

Dear Mr Sidibe!

On behalf of the community organizations working in the field of HIV prevention in Russia, we would like to express our concern about the diminishing role of the regional UNAIDS office in the Russian Federation, as well as in other countries of the region, in combating the HIV epidemic.

The mission of the Joint UN Programme on AIDS is to coordinate the global HIV efforts undertaken both by the governments and international organizations and by the civil society. Sadly, it has to be said that over the last few years UNAIDS has not only stopped playing a leading role; rather, as perceived by community organizations, it has not been visible at all.

We would also like to point out a number of other problems:

1. Most Russia-based community organizations working in the field of HIV are not informed about the plans of UNAIDS related to the HIV response in Russia. In the best-case scenario, they find out about the activities organized by UNAIDS post factum. These activities are organized and developed without any consultations with the civil society, which, in our opinion, makes them less effective, and in some cases even pointless.
2. The regional UNAIDS office is not making any effort to inform the civil society about their activities on a systemic basis and ignores the existing communication channels with the community organizations.
3. UNAIDS country offices have either been closed or are in the process of shutting down; the regional office has not taken over their functions aimed at coordinating the national HIV response.
4. The regional UNAIDS office is not making any effort to coordinate the activities of the civil society; the meetings of the Partner Forum used for experience and information exchange have not been held for a number of years.
5. The local communities have no information about the resources the regional UNAIDS office has at their disposal; no consultations are made with the civil society with regard to planning and supporting their initiatives in Russia and several other countries in the region.

Taking into account all the challenges related to the Russian political environment, we are expecting effective work from UNAIDS even given these difficult circumstances. We urge you:

- To oblige the regional UNAIDS office to inform the civil society about their activities and plans, as well as about the projects and initiatives of other UN agencies, in timely manner.
- To publish a report on UNAIDS work in Russia, including the activities supported financially by UNAIDS, on an annual basis.
- To renew the discussion about the priorities of UNAIDS as to financial support of civil society initiatives.

We kindly ask you to send us an open response to this letter in Russian.

Respectfully,

On behalf of Dance 4 Life Russia, country coordinator Tatyana Evlampieva

On behalf of the International Treatment Preparedness Coalition in EECA, Regional coordinator Gregory Vergus

On behalf of Regional Orel city Organisation "Phoenix plus", director Evgeniy Pisemskiy