

**Report on  
The session of experts on stewardship of establishment, development and support of  
Central Asian Harm Reduction Training & Information Center (CAHRC)**

**Date:** April 21-23, 2008.  
**Place:** Small Reding Hall, Center for Health Systems Development (CHSD), Bishkek  
**Facilitator:** Aida Kurbanova  
**Aim of the session:** Discussion of key issues on establishment, development and support of Central Asian Harm Reduction Training & Information Center.

**Day 1, April 21, 2008**

**Questions for discussion:**

CAHRC formation and development concept. Definition and improvement:

- Mission of the Center
- Center activity principles
- Regional needs
- Basic trends of CAHRC activity

**Main comments on Day 1:**

T. Meimanaliev, CAAP Executive Director opened the session of experts, who noted that establishment of Centers in four countries on different directions on which Central Asian AIDS Control Project is working is related to necessity of further development of HR Programs in Central Asia and approved by Regional Project Steering Committee. In addition, he shared the experience on programs institutionalization and centers establishment on the other directions of CAAP in the other countries, particularly in Uzbekistan. Besides, he focused experts' attention on necessity to take into account the following issues while discussing the activity of Central Asian Harm Reduction Center:

- Compulsory observance of parity principle in the activity of the Center, it is necessary to take into account the best practices of different countries;
- Provision of financial transfers from countries since there are examples when, for instance, in Uzbekistan organizations can not withdraw grant funds for over six months, that is to consider any possibility to find financial broker;
- There should be partnership between NGOs and government as key players in harm reduction programs (for instance, it is statistically important to see AIDS country Center in founders of the Center).

After that T. Asanov, CAHRC Consultant made a speech who presented a review on outcomes on CAHRC institutionalization issues considered at the Round Table held March 14, 2008 where the key challenges were defined in front of experts of this session taking into account the adopted agreements at the previous stages.

**Results of the Day**

Having discussed the basic values and principles of the Center activity the group defined:

**1. Main challenges/problems of harm reduction programs in Central Asian region:**

- Lack of unified information field
- Best practices are not systematized
- Training materials are not analyzed
- Deficiency of methodology
- Lack of unified database on trainers/materials
- Surveys results are not accumulated
- Presence of opposition between government and NGO
- Lack of organizations capacity
- Poor coordination of international programs efforts

- Can assist to solution of problems on verification, institutionalization of education
- Narrowness of communicative area
- Lack of general recommendations on HR
- Lack of understanding of HR philosophy
- Lack of human recourses
- Non-sustainability of HR programs (institutionalization)
- Information and training materials systematization is needed
- Reviewing of information and training materials
- Lack of the database on training materials and trainers
- Lack of connection with Carissa whose responsibility is to collect the data (can be used later)

## 2. Mission of Central Asian Harm Reduction Training & Information Center

### 3. List of needs has been defined:

- In training of trainers or technical assistance.
- In information exchange (on best practices etc).
- In organizations capacity improvement.
- In creation of the database of HR trainers and experts.
- Non- completeness of the information on organizations and spectrum of HR services.

***MISSION OF THE CENTER***  
**Capacity and collaboration strengthening of interested government, non-government, international organizations and individuals in the filed of harm reduction via training and information support at the regional and national levels**

#### ***CLIENTS OF THE CENTER***

- Non-government, government organizations, international organizations interested in HR Programs (individuals, legal entities interested in HR Programs)
- Individuals and legal entities seeking training irrespective of types of ownership
- HR trainers/experts

#### ***KEY ACTIVITY TRENDS***

- Organization and conduction of training courses
- Provision of expert, consultative and technical support
- Collection, adaptation and dissemination of methodical guidelines and manuals
- Management of information recourses and network management
- Research and analytical activity

## 4. Status of the Center as regional Center has been defined as well as priorities have been determined:

- Effective use of countries recourses
- Capacity expansion
- Use of positive experience
- Combination of four countries experts efforts
- Partnership of the government with NGO
- Center should be interesting for all countries.

## 5. CAHRC activity principles have been defined:

In order to achieve its aims and objectives the Center supports the following activity principles:

- Close interaction with national and international partners (EHRN, HR Associations, non-government, government and international organizations), openness for dialogue;
- Use of principles of scientific content and evidence base;
- Use of the best practices from international and regional experience of non-government organizations implementing HR Programs in CAR as well as those included in Eurasian Harm Reduction Network;
- Target directivity and compliance of training programs to the needs of target groups as well as to local conditions;
- Availability of the training process and other implemented measures for external and internal assessment; use of interactive ways of the training process organization;
- Transparency of the budget with publication of annual reports.

