

Minutes of the 69th CCM meeting
Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs, CCM Office
February 20, 2014

Sandra Elisabeth Roelofs - CCM Chairperson, "SOCO Foundation"- Charity NGO
Mariam Jashi - Deputy Minister, on behalf of Mr. David Sergeenko – Vice-Chair, Minister of Labour, Health and Social Affairs
Nino Kochishvili – on behalf of **Philip Dimitrov** - Ambassador, Head of EU Delegation to Georgia
Zurab Vadachkoria - Rector of Tbilisi State Medical University
Tengiz Tsertsvadze - Infectious Diseases, AIDS and Clinical Immunology Research Center, General Director
Khatuna Todadze - Research Institute on Addiction of the Center for Mental Health and Prevention of Addiction, Head
Mamuka Japaridze - National Center of Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases, Director
Akaki Lochoshvili - Global Projects Implementation Center (GPIC), Executive Director
Tamar Sirbiladze - USAID/Caucasus, Health and Social Development Office, Director
Tamar Gabunia – TPP, Chief of Party
Giorgi Soselia, on behalf of Lasha Tvaliashvili - Real People-Real Vision, Executive Director, (PTF)
Lasha Zaalishvili - Georgian Harm Reduction Network, Executive Director, (PTF)
Konstantin Rukhadze, on behalf of Konstantine Labartkava - New Vector, Board Chairman, (PTF)
Rusudan Klimiashvili - WHO Georgia, Head of Country Office
David Ananiashvili - "Georgian Plus Group", Director
Amiran Gamkrelidze - NCDC&PH, General Director
Natia landia, on behalf of Archil Talakvadze – MCLA, Deputy Minister
Dimitri Kordzaia - Board Chairman of Georgian National Association for Palliative Care

Secretariat:

Eka Iashvili – Executive Secretary /TB Consultant
Maia Tsereteli – HIV/AIDS Consultant
Natia Khonelidze – Administrative Assistant

Guests/Observers

Eduard Yengibaryan – FA, Team Leader
Mzia Tabatadze – UNOPS/LFA Senior M&E/Health Expert in Georgia
Irma Khonelidze – NCDC, Deputy Director
Ileana Fajardo – GMS, team leader
Tamar Sirbiladze – Bemoni, Chairpersom
Nana Pruidze – UNICEF
Marina Chokheli – Open Society Georgia Foundation

Agenda

17:00 – 17:10	Opening speech /remarks Mrs. Sandra E. Roelofs, Chairperson of the CCM
17:10 - 17:20	Welcome speech /remarks Mr. David Sergeenko, Minister of Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia
17:20 – 17:30	Involvement of Mr. Dimitri Kordzaia, Board Chairman of Georgian National Association for Palliative Care
17:30 – 17:40	Nomination of the Oversight Committee Chair within the OC members/Discussion/Planning of the Oversight Committee Meeting
17:40 – 17:55	Projects Implementation Status Mr. Akaki Lochoshvili – GPIC, Executive Director
17:55 – 18:05	Brief update on in-country mission (PR assistance) Ms. Ileana Fajardo – GMS, team leader
18:05 – 18:15	Current Status of PIU staffing/ Discussion on Cash Incentive Scheme Ms. Irma Khonelidze – NCDC, Deputy Director
18:15 – 18:30	Adolescents, HIV Prevention and the Law Tamar Sirbiladze – Bemoni, Chairperson
18:30 – 18:40	Reprogramming of the Budget/ Annual National Conference of Harm Reduction Network Mr. Lasha Zaalishvili - Executive Director, GHRN
18:40 – 19:00	Questions/Answers and Discussion

Sandra E. Roelofs – greeted the participants and thanked them for coming. The Chairperson overviewed the agenda of the meeting and presented the observers of the meeting. Mrs. Roelofs focused on the details of CCM and its Secretariat Budget announcing that the negotiations with the GFATM were ongoing and she presented the new structure of the CCM Secretariat that was agreed by the members at the previous CCM and further approved by the GFATM. The Chairperson announced that she herself will be participating at the 31st GF Board meeting in the capacity of an Alternate member in March. Mrs. Roelofs will take over the position of the Board Member from EECA Constituency in May. The Chairperson reviewed the items of the upcoming meeting with special emphasis on New Funding Model that will be finally endorsed at the Board Meeting. Mrs. Roelofs brought to the attention of the attendees the statement of the All-Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV on the situation in Ukraine that was distributed to the members and noted that though the statement was dated January 23, according to Mr. Vladimir Zhovtyak all issues highlighted are still acute and even deteriorated to the date.

