



Evaluation report on the results of the project “Health Education for Social Prosperity”

SUMMARY

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Introduction

The profile of the prison inmates shows that in many cases they have low educational status and no supporting social environment. These factors are often accompanied by low health culture and risk behavior, from a health perspective, part of it being the use of drugs in prison. According to the database of the General Directorate “Execution of Penalties” in 2012 there have been 992 persons registered as users of psychoactive substances. This data clearly demonstrates the challenges for the penitentiary system in the last years. There is a growing necessity of specific interventions which could address the needs of the prisoners who have had or currently have access to narcotic drugs.

The project “Health education for social prosperity” is directed to these needs and challenges. The project has been realized by the Initiative for Health Foundation in collaboration with the Foundation “Tyrili” from Norway. The project aims to develop and implement a model of intervention for prevention and harm reduction of drug use among prison inmates in three places of detention in Bulgaria: the Prison in the town of Pleven, the Prison in the town of Plovdiv and the Correctional Facility in the town of Boychinovtsi. The project has three specific objectives: 1) To increase professional capacity of prison and NGO staff to work with prison inmates who are at risk of drug use; 2) To reduce vulnerability related to drug use among prison inmates; 3) To improve cooperation between detention settings and civil society in the area of working with prison inmates at risk of drug use.

The activities of the project are directed to the most vulnerable groups of prison inmates – drug users, underage and representatives of the Roma community. The activities include: 1) Training of prison staff and NGO teams in Boychinovtsi, Pleven and Plovdiv; 2) Implementing intervention for prevention and reduction of the harms of drug use in Boychinovtsi, Pleven and Plovdiv; 3) Expanding the methodological basis for work with prison inmates at risk of drug use; 4) Ensuring publicity of the project.

During the initial training 27 representatives of the penitentiary system and 9 experts from NGOs have been trained. Their future engagement in the project activities is impressive. In Plovdiv 5 persons from the prison staff have conducted further education for prisoners in cooperation with three experts from the NGO; in Pleven – 4 representatives of the NGO and 8 prison professionals; and in Boychinovtsi – two representatives of the NGO and 5 prison pedagogues.

For a period of 8 months in the three prisons the professionals have conducted 35 educational groups with prison inmates overall, which have been oriented to information and prevention of drug use and reduction of the harms (prevention of HIV/AIDS and blood

and sexually transmitted infections, overdose, etc.). The distribution of the groups is the following: 15 in Pleven, 15 in Plovdiv and 5 in Boychinovtsi.

The educational group work includes three sessions with each group on the following topics: “Drugs, safer use and overdose”, “TB and sexually transmitted infections” and “HIV and hepatitis”. The overall number of educated prisoners is 352.

This analysis offers an evaluation of the activities described above and explains how they have contributed for the achievement of the specific objectives set in the project.