**Findings:**

- Experts returned to the discussion of the already adopted agreements: necessity and practicability of establishment of the Center, certification of Center trainers, obtaining license for the training activity, issues on factual representation of four countries (won't the Center be only national project), observance of parity principle while adopting key issues.
- The issue on legal status of the Center caused debates that in facilitators' opinion had to be discussed additionally; besides, the issue on RPSC supporting of agreements adopted by experts of this session caused doubts.
- There were problems concerning understanding of the role of the assembly and Center Steering Committee (Board), problems with membership, roles of members and founders in public associations, in accordance to organizational formation of membership organizations.

**Day 2, April 22, 2008**

**Questions for discussion**

- Definition of CAHRC organizational structure
- Functions and authorities of the steering committee
- Functions and authorities of the executive body
- Functions and authorities of the technical expert council
- Functions and authorities of other Center structures

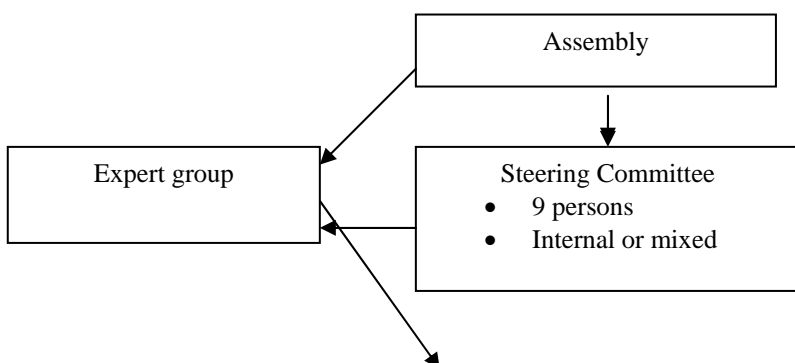
**Results of the Day:**

1. As a result of the joint discussion the organizational structure of CAHRC has been defined

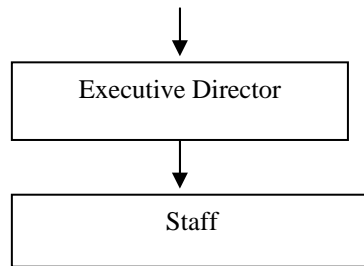
***Developments of the groups:***

**CAHRC Organizational Structure**

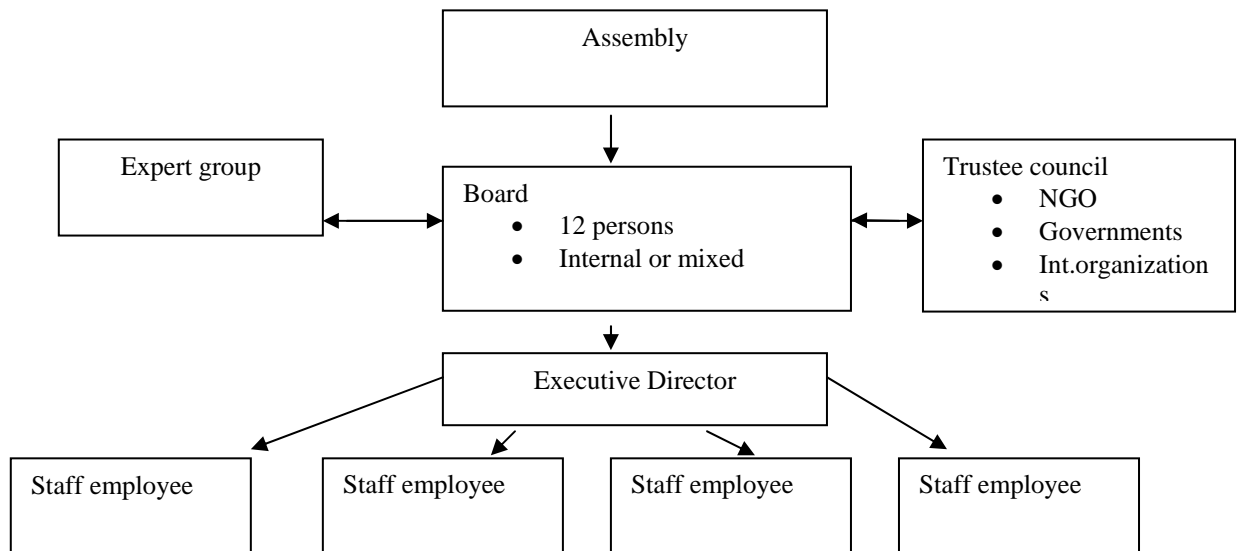
CAHRC Structure:



Development of group 1:



Development of group 2  
(final version):



During the discussion in small groups and in the joint discussion key functions and authorities, competence sphere, order and procedures of the Center structural units activities have been defined.

- Board/Assembly until 2010.
- Executive Director
- Expert group
- Trustee council (see Annex).

