



HLSP – HIV and AIDS Experience in Europe

HLSP is committed to bringing its experience and expertise in technical consultancy and management to supporting the global response to HIV and AIDS.

- We support global initiatives, national programmes, private sector initiatives, civil society and community based interventions.
- Our expertise includes capacity building for institutions tasked with planning, coordinating and implementing multi-sectoral responses to HIV and AIDS.
- We actively work to increase equitable access to prevention, care and treatment services.
- In addition we have an extensive track record of providing policy and technical advice and we have experience of appraising, designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating complex national HIV and AIDS programmes.

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HLSP

HLSP is an international professional services firm specialising in the health sector in both the UK and worldwide. Working with international agencies and national governments, HLSP strives to advance health systems, reduce poverty, improve health outcomes and combat HIV and AIDS through long-term sustainable solutions.

Internationally we work in partnership with governments, bi-lateral agencies such as the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), multi-lateral agencies such as the Development Banks, the European Union, and the World Bank, United Nations Agencies, Global Health Partnerships and private sector organisations.

The principal components of HLSP are:

- HLSP providing client focussed technical services, consulting and project management, including programme design, monitoring and evaluation.
- The HLSP Institute which builds on HLSP experience and expertise in health and AIDS policy and practice, health systems and aid management to inform debate and policy on global health issues.

Additionally, we manage two resource centre contracts for DFID: the Health Resource Centre focussed on communicable diseases such as AIDS and sexual and reproductive health; the Health Systems Resource Centre focused on national and international policy and health systems development. These Resource Centres assist DFID in its procurement and management of technical assistance in priority countries for its work in health and HIV and AIDS, as well as supporting DFID's policy and strategy development on these agendas.

HLSP Group in Europe

HLSP has been working in Central and Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union for over ten years. During this time, the company has been involved in complex projects dealing with the transformation of health care systems throughout the countries of the region. Due to the political environment and the particular characteristics of the epidemic in the region, our work prior to 2001 followed the overall pattern of foreign assistance in the region, which exerted a minor, but positive influence on HIV and AIDS prevention.

The region now has the steepest rate of new HIV infections in the world. Countries in the region have varying rates of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), levels of unsafe sex, and numbers of people who inject. In addition, many countries in the region have experienced increasing rates of tuberculosis (TB) over the last decade. The dual challenge of HIV and AIDS and multidrug-resistant tuberculosis places increasing demands on health care systems and makes the expansion of effective HIV, STIs and tuberculosis prevention and control programmes of high public health relevance.

HLSP offers a range of technical services to support partners' efforts to build national capacity to monitor and understand the epidemic, to organize and mobilize communities to prevent its further spread, and enhance capacity to control the epidemic and treat those infected with HIV.

Adapting Health Care and Social Support Systems

Many Governments in the region are modernising their health systems, in particular, primary health care, public health and disease control services. We believe that HIV and AIDS prevention, diagnostic and treatment interventions cannot be delivered effectively unless systems and institutions are strengthened. We have experience of transforming health care and social support systems in several countries in the region:

- In Samara, we worked with the regional and municipal authorities to facilitate health system reforms to increase the efficiency of services.
- We have assisted national and sub-national governments in Russia, Uzbekistan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Tajikistan on the development of new models of primary care provision. Inputs have included: development of strategies for primary health care development at the central and regional levels; development of a new GP delivery model; Training of the

GPs in case management including family planning, sexually transmitted infections and HIV prevention

- We have successfully managed a DFID funded, 4-year Health and Social Care Partnership Scheme that has provided technical support to 14 projects dealing with various aspects of HIV and AIDS prevention in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. Participants have included both governmental and non-governmental organisations and projects have included prevention work with high risk groups and care and support to people living with HIV.
- Through the Resource Centre contract with DFID, we provided a design team for the Russia Comprehensive Targeted HIV Prevention and Control Demonstration Project. The design was carried out in partnership with the Russian Ministry of Health. In the course of the project preparation criteria were identified which could be used to assess the regional capacity to implement prevention and control programmes. They included positive political association and support, availability of regional resources, capacity to deliver services and public administration capabilities. Six regions were evaluated according to these criteria.