Sandra E. Roelofs – gave the floor to **Ms. Jashi**.

Mariam Jashi – greeted the participants and expressed the hope that Mr. Sergeenko would join the meeting later on. The Deputy Minister focused on the following: the GFATM Secretariat has a very positive estimation of the transition period and confirms that the processes are on-going adequately. The Ministry, LFA (as an observer), NGO Sector and the GFATM itself (in on-line format) are deeply involved in the process of NCDC PIU staffing which is also on-going appropriately. The Deputy Minister referred to the information briefing held at the Ministry previous week in connection with rehabilitation of AIDS Center and noted that the Government of Georgia allotted the sum for rehabilitation work of the first stage and the equipment component will be also covered. She expressed special gratitude to Mr. Gamkrelidze, Mr. Tsertsvadze, Mr. Ananiashvili for their involvement. Afterwards Ms. Jashi brought to the attention of the attendees an acute issue of the Abastumani TB Hospital and outlined the current status of affairs and communication between the MoLHSA and Ministry of Economics. She underlined that the position of the Ministry is that the condition of the hospital property handover is continuation and delivery of adequate TB Services. Ms. Jashi highlighted the importance of the involvement of the CCM in current negotiations and in the process of making a final decision.

Sandra E. Roelofs – opened the floor for discussion.

Tamar Gabunia– underlined the challenges associated with the functioning of Abastumani TB Hospital (lack of functional Xray, deficient infection control measures) and raised the issue of economic efficiency of the use of the current building for providing TB services.

Mariam Jashi– noted that the Healthcare Department of the MoLHSA has accumulated all relevant information regarding Abastumani TB Hospital. Several draft options of the handover

are elaborated. Ms. Jashi raised the issue of Kutaisi TB Hospital and anticipated optimization of its staff, if TB services are moved into the newly established Hospital for Infectious Diseases. The Deputy Minister addressed the Chairperson and the members with the request to conduct next week a working meeting with participation of the CCM members active in TB field in order to come up with a consolidated opinion regarding these two issues of TB services.

Tamar Sirbiladze (USAID) - briefed the audience on the assistance envisaged by the government of the USA in terms of improved TB services in the country. Ms. Sirbiladze noted that the program is not finally designed. The first assessment visit has been already done, the second expanded mission is anticipated by the beginning of March. According to the preliminary design the assistance can be structured around physical infrastructure, equipment, ventilation system (Abastumani Hospital) etc. The Kutaisi TB hospital was selected for a pilot program. Ms. Sirbiladze highlighted the importance of thorough considerations towards the handover process of Abastumani Hospital taking into account the fact that only two TB facilities (Tbilisi and Abastumani) are covering TB services in Eastern Georgia.

Mariam Jashi – stated that one of the Condition Precedent of the GFATM is finalization of the National Tuberculosis Strategy. In case of need a working group will be created under the Minister's order that will issue the recommendations which will be discussed at the CCM meetings.

Tamar Gabunia – stated that National TB Strategy that was endorsed by the CCM in March 2013 covers the period 2013-2015. She highlighted that identification of the single coordinating body responsible for oversight and ownership of the TB Program is still an unsolved issue that requires making a decision. Ms Gabunia also pointed out that currently Parliament of Georgia is working on the legislation package aimed at improved TB Services.

Mariam Jashi – noted that the regional coordination mechanisms will be strengthened though it does not represent a long term decision.

It was agreed that the working group with assignment of elaboration of recommendations toward TB National Strategy will be created and the group will be reporting to the CCM.

Sandra E. Roelofs – put an issue of electing of Mr. Dimitri Kordzaia as CCM member to vote.