### Main comments on Day 2:

1. Legal Entities Association was accepted as the most reasonable form of self-dependent legal entity for CAHRC in the steering body of which the countries parity principle observance and inclusion of the government structures is compulsory.
2. Participants have taken a decision that assembly members will be automatically presented in the Board and only after the Center's formation period the membership to this organization will be available for other interested individuals. In its turn, the Board should necessarily include in the staff an equal number of representatives of all four countries. In the future only internal administering of the organization can lead to conflict of interests of Board members.
3. It is necessary to think over more precisely and develop a procedure on acceptance to membership since the elected legal form proposes membership in the organization; consequently, adopting regulation on membership in the future makes sense;
4. Participants of the discussion pay a special attention to observance of the principle on countries parity in the Board as a body making strategic decisions, which should be written in the procedures and regulations of the Center;
5. There is a discomfort in the group, misunderstanding of the role and place of each participant as representative of the country and organization in the structure and activity of the Center;

6. Participants of the discussion do not clearly understand selection mechanisms of experts to Technical Advisory Group and Trustee Council of the Center; also, in facilitators opinion, the role of Regional Technical Working Group (RTWG) in the Center's activity and mechanisms on interaction of the Center with RTWG have not been precisely presented.
7. Developments of groups need a detailed and competent expertise and finalization by legal advisors for compliance to national legislation.
8. Some participants expressed doubts regarding reasonableness to establish such a structure as Trustee Council at the stage of initiation; during the discussion the group inclined to relevance of such initiative.
9. In the future, it is advisable for the Center to initiate projects for institutional and organizational development, development of all internal policies and procedures taking into account the peculiarities of each country (programmatic, financial, administrative components).

### **Day 3, April 23, 2008**

#### **Questions for discussion:**

- Mechanisms and principles of CAHRC experts and audience selection.
- Staff capacity development (administrative and trainer).
- Definition of strategies on CAHRC institutional and financial sustainability:
  - Request for CAAP third grant round
  - Regulation and list of Regional Technical Working Group on Harm Reduction
- Development of concept implementation plan including proposals on CAHRC sustainable development.

#### **Results of the Day**

1. Key requirements for selection of both, audience and experts of the Center have been defined; effort to develop mechanisms of their selection has been realized;
2. Key points on the Center staff and experts capacity development; procedures and standards require finalization;
3. Basic trends/components have been defined, which in experts' opinion, should be included in the grant request for third grant round of CAAP.
4. Also, an effort to see the role and place of RTWG from the Center activity viewpoint has been made;
5. Draft concept implementation plan has been planned for first three months.

(see Annex)

***During the session the group developed only main proposals and vision on CAHRC formation and development Concept that requires systematization and detailed elaboration by CAAP representatives.***

#### **Main comments on Day 3:**

- A special attention of the session participants will be paid to the issues on defining institutional and financial sustainability of the Center, though along with this, some

- experts considered writing of grant proposal for the third round of CAAP as a separate event that is not directly related to a newly established Center;
- The issue on defining a main requestor in the grant proposal taking into account requirements of the donor and the Center activity as regional organization caused debates;
  - Experts state about necessity to assess the country needs and requirements while writing a request for the third grant round, in relation to this two ways were proposed: to conduct self-research (cost-based and long-term) and make analysis on the existing surveys (non-cost and more rapid, but some data is not enough);
  - Experts are more inclined to consider grants as a solo financing source of the Center. At the stage of formation of the Center it is reasonable to foresee diversification of financing recourses and develop a strategy of Center financial sustainability plan, conduction of preliminary marketing surveys etc.;
  - In facilitators' opinion, the group of experts did not consider the issues on RTWG activity strategy in detail, as well as the issues on aligning information and communication relations of RTWG and the Center that complicated the process of RTWG regulation finalization.
  - Different work schemes of the Center in different countries, as well as "impalpability" of this structure complicated non-existent structure (Center) activity discussion process;
  - As initiator of HR Program institutionalization at the initial stages of the center's formation, CAAP has to provide supervision in order to align CAHRC;
  - At the stage of development and registration of charter and founder documents, internal regulations and procedures it is reasonable to involve non-commercial law, accounting and financial control and organizational development experts and others if needed.
  - Supervision of EHRN makes a positive effect since the participants of the debate had a possibility to build-up their own Center formation concept based on the practical pattern and lessons learned;
  - Participants have different level of skills in the filed of organizational development as well as different level of awareness on CAHRC formation and development concept.
  - Participants expressed an opinion that results of this discussion should also be presented in the countries for additional discussion;
  - Participants of the debate uncertainly connect their future activity with the Center's activity.
  - Experts are particularly sensitive to the issues on equal representation of all countries in the Steering body of the Center that is ensuring parity principle in the process of making strategic decisions.

### **Annexes:**

- Presentations (6)
- Presentations of facilitators (2)
- Concept implementation concept on formation and development of CAHRC
- Session protocol
- Developments of groups (7)
- List of participants of experts session.

Performer of the report:

Aida Kurbanova, CARHAP Facilitator.