**PHP Work in Russia**

**General**: Current PHP engagement in Russia consists largely of collaborative work by IHRD (harm reduction), LAHI (law and health) and AEMI (access to essential medicines). Given the hostility of the Russian government toward work with marginalized populations, we have increasingly linked our work to broader movements and themes, such as freedom of expression, rule of law, prison reform, anti-corruption efforts, citizen mobilization, and women’s rights.

**IHRD/LAHI collaboration** in Russia is focused on funding two streams of work: 1) **legal empowerment and rights protection** and 2) **monitoring access to health in pretrial detention**. Our current legal aid grantees focus on identifying and implementing creative ways of providing legal assistance and legal empowerment to people who inject drugs and/or are living with HIV/AIDS. The other grantees work on identifying successful methods of improving access to health services in closed settings, with a particular focus on pretrial detention.

LAHI’s 2011-2014 strategy identified Russia as a country of focus. To this end, the LAHI team plans on traveling there in early 2013 to expand its current grantmaking, solidify its strategy for work in Russia, and identify new partners. Some of the 2013 funding plans include:

* Documentation of best practices of our legal empowerment work in Russia (as part of a broader effort by LAHI and partners, including OSJI and Namati, to document the impact of our work on legal empowerment)
* Expanding the number of projects integrating harm reduction and legal aid in Russia (through a grants competition)
* Providing training and mini-grants to Public Supervisory Commission members for monitoring of access to health in pretrial detention
* Increased support for strategic litigation to promote and protect the rights of people who use drugs in Russia and remove legal barriers to harm reduction, largely through 2 key PHP grantees, the Canadian HIV-AIDS Legal Network (CHALN) and the Andrey Rylkov Foundation for Health and Social Justice,(ARF). ARF’s leader, Anya Sarang, is the liaison and principal actor in international advocacy efforts , including with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the CESCR, and the CAT.

**IHRD/AEMI collaboration** in Russiais focused on support for civil society monitoring of medication procurement practices by the Russian government, as well as advocacy/campaigning targeted at pharmaceutical companies and the government to reduce the price of HIV and Hepatitis C medications in Russia. This work is led by the International Treatment Preparedness Coalition-Russia, the social movement “Patients in Control,” and AGORA. The anti-corruption activist Alexei Navalny is collaborating and providing strategic guidance in this work.

**IHRD work** in Russia has a substantial focus on the rights and health of women who use drugs and/or are living with HIV/AIDS. This has most recently included:

* Support for community-driven documentation and advocacy around rights violations by medical providers (denial of care, coerced abortion, etc.) by EVA, the Network of Women Living w/HIV
* Support to the Andrei Rylkov Foundation for a convening on violence against marginalized women in Russia with the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women.

In 2013, IHRD and LAHI will explore opportunities for deepening work around access to justice for marginalized women in Russia, as well as links to other groups working on gender-based violence. IHRD will be providing some exploratory co-funding for HRGGP’s planned grant to ANNA, the Russian domestic violence network, for a women’s rights litigation training effort next year.

The primary tools for achieving our goals have been targeted project grants, as well as providing capacity building funding. We are also constantly seeking new ways to build the advocacy capacity of our grantees by connecting them with learning opportunities both in Russia and abroad. Given the ever-decreasing amount of funding available to harm reduction organizations in the country, we have also sought to support certain key groups like Humanitarian Action in St. Petersburg in their efforts to develop more diversified funding strategies (including local government and business support) going forward.

While IHRD has historically supported innovative community-based harm reduction services (naloxone for overdose, integration of HIV and TB services), we anticipate narrowing the scope of our work to the priorities identified above and issuing a number of "tie off" grants to some long-term partners whose work does not cut across larger OSF/Russia program priorities.

In terms of the recent laws that aim to regulate the activities of NGOs in Russia, none of our grantees plan on registering as “foreign agents,” believing that they fall under the health/humanitarian exception of the law.