



HIV Prevention and Psychosocial Support for MSM in Prisons

Results and Lessons Learned



Nikolaev
2012

HIV Prevention and Psychosocial Support for MSM in Prisons: Results and Lessons Learned

The report presents outcomes of three years of the project «HIV Prevention and Psychosocial Support for MSM in Prisons» implemented in Ukraine by the Penitentiary Initiative NGO (June 1, 2009 – May 31, 2012).

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• Русскоязычная версия – с обратной стороны буклета



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HIV prevention, care and support in prisons

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A winner of Red Ribbon Award
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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

amfAR	amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research
colony	correctional colony
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
LGBT	lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender
LiGA	LiGA, the Nikolaev Association for Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals
MSM	men who have sex with men
NGO	non-governmental organization
PRECIS	the project «Prevention and Empowerment in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)»
STI	sexually transmitted infection

SUMMARY

HIV prevalence among male prisoners in Ukraine is extremely high – over 4%¹. Estimated HIV rate among MSM in Ukraine is 8.6%². Highly stigmatized, little data exists on MSM prisoners, however, they have limited access to HIV services. There is an urgent need for penitentiary programs targeting HIV needs of MSM.

The Penitentiary Initiative NGO in Nikolaev (Ukraine) developed an outreach model of HIV prevention and psychosocial support for MSM/MSM+ prisoners. It includes psychological support groups; trainings in HIV, STIs and other infectious disease prevention; individual counseling by psychologists and social workers; training peer educators for outreach work among MSM/outcast inmates; distribution of condoms, lubricant, supplies for personal hygiene, bleach and informational materials; and referrals after release.

To scale up the program at national level, the Penitentiary Initiative produced a manual on MSM/HIV in prison settings. Three national seminars on work with MSM/MSM+ prisoners were conducted for penitentiary staff and NGOs working in prisons. Lessons learned were also disseminated through internships, the organization's website and electronic bulletin «Prisons Free from Discrimination.»

Funded by amfAR, the program has been implemented in 4 regions of Ukraine since 2009. Awareness among MSM prisoners regarding HIV prevention and sexual health issues has increased significantly. The project has also drawn attention to MSM and HIV within the penitentiary system. Our manual have been approved by the State Penitentiary Service and recommended for use in all Ukrainian prisons. An annual «Summer School» for current/potential facilitators of MSM prison groups was conducted. In 2012, MSM support groups function in 10 prisons in 6 regions.

The project has contributed to developing a standard package of HIV services for MSM prisoners. Homophobia in Ukrainian society hampers implementation of MSM-related programs. Reducing stigma and discrimination and changing common prison stereotypes on sexuality are vital for the program success.

1 Statistics of the State Penitentiary Service of Ukraine
<http://www.kvs.gov.ua/peniten/control/main/uk/publish/article/628075>
<http://www.kvs.gov.ua/peniten/control/main/uk/publish/article/633088>

2 Men having sex with men in Eastern Europe: Implications of a hidden epidemic. Regional analysis report, the International HIV/AIDS Alliance in Ukraine, 2010, p. 99.

INTRODUCTION

HIV rates in Ukrainian prisons are much higher than in the general population. As of 2012.04.01, around 4.4% of prisoners are HIV-infected. According to epidemiological survey of 2009, HIV prevalence among MSM in Ukraine is estimated to be 8.6%. Taking into account that same sex practices among men are widespread in prisons, ensuring MSM prisoners' access to HIV prevention and treatment is an urgent issue.

The Penitentiary Initiative piloted a targeted program to reach MSM prisoners in 2008. By then our organization had implemented HIV prevention, care and support projects in prisons for a number of years. Sometimes during our lectures and mass events we noticed some prisoners being forced to leave by other prisoners. We found out that the banished were 'outcasts.'

