



2009-12-08 Draft

Minutes from the 10th meeting of the Joint Working Group on Health and Related Social Issues (JWGHS) in Arkhangelsk, Russia, 12th November, 2009

1. Opening of the meeting

Ms. Kerstin Ödman, Ministry of Health and Social Affairs Sweden, and Ms. Vera Utyugova, Health Care Department of Arkhangelsk Region Administration, the Co-Chairs of the JWGHS, opened the meeting. Participants of the meeting presented themselves. List of the participants is attached to these minutes.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

3. Adoption of the report from the JWGHS meeting held in Arkhangelsk, Russia, on the 13th November 2008

The report was approved.

4. Tuberculosis in the Barents Region

Background

The Prime Ministers' Declaration in Kirkenes of 11 January 2003 on the occasion of the BEAC 10th anniversary made some specific commitments to advance co-operation. Health and social authorities were urged to gain full control of TB spread in the Barents Region within 10 years (i.e. by 2013).

The JWGHS meeting of November 2008 made an assessment of the present situation. TB expert and WHO-representative Prof. Andrei Maryandyshev, Northern State Medical University, reported about TB situation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region.

The JWGHS noted that important progress had been achieved, but at the same time much more needed to be done and that continued co-operation was necessary.

4a) Report on the situation

Ms. Elena Nikishova, Deputy Head Doctor of Arkhangelsk Regional TB Dispensary, presented the report on TB situation in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region. She began with thanking the members of the JWGHS for the contributed information regarding TB situation. The information was summarized together with Professor Andrei Maryandyshev, WHO-expert on TB issues. (The presentation has been posted on www.beac.st).

6) Possible activities in order to promote co-operation on tuberculosis to improve the situation. Discussion and decision.

Ms. Kerstin Ödman, the Swedish Co-Chair of the JWCHS, announced the proposal of the Co-Chairs in relation to further strengthening of co-operation on tuberculosis, as well as the proposal made by Mr. Zaza Tzereteli, international technical adviser of the NDPHS Expert Group on Prison Health (see the materials of the 10th JWGHS meeting). A discussion followed.

The following conclusions were drawn as a result of the discussion:

The JWGHS considers that strengthening of international co-operation is needed in order cope with TB spreading. Priority target groups should be prisoners and vulnerable groups of population at risk of becoming HIV infected or already HIV-positive. Adequate linking of civilian and prison TB programmes is essential. Co-operation and co-ordination between TB and HIV services should be strengthened. The importance of treatment and prevention of MDR TB was underlined for the future work. It was finally emphasized that health and social measures should be integrated as far as possible.

Future work should be done in co-operation with the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS) and its relevant Expert Groups. Already ongoing international co-operation should be taken into account.

The JWGHS welcomes the offer of the NDPHS Expert Group on Prison Health to organize a meeting in March 2010. JWGHS proposes this meeting to be a preparatory stage for a Logical Framework Approach (LFA) seminar in June 2010 where all stakeholders should be invited. LFA method should be used to develop a programme covering both penitentiary and civil health care services. Developed program should then serve as a basis to apply to relevant bodies for financing.

The NDPHS Prison Health Expert Group was invited to organize these meetings, in co-operation with the Arkhangelsk regional health administration, represented by Prof. Maryandyshev, TB expert and WHO representative, professor of Northern State Medical University, Arkhangelsk, and the new Co-Chairs - Finland and Komi. Finland and Sweden will find possibilities to provide funding for LFA-seminar. The Russian side is to report back to the JWGHS on LFA-seminar outcomes.

5. Co-operation in the Barents Region on health and social issues

a) Report from the Barents HIV/AIDS programme Steering Committee

Ms Outi Karvonen, programme coordinator, presented the report from the Steering Committee of Barents HIV/ AIDS Programme. The presentation has been posted on www.beac.st.

Outi Karvonen began her presentation with HIV situation in the Barents region. The statistics was taken from EPI-North and North-west AIDS Centre. She pointed out the increase of HIV and TB co-infection in St. Petersburg during the period of 2000- 2009. Outi Karvonen also presented the activities carried out at the end of 2008 and during 2009. Projects´ status in November 2009: 12 projects are ongoing and 16 projects have been completed. Also several new project applications were submitted. The results of Arkhangelsk evaluation performed by professor Pauli Leinikki were presented by Outi Karvonen as well: Pauli Leinikki was very impressed how well HIV work was organized in Arkhangelsk and that Arkhangelsk AIDS Centre has clear leading role. He made some recommendations concerning future collaboration and remarked that this collaboration had really good impact here. In the conclusion Outi Karvonen told about next steps of the programme.

b) 1. Report from Steering Committee of the programme Children and Youth at Risk in the Barents Region (CYAR)

Mr. Pål Christian Bergstrøm, the Chair of the Steering Committee of the programme Children and Youth at Risk in the Barents Region (CYAR), informed the JWGHS about the latest development and pointed out two major challenges related to the CYAR programme: 1. Funding of programme activities. 2. Stabilisation of the programme Steering Committee.

