



# Strengthening of HIV/STI interventions in sex work in Ukraine and the Russian Federation

## The project

CONNECTA aims to reduce vulnerability of sex workers to HIV/STI transmission, while developing comprehensive and rights-based services and approach to HIV/STI and sex workers.

## Objectives

- Provide comprehensive and multifaceted services for sex workers in the region of Lviv and St. Petersburg, with the development of a good practices model and tools for national replications.
- Strengthen the capacity and skills of service providers, community based organisations (CBOs), and policy makers while developing a programmatic approach to HIV/STI in sex work settings in Ukraine and Russia.

Fundamental to reducing HIV risk and vulnerability is enhancing access to HIV prevention, treatment, and care for all, including sex workers.

Comprehensive rights- and evidence-based programmes on HIV and sex work are crucial to the success of HIV response. It has been proved that an efficient strategy to reach this success is to work in partnership with sex workers, in order to identify their needs and to advocate for policies and programmes that improve their health, safety and engagement in HIV/STI prevention.

Evidence-informed measures to address sex work constitutes an integral component of an effective and comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS in the field of sex work, as well as a cross-sectorial cooperative approach to tackle the epidemic in the region, which affects particularly sex workers (female, male, and transgender) and individuals who inject drugs.

## Activities

To implement the CONECTA project, the **Tampep International Foundation** in Amsterdam, **Humanitarian Action** in the Russian Federation, and the **Salus Charitable Foundation** in Ukraine, along with regional networking, and making use of their long expertise and partnership, carries our activities in three main areas (work packages) in order to reach its goals.



This project is funded by  
The European Union



## **WP1 ■**

### **Build up capacity in information, dissemination and networking**

**To improve** the capacity of NGOs and CBOs in the development of a comprehensive regional response to the extreme vulnerabilities of sex workers to HIV and STI, implement the following activities:

#### **■ Activity 1 – Mapping of the National Prostitution Scene in the Russian Federation and Ukraine**

- Produce a Russian and a Ukrainian National Prostitution Mapping Report.
- Produce two Regional Prostitution Mapping Reports.

This activity intends to provide an overview of the prostitution scene in Ukraine and in the Russian Federation. Different aspects of prostitution in these countries will be taken into consideration such as the situation of national and migrant sex workers; the patterns of mobility in the region; the existence and characteristics of the accessible health and social care services; the main gaps related to the organisation and provision of services; the existing laws and policies and their impacts in the prevention and HIV/STI in relation to sex workers, and as well their impacts on guaranteeing human rights.

The reports will result in a comparative analysis of the prostitution mapping between the two countries part of the project and will identify needs for changes and policy recommendations in the region.

#### **■ Activity 2 – Setting up and making operational an oblast-wide network of sex work project organisations in the Russia Federation and Ukraine**

- Promote and improve the communication among NGOs that provide services for sex workers, by means of national training programmes, one regional seminar, and regional newsletters.

This activity intends to: i) create a supportive national and regional network structure for NSA with a sex work project component in their services for strengthening the capacities in service provision for sex workers; ii) to exchange of experiences, knowledge and skills within the network and cooperation model on local, national and regional level; to develop and maintain a local, national and regional cooperation structure for health and social care services for gathering NSA, public sectors, law enforcement actors, administrative authorities, representatives of national agencies.

In order to achieve such goal, this activity will be oriented to prepare newsletters, two national training programmes, one regional capacity building conference (with representatives from both countries). Noteworthy, it is based on models of cooperation and intriguers partners to develop effective local platforms of cooperation.



This project is funded by  
The European Union



## WP2 ■

### **Enhance the possibilities of services to respond to sex workers' needs**

**To strengthen** the capacities of service providers and CBOs in developing comprehensive, accessible, acceptable, sustainable, high-quality, user-friendly HIV/STI prevention, treatment, care and support, implement the following activities:

#### ■ **Activity 3 – Setting-up and Running multi-faceted services for SW, offering comprehensive services**

- Promote and develop multi-faceted services carried out by implementing partners (local trainings, preparation of educational materials).

