



BORDERNETwork

Training seminar

**The method POL (Popular Opinion Leader) for Participatory Community-based HIV/STI Prevention for ethnic minorities (Roma) and migrant groups
(in the frame of project's Work Package 8)**

28 – 30.03.2011

Bucharest, Romania

Report

HESED

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From 28th to 30th March 2011 in the frames of Work Package 8 of the BORDERNETwork project a seminar dedicated to the POL model was conducted in Bucharest, Romania. The participants were experts in the field of the HIV prevention from all organization included in the WP8 activities. During the seminar sessions the following themes covered diverse components of the POL model:

- Overview and theory behind POL model – introduction in the Diffusion theory – the theoretical basis of the POL model and presentation of the relevant elements of this theory.
- Identifying and recruiting POLs – in the preliminary program there was 1-hour session provided for this issue. During the seminar due to the needs and questions of the participants two 90-minutes sessions were spent on this issue. The detailed understanding of the investigation and identification of the target population’s structure and norms and the correct identifying of the popular opinion leaders, both aspects are crucial for the implementation and for the impact on the target population of the POL model. During the seminar the participants needed more time to consider, discuss and compare:
 - the differences between all other models of community work (peer education and work with community leaders in particular) and the POL model;
 - the differences and similarities between NGOs’ target populations;
 - the sophisticated matter of the process of identification and recruiting if the POLs – the popular opinion leaders. Two role plays were dedicated to this issue.
- Core elements of the POL intervention – 30-minutes long session was foreseen for this subject. During the seminar the participants needed more time to consider the realistic implementation of the POL model and to choose the proper target population for it. Regarding the discussion of the differences between all other participatory models and the specifics of the POL model by choosing the target population, each organization needed more time for consulting the particular situation and the POL implementation possibilities.
- POL training - other specific aspect of the POL model is the training of the recruited popular opinion leaders. In the preliminary program one 90-minutes long session was foreseen for each training session (4 main training sessions according to the model). The seminar time was insufficient for detailed discussing of the training sessions – their objectives, structure and the techniques used for each particular training session. Five group role plays, focusing on “How to conduct each session” were planned but due to following reasons they were not conducted:
 - the seminar participants had different professional background and training skills;
 - the majority of them did not have experience with the group working techniques – role play in particular. It is one of the most important techniques for the POL

training. The HESED trainers spent time to introduce this technique to the participants. However, for the proper use of it they need more training time.

- the sophisticated, new for the participants and unique character of the POL model – all participants needed time to the proper understanding of previous aspects of the POL model and implementation.

Considering the differences between the planned and the realized program and the reasons for these differences, considering the participants' needs and the importance of the proper understanding of the POL model, the HESED trainers' team would suggest to continue this issue with additional sessions during the next meeting in the frames of the WP8, planned to take place in November 2011 in Vienna.

The buildup additional sessions will cover the following topics:

- discussing the NGOs' experience and consulting the NGOs' teams in the implementation of the POL model in their own context of community based prevention;
- detailed presentation and group role plays for selected training sessions.