Prison culture from the USSR times divides male prisoners into 'castes.' The lowest in the hierarchy are 'outcasts.' Under constant pressure of heavy stigma and discrimination from other prisoners and prison staff, outcasts are registered by prison psychologists as at-risk of suicide. As a rule, they are not allowed to participate in general HIV activities (support groups for HIV+ inmates, trainings, and mass actions). Imprisoned gay men are outcasts without an alternative. About 10% of outcasts provide transactional sex.

According to focus groups conducted among outcast prisoners in the Nikolaev region, each of the MSM inmates providing transactional sex has 10-15 clients a week. After release, such men – having a dire need for money – come to gay meeting spots and offer their services (often without a condom).

We realized that it was important to reach the outcast prisoners with HIV/STI risk reduction messages, but did not have funding for a specialized program. At the same time LiGA, the Nikolaev Association for Gays, Lesbians and Bisexuals, were concerned about guys looking like prisoners and offering sex for money at the gay meeting spots. LiGA contacted us and proposed funding to start a program for MSM prisoners. They also provided initial training in the specific needs of MSM.

Thus in February 2008 the Penitentiary Initiative established a psychological support group for outcast prisoners in Correctional Colony 53. The group proved to be effective, and in January 2009 we started a support group in Colony 93. LiGA provided facilitator fees and refreshment costs for the two groups within the frameworks of the PRECIS project.

With amfAR's MSM Initiative Community Award funding, since June 2009, we obtained the opportunity to provide the outcast inmates with HIV and personal hygiene supplies, to produce informational materials on MSM and HIV in prison settings, to organize training for prison staff and NGOs, and scale up the program to other regions of Ukraine.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Outreach Work Among Outcast Prisoners

Here is our outreach model of HIV prevention and psychosocial support for outcast prisoners, and how it works. The model is based on our 16 month's experience conducting outcast support groups, and needs assessment of the target group (focus groups with outcast inmates, and questionnaire survey on their social situation, sexual health knowledge and practices) in Colonies 53 and 93.

► Psychological support groups

The «rejected» inmates are not able to improve their situation by themselves – both because of their personal traits and because of humiliating attitudes toward them. As a main form of work we have chosen psychological support groups.



Support group Horizon in Colony 53 with Olena Chupryna, project coordinator and the group facilitator

Support groups for outcast prisoners are facilitated by NGO psychologists. Initial contacts are established through the prison's psychological service or medical unit. It is important to identify and engage inmate leaders. Friendly atmosphere and refreshments should be provided for the group meetings. Discussion topics include: sexual health, discrimination, family values, living with HIV, conflicts, and stress and depression prevention. Art therapy techniques are also used for psycho-correction. Group size is 12-20 people.

► Training

Training sessions for the support group participants are conducted regularly with the focus on safer sex and health maintenance in prison settings. Main topics are HIV, STIs, viral hepatitis, and TB prevention, how to use condoms and lubricant, alcohol and drug abuse as factors of high risk sexual behavior. The participants' knowledge about HIV prevention and sexual health increased on average by 30% in one year.



Psychologist Olga Yelesina conducting training in Colony 53

Training peer educators for outreach work among outcast inmates:

We also provide training in peer education concept and communication skills. The group participants do peer counseling and distribute informational materials on infections prevention. The work results in involving new inmates in the support groups. The opportunity to help others for many of the participants has become as important as getting help and support for themselves.

► **Individual counseling**

Individual counseling by psychologists and social workers is provided to participants who need privacy to discuss their problems or when they cannot attend group meetings regularly because they are busy with work. Main topics are: living with HIV, health maintenance in prison, sexual health, discordant couples, loneliness, conflicts in family, and relationship with parents. The individual counseling contributes to depression prevention and relieving psychosocial strains among outcast inmates. Added value is counselors are NGO specialists, because inmates trust «outsiders» more than they trust prison staff.

► **HIV supplies and informational material distribution**

The support group participants are provided with HIV prevention kits and supplies for personal hygiene. The following items are distributed: condoms and lubricant, informational materials on infectious disease prevention and health maintenance in prison settings, disposable shavers, tooth brushes and toothpaste. Taking into consideration, that many of the inmates have lost family and social connections and are poor, we provide vitamins and a limited number of supplementary food rations (tea, condensed milk, canned food, and biscuits) to those most in need. Outcast inmates are often forced to do dirty jobs (e.g. cleaning premises and toilets), that is why we provide them with rubber gloves, detergents, and bleach. Need for these supplies have been expressed by the support group participants.

