

## **Project “Prevention and Empowerment in the NIS”**

**ILGA-Europe Activity Report** January - December, 2007

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### Programme objective:

- to advocate for inclusive HIV/AIDS and other STIs prevention and sexual and reproductive health policies in the programme region

### Programme results (numbered according to the project plan):

R1: LGBT organizations have the knowledge and skills to advocate and lobby on sexual and reproductive rights and HIV/AIDS in relation to sexual minorities.

R 2: An overview of relevant existing policies on sexual and reproductive rights and HIV / aids is compiled.

R3: Guidelines on using existing international policies on HIV/AIDS, sexual and reproductive rights and sexual minorities in the local context are developed.

R 4: Country based strategic advocacy and lobby plan in the field of sexual and reproductive rights and HIV / aids in relation to sexual minorities is developed.

R5: International and national relevant institutions are more sensitive towards including sexual minorities into their SRHR and HIV/AIDS strategies

### Activities towards results in year 2:

#### *To achieve Result 1:*

For monitoring purposes ILGA-Europe developed a simple but rich in contents questionnaire to assess advocacy capacity of the partner organisations at the beginning of the project (annexed in the January-June report of 2007). The partners filled it in (with exception of Women’s Network), and the results informed decisions regarding the programme of the training that followed. It will also serve as initial indicators of capacity of the organisations, which will be compared with indicators at the end of the project in order to measure impact.

To enable advocacy work by national PRECIS partners, ILGA-Europe organised a training on planning advocacy, documenting human rights violations, international standards in the field of sexual health and rights of LGBT people and lobbying international institutions. The training was held on 21-25 May (five days of training) in Kyrgyzstan. A total of 13 representatives of partner organisations took part (2 per country, Kyrgyzstan in view of low cost was represented by 3 participants).

The training was organised in an interactive way, with practical exercises and possibility for all participants to get ‘hands-on’ advocacy experience through model games. The structure included 2 days in-depth training on how to document human rights violations (by an experienced trainer from Russian NGO “Pytkam Net” Olga Sadovskaya, in Russian), 1 day on international standards in the field of sexual health and rights (by another experienced expert from Ireland Aengus Carroll), 1 day on planning advocacy work and 1 day on lobbying European institutions, such as the Council of Europe, OSCE and the European Union (both by ILGA-Europe).

The participants evaluated the training as successful and useful, as well as highly appreciated the quality of trainers and materials distributed. A summary evaluation sheet was provided together with the January-June activity report.

For increasing the partners’ skills to advocate and lobby, ILGA-Europe started preparing targeted trainings on advocacy planning for national partners. Two to three advocacy planning sessions will be implemented in 2008. See also activities for result 4.

*To achieve Result 2:*

An overview of relevant existing policies on sexual and reproductive rights and HIV / aids, called International human rights references to sexual and reproductive health and rights and STIs in relation to LGBT people, was finalised and published within the project by ILGA-Europe on November 30<sup>th</sup> 2007 in the context of the World Aids Day 1 December. The reference guide is available as an electronic publication on ILGA-Europe webpage.

*To achieve Result 3:*

Preparation for producing an advocacy manual was started. The manual will be based on the international human rights references to sexual and reproductive health and rights and STIs that were published within the project by ILGA-Europe (see activities to achieve result 2).

The focus of the contents of the manual is how the existing HIV/Aids/SRHR regulation found in UN treaties and other international law can be used effectively and correctly on the national level in order to enhance the general wellbeing of LGBT people by advocating for the inclusion of the sexual and reproductive health and rights of LGBT people in the national and institutional strategies in various policy sectors.

The primary target audiences of the manual are the project partners and other LGBT organizations and activists in the project partner countries. However, the document can be used by any interested NGOs wishing to strengthen their capacities in the field of advocacy. The manual will be distributed to the project partners and to all ILGA-Europe member organizations and other NGOs.

*To achieve Result 4:*

As mentioned above (see activities to achieve Result 1), preparations were started with national partners in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine for arranging tailored advocacy planning sessions for the national partners in order for them to develop country based strategic advocacy and lobby plans in the field of sexual and reproductive rights and HIV / aids in relation to sexual minorities. Two to three advocacy planning sessions will be held in 2008.

Only three advocacy planning sessions are originally budgeted for the whole project period, but as several partners are interested in the planning sessions and the management team has expressed a wish of organising more sessions (e.g. to Kazakhstan), ILGA-Europe looks into possibilities of saving in the budget elsewhere to do more advocacy sessions than planned.

*To achieve Result 5:*

ILGA-Europe continues to lobby European institutions to ensure they take up human rights violations that happen in the project partner countries, as well as to raise the issue of human rights of LGBT people with relevant national governments. ILGA-Europe has particularly worked during the reporting period with Georgia, Azerbaijan and Moldova.

A representative of ILGA-Europe participated within the framework of the PRECIS project in two international events concerning Sexual and reproductive health and rights and STIs: A conference related to sexual health and rights in Lisbon in October and a World Aids Day conference on HIV/aids and LGBT population in the European parliament (see annex).

