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IOM International Organization for Migration

**TRAINING COURSE**

**'HIV/AIDS and Mobile Populations:  
Strengthening NGO Cooperation and Communication'  
19-20<sup>th</sup> April 2006, Hotel Bosnia, Sarajevo**

**FINAL REPORT**

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**By :**

**Stefano Volpicelli - Trainer  
Roberto Rossi - Trainer  
Ruth Grove-White - Project Coordinator**

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**Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Vilsonovo setaliste 10, 71000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Tel: +387/33/648-137, 648-150, 648-160, 648-162, 648-165, 648-168  
Fax: +387/33/648-202  
E-mail: [missionsarajevo@iom.int](mailto:missionsarajevo@iom.int) • Internet: <http://www.iom.ba>

## 1. Background

The 2-day training took place in April 2006, as part of IOM's 'HIV/AIDS National Capacity Building and Awareness Raising Activities in Bosnia and Herzegovina'. Attending the training were 26 national NGO representatives, in the fields of:

- Sexual/reproductive health
- Youth health
- Women's health
- Mobile groups (including refugees and victims of trafficking)
- Local activism

All participants were invited on the basis of their involvement in HIV/AIDS-related activities. Additionally, 2 regional IOM HIV/AIDS representatives attended, from IOM Kosovo and IOM Macedonia, in order to present the situation elsewhere in the region and discuss possible activities and strategies for the targeting of mobile groups in BiH.

2 trainers, Stefano Volpicelli and Roberto Rossi, from Italy, led the programme. Ruth Grove-White and Mirsada Zeco from IOM Sarajevo also attended and assisted the coordination of activities.

The training had three stated aims:

- Improve participants' knowledge of HIV/AIDS issues in relation to mobile populations
- Exchange best practices with one another regarding HIV/AIDS
- Agree a common language on HIV/AIDS for further work

## 2. Methodology

In terms of simplified categorisation, two kinds of training can be identified: a) training aimed at learning new techniques (thus modifying old practices) and b) training aimed at strengthening the capacity of a "system" to counteract challenges; the first type prioritises individual/manual procedural impact, while the second addresses the coordination and team building of different stakeholders.

Given the purpose of this training, the second methodology was chosen. This method makes large use of the so-called experiential learning, where the theoretical and working experiences of the participants are brought out, discussed and shared. Following an ancient proverb that says: "tell me... I forget, show me... I remember, involve me... I understand", the experiential learning method gives trainees the opportunity to begin to develop their skills with immediate feedback. It also gives them the opportunity to participate in many of the training exercises and techniques. For the above stated reasons, it was decided to use the 'work in progress' technique, that is to say a work method that considers the learning speed of the group.

The communication procedures which develop within a group are another important aspect to underline. In this training, instead of a structured classroom, the trainers favoured a continuing interactivity among participants, with the aim of promoting contributions and a higher interpersonal exchange. The Circle-time (circle of chairs without tables) within the training space was chosen as a layout in order to ensure that each person is an equal distance from the centre, improving the interaction among participants and enabling face-to-face communication.

In order to achieve the planned goals (coordination and team building) the trainers chose to increase activities aiming to stimulate communication through the use of a range of interactive techniques: brainstorming, small-group discussions, working groups along with the use of role-play. The latter is a technique that, in an enjoyable setting, can enable the providing/sharing of information, creating common motivation and building skills.

### 3. Outline of training

The training took place on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> April 2006 at Hotel Bosnia, Sarajevo. 26 Participants gathered from across Bosnia & Herzegovina, including representation from the Federation of BiH and the Republika Srpska. Two Medical Health representatives from IOM missions in Kosovo and Macedonia joined the meeting. A complete list of participants is available in Annex 1.

Upon arrival participants were presented with a 'training pack', including 'Training Materials' booklet, information booklet on HIV/AIDS, writing materials, the training agenda and Final Evaluation Form.