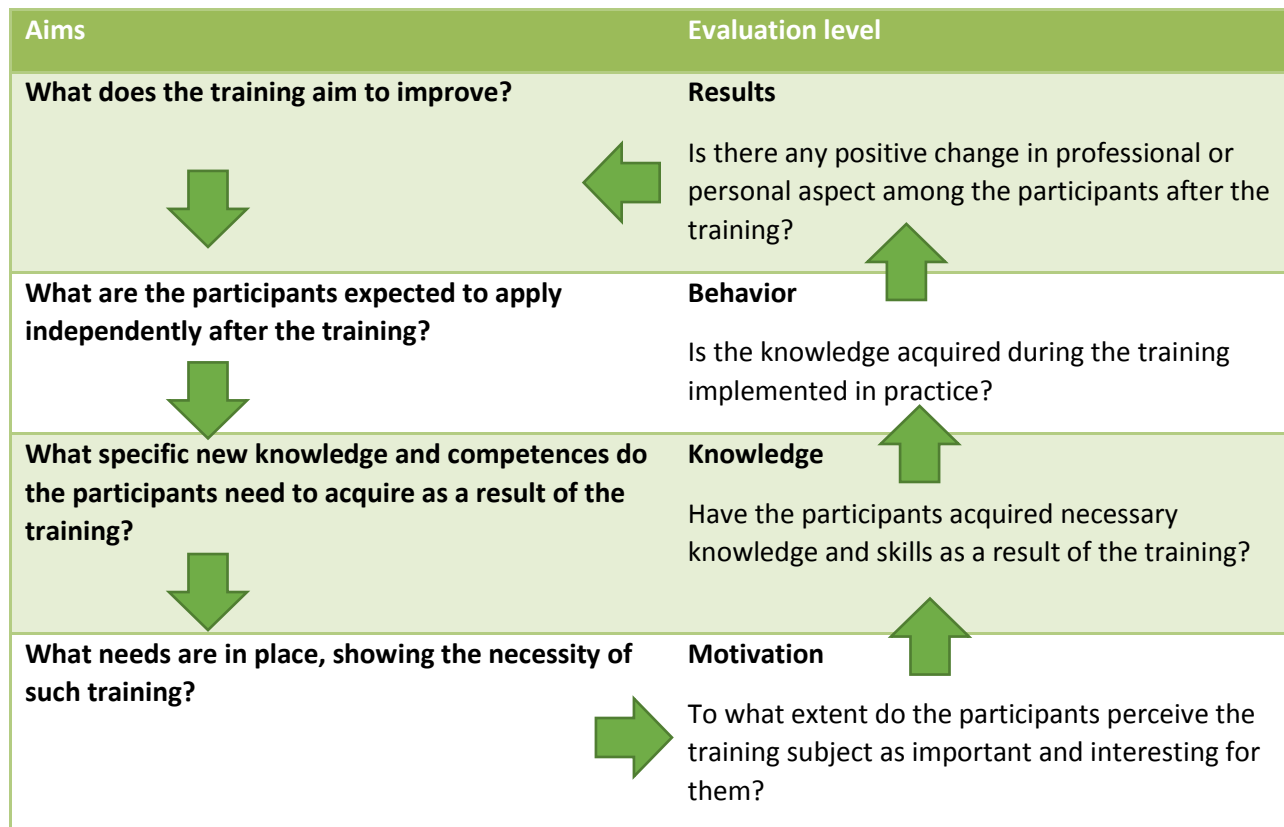
Goals and objectives of the evaluation of activities

The logic of the current evaluation follows the activities' implementation of the social and health intervention within the project "Health education for social prosperity". The evaluation of activities has been realized during the entire time of the project, when certain indicators have been measured before and after the implementation of the activities, with the aim to assess the effectiveness of the three main goals of the education:

- 1) Effectiveness of the training and practical implementation of the acquired knowledge by the prison staff;
- 2) Effectiveness of the training and practical implementation of the acquired knowledge by the prison inmates;
- 3) Effectiveness of the collaboration between the prison staff and the NGO experts during the implementation of the health training among prisoners.

There are numerous different methods for assessment of the effectiveness of education for competences. One of those most popular is the four-step model of Donald Kickpatrick for learning evaluation, which focuses on the evaluation of the level of the education goals' realization. This model is frequently used for planning, evaluation and presentation of results from training programs. The four evaluation steps of this model include the following indicators:

Figure 1. Four-step evaluation model of Donald Kickpatrick



Evaluation methodology

The evaluation of the trainings within the project follows the four-step model of Donald Kickpatrick. Four independent experts conducted the evaluation of the three main objectives set in the project.

The evaluation of the training and practical implementation of the acquired knowledge by the prison staff is based on two main instruments – a satisfaction inquiry and a questionnaire aimed at assessing the level of practical use of the knowledge and its contribution for higher productivity at workplace. The satisfaction inquiry aims to assess to what extent the training corresponds to the real needs of the prison staff and it has been filled right after any of the training modules. The questionnaire has been filled some months after the trainings and it aims to assess the behavioral change and the final results in prison staff. A total of 36 persons, or all participants in the prison staff trainings, have been asked to fill both the inquiry and the questionnaire. Finally both instruments have been filled by 30 of them.

The evaluation of the effectiveness of the training for prison inmates is also based on two stages. The first stage includes evaluation of the change in knowledge and information and is based on entry and outcome test. The entry and outcome test covers four main areas: 1) Drug use and overdose; 2) Sexually transmitted infections; 3) Tuberculosis; 4) HIV and hepatitis C. The test has been filled by all 349 prisoners who have participated in the trainings. The second stage of the evaluation includes in-depth interviews aiming to assess the usefulness of the delivered information and its practical application. Interviews have been conducted in each of the three prisons with one prison professional and up to 10% of the prisoners, who have participated in the training sessions. In Pleven these were 14 prisoners and 1 professional. In Plovdiv – 13 prisoners and 1 professional and in Boychinovtsi – 5 prisoners and 1 professional.