Working with Institutions for Effective Responses in HIV/AIDS/STIs

Institutions working in the field of HIV and AIDS are confronted with an increasingly complex set of problems and priorities. Ensuring national strategies and comprehensive responses are based on multi-sectoral action and adapting surveillance systems to the particular HIV and AIDS epidemic are just some of the challenges many countries are facing in the region. Our global experience of working with institutions for effective responses in HIV and AIDS ensures we can draw on best practice and lessons learned in different regions. In Europe, we have provided a range of support as outlined below.

- We have provided support in auditing legislative frameworks in the region regarding communicable disease control. In Romania, we supported the Ministry of Health to improve the function, organisational structure and financing of epidemiological surveillance and reporting systems by designing and implementing National Action Plans for disease surveillance and control and the revision of existing legislation to meet the European Union quality standards.
- HLSP has worked in Samara and Kemerovo Oblasts developing sustainable TB services. Our work included an organisational, management and resource evaluation of the capacities of national bodies and stakeholders to implement communicable disease management systems. We assisted the national authorities in the revision of the TB surveillance procedures, tools and guidelines in order to strengthen diagnosis, follow-up, reporting, monitoring and supervision. The programme is establishing standardised directly observed treatment (DOTS) guidelines and developing co-ordination between civilian and prison health providers as well as providing social support.
- We assisted the Ministry of Health in Russia to develop an HIV strategy that reviewed the levels of understanding of HIV issues, provided contemporary perspectives on HIV and AIDS and highlighted the policy implications of these issues.
- In Ukraine, we have worked with the Ministry of Education & Science and the Ministry of Health, to develop a model of good practice for the planning, training and implementation of comprehensive region-wide youth services, including the development of material to introduce sex and drugs education in schools.

Prevention and Care: Working with High Risk Groups

Much of our experience in Europe in HIV and AIDS has focused on prevention efforts targeting youth. These have been small-scale programmes funded through the Health and Social Care Partnership Scheme, or the design and/or management of youth prevention programmes. Our country experience in this area includes Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. Examples include:

- Preventing the spread of HIV, hepatitis and drug use among middle and high school students. School educators, psychologists and social counsellors have been trained in innovative approaches to AIDS/drug use prevention work among teenagers. The project includes the development of a programme of raising awareness of AIDS and covering drug use prevention topics by developing learning materials and using in-class and out-of-class curricular.

- Providing healthy life style education to young people, particularly socially excluded teenagers, orphans, school children at risk of exclusion from school and young females. The project includes the opening of youth friendly centres where alternative leisure activities and peer-driven interventions can be implemented by the training and support of peer educators and the production of IEC materials.
- Projects targeting vulnerable youth groups, educators, health and social care providers from local and regional institutions, including strengthening NGO outreach skills for youth work. Besides the implementation of community outreach interventions, the project also included the development of systems to co-ordinate different social, health and educational institutions at local and regional level dealing with reproductive health among young people.
- Projects supporting the development of multi-disciplinary therapeutic models, including models of abstinence-based treatments for young drug addicted patients. The projects included the training of local representatives about the social care system relating to drug and alcohol treatment for young drug addicts.
- In Ukraine, we have provided support to local NGOs involved in HIV and AIDS prevention to strengthen and expand their responses in delivering HIV information and services to high risk groups. We also supported the Oblast Youth Prevention Demonstration Project.
- Also in Ukraine, we actively contributed to the design of media campaigns promoting condom normalisation at national and regional level. This included the production of video, audio and printed materials, placement of billboards, training and competitions for journalists, competitions for schoolchildren in HIV related film scenarios, graffiti, body art and theatre performances.
- In the Russian Federation, we provided technical assistance for the design and appraisal of HIV harm reduction activities. This programme complements other donor funded programmes on a range of issues from knowledge generation to treatment and care.
- HLSP is providing specific HIV and AIDS prevention inputs to a team of experts developing an international training package specific to the WHO European Region on "WHO second generation HIV surveillance methods" which includes behavioural surveillance among vulnerable groups including youth. This package is part of an effort to support the optimal access of WHO Eastern European countries to GFATM and other donor funding initiatives.

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