At the beginning of the training the participants expressed their expectations for the training, as follows:

- Exchange of knowledge and experiences on HIV/AIDS and Mobility (several)
- Data on HIV/AIDS (several)
- Communication with patients (several)
- Pave the way to coordination, communication and networking (several)
- Practical experience on advocacy and self help groups
- Information on legal framework, types of support
- How to manage a media campaign
- Prevention actions for mobile population

In consideration of the expectations gathered, which clearly showed that some of the participants did not seem to have understood the focus of the training (see Paragraph 4 'Constraints and Action Taken'), the training objectives were slightly changed from the original:

- a. To share experiences and knowledge
- b. To build up a common playground
- c. To establish the basis/create a 'strategy' for future projects

After the opening session (introduction of participants, gathering of their expectations and agreement on the objectives of the training), the session started with a lecture on *the meaning of activism*. This lecture was chosen because the participants came from different fields, with different experiences – both theoretical and practical. Moreover, they were, according to initial discussions, poorly coordinated with one another and many were not active in the field of HIV/AIDS in relation to mobile populations. The lecture about activism helped them to understand the reasons behind the need for and role of experienced NGOs in the so-called social arena. Excerpts of the lecture were included in the notes the participants received when registered.

After the lecture, participants were asked to join a group exercise called *the NGO position*. They were split into four groups, and, as a group, each drew a map of the social actors involved in HIV/AIDS activities dedicated to mobile populations.

The exercise aimed to demonstrate the correct position of an NGO in the social arena. NGOs should be in-between the beneficiaries and the institutions. They advocate beneficiaries' rights while negotiating with, affecting and orienting the actions of the institutions. NGOs are expected to experiment with new actions (projects) and then, when and if their effectiveness is proven, ask the institutions to assume these responsibilities.

According to the exercise outcomes, only one group was able to locate its own position as an NGO correctly. Outcomes (photos) of the exercise are reported at Annex 2. The exercise was followed by a discussion. The trainers recommended that the NGOs do **not** take on the role of the institutions for the following reasons:

- a) time constraints: NGOs are likely to provide services until they receive funds; when the funds finish the NGOs end their work. If they haven't transferred their skills to the institutions, the experience is lost.
- b) geographical constraints: NGOs actions are addressed in a specific area (region, province, municipality), therefore discriminating against members of the same target population who are based in other areas where the NGO is not active. A lack of common strategy among NGOs produces disparate action plans and a low level of effectiveness.

The unfortunate reality for NGOs is that they must constantly face these constraints. In order to provide an effective service to the community for which they are working, the actions of different NGOs in different areas must be coordinated.

In order to further encourage discussion related to NGO coordination, the participants were asked to take part in a role-play. *The stick* is a simple game where five participants are asked to line up, three of them facing the other two. They are asked to raise their index fingers in order to support a wooden stick which is very thin and light. The aim of the game is to bring the stick down to the ground, but the participants must keep their fingers in contact with the stick. Usually, instead of going down the stick goes up. The same occurred in this training.

The participants made two attempts, but they did not succeed in bringing the stick down. Through the exercise, the basic rules of coordination were immediately and clearly raised:

- a) To have a common and shared goal;
- b) To develop good communication;
- c) To decide who is dominant and therefore the leader

In the discussion that followed, the concepts of coordination as well as communication were shared among the participants, raising some relevant considerations:

- Do not make decisions that are not yours to make
- When making a decision you are simply choosing from the alternatives available. You are not making a choice between right and wrong.
- Avoid snap decisions. Decide quickly on those that are reversible and slowly on those that are not.
- Choosing the right alternative at the wrong time is no better than choosing the wrong alternative at the right time, so make the decision while you still have time.
- Do your decision making on paper. Make notes and keep your ideas visible so you can consider all the relevant information in making this decision.

The third group exercise introduced the topic of prevention and information. The participants, split into four groups as in the first exercise, were asked to prepare a billboard targeting a mobile population regarding the prevention of HIV/AIDS. Outcomes (photos) of the exercise are available in Annex 3.

The exercise stimulated a discussion about:

- a) the different meanings of prevention and information;
- b) the strategic importance of layout;
- c) the risk of stigmatization and discrimination;
- d) communication through metaphor and association

The first day ended at 18.00.

The second day opened with an evaluation of the posters created through the exercise the day before. All posters were discussed by the group and a debate arose concerning conflicting attitudes and considerations between participants. The debate was followed by three presentations, by IOM officers, of the figures of HIV in BiH, Macedonia and Kosovo. All presentations demonstrated the lack of reliable information and data about HIV/AIDS in general and in particular regarding mobile populations in the countries covered by the presentations.

The final activity involved the participants in another group exercise. Divided into three groups, participants were asked to design a preventative project in the field of HIV/AIDS, targeting a mobile group and outlining the aims, activities and challenges of their project. Please see Annex 4 for the transcript of the project outlines. The exercise was extremely useful because, through the presentation of projects and ensuing discussion, a number of methodological matters were raised such as peer education, role of opinion leaders, research tools.