Eka Iashvili – reminded to the audience that at the 68th CCM meeting it was decided to rotate CCM membership from Ms. Fati Dzotsenidze to Mr.Dimitri Kordzaia (Board Chairman of the NGO working on Palliative Care)

Mr. Dimitri Kordzaia was elected unanimously as CCM member.

Sandra E. Roelofs – raised the issue of the Oversight Committee (OC) and reminded to the audience that in response to GFATM Condition Precedent the OC was officially created and endorsed by the CCM. The Chairperson listed the members of the Committee and highlighted

the importance of election of the Chair in order for the Committee to proceed with the first meeting and to overview the process of close out of GPIC grants. The Chairperson referred to the letter of G. Soselia nominating the candidacy of Mr. Giorgi Khechinashvili. The Chairperson reminded MoLHSA that a nomination of a representative was still anticipated.

Mariam Jashi – responded that she herself will be involved in the Committee with further possible delegation of the authority to another representative of MoLHSA.

Eka Iashvili – reminded to the members that on February 13 Secretariat addressed the OC members with a request to come up with a consolidated opinion regarding the candidacy of the OC Chair in order to validate him/her at the next CCM meeting which did not happen.

Sandra E. Roelofs – addressed the members of the OC with the request to submit to the CCM a written note of internal election of a Chair signed by all members.

Akaki Lochoshvili – underlined that the GPIC remains open for the OC and its involvement of the close out of the grants. He noted that Mr. Soselia's opinion that close out plan had any influence on the start of the next implementation period was wrong. He called to the representative of the community for better understanding of the GFATM processes. He stressed that the nomination of the Chair should be a consolidated opinion of all OC and not only of individuals involved as members. He stressed that such letters should not be distributed among the CCM a day before the meeting. He briefed the members on the peculiarities of writing a close out plan and stated that it will be completed by the end of February and further distributed to the members for endorsement.

Giorgi Soselia– explained that the members of the OC received a letter from Fund Portfolio Manager requesting involvement of the OC in the process. He stressed that the OC Chair will be elected by the OC itself during/as a result of the first OC meeting.

At the discussion followed it was agreed that the OC meeting will be conducted as soon as possible. The Chair will be elected by the OC. The CCM will receive a document introducing the OC Chair signed by all OC members.

Sandra E. Roelofs – gave the floor to **Mr. Lochoshvili**.

Akaki Lochoshvili– presented the current status of implementation of the GFATM grants. He stressed that all commitments of the transitional period are in the process of successful implementation and finalization. 22 tenders are announced and in the process of finalization. The obstacles in supplying of ARV and anti-TB drugs are not anticipated. Mr. Lochoshvili stressed that in terms of implementation of the GFATM grants the only problem is one SR, namely Georgian Harm Reduction Network. Mr. Lochoshvili pointed out inadequate financial reporting from the SR that has a permanent character during the years. The rapporteur stated that termination of the contract may be considered. He addressed Mr. Zaalishvili with request to a

dialogue and obedience to the GFATM regulations in order to avoid mentioned above action. He also pointed out the absence of information regarding funding from other sources than the GFATM of the GHRN. In response to the remark from the audience that such information exists he asked to provide the GPIC with such information.

At the discussion followed it was mentioned that the issue of the SR raised by Mr. Lochoshvili should have been initially discussed internally between the PR and the SR and only after that should be brought to the attention of the CCM. It was noted that if such problems occurred earlier, why didn't CCM got informed about it.

Sandra E. Roelofs – gave the floor to Ms. Fajardo.

Ileana Fajardo - greeted the participants and thanked for inviting her to the CCM meeting. Ms. Fajardo briefly presented the team members and overviewed the main Scope of Work of the team which lies within facilitation of the solving of issues raised by LFA and the GFATM in terms of the NCDC as a new PR. Ms. Fajardo stated that overall capacity of the organization to manage the grants are reviewed. At the time being main work is concentrated at the TB issues. Performance framework, PSM plan have been already reviewed. The team has reviewed PIU and different units of NCDC in order to learn the integration of the PIU with already existing systems. The team will be visiting the county two more times. Ms. Fajardo thanked the CCM again and answered specific questions from the audience.