The informational material distributed includes a booklet «С глазу на глаз» («In Private») developed by the Penitentiary Initiative in 2009 as part of the project. The booklet was approved by Ukraine's State Penitentiary Service.



► Mass actions and sport events

Mass actions for outcast prisoners are conducted for World AIDS Day, AIDS Candlelight Memorial Day and International Day Against Homophobia. One of the ways to celebrate the days is to organize sport events under the motto «Sport against AIDS». Outcasts are not allowed to participate in sport events within the

general prison population. We conduct separate activities for them: football matches, table tennis and backgammon tournaments, etc. Participants are awarded prizes and gifts. Fans receive informational materials, HIV prevention kits and supplies for personal hygiene. The sport actions always draw great interest and give the outcast inmates additional motivation to participate in our prevention activities. It is an opportunity for the inmates to show their best. The sport games contribute to building group solidarity and to raising the self-esteem of the participants.



*Sport Against AIDS
football match
in Colony 93.
Support group
facilitator
Irina Mospan*

► Referrals after release

We provide assistance and psychosocial support for the support group participants after release. Some group participants have served several terms and have lost their social and family connections. After release from prison, these clients face problems which they cannot solve on their own e.g., restoring identification documents, obtaining living accommodations, finding employment, ongoing health issues, and general lack of funds. We link them to governmental agencies and NGOs that can help them: the Registration Center for Homeless, Regional Employment Center, Regional AIDS Center, Movement in Support for Ex-prisoners of Ukraine, and LGBT organizations. Our clients also receive counseling from our lawyer and psychologist, and if necessary, aid with clothing and shoes.

Scaling Up

To scale up the program at national level, the Penitentiary Initiative produced a manual on MSM/HIV in prison settings and conducted three national seminars on work with MSM/MSM+ prisoners. Lessons learned were also disseminated through internships, the organization's website and electronic bulletin.

► Support groups in Lugansk, Cherkassy and Kherson

The Penitentiary Initiative's model of HIV prevention and psychosocial support for outcast prisoners was implemented in five more prisons by the project partner NGOs Anti-AIDS (Lugansk), Insight (Cherkassy), and Mangust (Kherson) during Year 1 and Year 2 of the project. In September 2009 psychological support groups were started in Colony 19 (the Lugansk region) and Colony 62 (the Cherkassy region). In 2010 the project supported groups for outcast prisoners in Colonies 10, 90 and 105 in the Kherson region.



Support group in Colony 90 (Kherson) (Photo: Mangust)

The Penitentiary Initiative trained the group facilitators during internship and seminars, provided methodical materials on MSM and HIV, and further consultations via telephone and email. The Penitentiary Initiative and LiGA specialists also conducted monitoring visits to the three regions to assess the project activity of the partner organizations. During the site visits the monitors communicated with participants of the support groups and provided consultative assistance to the group facilitators. Recommendations were given on optimizing work processes.

It could be concluded that the psychological support services for outcast inmates were in great demand. The monitors especially mentioned successful work of Anti-AIDS (Lugansk): good contact with inmates; all inmates providing transactional sex attend the sup-



Site visit to Lugansk: Support group Rostok (Colony 19), facilitator Oleg Perepelitsa (second row in the center); front row: Oleg Alyokhin (LiGA), Elena German and Irina Zhelvakova (Penitentiary Initiative)

port group meetings regularly, and receive individual counseling, informational materials, condoms and lubricant; according to the group participants and prison staff, a high level of tolerance among peers toward the MSM group has been achieved.

