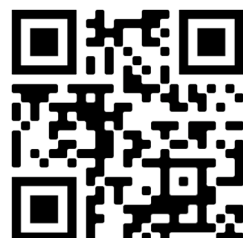




ADVOCACY ROADMAP TO ADDRESS FINANCIAL GAPS OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES PROVIDED TO MSM AND TRANS* PEOPLE IN ARMENIA





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NEW GENERATION



ADVOCACY ROADMAP TO ADDRESS FINANCIAL GAPS OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES PROVIDED TO MSM AND TRANS* PEOPLE IN ARMENIA

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ABBREVIATIONS

PWID	PEOPLE WHO INJECT DRUGS
CSW	COMMERCIAL SEX WORKERS
NGO	NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
RA	REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
AIDS	ACQUIRED IMMUNODEFICIENCY SYNDROME
HIV	HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS
CCM	COUNTRY COORDINATING MECHANISM AGAINST HIV/AIDS, TUBERCULOSIS AND MALARIA
MSM	MEN WHO HAVE SEX WITH MEN

BRIEF REVIEW

In 2021, analysis of the financial gaps in the Armenian State Budget for social and health services provided to MSM and trans* people was carried out with an aim of program and financial assessment of the National Program on the Response to HIV of the Republic of Armenia, in relation with the health and social services provided to MSM and trans* people.

The international experience, available financial allocations were assessed during the analysis, the financial gaps were revealed, and recommendations were developed to ensure the financial sustainability of prevention programs among MSM and trans* people.

The available documents were studied, information on the financial expenses was collected and in-depth interviews were conducted with experts during the analysis.

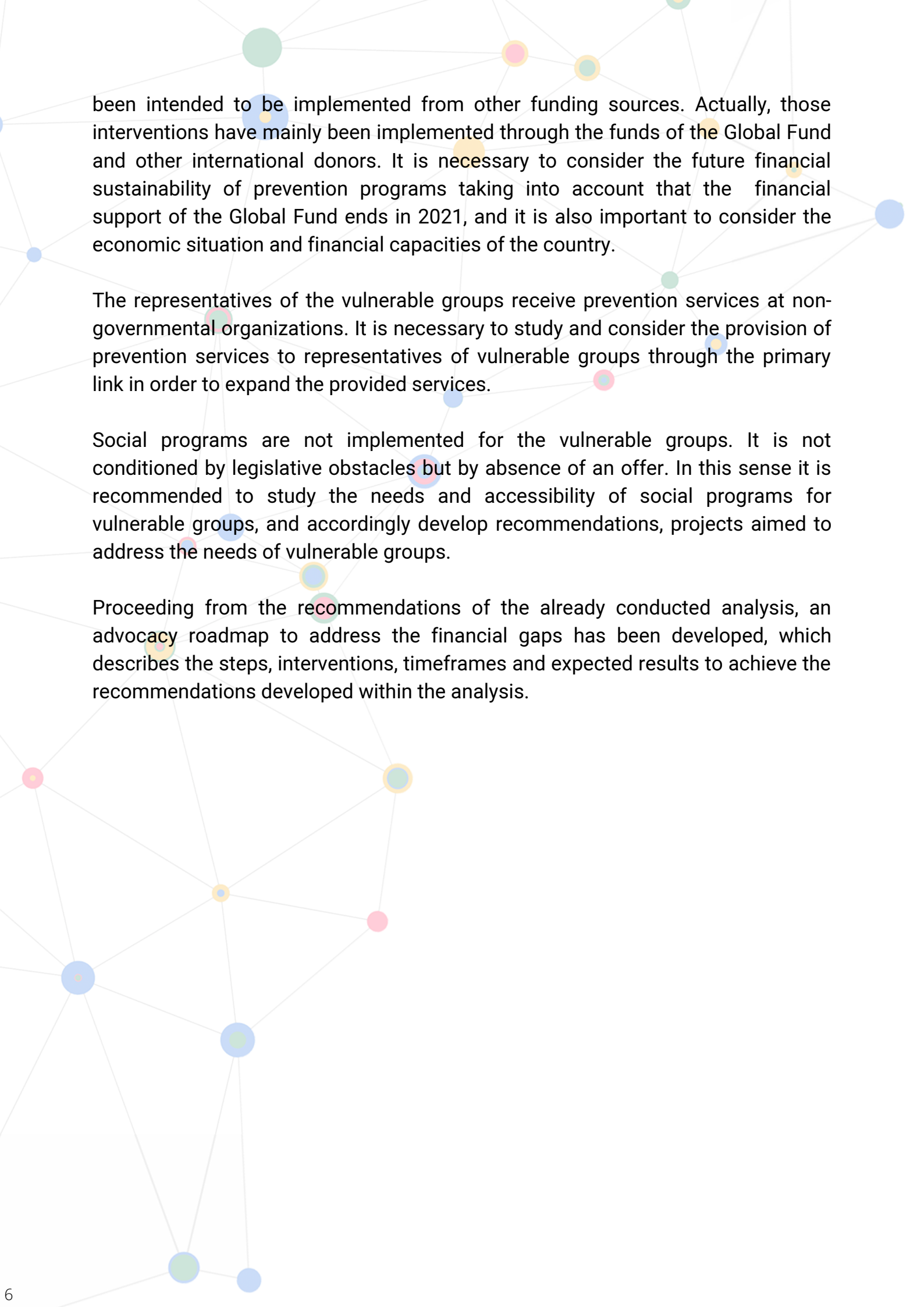
The interventions intended among the target groups within the National Program on the Response to HIV of the Republic of Armenia for 2017-2021, the expected results of those interventions, the actual results of the implemented interventions and the HIV-related epidemiological context in the country were examined during the study of the available documents.

