535,74 USD in 2020. Price for ART in Kyrgyzstan reduced by 56%, Moldova – 37%, Ukraine – 23%, Russian Federation – 22%. Thanks to this work, some 119 M USD have been saved on ART procurement.

The contributing factors were:

- New HIV treatment guidelines that comply with the WHO’s treatment recommendations were approved in RF, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.
- In partnership with ITPCru there were 9 online ECAT meetings held to facilitate the negotiations of the patients and producers of original and generic drugs on decreasing prices and scaling up access to key ARV drugs. Representatives of WHO, MPP, UNDP and UNICEF took part in the meetings.
- The total amount of savings over 2 years is exceeding 60 million US dollars in RF through price monitoring/optimization, DTG uptake increase.

- Kyrgyzstan activists advocated for decrease of the basic 1 line ART (tenofovir / lamivudine / dolutegravir) from 186\$ per patient per year in 2019 to 86\$ per patient per year in 2020.
- Announcement of a re-tender for the purchase of TDF / FTC in Moldova saved \$ 602,913 compared to the results of the initial tender.
- In partnership with MPP, patient community advocated for inclusion of Belarus and Kazakhstan in the voluntary license for DTG. Relevant license agreements were signed in November 2020, they open access to DTG generic drugs for countries, It's expected that the DTG price will decrease by 2-3 times as result of these license agreements.
- The need in ART price optimization in Balkans appeared as result of price analyses. The regional dialogue for changing approaches to procurement of drugs leading to decrease of the expenses for ARVs was held online in December 2020. North Macedonia implemented activities for scaling up of DTG use and has achieved a 14% price reduction for DTG-based regimens. Optimization of ART regimens in Serbia will allow reduce treatment cost by \$312 600.

Some documents confirming the data on average costs spent by countries for ART are available at the link https://www.dropbox.com/s/ure9ar0mr23dxps/ARV_2018_2021.rar?dl=0

The initial data available for this assignment are summarized in the table below.

	Average year cost of ART for 1 patient, 2018, USD	Average year cost of ART for 1 patient, 2020, USD	Action to reduce price that worked out
Kyrgyzstan ¹	208,11	91,75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New HIV treatment guidelines that comply with the WHO's treatment recommendations approved in 2020 introducing DTG as the main first-line treatment regimen and EFV400 as the alternative first-line treatment regimen • Community-led analysis of compliance of national HIV guidelines with WHO recommendations highlighted discrepancies and identified directions for treatment optimization. Recommendations of the analysis were discussed with clinicians and WHO • In partnership with WHO and CAAPL 3 webinars for clinicians and patient activists

¹ Documents for EECA countries can be found here https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1_hPkyvi4W8w8s0E86hkBtQNNxQJeCtZp?fbclid=IwAR3lw4Tr87KOax8h4eFrFzXafBG0ZQjBTWLRsHSLG9tpNouokwhviXBB1

			<p>were conducted to analyse practical cases and problems related to HIV detection and treatment for 8 EECA countries (special focus on DTG, EFV 400, TAF)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide uptake of generic medicines • Community-led monitoring of the procurements • Community-led advocacy of price reduction • Negotiations with pharmaceutical companies regarding registration of new generic medicines and participation in the procurements (direct negotiations, ECAT meetings) • Technical assistance with registration and procurement terms provided to the pharmaceutical companies to ensure wide competition and price reduction
Moldova	179,42	112,29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-led analysis of compliance of national HIV guidelines with WHO recommendations highlighted discrepancies and identified directions for treatment optimization. Recommendations of the analysis were discussed with clinicians and WHO • In partnership with WHO and CAAPL 3 webinars for clinicians and patient activists were conducted to analyse practical cases and problems related to HIV detection and treatment for 8 EECA countries (special focus on DTG, EFV 400, TAF) • Wide uptake of generic medicines • Community-led monitoring of the procurements • Treatment optimization according to the WHO's recommendations • Negotiations with generic pharmaceutical companies regarding participation in the state procurements

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance with registration and procurement terms provided to the pharmaceutical companies to ensure wide competition and price reduction
Russian Federation	913,06	706,45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-led monitoring of the procurements • Community-led advocacy of price reduction • Negotiations with pharmaceutical companies regarding registration of new generic medicines and participation in the procurements (direct negotiations, annual ECAT meetings) • Community-led analysis of compliance of national HIV guidelines with WHO recommendations highlighted discrepancies and identified directions for treatment optimization. Recommendations of the analysis were discussed with clinicians and WHO • In partnership with WHO and CAAPL 3 webinars for clinicians and patient activists were conducted to analyze practical cases and problems related to HIV detection and treatment for 8 EECA countries (special focus on DTG, EFV 400, TAF)
Ukraine	131,64	100,75	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New HIV treatment guidelines fully harmonized with the WHO's recommendations were adopted in 2019 ensuring DTG as the main treatment option and EFV 400 as the alternative regimen of the first line of treatment. • In partnership with WHO and CAAPL 3 webinars for clinicians and patient activists were conducted to analyse practical cases and problems related to HIV detection and treatment for 8 EECA countries (special focus on DTG, EFV 400, TAF) • Wide uptake of generic medicines