The evaluation of the collaboration between prison staff and NGOs is the final element of the evaluation process and it has been carried out after the end of all trainings. For this evaluation 32 persons have been interviewed – 9 NGO representatives and 23 prison staff representatives (10 in Plovdiv, 10 in Pleven and 12 in Boychinovtsi). Two standardized questionnaires have been developed – one for prisons and one for NGOs. The questionnaires collect information about the professional experience of the respondents, their specific experience with drug users, their assessment of the prison-NGO collaboration and practical results from the trainings.

Effectiveness of the training and practical implementation of the acquired knowledge by the prison staff

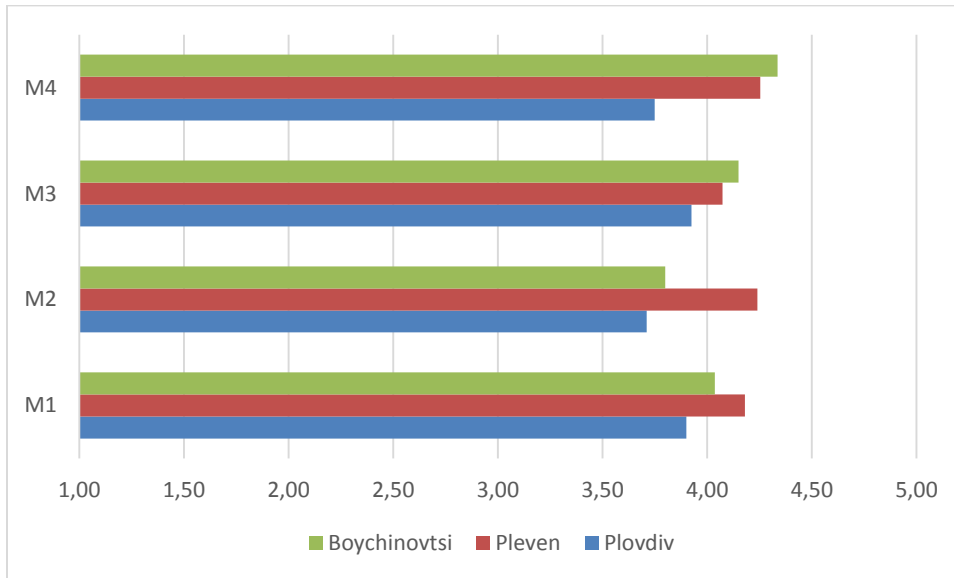
In the first stage of this evaluation process the respondents were asked to provide feedback about their **satisfaction from the delivered information** after the end of each training module. In the inquiry form they had to rate each training from 1 to 5, where 1 was the lowest level of satisfaction and 5 was the highest. Prison staff representatives participated in four consecutive training modules: M1 – Motivational interviewing; M2 – Treatment and prevention of drug use in prisons; M3 - Brief interventions in cases of drug use or suspected drug use; M4 – Reduction of the harms of drug use. Satisfaction was measured by asking to what extent the participants were able to: 1) Acquire new information; 2) Exchange ideas that would support them professionally; 3) Acquire practical skills for their work; 4) Participate actively in the training process; 5) Establish useful contacts.

The analysis shows that the overall level of satisfaction in staff from the three prisons for all four training modules varies between 3,7 and 4,3, that is to say that there is a relatively high level of satisfaction from the trainings. The highest level of satisfaction was expressed

by participants from Boychinovtsi, followed by those in Pleven and a bit lower in those from Plovdiv.

Comparison by modules shows that all participants have given highest evaluation to module 4, covering the reduction of the harms of drug use. Second and third places are for modules 3 and 2, covering respectively brief interventions and drug treatment. A bit lower is the evaluation for the module dedicated to motivational interviewing (Figure 1).