Funding: NDPHS, Partner contributions

Project owner: CYAR Steering Committee

Project leader: CYAR Chair, Bufetat Barents department

Project coordinator: Dr. Kuposov, Bufetat

Objective: Realization of CYAR programme

The project comprises four main activities:

1. Developing a situation overview in the Barents region – through annual regional reports, Barents meetings.
2. Annual expert conference on CYAR topics.
3. Competence sharing – dissemination of 4 selected methods of programme aimed at CYAR:
 - Incredible Years
 - Family Group Conferences - FGC
 - Aggression Replacement Training – ART, Family ART
 - Restorative Justice – Mediation boards
4. Information networking and developing the website for CYAR and International Barents Secretariat.

The four selected programmes have a lot in common. All of them are directed towards CYAR prioritized target groups, all of them have a very strong family perspective, all of them have a documented effect towards the target groups and all of them exist now both in International and Russian versions. The experience from the use of these programmes both in Nordic and in N-W Russian regions has proved that they are highly recommended, there is a lot of positive outcomes and they are in demand in all regions. Programmes are also in line with regional plans for development of social services in the region. Barents partners are very interested in these programmes and already a lot of applications were received for participation in training courses for building competence in new organizations based on such programmes. The key organizations involved in this project are:

Incredible years – University of Tromsø, the Ministry of Health and Social Development in Karelia.

Family group conferences - SOS children cities in Russia

ART, Family ART – University college of Rogaland in Norway and the Ministry of Education in Karelia

Restorative Justice and mediation – Pomor State University in Arkhangelsk, Correctional Services and the Ministry of Justice and Police in Norway.

Basically now in the Bufetat Department for Barents cooperation in Tromsø there exists an organizational platform for carrying out this project. There is funding available for project realization. All of the activities are carried out through NDPHS programme and agreements with all the organizations involved in this new initiative are made.

2. Prolongation of the CYAR programme

Mr. Pål Christian Bergstrøm addressed the JWGHS members with a request about one year prolongation of the CYAR programme, original time-frame being 2008-2011 (i.e. prolongation until the end of 2012). This is necessary because of the late start of the programme.

JWGHS highly appreciated all the efforts taken by the CYAR Steering Committee and Pål Christian Bergstrøm in particular. Members expressed strong belief that CYAR programme would be a success and decided on the prolongation of the programme implementation as requested.

The JWGHS was at the same time pointing out that the Co-operation Program on Health and Related Social Issues lasts up to the end of 2011, but even in case programme would not be renewed, possibilities would still exist to find place for the CYAR programme within the Barents co-operation.

c) Information from regional and national representatives on current and future co-operation in other areas

d) Further steps to develop co-operation

The first presentation was delivered by **Ms. Vera Utyugova**, Deputy Director of the Arkhangelsk Region Health Care Department:

In Arkhangelsk region about 20 Barents projects have been under implementation.

1. Projects with Helse Nord:

- Creation of the rehabilitation Center for the patients with multiple sclerosis and stroke patients in Arkhangelsk Regional hospital
- Improvement of treatment and rehabilitation of stroke patients
- Qualitative development of diagnostics in the North-West of Russia
- Leadership and management in nursing.
- Pomor programme of PHC development
- Comparison of international and Russian standards of treatment and diagnostics of Chlamidia trachomatis, Mycoplasma genitalium, Ureaplasma urealyticum
- The heart link – e-health contribution to life quality of people with CVD in the north-west of Russia
- Medical Equipment for the North-West of Russia
- Improvement of identification of patients with first psychotic episodes in PHC and their treatment and social services

2. Projects with Norwegian Healthcare Directorate:

- Health Care System Reforming with focus on Primary Health Care
- Role of a nurse in health promotion and STI prevention

3. Projects with LHL:

- Decrease of TB prevalence in Arkhangelsk region
- GUCH-project

4. Projects with Pertinax Group (Oslo):

- Peer education in STI and HIV prevention
- Prevention of psycho-active substance addiction in teenagers

5. Projects with Sweden:

- Teaching of young psychiatrists to management in psychiatric service
- Distant communication between general practitioners in Arkhangelsk region and north of

Sweden

- Implementation of clinical audit to primary healthcare

6. Projects financed by NCM:

- Social partnership against the spread of HIV/AIDS and drug addiction in the North-West of Russia”

Ms. Vera Utyugova pointed out that the most important outcome within the framework of the Barents Euro-Arctic Region cooperation is coordination of activities, contacts on the level of administration and individual specialists, sharing of experience and friendship that enhances more active implementation of new projects.

