

Emergency Support Fund for Key Populations in the EECA region

A Comprehensive Response to Emergencies Threatening HIV Service Provision for

Key Populations in Eastern Europe and Central Asia

About the Fund

The Emergency Support Fund for Key Populations in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA) strives for a comprehensive response to emergencies threatening HIV service provision for key populations in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

The HIV epidemic in EECA, particularly in the Russian Federation and Ukraine, remains the fastest growing in the world. Access to prevention and treatment in EECA is a crucial need, in particular for key populations most at risk. Figures show that less than 25% of people living with HIV in EECA have access to treatment. At the same time, accurate numbers are missing. Real numbers of access to treatment are expected to be substantially lower. Influencing factors such as stigma and discrimination form barriers in access to prevention, treatment and care. Tailored (outreach) activities are needed to reach key populations most at risk. NGOs and CBOs are the main actors who have the ability to reach these groups with effective programs, but they suffer from toughened legal environments and funding cuts, especially in Russia. They often deal with emergency situations due to poor basic healthcare, funding uncertainties and changing policies.

The Emergency Support Fund for Key Populations in EECA is aiming to contribute to the following goals:

Goal 1. Decline in annual number of new HIV infections in the EECA region.

Goal 2. Everyone living with HIV in the EECA region receives treatment.

Goal 3. Full funding of the AIDS response in EECA.

Through small grants to registered and non-registered NGOs and CBOs, working in the area of HIV and human rights, with activities ranging from advocacy and prevention, to treatment and care in terms of HIV and co-infections, based in countries of the EECA region, *AFEW International* and *Aidsfonds* respond to fast-growing HIV epidemic in this region.

The overall goal of the Fund is to improve HIV prevention, treatment and care for key populations in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Funding available

In order to reach the overall goal, the Fund aims at supporting 80-100 organisations in the EECA with small grants in the period of 2019-2021. The maximum amount per grant is € 8.000,-. Only applications with a strong sustainability plan can be awarded the maximum amount, whereas the costs of the sustainability activities cannot exceed € 3.000,- or account for more than 37.5% of the total amount of the grant.

The Emergency Support Fund for Key Populations in EECA was launched on 1st December 2018, with a total of the EUR equivalent of GBP 1.308.810,- available. The Fund will be operational until December 2021; activities funded with an ESF grant should finish **no later than October 1, 2021**. Until January 2021 EUR 915.063,- has been allocated, leaving EUR 573.236 for 2021 .

Assessment of Applications

Applications meeting the eligibility criteria will be scored based on the selection criteria. Applications will be assessed every week on an ongoing basis. Decisions will be made within 10 days. We aim to initiate a transfer of the funds within 10 days of a positive decision.

How can NGOs and CBOs apply

To submit to the Emergency Support Fund, applicants can fill in an [online Application Form](#). We will not accept any applications by email.

The Application Form consists of two parts. Part 1 has to be completed to submit an application. In order to speed up the contracting, applicants are encouraged to already fill in Part 2, providing organizational and banking details, when submitting their application.

Applicants are allowed to submit more than one application. Applicants can receive more than one grant. In case of any problems or questions, please contact secretariat@emergencyfund.nl.

Eligibility Criteria for Emergency Grants

Eligibility criteria for the applicant

- Applicant is a Community based organization (CBO) or represents the interests and needs of the following groups:
 - Sex workers
 - LGBTQI
 - Men who have sex with men (MSM)
 - (Ex) Prisoners
 - Women vulnerable to HIV
 - Migrants
 - Adolescents and/or youth
 - People using drugs
 - People living with HIV (PLHIV)
- Applicant is based in Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine or Uzbekistan.
- Applicant is a registered NGO/CBO or - if not registered - provides references from partner organisations. Emergency Support Fund operational team shall be able to receive sufficient information about an applicant and can request information about applicant's capacities from mentioned partners. An applicant can be a national or regional network. Proposals by individuals will not be taken into consideration for funding. Unregistered initiatives and groups if awarded a grant, need to find a reliable fiscal partner which can receive the grant money through an international transfer.

Eligibility criteria for the application

- Projects ensure access to HIV prevention, treatment and /or services for key populations, or projects protect the human rights of key populations and contribute to one of the three objectives of the Fund. (see page 1)
- Activities respond to an emergency situation that threatens the health, and/or the physical or juridical safety of one or more people from the above target groups or threatens the financial and/or legal situation of an NGO/CBO; falling under one or more of the following categories:
 - I. Medical life-threatening situations for key populations
 - II. Violation of human rights of key populations as a result of stigma, discrimination and criminalization
 - III. Juridical life-threatening situations for key populations
 - IV. Situation threatening organizational capacity and continuity of work of NGOs and CBOs

- V. Activities in relation to COVID-19: to prevent increased risk behaviour or support ART adherence. (see a list of examples and possible interventions on page 5-6)
- Activities to relieve an emergency will be immediately implemented, and should finish before October 1, 2021.
- The proposal is submitted in English or Russian.
- The proposal is submitted through the online application form.