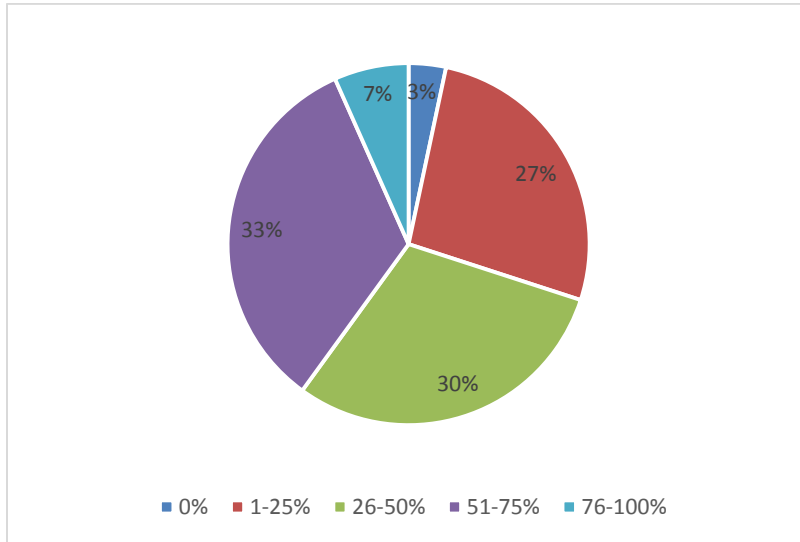
Figure 2. Overall satisfaction of the prison staff from the trainings



For the **evaluation of the final result from the trainings, related to changes in productivity at workplace and quality of life** a special questionnaire was developed with nine questions, covering two levels: change in behavior and change in productivity at workplace and quality of life of professionals. The questions about change in behavior sought to find out if the participants were using the acquired new knowledge as well as how they were applying the information. Generally these questions sought to evaluate if the training had a positive effect over the attitudes, skills and work effectiveness, resulting from the transfer of knowledge, delivered through the training at workplace. The questions on the results level sought to find out if the training led to higher productivity, improved quality of life, higher motivation and work satisfaction.

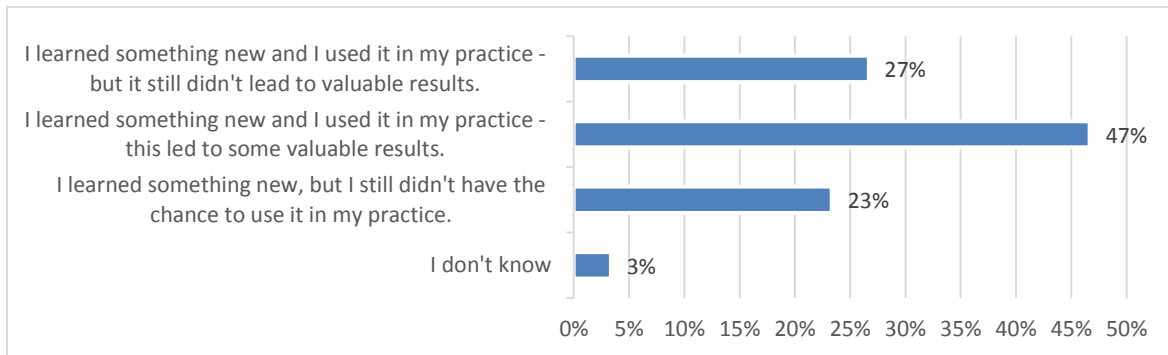
The data from the analysis of the questionnaire show the following, according to the **use of the information about the topics, methods and instruments, discussed during the training:**

Figure 3. If you consider the overall training, what percentage of the discussed topics, methods and instruments do you use in your work today?