► Seminars on work with MSM in prisons

Seminar 1: HIV Prevention and Psychosocial Support for MSM in Prisons of Ukraine
28-29 August 2009, Koblevo (Nikolaev Region)

The Penitentiary Initiative conducted a first ever two-day national seminar for health workers focused on MSM/MSM+ in prisons. Participants representing penitentiary officials, prison psychologists, NGO health professionals, as well as ex-prisoners and LGBT leaders, were able to identify effective strategies to address HIV needs of MSM prisoners. Discussion topics included: basics of sexuality; stereotypes of MSM (including differences between MSM behavior in the general population and in the prison population); inherent HIV risks among MSM in prison settings; strategies for working with MSM/MSM+ in prison settings; needs assessment of the target group (their social situation, awareness of HIV/STIs, sexual practices, access to condoms and lubricant, and needs for psychological support). Penitentiary Initiative and the Mangust Foundation shared their experience conducting support groups for outcast inmates.



Twenty five NGO and penitentiary specialists from eight regions of Ukraine have gained knowledge and shared practical experience in work with MSM in prison settings. 'Insider' information and insights of ex-prisoners and prison psychologists brought special value to the seminar. Participant feedback gave especially high ratings to the topics «basics of sexuality» (in particular, differences between sexual orientation and sexual behaviors) and «stereotypes of MSM.» In general, the seminar highlighted the following strategies targeting incarcerated MSM: conducting psychological support groups, and training peers for peer education and distribution of condoms, lubricant, supplies for personal hygiene and informational materials.

Seminar 2: Psychosocial Work among Outcast Inmates in Prisons of Ukraine

2-3 September 2010, Ochakov (Nikolaev Region)

Participants: penitentiary staff (representatives of prison psychosocial service), NGOs working or planning to work in prisons, LGBT organizations and organizations of former prisoners. Twenty eight people were trained.

Discussion topics included: sexual orientation, sexual identity and sexual behaviour; tolerance and homophobia; discrimination and stigma in prison settings and at large; strategies and methods of work in prison settings; support groups, self-help groups, therapeutic groups: similarity and differences; specificities of psychological support groups for outcast inmates; peculiarities of conducting mass actions in prison settings.

The seminar brought together representatives of 9 penitentiary institutions and 9 NGOs from 7 regions of Ukraine (Kiev, Kharkov, Poltava, Lugansk, Cherkassy, Kherson and Nikolaev). Active networking and experience sharing were very valuable. The seminar contributed to building a constructive dialogue between penitentiary staff and NGO specialists. Prison psychologists improved their knowledge of sexuality basics and issues of homophobia, discrimination and tolerance. NGOs learned from prison staff and ex-prisoners about specificities of outcast inmates.

Seminar 3: Summer School on Work with Outcast Prisoners

29 August – 2 September 2011, Koblevo (Nikolaev Region)

Participants: 23 people (14 NGO and 9 penitentiary specialists) from 7 regions of Ukraine.

Discussion topics included: informal hierarchy of prisoners; basics of sexuality; forms and methods of work with outcast inmates. Nikolaev, Lugansk, Cherkassy and Kherson shared their best practice in conducting MSM support groups in prisons. The distinctive feature of this seminar was practical training for current and potential facilitators of MSM prison groups. Participants had an opportunity to show their skills of conducting informational sessions and facilitating support groups in practice. The exercises were filmed. Reviewing trainers' feedback was provided from the video. Such supervision by the trainers allowed the participants to see their strengths and weaknesses, and to get adequate and professional advice.

Two international participants from Moldova attended the seminar: a representative of the Medical Division of the Department of Penitentiary Institutions and a social worker from the nongovernmental organization GengerDoc-M.



► **Manual for NGOs working in prisons**

The manual «HIV Prevention in Prison Settings among Outcast Inmates: Methodical Recommendations» was developed by the Penitentiary Initiative in 2009-2010.

The manual highlights issues of prison culture (prison hierarchy), mechanisms of homosexual behavior in prison settings, factors of higher HIV risk for outcast inmates, and their specific psychological and medical problems. A separate chapter is dedicated to basics of sexuality and homophobia.

