Harm reduction in the context of social inclusion, access to and quality of health systems

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The Russian Harm Reduction Network ESVERO unites individuals, state and public organizations implementing harm reduction programs and providing services for vulnerable groups, which have based on the human rights approach.

**Our Mission**

Reduction of adverse consequences related to the use of psychoactive substances for the people affected by this problem, and as a result, promotion of public health and socio-economic well-being of the population of Russia.

**Our scope**

We has focused our efforts on programs and policies that offer long-term solutions and provides research, publications, technical and financial assistance, etc.
Increase in the number of reported HIV cases among the Russian citizens in 1987-2009

![Graph showing the increase in HIV cases among Russian citizens from 1987 to 2009. The graph includes data on cumulative reported HIV+ persons, excluding deaths, and cumulative number of died persons.](image-url)
HIV infection risk factors in Russia in 1987-2009

- Injecting drug use
- Infection of mothers from children through breast feeding
- Infection of children from HIV+ mothers through breast feeding
- Nosocomial seat location
- HIV-affected blood transfusion
- Heterosexual intercourse
- Homosexual intercourse
More than 50 of harm reduction programs in Russia have no legal, political and financial support component from federal government. At the same time there are few serious legal considerations related to the key harm reduction interventions.

HIV is prolific among drug users and will presumably be an epidemic amongst the general population.

Lack of political clout by people who use drug, and accompanying neglect of their welfare by politicians and government.

Stigma regarding drug use is widespread and entrenched throughout civil society.

Traditional and classical health care system that does not look favorably upon the techniques and methodologies employed in harm reduction, but is not effective on its own to treat drug users.

Government and civil society are not willing or able to delay the resources necessary to combat the pervasiveness of drug use, and, as a corollary, the spread of HIV.
Goal

There are effective policies and practices within the government and civil society that protect and promote the health and human rights of people who use drugs — i.e., mobilize the government and NGOs to actively create a social support network for them.
Key activities:

- advocacy of harm reduction policies and services for drug users and members of other vulnerable populations;
- harm reduction documentation, information dissemination, and education;
- monitoring, evaluation and needs assessment for drug users, other vulnerable groups, and harm reduction service providers;
- technical assistance and expert work for individual organizations and government bodies;
- networking of key stakeholders and support for harm reduction service providers;
- development of self-help organizations for drug users and other vulnerable groups.
The aim of our strategy is to create a basis for the serving NGOs, public activists and civil society individuals acting in the field of HIV and drug prevention, treatment and care towards ensuring sustainability of those NGOs and individuals by improving their capacity based on Human Rights and Rule of Law principles.

What’s a intervention?
This intervention is public interest law:

- As access to justice
- As law reform
- As political empowerment, in which the focus shifts from expanding access to the health system or changing it through reform to directly empowering the parties who are interacting with the state
Inclined and expected results include:

- Improved technical capacity and sustainability of target groups and civil society
- Prevention and reduction of administrative and penal sanctions related to the target Groups’ activities
- Improved status of target groups and reduction of their vulnerability
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!