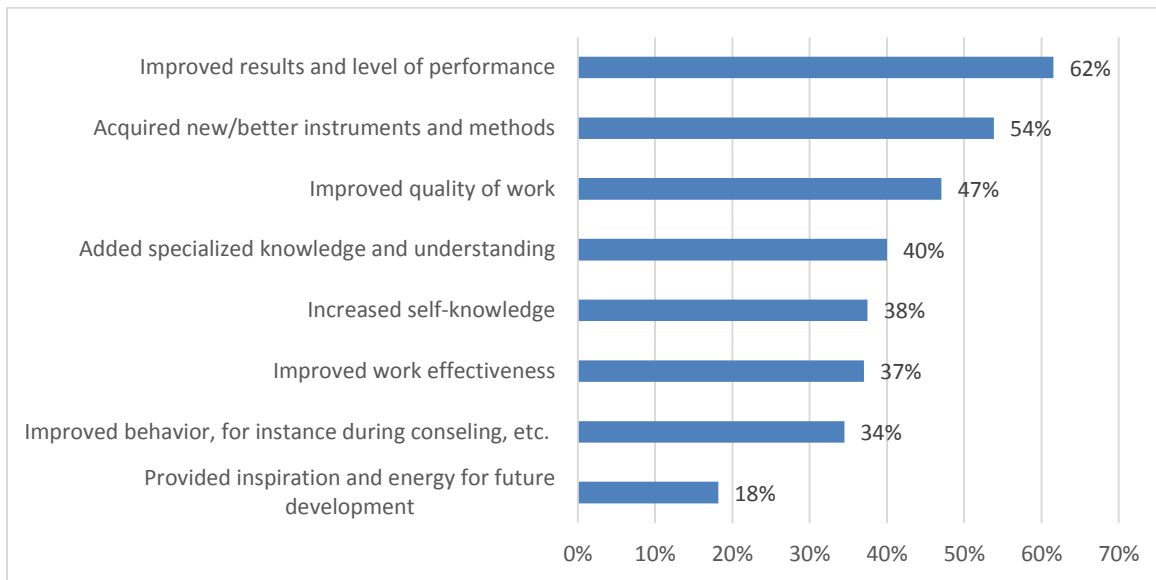
The participants also evaluated **to what extent they had learned something new for them, which they had applied in their practice afterwards.**

Figure 4. Which of the five statements below corresponds most precisely to your experience after the participation in the training?



The prison professionals were asked also to evaluate **which specific effect of the trainings had the greatest significance or impact for their work.** They were provided with eight different indicators, helping them to assess whether the training had an essential meaning for a positive change.

Figure 5. Which specific effect/s had the greatest significance for you in regard to the training?



The analysis of the data demonstrates that the training has contributed for the improved knowledge and skills of the participants. They also share in the additional open-question feedback form that the training has had influence over them for the following reasons: 1) Professionalism of trainers in all four modules; 2) Information transferred in accessible way; 3) Gaining new working methods, making them more effective; 4) Complex and systematized working approach; 5) Acquiring new information, relevant for their everyday work.

In the prison of Plovdiv two participants have shared that their attitudes towards the work with drug addicts have been changed radically. They share that the level of strain and stress in their work has been lowered and their effectiveness has been increased. In the Correctional facility of Boychinovtsi all participants describe the training as especially useful. The training has had a strong influence over them by informing them about ways to be more effective in their work with juveniles. Some participants shared their concern about conducting group sessions on reduction of the drug related harms. Their concern was related to the fears that the information about psychoactive substances may provoke curiosity in youngsters and encourage them to use. The participants in Pleven expressed the opposite opinion and shared that they would continue the group work on harm reduction even after the end of this project.

All participants unanimously stated that they need continuous training for maintaining and development of the acquired skills. As an outcome of the interviews it could be concluded that the participants are motivated to apply elements of the knowledge continuously and independently after the end of the project. It is a worrying fact that the acquired knowledge

and skills may be lost due to the political and economic conditions and the lack of investments in the penitentiary system. A great number of the interviewed professionals shared their “disappointment from the system”. Two persons who passed all modules were discharged due to budget cuts before the end of the project (in Pleven and Plovdiv), while the staff in Boychinovtsi was concerned about the unclear future of their institution having in mind the new reforms. A great part of the personnel there (the teachers and the psychologist) consider different professional paths.