The manual includes recommendations for NGOs on work with outcast inmates (including forms and methods of work), instructions for support group facilitators and a training module of 6 sessions for outcast inmates (topics: Support Groups, HIV/AIDS, STIs, Infectious Disease Prevention, Safer Sexual Behavior, Addiction Prevention).

In January 2011 the State Penitentiary Service approved the manual and recommended that the book be distributed in all penitentiary institutions of Ukraine. An electronic version of the manual is available on our website www.noomd-pi.org.

► **Website and e-bulletin**

A collection of materials on work with MSM/MSM+ in prison settings has been created on the Penitentiary Initiative website www.noomd-pi.org. It includes informational and educational materials, training programs, videos, photos, and presentations developed by the Penitentiary Initiative and the project collaborators, as well as other Ukrainian and international organizations. The materials are for use to improve prevention, medical and social services for MSM prisoners.

A quarterly electronic bulletin «Prisons Free from Discrimination» has been produced since June 2010. The purpose of the bulletin is to draw attention to HIV programs for MSM in prisons. It reports on the project progress in the Nikolaev, Lugansk, Cherkassy and Kherson regions. The newsletter with the bulletin is disseminated among NGOs working in prisons, AIDS service and LGBT organizations, potential donors and other interested stakeholders.

Training for Prison Staff

Strong homophobia in Ukrainian society and especially inside prison walls is a serious obstacle to effective HIV prevention among MSM. Homosexual relations between men were criminalized until 1991. It takes time and constant work to change minds. Work among prison staff and the general prison population on building tolerance for MSM is an important part of the project.

In September 2009 the Penitentiary Initiative introduced the project at the Nikolaev Regional Office of the State Penitentiary Service. Psychologists of all prison institutions of the region participated in the meeting. We highlighted issues of sexual diversity, urgency of HIV prevention among MSM in prisons, and shared our approach to work with outcast inmates in Colonies 53 and 93. The presentation generated fruitful discussions about psychological peculiarities of MSM and the necessity of psychosocial support and building tolerance for MSM in prisons. As a result of the meeting, the psychologist of Colony 83 initiated work with outcast inmates in his colony. That led to establishing a support group in the colony.



Trainings for prison staff were conducted in 7 colonies in the Nikolaev, Cherkassy and Kherson regions. Main topics were: sexual orientation, sexual identity and sexual behavior; prejudice and stereotypes of homosexuality; stigma and discrimination; tolerance; forms and methods of work with outcast inmates.



Seminar at the Lugansk Regional Office of the State Penitentiary Service (Photo: Anti-AIDS)

In May 2011, Oleg Perepelitsa of the Anti-AIDS (Lugansk) conducted a seminar for medical specialists and psychologists from all prisons of the region. The participants were well educated about infectious diseases, but there were gaps in issues of sexual orientation. At first the topic aroused irony, but when issues of outcasts came under discussion, the participants started to speak about problems related to outcast inmates. During the session differences between sexual orientation and sexual behaviors were discussed, as well as the concept of tolerance, and how tolerance can create opportunities for further work with this category of inmates.

The training for prison staff contributed to building tolerance for outcast inmates and to strengthening partnerships with prison administrations.

IMPACT



Photo: Anti-AIDS (Lugansk)

The project has contributed to developing a standard package of HIV services for outcast/MSM prisoners. It drew the attention of the national penitentiary authorities and civil society to the urgency of HIV prevention among MSM in prisons. The project efforts to bring penitentiary staff and NGOs to a dialogue at the annual seminars resulted in a developing network of organizations working/planning to work with MSM in prison settings. The interaction between prisons and NGOs is a way to improving inmates' access to HIV services and psychosocial support. The manual «HIV Prevention in Prison Settings among Outcast Inmates: Methodical Recommendations» is used in prisons and by AIDS service NGOs. Our approach to HIV prevention and psychosocial support for outcast prisoners is implemented in a growing number of prisons in various regions of Ukraine.