Finally, the participants completed evaluation forms and engaged in a verbal evaluation of the training session. All outputs are summarized in Section 6. The session ended at 16.00 instead of 18.00 as planned because a long trip back home awaited many participants.

#### **4. Future Action**

It was agreed that:

- IOM would provide all participants with a full participant contact list, a photograph of the training and a certificate at the close of training.
- 1 participant from each group in the final exercise (designing a project targeting a mobile population) to write up the project outline for the group and send to IOM for distribution among all participants.
- Participants to continue cooperation and communication with other NGOs building on platform created during the training.

#### **5. Constraints and Actions Taken**

Some constraints, both major and minor, occurred in this training; the most significant were:

- a) many participants weren't familiar with the issue covered by the training. As indicated by their initial expectations, expressed on Day 1, many participants were expecting some topics usually addressed during the so-called "basic" training.
- b) The training started on the first day at 10.30 AM, because many participants arrived from distant locations;
- c) There was a discrepancy between the participants, with some of them already working in the field and well connected with international networks, and others at the very beginning.

The above listed constraints were overcome through the modification of the agenda. The group exercise, which introduced each topic addressed, gave the participants the opportunity to exchange local knowledge and skills. Furthermore the discussions were driven in order to meet as many of participants' initial expectations as possible. These solutions tried to stimulate a sort of 'self-learning' and cooperative attitude, but in two days only partially worked.

#### **6. Evaluation**

##### **a) Participant Evaluation**

Evaluation forms indicated that participants had varied experiences of the training, depending upon their NGO and prior experiences. This was supported by the verbal evaluation, which took place at the end of the training, as a group. All participants contributed to this discussion.

Participant Evaluation Forms:

**1. How far were your expectations of the training met?**

Average answer: 3.6 / 5

**2. Which topics in the training were the most useful?**

Participants noted the following: communication (x6), Information about Macedonia, Kosovo and BiH (x5), section on status of NGOs (x4), Coordination of activities (x3), Activism roots (x3), exchange of experiences (x3), practical information about HIV/AIDS (x3), statistical data (x2), interactive activities (x2), ideas for future activities (x1), making NGO contacts (x1)

**3. Which topics in the training were the least useful or not useful at all?**

Participants noted the following: NGO status (x5), activism (x3), history of activism (x1), axioms of communication (x1), cooperation (x1)

**4. Which themes were absent that you would have liked to have been included?**

Participants noted the following: Data on HIV/AIDS in BiH (x3), quality approach to service users (x3), campaigns (x2), more on mobile populations (x1), short documentary on infected person (x1), monitoring and evaluation (x1), creation of common state-level strategy against HIV/AIDS (x1), more exchange of experience (x1), funding information (x1)

**5. Will the training be useful in your work?**

Average answer: 3.3 / 5

**6. Was the training interesting?**

Average answer: 3.7 / 5

**7. Comments included:**

- "I expected more practical topics, that are less present in the public"
- "thank you"
- "we take a positive impression back to our organization"
- "more statistics please"
- "too little time to follow the curriculum of the training" (x3)
- "the training was interesting because everybody took part"
- "great! Can we continue the activities?"
- "a mistake was made at the beginning with a digression from the main topic, however it came out OK in the end"
- "the topics were illogically connected, a bit jumbled"
- "informal share of experiences outside the training was useful"
- "very well organized"
- "I expected more interaction and new initiatives for cooperation and networking"
- "local NGOs are to share information, tasks, even capacities but same goes for International Organizations - they need to be in the 'network' as well so that we can divide the tasks, and not have 'everybody doing everything'"

**b. Final Evaluation:**

The training was designed taking for granted that the participants had a basic level of HIV/AIDS, as all NGOs were chosen for participation on the basis of their running HIV/AIDS-related projects. A certain level of skill/awareness was therefore assumed, as was a basic knowledge of mobile groups. Unfortunately, participants were revealed to be quite far from this point. Although the objectives of the training were partially met, it was found that the planned programme could not entirely fit the range of participants.

This training, while acting as a first teambuilding seminar involving a large group of NGOs representatives, gave some useful hints for the future, such as:

- few are currently dealing with mobile populations
- most NGOs need an extensive follow-up training on HIV/AIDS and mobility
- many other NGOs need an extensive basic training on HIV/AIDS.

The final recommendation arising from this training was:

- A serious training on HIV/AIDS facts, prevention and assistance within mobile populations is needed. The training should provide basic information about HIV/AIDS and mobile groups, comprising lectures, exercises and lasting three or four days.