The next report was presented by **Ms. Elena Khoroshkina**, Head of Information Centre of the Nordic Council of Ministers in Arkhangelsk, Russia. Ms. Khoroshkina informed about an international project started in 2009 and funded by NCM.

The project's title is «Social partnership against HIV/AIDS and drug addiction in NW Russia»

The goal of the project is promotion of cross - sectoral social experience competence enhancement against drug abuse, HIV/AIDS in NW Russia.

Project Partners are:

- National Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland
- National Board of Health and Welfare, Sweden
- Norwegian Health Directorate
- National Health protection Ministries in Barents region, Russian Federation
- Antidrug control in NW Russia

Geographical areas covered by the project are North West Russia, Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark.

Activity within the project: knowledge exchange between authorities, power structures in Nordic countries and North-West Russia by arranging a set of seminars, traineeship visits to Nordic countries on prevention of AIDS\HIV, drug abuse.

Expected results of the project

- The project will contribute to strengthening long-term partnerships between North-West Russian and Nordic partner organizations on prevention of drug addiction, HIV/AIDS.
- Project will promote inter-sector knowledge, experiences and skills exchange as well as establishment of networks, effective in the Nordic countries and North-West Russia on prevention of drug addiction, HIV/AIDS
- Partners and participants of the project will investigate common prevention policies, receive new ideas for regional and municipal policy, possible implementation of the prevention policies into Nordic-Russian practice.
- Lessons learned from the project will be utilized by decision- makers for cross regional policy making. Recommendations from the project will be presented to regional governments and legislative bodies
- Modelling process on implementation of best practices, concerning health and social care will be carried out.
- The project will contribute to social sustainability in the North-West Russia and Nordic countries region.

Ms. Olga Kolosova, chief specialist of the Unit for medical care organization, Ministry of Health Care and Social Development, Murmansk Region, Russia, informed about international projects

implemented in Murmansk Region.

Currently 6 international projects are under the implementation. One project was finished in spring 2009, another project is planned to be launched in 2010. All the projects are different but there is one common feature about them - investment in intellect. The orientation of the projects coincides with the priorities of social state policy in Russia.

The following projects are implemented within the Programme "Prevention and combating communicable diseases":

"Coordination of HIV/AIDS programme"

"Further development of low threshold services in the cities of Murmansk and Kandalaksha"

"Establishment of cooperation network for prevention of drug addiction in the Murmansk Region"

"TB and HIV"

The following projects implemented in Murmansk region are in line with the priority defined as "Prevention of life-style related medical and social problems. Promotion of healthy life style":

"Prevention, diagnostics and treatment of COPD in the Murmansk Region"

"Pomor primary healthcare Programme"

"Clinical audit in General Practice".

Since 2006 there has been implemented Russian-Norwegian project "Delivery register in the Murmansk Region", aimed at organization and quality improvement of obstetric-gynaecologic and neonatal care.

Ms. Evgeniya Kotova, Deputy Minister, Health Ministry of Komi Republic, Russia, informed that currently on the territory of Komi Republic there are no international projects implemented in the healthcare sector except the interaction with "Green Light" concerning TB treatment. She expressed hope that the period of co-chairmanship of Komi Republic and Finland, 2011 - 2012, would have a positive impact on international cooperation development.

Regretfully, there were no representatives from the Republic of Karelia, Russia, at the 10th JWGHS meeting. Therefore, the information about international projects in the field of HIV/AIDS and TB prevention and occupational health, implemented in the the Republic was presented by **Ms. Maria Waltari**, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland, **Ms Outi Karvonen**, Programme Coordinator, Barents HIV/AIDS Programme, Finland, **Ms. Rauni Ruohonen**, Finnish Lung Health Association, Finland.

Ms. Kerstin Ödman thanked the speakers for the presented reports. She remarked that the projects verify the impressive range and development of cooperation going on. Such a roundtable discussion not only gives a picture of work done but also develops ideas about possible collaboration between different projects. Ms. Kerstin Ödman also noted that bilateral cooperation is of great importance; at the same time she expressed satisfaction about the fact that co-operation with more partners is emerging. Hopefully there comes more cooperation of such kind from Nordic Council of Ministers.

