

Request for Proposals for Technical Assistance Provision

Deadline for Proposals Submission: January 24, 2016

East Europe and Central Asia Union of People Living with HIV (ECUO) is currently soliciting request for proposals (RFP) from qualified organizations to deliver technical support services both to ECUO and ECUO beneficiaries and stakeholders, involved into realization of the Regional project "Partnership for equitable access to HIV-care continuum in Eastern Europe and Central Asia" being implemented by ECUO within the framework of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) New Funding Model.

The purpose of this RFP is to select an organization for technical assistance provision for the year 2016. Technical assistance providers can be consulting groups, organizations, networks or consortia with appropriate technical expertise who can offer the best value in terms of both technical and cost factors. The organization should have capabilities and experience in at least one from four technical areas: 1) Conduction of the review/assessment of the situation on different aspects connected with the access to HIV-care continuum; 2) Monitoring & Evaluation; 3) Advocacy; 4) Organizational capacity building. The activities envisaged for each of the technical areas are specified in Annex 1 to this RFP (please, find below).

Background

The international charitable organization "East Europe and Central Asia Union of People Living with HIV" was established in 2007 in Kiev, Ukraine.

ECUO is a regional partner organization that was established by and for People Living with HIV (PLWH)! ECUO is the "network of networks" that unites PLWH community from EECA countries to increase its influence on scaling-up access to antiretroviral treatment (ART) through using powerful regional and international tools and securing human rights of all people living with HIV in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) region for getting comprehensive access to treatment. Currently, PLWH organizations from 16 countries of the region are ECUO members. The ECUO Secretariat is based in Kiev, Ukraine.

ECUO has developed the Regional Advocacy Strategy on ensuring access to ART in EECA (RAS, <http://ecuo.org/ru/ecuo/about/strategy/>) in 2012. It was revised and renewed in 2014 in accordance with the new data available on the situation with HIV/AIDS epidemic in EECA. The main goal of RAS is to provide on the PLWH's community's initiative in EECA countries 100% financing of the antiretroviral treatment from the state budget for all PLWH who need it and its effective use by the year 2020. The achievement of four interim results is envisaged within the framework of RAS: 1) In the EECA region the provision of HIV-care continuum including the services of involving and retaining the patients within the treatment programs is financed at an average of no less than 50% from the state budget; 2) The state financing of the antiretroviral HIV- infection treatment programs is most effective and corresponds to the "price-quality" principle. 3) The PLWH organizations are capable to conduct effective public campaigns aimed at ensuring the sustainability of the antiretroviral treatment programs for the state budget means; 4) Access to

antiretroviral treatment is expanded. For achievement of the goals mentioned above ECUO in a partnership with other organizations realizes the projects supported by the various donor and international organizations (Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM), Robert Carr Civil Society Networks Fund, Global Network of People Living with HIV etc.)

The Regional project "Partnership for equitable access to HIV-care continuum in EECA" was developed by ECUO in partnership with the Eurasian Harm Reduction Network (EHRN) with the technical support of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the [Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS](#) (UNAIDS), was discussed at a number of regional consultations and was supported by the wide circle of stakeholders. Regional project was adopted within the framework of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria New Funding Model and commenced its implementation in 2015.

The project "Partnership for equitable access to HIV-care continuum in EECA" focuses on two most urgent issues concerning PLWH in the EECA region:

- 1) PLWH drop-out of the stages of the HIV treatment cascade, which leads to later start of ARV- treatment among PLWH, especially among key affected populations (KAP), and to higher AIDS mortality rate in the presence of ART;
- 2) absence of strategic investments and sustainable plans of transition to domestic sources of funding the access to the continuum of services ranging from HIV detection to treatment, which prevents access to HIV-care continuum.

The goal of the Regional project is to increase efficiency, accessibility and sustainability of the HIV-infection treatment programs through promoting HIV-care continuum for PLWH with special focus on key populations in the EECA region.

The goal of the project is expected to be reached by means of joining actions at the regional and national levels; and by means of strengthening cooperation between organized communities, relevant ministries, departments and establishments, international and national organizations and technical partners. Interventions of the regional project "Partnership for equitable access to HIV- care continuum in EECA" constitute a comprehensive advocacy program, which consolidates PLWD and KAP communities' efforts in the implementation of the well-reasoned dialogue with decision-makers in EECA countries in order to ensure long-term sustainability in providing HIV-care continuum.

