

# Sustainable HIV and STI prevention among female, male and transgender sex workers in Serbia



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## THE PRIVILEGE AND ENJOYMENT OF COLLABORATION

STARTING FROM WHAT WAS PROVEN TO BE EFFECTIVE IN PRACTICE:

Overall objectives of

### POP PROJECT

To create a supportive environment for improving sex workers' sexual health and social position in Serbia and Bulgaria

To contribute to public health in Serbia and Bulgaria through the prevention of STIs and HIV among sex workers

### WHY HEALTH

The right to health is one of the basic rights  
 It is an entry point for many activities  
 Inefficiency of low-threshold services  
 Health promotion would entail the empowerment of the STIs  
 Empowerment would contribute to fight for own rights, advocacy skills and higher professional standards for STIs

### CREATE A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR SEX WORKERS

Working with communities – sensitization and mobilization

Sanctuary for representatives from local communities

Round table – stakeholders from republic and city level

Working with press

Scientific conferences with Academy of science and medical community

NPVIR pilot project based on HIV/STI prevention among sex workers

### BULGARIA: CREATING A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT OF THE SEX WORKERS

Low-threshold services

Mobile medical units, establishment and maintenance

Referral to VCTs, some of which are STI clinics as well

Outreach work: regular and professional

Sensitization and training of the policemen and medical doctors

### SERBIA

CAPACITY BUILDING

200 trainees

OUTREACH TEAM AT THE FIELD

MOBILE MEDICAL TEAM IN THE FIELD

PEER EDUCATORS

OUTREACH TEAM EDUCATION

MOBILE UNIT TEAM PREPARATION

GROUP CENTRE

MOBILE UNIT AT THE FIELD

### SERBIA BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY

JAZAS TEAM

DOCTORS

HEALTH VISITORS

NURSES

SOCIAL WORKERS

### LESSON LEARNED

To get commitment of a society and to guarantee sustainability of HIV prevention among sex workers Official institutions like the police have to be sensitized for their needs

### CONCLUSIONS

Regional collaboration, in spite of some differences among countries prove to be successful  
 Learning from Dutch and Bulgarian experience using strategies proved to be effective, having consultation for every "new" step make Serbia to go faster than expected.  
 After formal evaluation some of the approaches could be written as a "good practice" models for others to start For Serbia successful collaboration and support coming from Imperial College from London was, also very useful

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Involve different strata of societies, like the police force, in initiatives for HIV prevention among vulnerable groups like the sex workers and redefine their role in relation to prevention in a supportive one

## WHY SEX WORKERS

Reverse of: High discrimination and stigmatization

Sex work is forbidden in Serbia

Difficult access to services

Insufficient protective knowledge and skills

Criminalization (in Serbia)

Lack of self-esteem

Lack of support

Vulnerability towards HIV/AIDS/STI

## LOW – REGULATIONS

Judicial liability is pointed towards people who organize facilities and conduct

very maintenance liability

Related to people who are involved in prostitution, very maintenance liability

Who is involved in prostitution or rents premises for the purposes of prostitution is to be punished with 30 days prison penalty

Who rents rooms for under-aged persons for the purposes of prostitution is to be punished by the prison penalty up to 90 days

## CREATE A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR SEX WORKER IN SERBIA

### Advocacy level

PROMOTING PUBLIC AWARENESS

ADVOCACY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, PATIENT RIGHTS

INSTITUTIONALIZATION/CHANGE POLICE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR

COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

VIOLENCE PREVENTION

CREATION A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR SEX WORKERS

### Target group level

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

SKILL BUILDINGS

PROVIDING ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

EMPLOYMENT

CONDOM DISTRIBUTION

SUPPORT

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH AMONG SEX WORKERS DEPTH INTERVIEWS GAVE

ONGOING QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH ON HIV PREVALENCE AMONG SEX WORKERS (SUPPORT BY IMPERIAL COLLEGE)

## NEXT STEPS /SERBIA

MORE WORK AND BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY OF THE POP

APPROACH – FORMAL SERVICES HAS TO TAKE OVER AT LEAST SOMETHING OF POP

## VST IN MOBILE UNIT

## STRATEGIE USED –HOW EFFECTIVE THEY ARE

Three basic strategies were used simultaneously –all of them knowing as effective in others projects

Outreach work

Enabling or empowerment – to increase their control over their lives :

Only process evaluation has been done

Impact evaluation in Serbia will be done after one year

