



Irish Aid

Department of Foreign Affairs
An Roinn Gnóthaí Eachtracha

Strengthening HIV Prevention and Social Inclusion of Adolescents in Collective Accommodation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

For every child
Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY



Background

- **BiH is low HIV prevalence country**
- **Surveys in at-risk populations (IDUs, MSM, SW) – no quality data on most-at-risk adolescents (MARA)**
- **GFATM project on HIV targets at-risk populations – limited coverage of adolescents**
- **UNICEF – advocacy and support to data collection on adolescents and development of appropriate response (i.e. adolescents in collective accommodations: institutions for adolescents without parental care and boarding schools)**

Background

- **UNICEF - Legislation analysis:**

- **Access to reproductive health services for adolescents in BiH, 2007:**

- Limited access: possible only with parental consent for < 18

- **Harm reduction programmes for IDUs, 2007:**

- Criminalization of those caught with used syringe or needle

Background – cont.

- Behavioral study conducted among adolescents living in collective accommodation, 2008

Findings:

- Risk behaviours – 50% of male adolescents used consistently condom with casual partner
- Peer violence -- violence by staff reported by 18% of respondents
- Peer Stigma and discrimination in school -- 41.1%

Intervention Objectives:

- **Increase access to information, harm reduction services and protective commodities** (condoms, needles, syringes, etc.)
- **Increase HIV/STI testing/diagnosis**
- **Improve health protection and accessibility to the treatment of STIs**
- **Reduce risk taking behaviour** (unprotected sex, drug use, peer violence, etc)

Intervention:

1. Capacity and Knowledge Building of adolescents living in institutions and their environment

- Educational workshops -- (400 reached)
- Training for staff -- (133 reached)
- School panels in primary schools (588 reached)
- Round Tables at municipality level (148 reached)

11 towns covered with project activities

47 preventive interventions/sessions

March 2010



Quality change measurement

Comparison of correct HIV knowledge responses
UNGASS Indicators #14, etc.

- **HIV Knowledge and Misconceptions:**
 - **Before: 29,10% Correct *After* 60,50% Correct**
- **Can risk be reduced by use of clean, un-used syringe/needle?**
 - **Before 69,90% Correct *After* 81,10% Correct**
- **Identify places to test for HIV**
 - **Before 58,20% *After* 88,30%**
- **Knowledge of Where to Buy/Get Condoms**
 - **Before 34,40% *After* 55.60% (at VCT Center)**
 - **Before 38,00% *After* 51,00% (at NGO)**

Intervention - cont.:

2. Advocacy/Support for Improvement of legal framework

- **Law on health protection of Republic of Srpska (endorsed 2009)**
- **Law on Protection of Patients Rights (endorsed 2009, pending final endorsement in Parliament)**

(Both will enable testing from age 15 without parental consent)

- **State Strategy for diminishing of drug misuse (endorsed: 2008, Action Plan: 2009)**

Intervention – cont 2:

3. Strengthen protocols and standards

- **VCT Protocol and Guidebook for VCT Providers highlighting specificities of work with MARP/MARA (2009)**
- **Proposed Plan to Diminish Stigma/Discrimination (2010)**

4. Edutainment Campaign “Without Risk”

- **TV serial (Celebrities: Zeljko Joksimovic, Van Gogh, Jelena Tomasevic, Sergej Cetkovic, Edin Dzeko, Enis Beslagic, Davor Ebner, etc.)**
- **3 TV and Radio Clips (drug use, safer sex, alcoholism)**
- **Soundtrack with video clip (Kaliopi, Jelena Tomasevic, Toni Cetinski, Davor Ebner, Eldin Huseinbegovic, Bojan Marovic)**

Other Results:

- **Improved quality of counselling services for MARA and vulnerable adolescents**
- **No legal barriers for increase in testing rate among adolescents**
- **Harm reduction (needle exchange) services for IDUs fully endorsed by the government**
- **Biological data collection initiatives in the future may include minors from age 15+ in the research**

Thank you!



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