For successful RAS implementation through the Regional project "Partnership for equitable access to HIV-care continuum in Eastern Europe and Central Asia" realization ECUO plans to attract the organization for technical assistance provision (service provider), including formation of the pool of experts from the technical areas, specified in the Annex 1 to this RFP.

Scope of work

It's expected that the service provider will be selected by the February 1st 2016 and contract will be made between ECUO and organization for the period from February 8th to December 31st, 2016 with a possibility of extension.

It's expected that the pool of experts in accordance with the technical areas specified in Annex 1 (at least 10 experts per technical area), should be formed by the selected service provider by the February 29, 2016.

The specific technical assistance (TA) can be required by ECUO from the services provider for the realization of the Regional project "Partnership for equitable access to HIV-care continuum in EECA" (Regional Project) goal or for TA provision to the partners, participating in the Regional Project or for TA provision to the Sub-recipients or the Sub-sub-recipients of the Regional Project.

The prepared requests will be sent by ECUO to the selected service-provider.

Based on the ECUO requests the service provider should suggest at least two consultants for the implementation of the request, including terms of reference for the consultant and cost calculation for implementation of the request. ECUO decides on the optimal option by itself based on the submitted proposals and being guided by the "quality-cost" principle. Final versions of the terms of references for consultants, developed by the service provider, are to be approved by ECUO.

The quality of consultative services provision and term of fulfillment are controlled by the service provider.

It is expected that the technical assistance will be provided both distantly and by conduction of the visits to the countries of the EECA region.

Qualifications

To qualify, service provider must meet the following criteria:

- a. Must be a business or nongovernmental organization, institution or consulting group.
- b. Must have been in operation for at least 3 years and be able to demonstrate relevant activity during that period.
- c. The organization's consultants are responsible for any taxes and fees in connection with the payment of their work by themselves. For this purpose, when choosing an organization's consultant, the legislation of the country of residence of such a consultant is taken into account, so that it provides for the possibility for him or her of paying all the taxes and fees in relation to the income received.
- d. As some of the types of the technical assistance will be conducted within the framework of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria project, the Global Fund Standard Terms and Conditions form an integral part of this RFP and will be included in any contract resulting from this solicitation. Submitting a proposal in response to this RFP constitutes acceptance of these terms and conditions, found at this link on the Global Fund website: <http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/business/>. To be eligible as a supplier with the Global Fund, any organization or individual must comply with the Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest for Global Fund Institutions and the Code of Conduct for Suppliers. Both are located on the Global Fund website at the following link: <http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/governance/>

In addition, the organization must be able to provide or create within the framework of the contract with ECUO a substantial roster of experts with at least 3 years of experience in the technical areas relevant to the Terms of Reference (see attached Annex 1), and at least 2 years of experience working at national and regional levels. Consultants must have appropriate Russian language skills (both oral and written).

Payment conditions:

The payment will be made based on the tasks requests.

The payment for the creation of a list of pool of experts will be made in 2 installments:

- 1st payment - 30% advanced payment
- 2nd payment - 70% final payment upon approval

The payment to cover the costs for experts' work will be made upon the satisfactory completion of the work.

Proposals Submission

Applications must be submitted in English or Russian and should include the following sections:

1. Completed cover sheet and Capability statement (2 pages maximum) describing the organization's ability and experience in one or more of the subject technical areas specified in Annex 1 to RFP.
The capability statement should include background information on the organization including its legal status, constituent documents, current organizational structure, number and qualifications of staff, and annual operating revenues for the previous three years. The capability statement should also identify the management team and outline its approach to developing the organization's core competencies in the areas of business development (including growing its consultant roster).
2. Description of the relevant experience with a list of examples of TA provided
3. Regional experience and language capacity
4. Proposed top senior staff and consultants who will work in the technical areas of ECUO assignments (attach up to 10 resumes of proposed key staff and consultants)
5. Commercial offer with indication of the service fee of the organization for the following services: 1) formation of pool of experts in accordance with technical areas specified in Annex 1 (at least 10 experts per technical area) 2) development of the terms of reference for consultants 3) preparation of the proposals on the specific consultants for fulfillment of the request; 4) monitoring and control of the tasks fulfillment. The scanned version of the commercial offer should be signed and stamped and submitted to the following emails golubkova@ecuo.org and in CC olya.a@ecuo.org.