Sandra E. Roelofs – gave the floor to Ms. Khonelidze.

Irma Khonelidze – provided detailed information on PIU staffing including current status and the plans set. Ms. Khonelidze pointed out that though the contracting of already selected staff did not happen the elaboration of the draft contracts is ongoing. The rapporteur stressed that the deadline for TB Manager Position has been extended as per decision of the Tender Committee and the Committee failed to shortlist the position of the Finance Manager. Up to date all the positions have been already advertised; the next meeting of the Tender Committee is scheduled for February 21.

Amiran Gamkrelidze – added some more details and stressed that though the activity of the pretenders were high the choice of the highly qualified staff was not very broad. He noted that two applicants that are currently based abroad were also interviewed. Mr. Gamkrelidze stated that in case of need additional rounds of the selection will be conducted and specified the positions that were especially difficult in terms of selecting the most capable candidacies. He stressed the representative character of the Selection Committee.

At the discussion followed the member expressed their satisfaction with regard to the process of staffing.

Irma Khonelidze – continued the presentation and presented to the audience Cash Incentive Scheme for TB patients that had been already electronically distributed among the members on February 3, 2014 for review and approval. The rapporteur thanked USAID/URC TB prevention Project, the USAID HSS Project and the National Center for Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases (NCTBLD) for active participation in the development of the scheme. Ms. Khonelidze once more explained the audience that the GFATM has requested the CCM endorsement of the schemes before starting of its actual implementation from April 1, 2014. She presented the components of the scheme.

A discussion followed. The components of the scheme were thoroughly discussed among the members. While discussing two proposed options for disbursement of the amount to sensitive patients the preference was given to the option envisaging two disbursements of the incentive amount.

Comment: As per decision of the CCM the Cash Incentive Scheme was distributed among the members on February 21, 2014 with the request to submit comment if any by February 28, 15:00. If no reaction by the deadline set the scheme and the option given preference during the CCM Meeting will be deemed endorsed by the CCM (an e-mail letter is attached). No objection to the option envisaging two disbursement of the incentive amount and additional comments were presented by the members the scheme and the second option of the disbursement were deemed as endorsed by the CCM.

Sandra E. Roelofs – gave the floor to **Ms. Sirbiladze**

Tamar Sirbiladze (Bemoni) – presented to the audience the document “Adolescents, HIV Prevention and the Law. Policy Brief (the presentation and the document attached) elaborated within the framework of the EU funded regional project “Strengthening Capacity of NSA for HIV Testing and Counseling of Most-at-risk Adolescents and Young People”. The project has been implemented by UNICEF Georgia CO and Bemoni since 2012. Ms. Sirbiladze presented to the audience the peculiarities of the adolescence period and afterwards focused on the international experience in terms of HIV counseling and testing among adolescents. The experience and regulatory framework of the following countries was presented to the attendees: Great Britain, the USA, UN countries. While speaking on the regulatory framework of Georgia Ms. Sirbiladze concentrated on two factors: necessity of parents’ consent for conducting HIV counseling and testing among adolescents and absence of the clear definition of the terms child, youth and adolescents. Albeit it was noted that inter-agency council on development of state youth policy is working on revision of the youth policy document which will envisage a clear definition of different age groups. The rapporteur focused on human rights in the sphere of healthcare, namely individual rights and presented specific articles of the law on “Patients’ Rights” concerning adolescents. Ms. Sirbiladze stated that unfortunately the law does not stipulate separately the sphere of HIV/AIDS. The Law on HIV/AIDS does not provide specifics on this issue either. Ms. Sirbiladze outlined the recommendations of the working group

aimed at lowering legislative and regulatory obstacles for adolescents to access HIV counseling and testing.

The discussion followed was concentrated at the specific wordings and amendments of the Law. Mr. Amiran Gamkrelidze noted that there should be special regulations defining different age groups. He stated that the deliberations on separate stipulations on HIV/AIDS were held during the elaboration of the Law on "Patients' Rights". The rapporteur noted that such stipulation is not presented in the Law.

