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Outcomes of the DRSTP programme in Hungary

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Hungary participates in the Pompidou Group DRSTP programme, aiming to provide assistance to Central and Eastern European Countries (CEECs) for training the professionals working in the drug demand reduction fields. Katalin Szomor, working for the ministry of Health, is the project co-ordinator in this project.

Developing staff training in drug demand reduction

Building on experience gained from the three-year *Project on drug demand reduction staff training* (DRSTP-I) for twelve CEECs, the **Pompidou Group** is carrying out its 2nd phase (DRSTP-II). This programme commenced in 1999 and will be completed in 2002.

The main objective of the DRSTP-II is to support the development of national training materials for specific target groups involved in the implementation of drug demand reduction.

Some of the lecturers and consultants involved in DRSTP-I continued to take part in this 2nd phase. A *Management committee*, made up of representatives from two partner countries, the donor countries, and the EC, ILO, UNDCP and WHO, monitors the programme.

Each country identified a priority area in which to develop training materials. The goals varied considerably between the countries. This was expected, given the differences in experience, exposure to drug-related problems and policies.

In each country, a *National project team* (NPT) was set up at national level. Each NPT benefited from six consultation sessions driven by an international consultant. These helped the teams to extend their theoretical and practical knowledge and develop skills in the selected national priority training area.

The DRSTP-I demonstrated that policy-makers and practitioners could learn a lot from the experiences of countries that have been tackling drugs problems for longer. But adopting models and methods of other cultures has been repeatedly shown not to be effective: there must be a process of a cultural and adaptation. Lengthy discussions are needed to adapt concepts and methodologies to different cultural contexts.

The DRSTP-II is a time-limited programme. But the Pompidou Group wishes to create some sustainability to ensure that the work continues and develops beyond the end of the programme by sharing its achievements.

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IN THE FIRST PHASE, four Hungarian professionals benefited from a fellowship including a course in Italy and a two-months study tour in the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK.

After this, in-country seminars were organised, dealing with community level prevention, early intervention, harm reduction, life skills development and management of drug problems in correctional institutes. A methodological training was also given by distance education. In Hungary, the DRSTP seminars were followed by 290 professionals, who evaluated them with a high score. Professional information was also distributed via a DRSTP publication.

In the second phase, the need for books was identified: there was no training material, no manual, no tradition available in our country. Only one textbook should have been set up, but the Hungarian team was more ambitious and prepared a postgraduate distance education training package covering four different areas.

The curriculum was designed with the assistance of international experts. This was a lengthy process with many discussions. Qualified consultants of the Pompidou Group contributed to the success of this process, providing advice, motivation to the book-writers and by setting up a methodology.

An important activity in this phase was the literature research. As Hungarian literature on the selected areas was missing, the Pompidou Group and other international partners provided us with appropriate literature. We also gathered useful website addresses. ELISAD members also helped us, as well as other networks. Consultants always arrived in Hungary with a big suitcase of literature. Later, these documents were sent to the National Drug Library - to make them available to the public.

For the book-writing process - essence of this work - the unified team of 20 members met frequently until the curriculum was finalised. After, four sub-

teams were formed, each working on one of the four selected areas, in order to finalise the details.

Goals of the Hungarian project

The four distance education training materials prepared were:

Women and drugs

This book deals with the management of problems caused by the drug use of pregnant women and of young mothers, drugs in the work environment, the detoxification of the mother and baby, and the prevention and care of neurological and other symptoms (attention deficit disorder, hyperactivity). This training material was written explicitly for teams of medical specialists, including an obstetrician, a psychiatrist (addictions specialist), a neonatologist, a child-neurologist and a developmental psychologist.

Emergency care of drug addicts

This book deals with the emergency care of overdosed, intoxicated patients. It was written explicitly for emergency care teams.

Early diagnosis and early intervention of drug problem in the primary health care

This book was written for family doctors, pediatricians, youth and school doctors. It enables them to recognise a drug problem at an early stage, to set up the first diagnosis and to motivate the drug user to go for a special treatment. It also pays attention to prevention needs in the local community.

Management of the drug problem in prison

This book provides assistance to psychologists and educators working in prisons and physicians helping in the management of acute problems of arrested persons and prisoners.

Each book consists of two main parts: basic knowledge and special knowledge. An important aspect was to introduce up-to-date European and American experiences, based on scientific evidences.

These Hungarian distance education textbooks are innovative and fulfilling

a real need as there is no relevant professional literature or textbooks available in these areas in Hungarian language. The package was designed specifically for the above-mentioned target groups within a postgraduate medical learning context. The training will take place in distance education courses, moderated by the tutors of the material.

Who contributed?

The most important contributors were the three consultants: Dr. Agneta Flinck, Swedish distance education expert, University of Lund, Dr. Gabriele Fischer, Drogenambulanz, Allgemeine Krankenhaus, Wien, Professor of Psychiatry, Universitat Wien (who spent the most time with us) and Dr. Igor Koutsenok, Professor of psychiatry, Prison specialist, Deputy Director of the Addiction Training Centre, Dept. of Psychiatry, Univ. of California San Diego, USA.

The work was coordinated by the editor-in-chief, Katalin Szomor. The produced material includes the 4 books in hard copy, 2 CD-ROMs and 2 DVD cassettes. An electronic version of Pompidou Group publications and other international information material were scanned to the CDs, to constitute an electronic home-library for the students. The DVD cassettes contain five educational films. Both were prepared by János Kegey, multimedia expert.

The Pompidou Group financed the costs of the international coordination, the costs related to the international consultants and the master copy of CD and video in Hungary. The Ministry of Health, Social and Family Affairs paid the book-writers and, together with the the National Prison Headquarters, the printing/copying costs.

This project was characterised by a nice human environment and a wonderful collective creativeness.

We hope that the outcomes of these efforts will contribute - via the training of the health care staff and of prison professionals - to the reduction of the drug demand in Hungary.