On October 11<sup>th</sup> the programmes director of ILGA-Europe, Maxim Anmeghichean, participated in Lisbon in the EuroNGOs Conference ‘Engaging the South in ICPD Advocacy’. The conference included presentations such as “The Global Fund - Scaling up a Gender Sensitive Response to AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria”, “Advocating for Increased Funding for SRHR at National Level” , “Advocating for Youth SRHR in Asia” and “Using Useful Evidence in Advocacy Work”.

In the latter one the programmes director of ILGA-Europe, Maxim Anmeghichean, delivered a speech on access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care for LGBT people in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. He highlighted three elements that contribute to the problem in the NIS: that homophobia is the number one impediment to access to HIV/AIDS prevention and care for LGBT people; that there is a lack of resources, but even when there are resources they are often not realistically implemented; and that the statistics from the region are not trustworthy.

Both of the conferences served for bringing more visibility to the situation of LGBT people as well as to the project, and for establishing and strengthening networks in the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights and STIs.

## ***Georgia***

ILGA-Europe has facilitated links between Dutch MEP Sophia Int’veld (ALDE) and the Inclusive Foundation for an interview which the MEP has given to the LGBT magazine “Me”. The interview has an awareness raising impact on over 1000 policy / decision makers who are included in the Inclusive Foundation’s distribution lists.

ILGA-Europe has also used the report on homophobic hate speech by Georgian politicians (prepared together with Inclusive Foundation) and the summary report on the LGBT situation in Georgia to lobby the Council of Europe. The information was provided to the Commissioner for Human Rights office, rapporteurs on Georgia in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and to the Council of Europe secretariat. We have indications this information will be included in the next HR Commissioner report on Georgia.

ILGA-Europe has also been in correspondence with the Georgian Ombudsman, who originally was not supportive of an LGBT cause. After receiving a letter from ILGA-Europe pointing out his obligations under the international law, he devoted big part of his institution’s newsletter to LGBT rights and has since met with the Inclusive Foundation to establish lucrative contacts.

A report “Forced out: LGBT people in Georgia” was published in October by ILGA-Europe in cooperation with COC Netherlands as a result of an earlier implemented fact-finding mission. The report, including a thorough overview on LGBT people’s human rights situation and preconditions of life as well as of the Georgian society as a whole, was and will be distributed to a vast amount of relevant actors including representatives of international institutions to increase awareness of the existence and burning issues of LGBT population in Georgia.

## ***Moldova***

ILGA-Europe has particularly organised extensive lobby around the situation of Moldovan Pride ban by the city authorities. GenderDoc-M was consulted by ILGA-Europe in drafting media statements, monitoring and documenting human rights violations during the pride events, lobbying European institutions (in particular, Council of Europe and the European Union). The results have exceeded the expectations, as the issue of pride ban was raised by the EU with Moldovan authorities at various levels, including at the meeting of the German Foreign Minister (EU Presidency) with the President of Moldova Vladimir Voronin in Brussels. EU has also re-iterated separately that the rights of sexual minorities are important in EU accession process, and have insisted on implementation by Moldova of the Chapter 13 of the National Human Rights Action Plan, which contains specific provisions for the rights of LGBT people.

ILGA-Europe co-organised together with the OSCE a seminar on anti-discrimination legislation for GenderDoc-M, its Moldovan partners working in the field and PRECIS project partners which were visiting Moldova for a study visit. The seminar was

combined with a training on monitoring pride parades / freedom of assembly in difficult environments.

ILGA-Europe facilitated a meeting with EU officials for GenderDoc-M president Alexei Marcicov and Policy Officer Dana Cotici in December. Moldovan activists met with European Commission staff responsible for human rights in Moldova and with MEP Maria Carlshamre from the EU-Moldova Delegation of the European Parliament to lobby for implementation of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation in Moldova and for freedom of assembly.

### ***Azerbaijan***

ILGA-Europe has consulted Azerbaijani partners in the case of police harassment, illegal detention and forced treatment of commercial transsexual sex workers in Baku. As the organisation decided not to use European institutions, but rather to put pressure on the police using local resources and network of partners, the case didn't have a follow-up at the European level.

A report "Forced out: LGBT people in Azerbaijan" was published in October by ILGA-Europe in cooperation with COC Netherlands as a result of an earlier implemented fact-finding mission. The report, including a thorough overview on LGBT people's human rights situation and preconditions of life as well as of the Azeri society as a whole, was and will be distributed to a vast amount of relevant actors including representatives of international institutions to increase awareness of the existence and burning issues of LGBT population in Azerbaijan.

### **Overall project responsibilities:**

During the reporting period ILGA-Europe has taken part in three management team meetings and two Programme Task Force meetings (Istanbul, Turkey and Amsterdam, Netherlands).

In the middle of the year there was a change in the ILGA-Europe team for coordinating the project. The new Programmes and policy officer took over the overall coordination of the project, reporting and delivery of project outputs whereas the Programmes Director remained responsible for strategic project development as well as for participation in PTFs and management team meetings.

### **List of Annexes:**

- Annex 1: Financial report
- Annex 2: Report, World aids day conference at the European Parliament 3.12.2007
- Annex 3: ILGA-Europe press-release on 30 November 2007 to launch the SRHR reference guide in the context of the World Aids Day