Outcast inmates receive psychosocial support and training about HIV prevention and sexual health. The program facilitates the inmates' access to condoms, lubricant, supplies for personal hygiene and informational materials. Rubber gloves and bleach are provided to protect the men forced to do the prison's dirtiest jobs. Support groups and individual



Support group Leader (Colony 93)

«When I went to jail and got into a caste of outcasts, my life turned into a nightmare. I thought I was worthless, and it seemed to me that everybody thought that way. Now I know it's not true. I realized it thanks to the Penitentiary Initiative staff who helped me believe in myself.»

A support group participant

«We discussed issues of sexual orientation and homophobia. At first the participants had very mixed feelings about the topic. But then they gradually did become more open and began to show their interest and ask questions. When after all one of the participants openly declared his homosexuality, it was for the first time since he had been in prison that he didn't face any mockery or cruelty, and was able to get understanding and support which he so much lacked before.»

*Olga Yelesina,
psychologist and support
group facilitator*

counseling contribute to psychological correction reducing the participants' emotional stress, and raising awareness of their rights. Facilitators report considerable improvements in psychoemotional state and self-acceptance of the participants. The participants have become more open. Now they frankly speak about their homosexuality and safer sex issues. Inmates providing transactional sex more often turn for individual counseling on health maintenance.

Regular counseling by psychologists and social workers helps the participants get rid of a feeling of isolation, loneliness and alienation. Over time the participants have become more active; they strive to learn, begin to think about their future, and offer topics of group discussions themselves. Another positive impact: the group participants do peer education work on infections prevention. The work results in involving new inmates in the support groups. The support group members continue communication outside the group meetings. The support groups give the inmates an opportunity to participate in processes of communication, understanding, and discovering of new opportunities in life.

Lessons Learned

Our experience shows that outcast support groups progress much more slowly than support groups for other categories of prisoners. Living under constant pressure of severe stigma and discrimination from the other inmates and prison staff, outcast prisoners are especially difficult to gain trust. Their typical traits are self-doubt and constraint, reticence, low self-esteem, internalized homophobia, lack of tolerance toward each other, and distrust of their

own caste and of outsiders. With outcasts it takes much longer time to establish good contact and create the atmosphere necessary for effective work.

A support group in a prison is slightly different from a conventional one. Work in prison settings has certain specificities. For example, at least one guard is present at the group meetings for security reasons, which hampers confidentiality that is very important to discuss the sensitive issues of MSM.



*Support group
in Colony 62
(Photo: Insight)*

Therefore at the initial stage it makes sense to conduct meetings in the form of informational sessions on HIV, STIs and healthy lifestyles. While providing the useful information, a facilitator is able to assess the group and gain trust, which will enable the group to move on. It may take months for the outcast inmates to become open enough to speak of their own problems related to same sex practices, homosexuality, and loss of social status.

In our training activities we also face problems that are common for all prisoners: lack of motivation for learning (especially at the beginning), a learning disability, illiteracy (some do not know how to write or read), a considerable proportion of drug users and people with mental issues. Sometimes we have to adjust our trainings accordingly: to use drawings, replace written questionnaires with oral ones, and repeat previous sessions.

The most essential need of the outcast inmates – as they expressed it themselves - is communication. They need recognition, understanding, attention and conversation. Psychological support groups can meet the need.

The very fact of the support group existence, and educational work among general prison populations on the issues of discrimination and tolerance changed prison culture. For example, when we started a support group for outcast inmates in Colony 53, the other prisoners said «No way!» to the outcast group meetings at the Peer Training Center, where

our organization conducts all our activities. We had to work with the outcast inmates in the colony's medical unit. After a while, the prisoners allowed the outcast support group to meet at the Center. In Colony 93, the work of the support group Leader has led to changing attitudes of the general prison population toward outcast inmates. One of the group members now participates in the prison theater Idea. He writes plays for the theater and performs on the stage, which would previously have been absolutely impossible. In Colonies 19, 62 and 105 joint training sessions and actions were conducted for the general prison population and outcasts. Though there have been improvements, much work remains in building tolerance for outcast inmates among the prison population and prison staff.