Applications will be evaluated based on the above criteria weighted as follows:

- 30 % technical experience and profile
- 20% geographic and language capability
- 20% management team and consultants quality
- 30 % service fee

Shortlisted organizations will be invited to participate in a second round consisting of telephone/Skype presentation of its potential value as a TA provider or written questions. It is expected that successful candidates will be selected, notified and contracted in February 2016.

Applications must be submitted by e-mail golubkova@ecuo.org and in CC olya.a@ecuo.org by or before January 24, 2016.

ISSUANCE OF THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS DOES NOT CONSTITUTE AN AWARD COMMITMENT ON THE PART OF ECUO NOR DOES IT COMMIT ECUO TO PAY FOR COSTS INCURRED IN THE PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION. FURTHER, ECUO RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL APPLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Annex 1 Terms of Reference and Technical Area Specifications

Terms of Reference

General terms of reference: provision of consultative services in specified technical areas upon the request initiated by ECUO

General skills requirements for consultants of potential service-providers:

1. Advanced graduate degree or certification.
2. At least 3 years of proven professional experience in at least one of the 4 technical areas of ECUO work, of which at least 2 years was at national level with the public sector, a national or international nongovernmental organization (NGO) or private voluntary organization (PVO), academia, development partner, or in the private sector.
3. Experience and/or training in facilitation, adult training, support of leadership and decision making bodies, governance, or policy making for governance consultants.
4. Professional-level language capacity in the Russian language. Knowledge of the English language is an advantage.
5. Strong writing and presentation skills, demonstrated through writing samples to be furnished on request.
6. Experience in working with teams to achieve results as well as an ability to work independently, take initiative, and use good judgment.
7. Demonstrated ability to collaborate effectively with colleagues in a broad range of indigenous, nongovernmental, governmental, and international organizations within multiple sociocultural contexts.
8. Demonstrated competence to assess priorities and manage a variety of activities in a time sensitive environment and meet deadlines with attention to detail and quality.
9. International work experience is required for some of the consultants.
10. Ability to travel internationally and domestically as required.
11. Office computer skills essential.

Technical Area 1: Conduction of the review/assessment of the situation on different aspects connected with the access to HIV-care continuum

In this technical area the following activities are envisaged:

1. Development of the methodologies
2. Conduction of the focus-groups
3. Preparation of the reports

Technical Area 2: Monitoring & Evaluation

In this technical area the following activities are envisaged:

1. Development of the methodologies of conduction of the public monitoring of treatment continuity and quality of treatment/services at the national level.
2. Conduction of the ongoing monitoring of treatment continuity and quality of treatment (prices for medicines, registration of the medicines, state procurements of the medicines) in 15 countries of EECA region.
3. Technical assistance in the development of the Monitoring and Evaluation System for the non-governmental organization
4. Technical Assistance in the project baseline development

Technical Area 3: Advocacy

In this technical area the following activities are envisaged:

1. Development of the regional and national advocacy plans on ensuring the access to HIV-care continuum
2. Development and distribution of the regional and national policy-briefs on access to HIV-care continuum
3. Technical support provision in community advocacy initiatives aimed at ensuring the access to HIV-care continuum with use of the "learning-by-doing" approach (technical support visits, ongoing distant support (online) on the issues of:
 - 3.1 Advocacy
 - 3.2 Finances (state budgeting processes)
 - 3.3. Intellectual property, patent oppositions
 - 3.4 Law
 - 3.5 Public health
4. Technical assistance in the creation of the national consortia of the people living with diseases (PLWH, people living with HIV and TB) and key affected populations (people using drugs, sex-workers, men having sex with men), and also in the development of the national advocacy plans and their activities implementation.
5. Facilitation of the regional and national advocacy events (meetings, conferences, workshops etc.)

Technical Area 4: Organizational capacity building

In this technical area the following activities are envisaged:

1. Development and implementation of the capacity building plan, including TA provision in the field of strategical, program and financial management
2. Development of the organizational strategic plan