In general terms, the objective of this activity is to i) develop effective HIV prevention programme model within sex work settings: a holistic and person-centred approach to health and well-being which respond to the diverse and complex needs of sex workers; ii) run multi-faceted services for sex workers in the oblasts of Leningrad and Lviv; iii) disseminate and promote the implementation of this model of multi-faceted services across the region; iv) improve the levels of knowledge and skill amongst staff and volunteers in relation to providing information to sex workers in diverse sex work settings about access to HIV/STI counselling, testing and treatment and develop good working relationships with HIV and STI treatment clinics, following the voluntary, counselling and testing good practice guidance; and v) develop and diffuse materials targeting sex workers.

In order to achieve its goals, this activity will be able to organize two local training programmes (one in Ukraine and one in the Russian Federation) and educational materials and resources.

#### ■ **Activity 4 - Implementation of peer education program for sex workers and develop a good practices guideline**

- Peer education program for sex workers and develop a good practices guideline (including reports, a manual, and campaign materials).

This activity is a twofold. The first activity is devoted to implement a peer education program and promote it across each country and the region. A Peer Education Training Report will be used to disseminate the good practices in peer education to different stakeholders in the region. The second activity is the development of good practices guidelines for the region by developing a Good Practices Manual and campaign materials and resources.

## WP3 ■

### **Creating and enabling policy environment for increased access to HIV & AIDS services for sex workers**



This project is funded by  
The European Union



**To promote** human rights and equality regarding public health policies and accessibility to these services, and enable legal and policy changes for preventing and addressing violence against sex workers, implement the following activities:

■ **Activity 5 – Development of advocacy strategy and tools for reducing structural vulnerability to HIV with human rights perspective and equal access to HIV prevention and care for sex workers**

- Develop human rights-based advocacy tools for national implementation, including policy papers, and the development of regional and national campaigns.

This activity is directed to i) sensitise policy makers and other stakeholders towards policy on reduction of sex workers vulnerabilities to HIV; ii) raise awareness of governmental bodies and institutions on the priority issues that need to be addressed in order to create and enable environment for increased access to HIV and AIDS services for sex workers, as well as the commitment for supporting interventions to overcome stigma, discrimination and other human rights-related barriers to health and access to services; iii) strengthen the attention to human rights at the operational policy and services level for taking forward strategic objective on human rights and equity; iv) make available and disseminate the UNAIDS Guidance Note on HIV and Sex Work and other petition and actions of the HIV and Sex Work related network; v) educate and involve local government, police and other law enforcement officers to reduce the negative practices against sex workers and actively support human rights-based approaches.

In order to reach results and impacts this activity will be able to develop 3 (three) Policy Papers to enable an environment for increased access to HIV and AIDS services for sex workers.

■ **Activity 6 – Preventing and Addressing Violence against Sex Workers**

- Address violence against sex workers by producing a booklet with cases of gender-based violence against sex workers.

This activity intends to: i) develop actions for reducing violence against sex workers; ii) raise awareness for reducing violence against sex workers; iii) create a support mechanism for sex workers equal access to justice.

For that a booklet on cases of gender-based violence against sex workers will be developed, as well as tools and materials for specific campaigns.

**Beneficiaries**

The project targets service providers and sex workers in the framework of building up comprehensive multifaceted services addressing sex worker's specific needs in Russia and the Ukraine.



This project is funded by  
The European Union



### **The CONECTA partners**

#### **Tampep International Foundation**

Van Diemenstraat 194 | 1013 CP | Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Tel: + 31 20 692 69 12

[tampep@xs4all.nl](mailto:tampep@xs4all.nl)

[www.tampep.eu](http://www.tampep.eu)

#### **Humanitarian Action**

Ofitserski pereulok 6, apt 2 | 197110 | St Petersburg, Russia

Tel. + 7 812 237 14 95

[office@haf-spb.org](mailto:office@haf-spb.org)

[www.haf-spb.org](http://www.haf-spb.org)

#### **Salus Charitable Foundation**

PO Box 320, 79000 | Lviv, Ukraine

Tel: +38 032 240 33 62

[salus@mail.lviv.ua](mailto:salus@mail.lviv.ua)

[www.salus.org.ua](http://www.salus.org.ua)



This project is funded by  
The European Union

conecta 