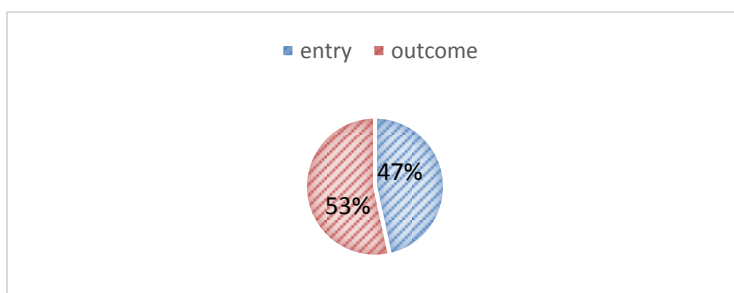
Effectiveness of the training and practical implementation of the acquired knowledge by the prison inmates

The effectiveness of the training among the prison inmates was evaluated through a two-step approach. The first step included evaluation of the change in information level of the training participants and it was based on entry and outcome tests covering the training topics. The second step consisted of in-depth interviews with 33 prison inmates and prison staff members, aiming to collect feedback about possible concrete positive behavioral changes of the training participants. In addition, short feedback inquiries were analyzed, which were filled by all training participants.

Comparative analysis of the entry and outcome tests

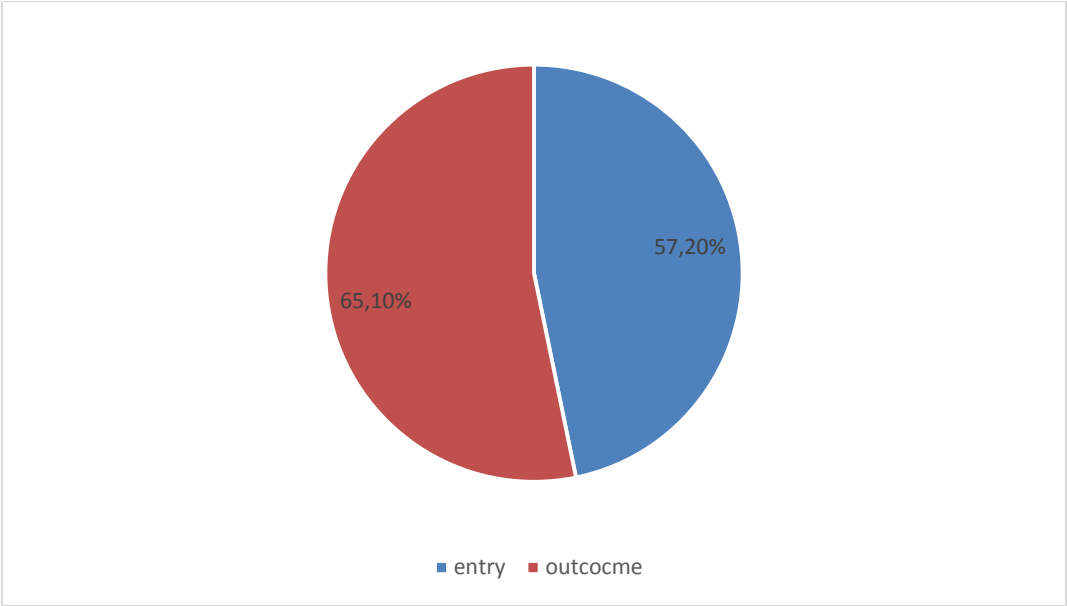
The comparative analysis of the entry and outcome tests is based on a sample of 30% of all tests. Generally the analysis shows that the level of knowledge of the training topics is low during the entry test and has been slightly increased during the outcome test. The right answers in the entry tests are 1163 out of 2100, while in the outcome tests they are 1334 out of 2100. The juxtaposition of the information levels in entry and outcome tests shows 8,1% increase of the knowledge level among trained prison inmates (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Information levels among prison inmates during trainings’ entry and outcome



