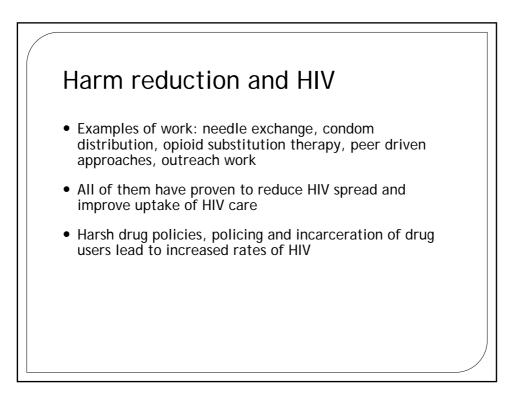


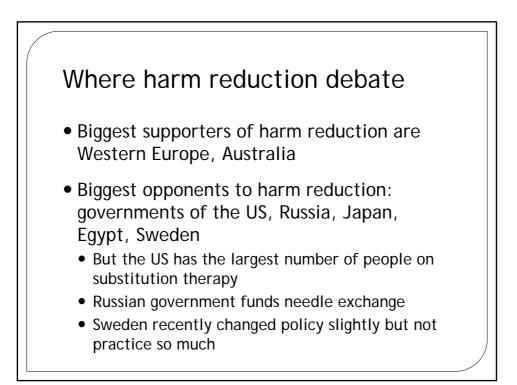
#### What is harm reduction

- Approach aimed to base drug policy and other related policies on human rights and public health principles.
  - Recognition that some people always have and always will engage in behaviours which carry risks, such as casual sex, sex work, and drug use.
  - Mitigation of the potential dangers and health risks associated with the risky behaviours themselves.
  - Reducing harms associated with, or caused by, the legal circumstances under which the behaviours are carried out





- Drug policy is politicized
- International drug conventions (historically) focused on international control with little attention to drug users themselves (or human rights)
- Some people believe in drug free world and that harm reduction is a recognition of our failure to seek for drug free world
- Evidence of efficacy and cost effectiveness is not enough for policy and decision making
- Help to drug users is not first priority
- No unity of civil society on harm reduction
- Involvement of people who use drugs is seen as involvement of criminals into debate around Criminal Code...



## Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia

- Balkans: substitution therapy in early 1990s in response to increased demand for opioid treatment
- The rest: HIV epidemic

1995-1996 first outbreaks of HIV among injecting drug users

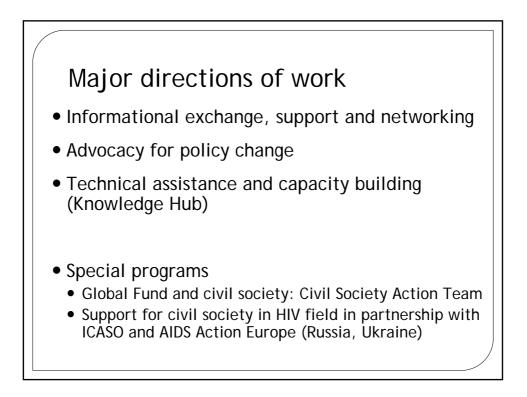
Kaliningrad, Russia;

Nikolaev and Odessa, Ukraine;

Svetlogorsk, Belarus







### Advocacy and policy change

what is needed 1. Issues → Targets/goals

- 2. Tools/arguments
  - Conventions, policy documents
  - Evidence base
  - Situation analysis
- 3. Partners (!major!)
- 4. Capacities
  - Allocated human resources
  - Building capacities of ourselves and partners
  - Financial resources
  - Advocacy toolkit
- 5. Plan