## ANNEX 1 – DIRECTORY OF PARTICIPANTS

### NGOs from Bosnia and Herzegovina

1. Arambašić Živanović, Tijana. *Budućnost*
2. Čalkić, Lejla. *Mladi za mlade plus*
3. Čilić, Nino. *Mladi Protiv Side*
4. Dedajić, Denis. *Margina*
5. Fetić, Emira. *Žena BiH*
6. Ganović, Aida. *Medica Zenica*
7. Golub, Nermin. *Margina*
8. Halilović, Samir. *Nove Nade, Demokratski Centar*
9. Ibišević, Samir. *UG PROI*
10. Kastratović, Milica. *Luna*
11. Klašnić, Ivan. *Omladinski Centar Vermont*
12. Kubat, Almir. *Inicijativa Žena*
13. Kukulj, Srdjan. *Akcija Protiv Side*
14. Medvedec, Tijana. *XY*
15. Milović, Marija. *Altius*
16. Mujezinović, Jasmina. *Fondacija Lokalne Demokratije*
17. Pandžić, Sanja. *Zdravo Odrastanje*
18. Puvača, Irina. *APOHA*
19. Sakić, Izida. *La Strada*
20. Stanić, Sanja. *Zdravo Odrastanje*
21. Stepanović, Zorica. *Lara*
22. Šarenac, Verica. *SOS*
23. Tomaš, Marjana. *O.K.C Abrašević*
24. Vidović, Gordana. *Budućnost*
25. Zorić, Dario. *Rosa Brandis*
26. Zulić, Nevres. *Međunarodni Forum Solidarnost*

### IOM Kosovo:

1. Shqipe Pallaska

### IOM Macedonia:

1. Drita Hadziabduli Pallosi

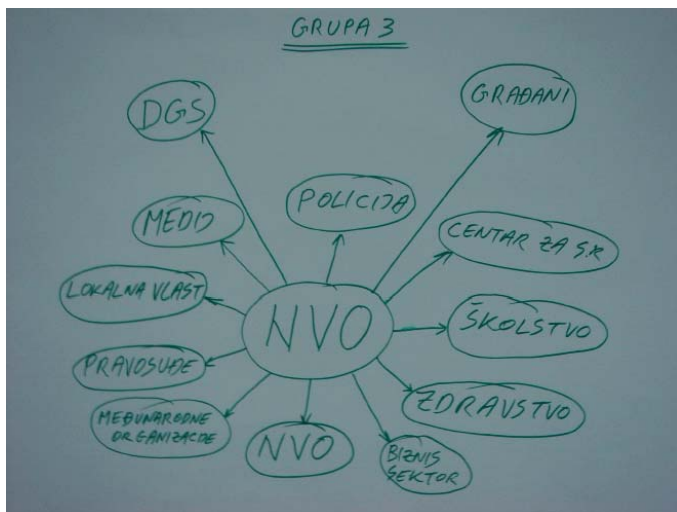
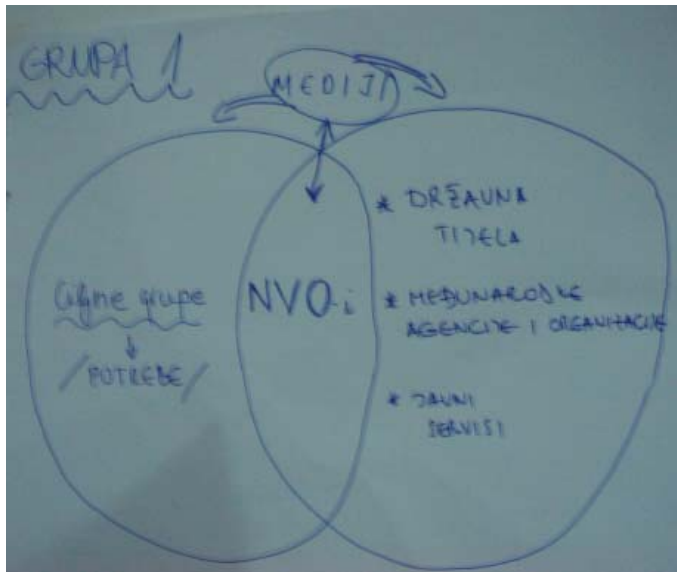
### IOM Bosnia and Herzegovina