Information was collected about the financial expenses of interventions for the target groups, incurred both from the state budget and other sources. During the analysis also in-depth interviews were conducted with experts about practical questions related to service provision to the target groups.

The collected information relating to the program interventions was presented by calendar year and the financial allocations for their implementation were presented by fiscal year, which partly restricted the implementation of analytic comparisons in a few angles. Besides, the data on a few interventions are not aggregated which has also been an obstacle to the review of funds spent on different interventions for MSM and trans* people, e.g. pre-exposure and post-exposure prophylaxes.

Considering that the National Program on the Response to HIV of the Republic of Armenia for 2017-2021 ends in 2021, it is necessary to develop and establish the new National Program for the next years to ensure the sustainability of interventions.

State budget funding for prevention programs has not been provided by the acting National Program on the Response to HIV of the Republic of Armenia, they have



been intended to be implemented from other funding sources. Actually, those interventions have mainly been implemented through the funds of the Global Fund and other international donors. It is necessary to consider the future financial sustainability of prevention programs taking into account that the financial support of the Global Fund ends in 2021, and it is also important to consider the economic situation and financial capacities of the country.

The representatives of the vulnerable groups receive prevention services at non-governmental organizations. It is necessary to study and consider the provision of prevention services to representatives of vulnerable groups through the primary link in order to expand the provided services.

Social programs are not implemented for the vulnerable groups. It is not conditioned by legislative obstacles but by absence of an offer. In this sense it is recommended to study the needs and accessibility of social programs for vulnerable groups, and accordingly develop recommendations, projects aimed to address the needs of vulnerable groups.

Proceeding from the recommendations of the already conducted analysis, an advocacy roadmap to address the financial gaps has been developed, which describes the steps, interventions, timeframes and expected results to achieve the recommendations developed within the analysis.

