

PRIORITIES FROM THE TRANS COMMUNITY in Ukraine
IN THE COVID-19 RM 2.0 GRANT

*The consultation took place from 9 to 10st of June 2021, on the south of Ukraine. The meeting was attended by trans * persons of different identities, age and social groups from 6 and regions of the country.*

How many are you? Why are you sure you need a separate HIV prevention program? Trans people are included in prevention for MSM. Why do you think this is a problem?*

These and many other questions are voiced by CCM representatives and decision-makers. We want to say that Trans voices must be heard by the Global Fund! We ask for attention to our community, without being tied to MSM and cis people!*

The COVID-19 pandemic in Ukraine coincided with the start of the first quantitative study among trans * people conducted by the Public Health Center under the Ministry of Health of Ukraine. Even during the study period, when it was necessary to involve respondents, the connection with representatives of the trans * community began to be lost and disappeared, due to the fact that most people lost their jobs, their place of rented housing and were forced to move to their families, where they were often subjected to violence. Later, we learned that people could not contact organizations, even to receive humanitarian aid, because many simply did not have telephones and the ability to access the Internet. Everyone with whom they managed to restore contact over time requested regular psychological help and support, information about the consequences of Covid and hormone therapy, those from the community who had clinical manifestations of the virus could not receive medical assistance, since they did not have a declaration with family doctors. All representatives of the trans * group expressed the need for medical assistance and support, while hospitalized by peer consultants. At the meeting, most of the participants underwent COVID and expressed the need for support and resocialization after post-COVID syndrome. As a result, our recommendations to the Global Fund are as follows:

1. Organizational priorities:

- a. In support and funding of a trans * group, do not combine it with MSM or LGB programs / groups!
- b. Any activity aimed at the prevention of HIV, COVID pandemic, vaccinations, etc. for the trans * community should be carried out exclusively by trans * people and trans * organizations that are run by the trans * persons themselves.
- c. Transfer national funding directed to the trans * group to the appropriate trans * organizations of national or international level to reach the trans * people services.

2. Highest priorities:

- a. Strengthen the **access of trans * people to health services** through the formation of a regional network of social medical support for peers. For this, it is necessary to train regional representatives who will be able to support and accompany trans * persons to medical institutions. Provide them with basic knowledge of medical law pravova, tools for dialogue with medical personnel, phones, computers, for organizing on-line / off-line medical appointments, give them the skills to monitor cases of violation of rights, as well as collect needs from both doctors and outsiders. community.
- b. **Mental health and psycho-social rehabilitation** - to prepare trans * competent psychotherapists competent in cognitive behavioral therapy who can provide support with a psychotherapeutic course (from 12 receptions). On the basis of the psychological service, form and train specialists for the hotline of psychological help for trans * people, trans * people. Equip them with technical means and train the skills of working on the hotline. Provide supervision to partner therapists.
- c. **Leave no one behind** - provide **the socio-economic reintegration** of trans * people in a post-like world. Conduct courses for obtaining practical skills for self-employment (SMM, IT, manicure, baking and cooking courses, running your own business project, developing your brand, business consulting,

etc.). Provide access to resocialization, education, employment to reduce economic vulnerability among trans * people.

- d. **Strengthen community mobilization support** - support the holding of camps, meetings and the search for trans * people, especially in small regions that have lost contact with organizations due to the pandemic. Especially sex workers who were actively involved in the work and were at risk from law enforcement agencies and clients at the height of the pandemic and still are. Conduct regular off-line support camps, educating trans * people about Covid, HIV prophylaxis, the relationship between hormone therapy and post-COVID state.
- e. **Provide Humanitarian Aid to Access Treatment** - Provide food kits requested by people in the community who are out of work due to the pandemic and need help with medicines for treatment. Purchase of medicines and supportive care for trans*individuals.

Other Recommendations for consideration.

- Research on the impact of COVID on the health of trans * people with different experiences of hormone therapy
- Support of on-line platforms for remote communication and work (Zoom, Telegram, MSTims, etc.)
- Provision of secure Internet access for trans * persons with education about cybersecurity
- Economic access to laboratories for testing, including for COVID
- Nutritional support (and other livelihood packages) especially for those living with HIV and the sex workers
- Providing transport for the trans members who have challenges accessing health facilities.
- Rapid assessment/ operational research on the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the SRHR issues/ mental health, IPV/GBV and how they are affecting the trans- community