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation of patients representative in procurement expert groups • Treatment optimization according to the WHO's recommendations • Annual MoH's order defining the recommended treatment options and their recommended quantities for calculation of procurement needs from the region • Community-led advocacy of price reduction • Negotiations with the pharmaceutical companies regarding registration of the generic medicines and participation in the tenders • Technical assistance provided to the pharmaceutical companies regarding terms of registration and procurement terms
Kazakhstan	935,28	747,30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New HIV treatment guidelines that comply with the WHO's treatment recommendations approved in 2020 with further treatment optimization • Community-led analysis of compliance of national HIV guidelines with WHO recommendations highlighted discrepancies and identified directions for treatment optimization. Recommendations of the analysis were discussed with clinicians and WHO • In partnership with WHO and CAAPL 3 webinars for clinicians and patient activists were conducted to analyze practical cases and problems related to HIV detection and treatment for 8 EECA countries (special focus on DTG, EFV 400, TAF) • Voluntary license for DTG in November 2020 • Community-led advocacy of price reduction (ECAT meetings)

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiations with pharmaceutical companies regarding registration of new generic medicines and participation in the procurements • Technical assistance with registration and procurements provided to the pharmaceutical companies to ensure wide competition and price reduction
North Macedonia ²	DTG (2020) – 5112 Euro	DTG (2021) – 4607 Euro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct negotiations on price reduction and voluntary license for DTG with ViiV • Advocacy regarding treatment optimization in front of healthcare officials (MoH, Clinic of Infectious Diseases)

2. Goal and objectives of the call for proposals

The overall goal of this call for proposals is to prepare a policy brief on price reduction of ARV drugs in EECA for the audience of influential stakeholders to facilitate change.

The developed policy brief should capture the results achieved in price reduction of ART drugs in EECA and provide guidance as per what mechanisms worked best to serve this purpose. Same approaches should be catalysed and can be used to reduce health expenditure across other disease areas.

The brief should be based on the available data and interviews with the relevant health officials and community activists. Brief should come with a summary (1-2 page) and a longer version of some 10-20 pages' length.

3. Methodology

The brief development should be conducted using a mix of methods and tools, such as a desk review, interviews with project team, key stakeholders, beneficiaries (via telephone, email, etc.).

APH will provide the documents for desk review of the Applicant and will help to organize the interviews with the relevant representatives in countries selected by the Applicant for the discussion. The Applicant will need to summarize the information received from desk review and interviews in the countries and develop draft policy brief.

² Documents for Balkan countries (including North Macedonia) can be found here <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1w-VISRrMdlcQvo6Q8QQB901un-UfRclZ?fbclid=IwAR3lw4Tr87KOax8h4eFrFzXafBG0ZQjBTWLRsHSLLGs9tpNouokwhviXBBI>

4. Duration of work:

The overall duration of the assignment is four months – April – July 2022. The preliminary schedule is outlined below:

- Desk review – April 2022
- Interviews in countries, development of the first draft of policy brief and its submission to APH for feedback – April – May 2022
- Finalization of the policy brief– June 2022
- Design, launch of the policy brief as well as dissemination and promotion of the results – July 2022.

5. Budget of the Call for Proposals: The budget of proposals to be submitted should not exceed 50 thousand US dollars.

6. Expertise required:

APH invites eligible Applicants to indicate their interest in development of the policy brief. Interested applicants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience in successful implementation of similar engagements:

- Ability to ensure that the developed policy brief will make significant impact on policy makers' opinions; proven experience in development of the policy briefs and their promotion in the countries (please provide the links to the relevant publications);
- Ability to develop a clear brief for broad range of policy makers (not using a very specialized language);
- Experience of conducting health finance research and dissemination;
- Experience of working with international organizations and/or national agencies implementing externally funded programs and projects;
- Technical capacities to ensure smooth implementation and high-quality outputs;
- Qualified staff/consultants with general experience in analysis of data related to prices of ARVs and knowledge of specifics of tendering processes, PSM cycles and factors contributing to cost of ARVs;
- Proven experience of the assigned personnel in conducting similar assignments in the EECA region.

7. Organizational requirements:

- Organizations submitting their proposals should be duly registered legal entities. The copy of registration document must be submitted with proposal.
- Applicants should be able to receive grant (charitable donation) from Ukraine on terms and conditions of APH.

Applicants should be able to implement activities in line with this Call for Proposals.

8. Reporting requirements and outline

The Applicants shall provide the final version of the policy brief in electronic copies considering the following tentative outline:

- Executive summary
- Description of the countries' achievements in the area of ARV price reduction
- Analysis of methods for ARV price reduction applied by the countries, factors that contributed, and conclusion on the most effective practices
- Key lessons learnt highlighting key factors that have contributed to ARV price reduction
- Recommendations and conclusions
- Annexes to the policy brief confirming implementation of activities: online meetings schedule, list of people interviewed, action plan to promote the policy brief, etc.

The developed policy brief should be in English and APH should be allowed to make Russian version translation without additional fee involved.

To take part in this Call for Proposals, organizations should submit their proposals in accordance with the templates attached hereto (Application Template, Work Plan Template, Budget Template) together with the documents confirming their legal status.

Deadline for submitting proposals – 01 April 2022, 18.00 Kyiv time.

Proposals should be submitted in electronic form to obilous@aph.org.ua.

Wishing you good luck and hope for fruitful cooperation!