ADVOCACY ROADMAP TO ADDRESS FINANCIAL GAPS

The following recommendations have been highlighted during the analysis of the financial gaps in the Armenian state budget of social and health services provided to MSM and trans* people:

- 1** The National Program on the Response to HIV/AIDS for 2017-2021 ends in 2021. It is necessary to develop and establish the new National Program to ensure the sustainability of interventions for the future years.
- 2** State funding for prevention programs has not been provided by the acting National Program on the Response to HIV/AIDS of the Republic of Armenia, they have mainly been implemented through the funds of the Global Fund and other international donors. It is necessary to consider the future sustainability of prevention programs taking into account the fact that the financial support of the Global Fund ends in 2021, and it is also important to consider the economic situation and financial capacities of the country.
- 3** Representatives of vulnerable groups receive prevention services at non-governmental organizations. It is necessary to study and consider the provision of prevention services to representatives of vulnerable groups through the primary link in order to expand the provided services.
- 4** Social programs are not implemented for the vulnerable groups. It is not conditioned by legislative obstacles but by absence of an offer. In this sense it is recommended to study the needs and accessibility of social programs for vulnerable groups, and accordingly develop recommendations, projects aimed to address the needs of vulnerable groups.

1 RECOMMENDATION

The National Program on the Response to HIV/AIDS of the Republic of Armenia for 2017-2021 ends in 2021. It is necessary to develop and establish the new National Program to ensure the sustainability of interventions for the future years.

Currently the development of the new National Program on the Response to HIV/AIDS for the future years has started. It is necessary to ensure participation of representatives of vulnerable groups or of non-governmental organizations working with those groups in the process of development of the new National Program in order to ensure multisided engagement.

The non-governmental organizations need to undertake steps to ensure participation of representatives of vulnerable groups in those processes. In particular, the new structure of the Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM) is going to be approved, where new representatives of different NGOs have already been included. This is already an important step in ensuring multisided engagement in this process.

The interventions' timetable must be inquired from the CCM.

Expected result:

Active participation of representatives of vulnerable groups in the process of development and establishment of the National Program on the Response to HIV of the Republic of Armenia for 2017-2021.

2 RECOMMENDATION

State funding for prevention programs has not been provided by the Acting National Program on the Response to HIV/AIDS of the Republic of Armenia, they have mainly been implemented through the funds of the Global Fund and other international donors. It is necessary to consider the future sustainability of prevention programs taking into account the fact that the financial support of the Global Fund ends in 2021, and it is also important to consider the economic situation and financial capacities of the country.

The representatives of non-governmental organizations as well as of communities living with HIV and tuberculosis included in the new CCM shall undertake advocacy steps aimed at ensuring financial sustainability of prevention programs, in particular at the allocation of state funding.

It is necessary to give consideration to the social service contracting as well as possible funding allocation for implementation of prevention programs by other ministries besides the Ministry of Health.

Considering that the new CCM structure is established for 2 years, the advocacy steps must be taken in the coming two years.

Expected result:

Partial ensurance of state financial resources for HIV/AIDS prevention programs.



B RECOMMENDATION

Representatives of vulnerable groups receive prevention services at non-governmental organizations. It is necessary to study and consider the provision of prevention services to representatives of vulnerable groups through the primary link in order to expand the provided services.

Currently the primary healthcare link has started implementation of rapid tests for HIV, including for representatives of vulnerable groups. It is necessary to create independent NGO-based monitoring groups which with prior agreement with the Ministry of Health will conduct periodical monitoring visits to the primary link for needs assessment of services provided to representatives of vulnerable groups, revelation and voicing the found gaps. It will provide an opportunity to establish cooperation between the state and social sector ensuring the accessibility of provided services to representatives of certain vulnerable groups.

Such community-based monitoring groups can also be formed under the CCM which will also provide an opportunity to present monthly group work analyses to the CCM.

Considering that the new CCM structure is established for 2 years, the advocacy steps must be taken in the coming two years.

Expected result:

Formation of community-based monitoring groups under the CCM. Development of recommendations based on the group reports aimed at ensuring provision of high-quality and needs-based services to representatives of vulnerable groups.

4 RECOMMENDATION

Social programs are not implemented for the vulnerable groups. It is not conditioned by legislative obstacles but by absence of an offer. In this sense it is recommended to study the needs and accessibility of social programs for vulnerable groups, and accordingly develop recommendations, projects aimed to address the needs of vulnerable groups.