1. Ruth Grove-White
2. Mirsada Zeco

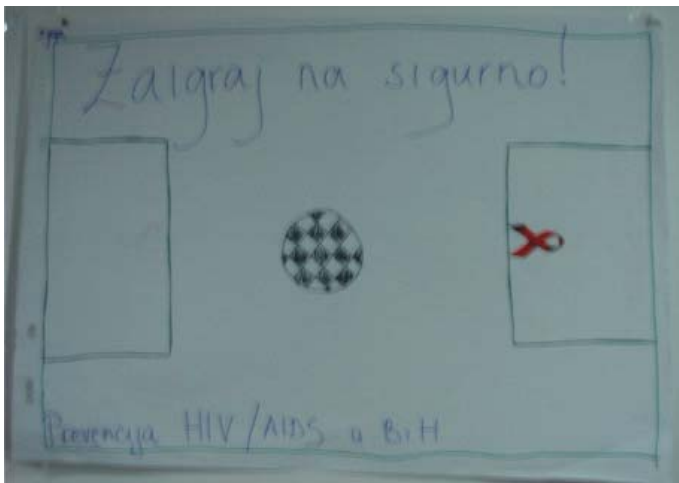
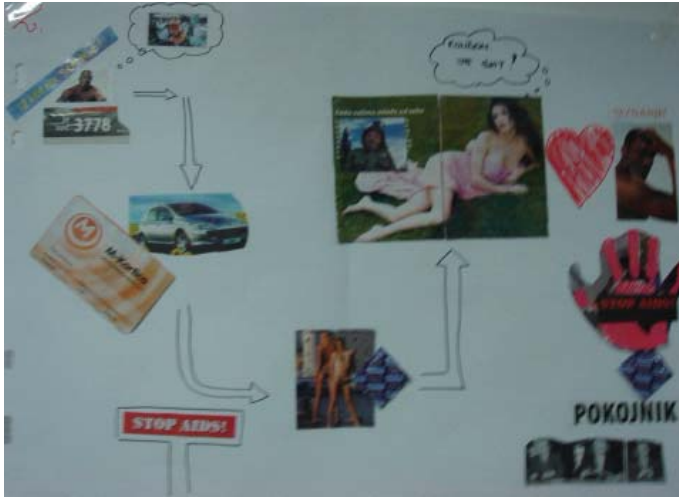
### Trainers:

1. Stefano Volpicelli
2. Roberto Rossi

ANNEX 2 - PHOTOS OF THE OUTCOMES FROM GROUP EXERCISE 1:  
 "THE NGO POSITION"



ANNEX 3 - PHOTOS OF THE OUTCOMES FROM GROUP EXERCISE 2:  
 "BILLBOARDS TARGETING MOBILE GROUPS"



**ANNEX 4 - OUTCOMES OF GROUP EXERCISE 3:  
"PROJECTS TARGETING MOBILE POPULATIONS"**

**GROUP 1**

**Target group:** The Roma 10-24 year olds

**Objective:** HIV/AIDS Prevention & Awareness rising

**Activities:**

- Education
  - Roma NGO capacity building (project writing, HIV education, STD, peer education training)
  - interactive workshops in the schools they attend (peer education)
  - interactive workshops in the Roma communities for the youth
  - new NGO
- Creating educational material (brochures, posters)
- Field work:
  - Entertaining-educational stands in the communities
  - Visiting potential beneficiaries
  - Establishment of creative workshops
  - Media coverage of the projects - media campaigns
  - Counseling services (dissemination of condoms and needles; on-line counseling, medical check-ups, tests)

**GROUP 2**

**Target group:** Homosexuals (MSM)

**Objective:** Reducing the risk of spreading HIV/AIDS infection

**Tasks:**

- Education for individual and organizational capacity building
- Promoting safe sexual contacts
- Campaigning organized by homosexual community to reduce the stigma and discrimination

**GROUP 3**

**Project title:** "Truck Waves"

**Objective:** Rising awareness on risks of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases for truck drivers

**Target group:** Direct: truck drivers  
Indirect: traffic participants

**Location:** BiH - All border crossings, local/regional roads, highways, and rest stops, transport companies

**Tasks:**

- Signing MoU with State Border Service
- Access to the Ministry of Transport and Communications' database - codes of truck drivers
- Creating the questionnaires for research and analysis of data from the questionnaires
- Creation and dissemination of promotional materials
- Putting up billboards
- Disseminating condoms
- Education of drivers employed by truck/transport companies