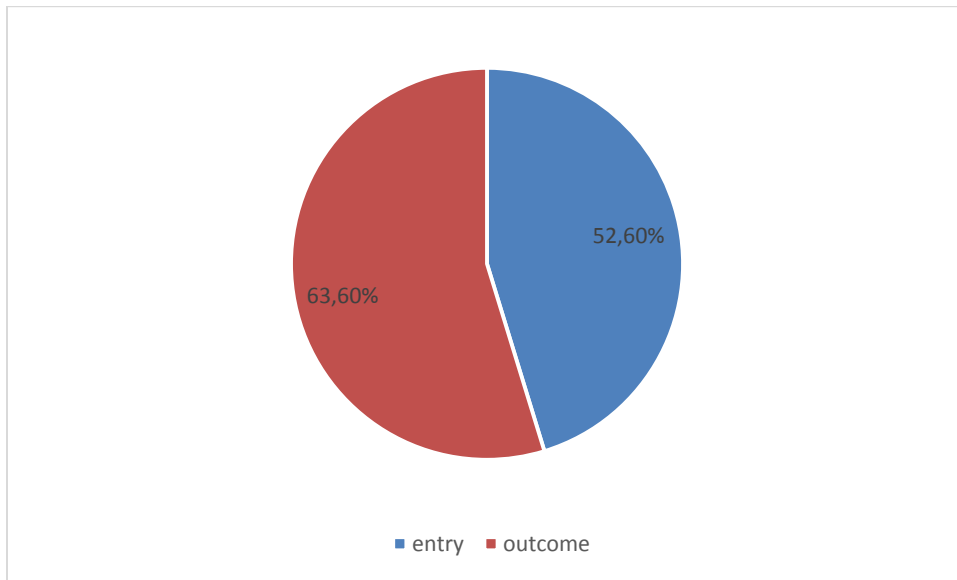
The topic “Drugs, use and overdose” was assessed as most interesting by the participants. Data show 7,9% increase in the information level on this topic (Figure 7). Probably this topic provoked greatest interest due to the rare opportunities to discuss this problem. During the presentation of this topic many interactive methods were used, which were highly appreciated in all groups.

Figure 7. Information levels in regard to drugs in entry and outcome tests.



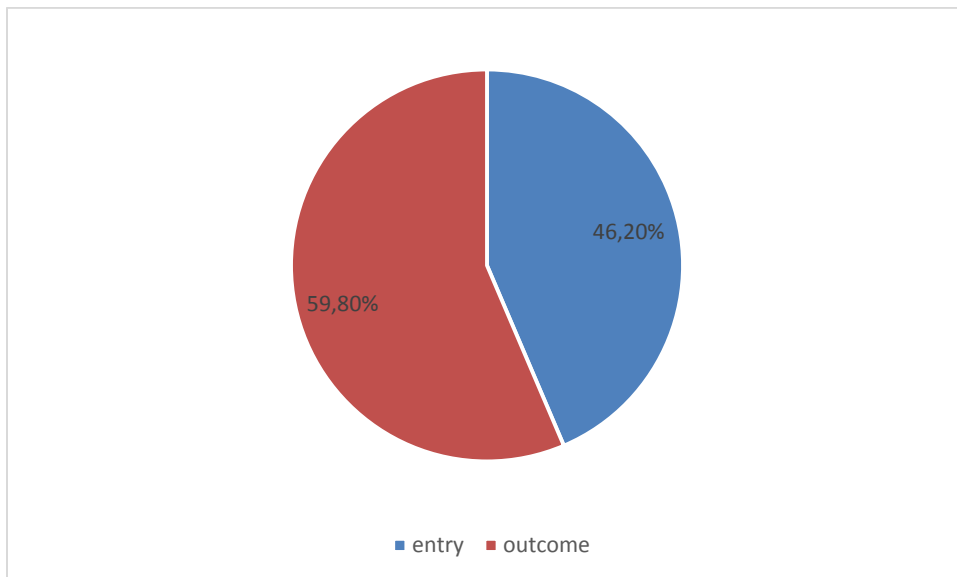
The topic rated second interesting topic by the participants is the one on “Sexually transmitted infections”. The analysis shows a knowledge level increase of 11% (Figure 8). A certain part of the training participants haven’t used drugs, so the topic related to sexually transmitted infections has been more interesting for them. Almost all respondents stated that they learned a lot and changed their attitudes about the topic by becoming more inclined to use protective measures in the future.

Figure 8. Information level in regard to sexually transmitted infections.



The third topic covered by the training is related to HIV and hepatitis. Here there is an increase of 13,6% of the information level (Figure 9). Despite the fact that the topic was rated third in terms of interest, it shows highest increase in knowledge. Especially interesting were the facts related to possible infection during tattooing and sharing of shaving equipment's.

Figure 9. Information levels in regard to HIV and hepatitis.



The last training topic is “Tuberculosis” where during the entry test the number of right answers is 201, while during the outcome tests it is 201 – namely we can see worsening of the results. One possible explanation is that the training has been provided in a complicated and confusing manner, leading to poor understanding from the participants’ side. It could be also explained with imperfections in the assessing instrument.