To study the vulnerable groups' needs for social programs. To regularly monitor the programs announced by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

To find out what programs are implemented. To develop recommendations and project proposals aimed to address the needs of vulnerable groups. Considering that the representative of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is a member of the CCM, it is necessary to raise and discuss the possibility of such proposals at the CCM sessions.

Timetable of interventions: ongoing.

Expected result:

Needs assessment for social programs. Development and presentation of new project proposals.

ANALYSIS

Besides the above-mentioned recommendations it is also important to consider the results achieved during the implementation of the National Program on the Response to HIV/AIDS. The analysis presented below includes recommendations for preservation of achieved results and ensuring their sustainability.

Commitment	Period	Indicator	Baseline data	Target	Data verification	Responsible agency	Comments
#1 Implementation of HIV prevention programs among MSM	2017-2021	HIV prevalence among MSM	0,8%	<2%	Results of 2018 HIV Biological Behavioral Surveillance Survey among people who inject drugs, commercial sex workers, men who have sex with men and transgender people	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	According to the results of HIV Biological Behavioral Surveillance Survey conducted in 2018, HIV prevalence among MSM was 1,9%, but the final assessment is to be conducted in 2021.

Commitment	Period	Indicator	Baseline data	Target	Data verification	Responsible agency	Comments
#2 Organization of seminars, trainings for people who implement prevention work among the most-at-risk groups	2017-2021	The number of trained people		250	Reports on the main results of interventions implemented in 2019, 2020, 2021 within the National Program on the Response to HIV of the Republic of Armenia	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	According to the report on the main results of interventions implemented in 2019 within the National Program on the Response to HIV of the Republic of Armenia, 98 people participated in the trainings. The indicator envisages annual training of 50 specialists of NGOs working with all vulnerable groups. The final results will be received in 2021.

Commitment	Period	Indicator	Baseline data	Target	Data verification	Responsible agency	Comments
#3 Provision of pre-exposure prophylaxis	2017-2021	The number of trained people		175	Reports on the main results of interventions implemented in 2019, 2020, 2021 within the National Program on the Response to HIV of the Republic of Armenia	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	According to the report on the main results of interventions implemented in 2019 within the National Program on the Response to HIV of the Republic of Armenia, 12 people received pre-exposure prophylaxis in 2019, the number included not only representatives of vulnerable groups. Discordant couples also received PrEP. The final data will be clear in 2021. The service is new, was included in 2019, appealability was low yet.

Commitment	Period	Indicator	Baseline data	Target	Data verification	Responsible agency	Comments
#4 Expansion of consultation and testing among PWID, CSW, MSM through NGO referral	2017-2021	Percentage of NGO referrals in the registered number of HIV cases	3,1%	30%	Reports on the main results of interventions implemented in 2019, 2020, 2021 within the National Program on the Response to HIV of the Republic of Armenia	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	According to the report on the main results of interventions implemented in 2019 within the National Program on the Response to HIV of the Republic of Armenia, the percentage of NGO referrals in the registered number of HIV cases of 2019 amounted to 9,8%. This indicator is still low to achieve the final result and there is a need to increase the coverage by engaging new subgroups of the given group.

Commitment	Period	Indicator	Baseline data	Target	Data verification	Responsible agency	Comments
#5. Provision of post-exposure prophylaxis to people who have been exposed to HIV occupationally and non-occupationally, including discordant couples.	2017-2021	<p>The number of people who have received post-exposure prophylaxis after non-occupational exposure to HIV</p> <p>The number of people who have received post-exposure prophylaxis after occupational exposure to HIV</p>	49	350	Reports on the main results of interventions implemented in 2019, 2020, 2021 within the National Program on the Response to HIV of the Republic of Armenia	Ministry of Health of the Republic of Armenia	According to the report on the main results of interventions implemented in 2019 within the National Program on the Response to HIV of the Republic of Armenia, 46 people received PEP, the number included not only vulnerable groups. The appealability was low.



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A network diagram consisting of numerous interconnected nodes of various colors (blue, yellow, red, green, pink) and sizes, connected by thin grey lines, forming a complex web across the entire page.

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