CONCLUSIONS

Ensuring MSM prisoners' access to HIV prevention and treatment is vital to stop the epidemic spread. The project has contributed to developing a standard package of HIV services for MSM prisoners. The support groups for outcast inmates have proven to be effective. There is high demand for such work in Ukraine's chronically under-resourced prisons. However, insufficient funding hampers scaling up the program at national level throughout the penitentiary system.

Homophobia in Ukrainian society is a main obstacle to the implementation of MSM-related programs. Reducing stigma and discrimination and changing common prison stereotypes on sexuality are urgent for the programs success.

PROJECT FACTS AND FIGURES

The project was implemented by the Penitentiary Initiative (Nikolaev, Ukraine). Supported with MSM Initiative Community Award funding from amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research. Supported in part by LiGA within the PRECIS project.

• YEAR 1

Project title: **HIV Prevention and Psychosocial Support for MSM in Prisons of Ukraine**

Award ID #: 107629-46-HAMM

Award amount: \$30,000 USD

Period of implementation: June 1, 2009 – May 31, 2010

Project partners: Anti-AIDS (Lugansk), Insight (Cherkassy)

Implemented in 3 regions of Ukraine in Correctional Colonies 53 and 93 (Nikolaev), 19 (Lugansk) and 62 (Cherkassy).

Number of outcast inmates reached: 215

• YEAR 2

Project title: **HIV Prevention and Psychosocial Support for MSM in Prisons: Scaling up**

Award ID #: 107872-48-HAMM

Award amount: \$30,000 USD

Period of implementation: June 1, 2010 – May 31, 2011

Project partners: Anti-AIDS (Lugansk), Insight (Cherkassy), Mangust (Kherson)

Implemented in 4 regions of Ukraine in Correctional Colonies 53, 83 and 93 (Nikolaev), 19 (Lugansk), 62 (Cherkassy) and 10, 90 and 105 (Kherson).

Number of outcast inmates reached: 348

• YEAR 3

Project title: **HIV Prevention and Psychosocial Support for MSM in Prisons**

Award ID #: 108089-50-HAMM

Award amount: \$18,000 USD

Period of implementation: June 1, 2011 – May 31, 2012

Implemented in Correctional Colonies 53, 72, 83 and 93 of the Nikolaev region.

Number of outcast inmates reached: 257

In three years, over 800 outcast prisoners have been reached in 9 prisons in 4 regions of Ukraine.

June 17-18, 2010, Nikolaev: Seminar on fundraising basics within the frameworks of amfAR's technical support. Fifteen specialists of Penitentiary Initiative and our local partner NGOs were trained.

Three national seminars on work with MSM prisoners were attended by specialists of 15 NGOs and 10 penitentiary institutions from 11 regions of Ukraine. Regions represented: Cherkassy, Dnepropetrovsk, Donetsk, Kharkov, Kherson, Kiev, Lugansk, Nikolaev, Odesa, Poltava, Simferopol. (Two participants from Moldova took part in the Summer School 2011.)

Trainings for penitentiary staff in building tolerance for MSM were conducted in the Nikolaev and Lugansk Regional Offices of the State Penitentiary Service, and in seven colonies in the Nikolaev, Cherkassy, and Kherson regions.

PROJECT PUBLICATIONS:

- ▶ «HIV Prevention in Prison Settings among Outcast Inmates: Methodical Recommendations» 200 copies (in Russian)
- ▶ «In Private», the booklet for prisoners on HIV/STIs prevention, 2000 copies (in Russian)
- ▶ «Prisons Free from Discrimination», the quarterly e-bulletin (in Russian) 8 issues (June 2010 – May 2012)
- ▶ «HIV Prevention and Psychosocial Support for MSM in Prisons: Results and Lessons Learned» (in Russian and English) 100 copies

The publications and other materials on MSM and HIV prison programs are available on the Penitentiary Initiative website www.noombd-pi.org

In 2012, MSM support groups function in 10 prisons in 6 regions of Ukraine.