6. Information about the latest developments of the Barents co-operation

Ms. Kerstin Rosén, informed about the program of Sweden as a new BEAC Chair for the years 2010-2011. She underlined the importance of Barents co-operation. The overarching focus area will be an *eco-efficient economy* which aims at addressing the challenges related to economic growth, climate change and rational use of natural resources and energy. In this connection she mentioned health and climate change and as a possible field of activity.

BEAC programme recognizes the importance of co-operation on health and social protection. Special attention is to be given to Kirkenes Declaration from 2003, where public health and social security bodies were recommended to gain full control of TB spread in the Barents Region within 10 years. It is important to safeguard the successful work already done to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and to enable implementation of the programme Children and Youth at Risk.

The chairmanship will be executed in co-operation with BEAC countries and in close contacts with the Northern Dimension Partnerships, CBSS, EU, Nordic Council of Ministers and other relevant stakeholders.

Ms. Anna Lund, International Barents Secretariat (IBS), reminded of the opportunity to use the IBS for information and communication services and informed that a press release about progress in the field of CYAR would be sent out to media in the Barents Region and be published on www.beac.st in the next few days.

Anna Lund also reported some of the Barents events that has taken place lately. One was the visit of Foreign Affairs Ministers of Sweden and Norway Mr. Bildt and Mr. Gahr-Store to the IBS and Norwegian Barents Secretariat in Kirkenes, followed by a bus trip to Murmansk, where number of meetings with government officials took place. Mr. Bildt's engagement in this event shows his great interest in the cooperation and the region which is promising for the Swedish BEAC Chairmanship. The event was reported on Swedish and Norwegian national TV-news and in the newspapers.

In September Conference on Climate Change in the Barents Region was held in Vadsø. Ms. Birgitta Evengård from Västerbotten, who is also a member of JWGHS, expressed at the conference a wish to make a research on the effect of climate change to people health – probably this topic will recently become a priority for JWGHS work.

The IBS has contacted with the NCM and also sent the text of the agenda item 4b to the NCM office in Kaliningrad in order to improve projects coordination and cooperation in the field of TB and HIV/AIDS.

7. Report on the progress of the Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being (NDPHS)

Mr. Anders Lamark Tysse from the Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care Services reported about CSR meeting (Committee of Senior Representatives of NDPHS) held in Riga on October 15-16, and informed that Partnership Annual Conference will take place in Oslo 25 November. Conference will be chaired by Norwegian Minister of Health and it will be the last one under Norwegian chairmanship in NDPHS.

Main questions of the agenda:

1) Election of a new Chair and Co-chair country.

Russia has informed that it is ready to take over the chairmanship for 2010-2011 with Finland as co-chair. Mr. Tysse remarked that the fact that Finland will chair JWGHS and co-chair NDPHS at the same time must lead to even closer collaboration.

2) Adoption of a new strategy for the partnership for 2010 and onwards - the strategy was presented by the chairing Sweden (Kerstin Ödman) at the CSR. The report is based on work results of the Strategy Working Group which was established in November 2008 to perform an external evaluation of NDPHS.

- 3) Memorandum of understanding concerning the establishment of a secretariat on NDPHS
- 4) Adoption of NDPHS declaration on prison health.

The day before the ministerial conference, an expert-level meeting on prison health will be arranged at the same venue.

Mr. Tysse finished by informing that Minister of Health of Norway was making a speech on behalf of the NDPHS at the Northern Dimension Senior Officials' Meeting in Stockholm 12 November.

8. Election of Co-Chairs for 2010 – 2011

Present meeting was the last one under the chairmanship of the Arkhangelsk region and Sweden. Komi Republic and Finland were announced to be Co-Chairs for 2010-2011.

Ms. Maria Waltari emphasized that Finland would willingly accept the co-chairmanship together with Komi Republic. She suggested organizing the next JWGHS meeting in Ivalo, Finland.

9. Any other business

Anna Lund asked the speakers to make presentations delivered at the JWGHS meeting available for International Barents Secretariat.

10. Next meeting

New Co-Chairs will discuss and inform JWGHS members about the dates and venue of the next JWGHS meeting.

11. Closing of the meeting

Co-Chairs thanked all those present for participation in the 10th meeting of the Joint Working Group on health and Related Social Issues and announced the meeting closed. Ms Kerstin Ödman expressed her gratitude to the Arkhangelsk hosts for their warm welcome and excellent organization of the meeting.