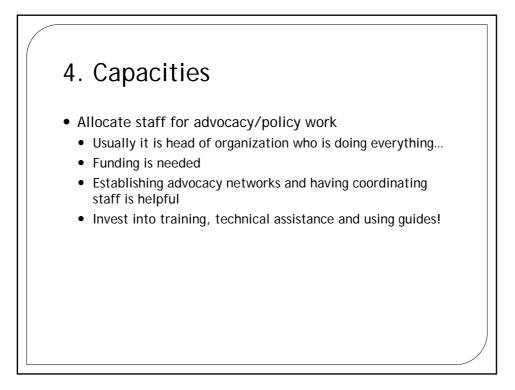


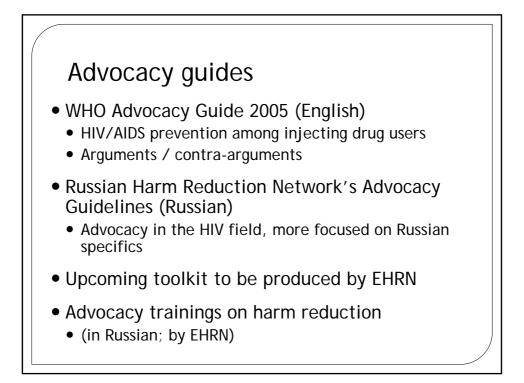
## Arguments in favour of harm reduction – combination of health, economic, drug policy, justice

- Effective in HIV prevention and management dependency
- Dependency is a chronic disease
- Cost effective/beneficial
- Reducing criminality
- Does not facilitate drug use
- Does not contradict International Drug Conventions
- Implemented in neighboring countries©

# 3. Partners – example of Coalition from national level in small

- Medical professionals
- Service providers
- Human rights groups
- Groups of people who use drugs and PLHIV
- People from decision making bodies





#### 5. Plan

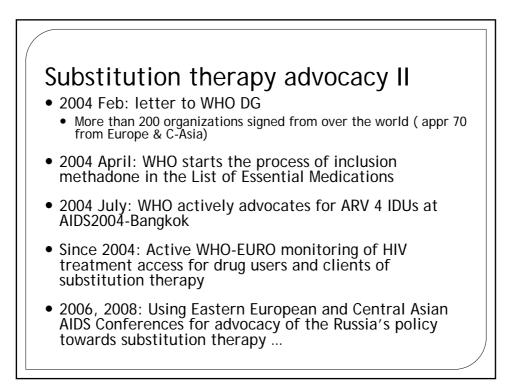
- Most complicated part, as well as implementation
- Better smaller but more realistic and with bigger vision

#### Examples

- Multi-strategy advocacy on ongoing basis
- Using analysis for national advocacy and creating network for follow up
- How EU documents can be helpful for changing
- Developing and stating civil society position in policy dialogue
- Crisis management through alliances
- Using new tools, like internet
- Building social responsibility in private sector
- More?



- Substitution treatment (ST): snapshots of situation and analysis of guidelines (2003; 2006; 2008)
  - Review of guidelines of each country pointing strong and weak parts (by experts)
  - Overview of ST situation
  - Networking between substitution treatment providers
  - List of prices and producers of substitution medications



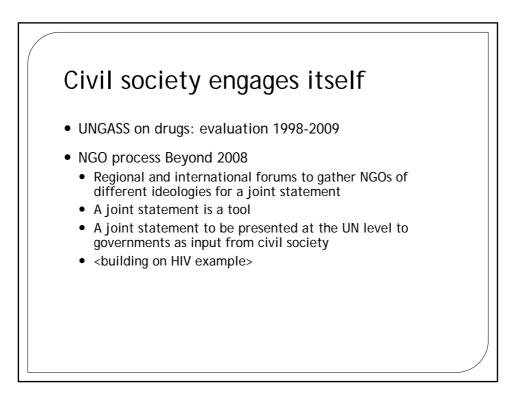
## Regional advocacy for improved sex work regulation

- Regional analysis of epidemiology, legislation, police practices and services for sex workers
- Follow up at national level:
  - Round tables with policy makers, police, service providers and other stakeholders
  - Press release
    - Outcomes: initiated ongoing debates regarding policy changes in Kyrgyzstan, Bulgaria, Serbia, Lithuania
- Follow up at regional level:
  - A regional network SWAN established based on human rights and harm reduction principles

#### EU and civil society engagement in drug policy

- EU Drugs Strategy and Action Plan:
  - Foreseen civil society engagement in drug policy
  - Commission established Civil Society Forum on Drugs in 2007-2008
  - Now this is turn for national governments to engage (happened in Hungary but not many other countries)







• Follow up awareness raising through media work, work with politicians and through multi-stakeholder round tables

### Pharmacies and harm reduction in Romania

- Work of ARAS and Romanian Harm Reduction Network
- Pharmacies is the primary source of syringes for drug users but often they don't sell syringes to drug users
- Training pharmacists
- Work with pharmacists, which led to a position statement of Pharmacists Association about social responsibility and role in HIV