Afterwards Ms. Sirbiladze presented specific guidelines and recommendations for service providers necessary once the legislative framework is revised. The rapporteur briefed the attendees that the document has been discussed at the meeting of the inter-agency council on development of state youth policy where the notion of necessity of inclusion of hepatitis B and C among adolescents was expressed. On October 3, 2013 the document was presented at the conference where Ms. Jashi offered to present the issue at the CCM meeting. It was decided at the conference that MoLHSA jointly with Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs will prepare the package of legislation change that will be further presented to the Parliament. Other important issue that was a matter of discussion at the conference was the issue of providing the child with information regarding HIV status (to notify or not, at what age, who shall notify, how). Ms. Sirbiladze presented the recommendations of WHO and American Academy of Pediatrics in this regard. Finally, Ms. Sirbiladze summarized the discussion issues: providing information and informed consent of adolescents – possible amendments in the Patient's Law; confidentiality and notification of the parents – differential attitude towards different age groups (14-16 and 16-18) - inclusion in the methodological recommendations; notifying the child on his/her HIV status – elaboration of the regulations.

The members thoroughly discussed the documents and offered novelties. It was decided that the presentation and the document will be disseminated among all members for more considerations. It was one more time highlighted that in the current legislation the word "diagnostics" is missed.

Comment: On February 21, 2014 the document and presentation were submitted to all members

Sandra E. Roelofs – gave the floor to **Mr. Zaalishvili**.

Lasha Zaalishvili – strongly opposed the statement of Mr. Lochoshvili and stated that GHRN has been successfully implementing 14 projects since 2008. The organization has audits' conclusions and LFA conclusions and was given high regards in terms of performance. He pointed out to the irregularities identified within the GPIC and assessed the statement of Mr. Lochoshvili as a sabotage. He addressed the members of the Supervisory Board of the GPIC with

a request to discuss the statement of Mr. Lochoshvili. Mr. Zaalishvili referred to the communication he had with the CCM Secretariat and the members where acute problems faced by the organization were raised. He highly emphasized the importance of the involvement of the OC and the CCM as a supervisory and decision-making body in the close out of GPIC grants. Afterwards he focused on the reprogramming request explaining that the reprogramming of already endorsed activities of the project is possible based on the decision of the CCM and in agreement with GFATM Secretariat. He explained that due to the fact that GPIC was unable to procure envisaged by the project 8 mobile ambulatories, a certain sum (20, 000 Euro) allotted for remuneration of the staff has remained unspent. Thus this activity will be performed in approximately three months period. Mr. Zaalishvili requested the CCM to make a decision allowing reprogramming of the budget and using unspent fund for conducting GHRN annual conference on March 24-25, 2014. The rapporteur stated that the preliminary negotiations with regard to the conference are ongoing and arrival of high level participants, including representatives of GFATM Secretariat is anticipated. Afterwards he briefly reviewed the structure of the conference, named the parallel sessions to be conducted and referred to the distributed budget summary. He stated that the Organization Committee is ready to accept the topics to be included in the conference agenda and the constituencies represented in the CCM will be given such possibility. Mr. Zaalishvili noted that the issue is agreed with GPIC and GFATM Secretariat which had requested CCM's support and endorsement.

The members expressed some frustration regarding the dates of the Conference as it coincides with TB World Day. Tamar Sirbiladze deemed it absolutely unfeasible taking into account the number of parallel events scheduled for that day. It was also underlined that a detailed description of the seminar was missing and that the organization of the meeting needed more time for preparation.

Lasha Zaalishvili – noted that the concern regarding coincidence with World TB day is understandable. He noted that the budget submitted to the members (attached) is analogous to last year budget of the similar event. In case the budget is approved with its total sum, he indicated that inner modifications within the budget can still take place. .

Sandra E. Roelofs – raised the question regarding existence of the quorum at present.

It appeared that some members had already left the meeting and such a quorum was not observed.

It was decided that further details about the suggested Annual Meeting would take place through e-mail communication.

Mariam Jashi– raised a question with regard to the number of participants and venue of the Conference.

Lasha Zaalishvili – explained that last year the event was conducted in Expo Georgia and the same assumptions are used. An approximate number of participants is equal to 100.