Organizational information is collected with care and delicacy. Information will be stored in a secured database.

Assessment Criteria for Emergency Grants

After an application is found to be eligible, the application will be assessed by the Operational Team based on the following criteria for Emergency Grants.

1. To what extent the situation qualifies as an emergency.
2. Relevance of the proposed activities: are the proposed activities in the given context relevant for solving the emergency situation?
3. Sustainability and Advocacy: Is there a good plan or strategy to prevent the emergency from happening again; and is the emergency situation and its solution used for advocacy purposes on a local or national level. This section will be given extra attention in this last year of the ESF.
4. Budget is clear and reasonable and reflects the proposed activities
5. Applicant shows the Capacity to implement the proposed activities

Each criterion is scored from 1 to 5, in relation to each other. Only applications with an average score higher than 3.5 will be considered for funding.

Reviewing the applications, we will keep the following in mind:

- We will prioritize activities that are not (easily) fundable through other means.
- We will prioritize activities that will also be used as a means for advocacy and/or publicity, addressing the causes of and striving to find more structural solutions for an emergency, and thus benefiting larger target groups.
- We will prioritize activities that include a good sustainability plan.
- In the portfolio of grants, we strive to have all mentioned key populations represented and all countries represented.

Due diligence

For selected grantees, a short organizational assessment will be conducted. This will assess governance and accountability structures; (financial) management and leadership; capacity to implement the proposed activities; and the meaningful involvement of key populations. This means that a sufficient level of organizational capacity is expected.

Possible Emergency situations for which grants might be awarded

Examples of emergencies are mentioned below. This is to give the applicant an idea of possible situations. Emergencies may include, yet are not limited to:

Possible Emergency Situations
<p>I. Medical life-threatening situations for key populations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock out of anti-retroviral therapy (ARV) • Stock out of HIV tests • Interruptions in provision of CD4 cell count tests • Stock out of Genexpert tests

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interruptions in provision of viral load tests • Interruptions in or no access for positively tested with the CD count eligible for treatment to ARV • Disruption of prevention services, e.g. stock-out of harm reduction commodities (syringes, cleansing materials, condoms etc.) • Stock out of post exposure prophylaxis medicines
<p>II. Violation of human rights of key populations as a result of stigma, discrimination and criminalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discharge of an employee as a result of disclosure of his/her HIV status • Denial or hampered access to prevention, treatment and/or other HIV/TB related services as a result of stigma attached to a particular key population group • Unauthorized disclosure of HIV status • Denial of access to HIV/TB treatment for patients in prisons
<p>II. Juridical life-threatening situations for key populations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prosecution of or/and threat of physical violence against (banned) activists • Denial of access to treatment as a result of lost documents or due to legal status (e.g. migrants)
<p>IV. Situation threatening organizational capacity and continuity of work of NGOs and CBOs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urgent need in the essential equipment on which the service provision depends • Emergent repairs (leakages, roof, basement, cellar, heating) and alike • Short-term gaps in the staff salaries for periods between regular funding • Legal prosecution threatening existence of the organisation
<p>V. Activities examples connected specifically to COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Switching and adapting existing service delivery to online working mode for eligible key population in response to the emerged needs due to COVID-19; this may include purchase of equipment to enable (remote) provision of services; • Setting up new services for eligible key populations in response to the emerged needs due to COVID-19; • Temporary economic support for individuals in order to adhere to ART, which could consist of covering basic food needs, purchase of food packages or distributing food vouchers, and hygiene packages for individuals. This practical assistance should be accompanied with support in applying to general socio-economic state support; • COVID-19 protection materials (masks, gloves, sanitizers, soap) for individuals, especially to be able to visit a health facility; • Purchase of mobile phone credit for individuals to be able to seek support or to get the services delivered virtually;

Possible interventions for solving Emergency Situations

Possible interventions could be, but are not limited to:

- direct service provision
- buying equipment and commodities to enable services provision
- buying medicines and test systems
- providing financial support to key populations in life threatening situations directly linked to HIV/AIDS
- transportation costs to medical facilities
- collecting cases and developing reports to be used for urgent advocacy for access to treatment and lifesaving commodities
- salaries to the staff members in between grants, or for service provision
- costs involved with usage of shelters
- lawyers' fees
- meeting costs for emergency gatherings of key stakeholders for decisions as part of the activities to solve/prevent life threatening situations
- domestic travel costs to attend an unexpected meeting to negotiate with governmental structures and decision makers.