Mariam Jashi – noted that there are inaccuracies in the budget even if it represents a preliminary draft. She requested to revisit it. Afterwards, the Deputy Minister pointed out to the procedural violations. Ms. Jashi explicitly noted that before starting detailed negotiations with the UN agencies and Geneva Secretariat an approval of the CCM should have been ensured.

Lasha Zaalishvili – explained that last year GHRN was planning to conduct such event with support of GFATM but this proposal was subsequently rejected by the GFATM. This year the GFATM support will give the possibility for the event to be very representative. He noted that it is the very first time that the organization was given an opportunity to proceed not only in terms of service delivery but also advocacy. He opposed the statement on procedural breach and stated that the issue was agreed with GPIC and GFATM Secretariat. There is an suggestion from GFATM that the issue to be discussed at the CCM. As evidence Mr. Zaalishvili showed an e-mail communication between GHRN, GPIC, GFATM Secretariat. He promised to distribute the correspondence to CCM members.

Mariam Jashi – referred to the statement of Mr. Lochoshvili regarding problems at the implementation level of GHRN and noted that such statement can not be neglected and left without reaction. The problem is aggravated by the fact that it is the very first time that the PR presented this issue to the CCM. The Deputy Minister stated that there is no problem if GHRN continues serving as SR for remaining three months until planned tender for revealing of new SRs unless serious irregularities are identified. Ms. Jashi requested involvement of LFA in verifying the statement of Mr. Lochoshvili.

Mzia Tabatadze – added that an official written address from GPIC or GFATM Secretariat is needed to proceed with verification.

Tamar Sirbiladze (USAD) – focused on the procedural breaches. She stated that it is absolutely inadmissible when the SR raises an issue directly to the donor without first agreement the issue with the PR.

Lasha Zaalishvili - noted that since it was the very first case of reprogramming the budget the GFATM was asked about the mechanism; the GHRN contacted the GPIC. GPIC responded that the approval of GFATM is needed. GHRN contacted GFATM (GPIC cc-ed). GFATM responded that the CCM approval is needed. The correspondence was between GHRN, GPIC, GFATM, FA was cc-ed. *It was pointed out to Mr. Zaalishvili that it should be GPIC not GHRN that contacts GFATM with such issues.*

Sandra E. Roelofs – stated that the quorum is not observed and further discussion can be conducted electronically.

Amiran Gamkrelidze – noted that the budget presented should be accompanied with a narrative part with a detailed description. He expressed concern that the country was not informed on the preliminary negotiations and on the plans of conducting such an event in advance.

Lasha Zaalishvili – noted that to his knowledge the sum will be lost unless spent in March 2014. He offered to present the issue to the CCM in details as it is prescribed by the procedure.

At the discussion the members expressed the opinion that before raising an issue to the GFATM the SR should have coordinated it with the current PR

The issue remained open due to absence of the quorum and following concerns expressed by the members:

The budget needs to be elaborated in an appropriate way and should be accompanied by a narrative part;

The CCM and MoLHSA should have had information on the preliminary negotiations undertaken in terms of planning of the conference; the issue should have been coordinated with appropriate stakeholders/in-country authorities;

The deadline for reprogramming of the budget and possibility to use an unspent fund should be double-checked;

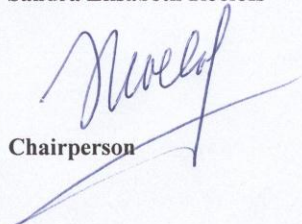
The CCM should take an informed decision on the appropriateness of conducting the Conference and also consider other possibilities to use unspent fund for other purposes.

The request for reprogramming of the budget should be raised by GPIC (PR) and not by GHRN (SR).

Decisions:

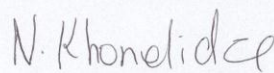
To rotate CCM membership from Ms. Fati Dzotsenidze to Mr. Dimitri Kordzaia - Board Chairman of Georgian National Association for Palliative Care

Sandra Elisabeth Roelofs



Chairperson

Natia Khonelidze



Administrative Assistant