Feedback from prison inmates in Pleven

In the prison of Pleven 14 interviews were conducted with prison inmates. Five of them had a personal history of drug use and 9 didn’t have. During the interviews it became obvious that part of them didn’t have any knowledge on the matter of the training. The prisoners in Pleven as a whole have very low educational status, most of them are illiterate and have no experience in acquiring new knowledge. A huge class partition is in place in the Pleven prison – those with better social skills do not communicate with the groups of Roma and illiterate people. People, who have used drugs stay on the lowest level of this improvised hierarchy and they are subjects of on-going mockery, repulsion and neglect from the rest of the prisoners.

A part of the prisoners shared that especially valuable for them was the opportunity to meet people from outside. A smaller portion shared that their motivation was law and they didn’t even remember the names of the trainers or the way they looked. One of the most serious successes of the training is that a great portion of the respondents have realized the risk of blood transmitted infections during tattooing and state that they are ready to terminate this practice. Nevertheless the prisoners said that the training should be adapted to the needs of illiterate by using more video and visual materials.

As a disadvantage of the training in Pleven it was pointed that some modules did not achieve their set goals. For example, during the presentation of the overdose topic it was not explained what was the aim of the video film, which was shown to most of the groups. For this reason most of the participants got the impression that the film only showed the ways and the consequences of drugs’ taking while they didn’t pay enough attention to the recovery position, which was the central message of the film.

Regarding the prison conditions that need improvement the opinion prevailed that drug addicts should be separated from the rest of the prisoners. A great part of the respondents also stated that a drug treatment clinic is need inside the prison.

The **head of the Unit “Social work and educational activities”** was also interviewed. He shared that in the beginning their attitude towards the project has been skeptical, because

of bad previous experience with NGOs. During the project however he changed his personal opinion. The trainings were useful for his colleagues – he said - and they were generally satisfied. Especially useful for them was the opportunity to meet representatives of the Norwegian penitentiary institutions. They highly appreciate the opportunity to establish good working relationships with the local NGO.

Regardless the fact that the Norwegian experience had provoked strong impression, the respondent stated against needle exchange in prisons. This opinion showed that obviously some prison staff members had a wrong impression about the goal of the project, presuming that it was to promote distribution of injecting consumables.

Regarding the trainings the respondent shared that he considered the methodology appropriate and he also liked the teaching style, which was accessible and easy-to-understand for the inmates. Furthermore, he found a change in behavior and attitudes among a part of the inmates, who wanted to pass testing for blood transmitted infections after the training.

In the prison of Pleven so far there has been a 12-step program, guided by the General Directorate “Execution of penalties”. There haven’t been any NGOs working on these problems. Recently the prison has been contacted by AA (Alcoholics anonymous), who have planned to present and potentially start their program inside the prison.

Feedback from prison inmates in Plovdiv

In Plovdiv 13 interviews were conducted with prisoners, 6 of which had a history of drug use. The head of the Unit “Social work and educational activities” was also interviewed.

One of the project’s major objectives is to create premises for change of the prisoners’ risk behavior. Six respondents stated that their attitudes have changed and they planned to change their behavior after the release from prison. The participants’ engagement with the training is confirmed with the fact that five of them reported to have discussed part of the training topics with other prisoners. One of them had even organized an improvised hepatitis C training.

Seven interviewed persons rated on the first place the topic about drugs; the overdose prevention theme was the most interesting for five and one of them reported to have used the knowledge in a real case of overdose in the prison. Almost all interviewed person approve the working model, which included a training team, formed by a trainers from an outside organization plus a prison staff member.

Regarding the necessary improvements, the opinion prevailed among prisoners that much more similar classes are needed. Three people expressed the opinion that prisons also need education on prevention of the start of drug use, because some of the prisoners initiate

drug use in prison without having access to any information. Some persons stated that the prisons need addiction treatment possibilities – such as therapeutic groups or communities or substitution therapy (Methadone).

The head of the Unit “Social work and educational activities” shared that the interest was high and real towards the trainings. It was especially valuable for the prison to accept external experts. He said that after the first training the information “was flying over the corridors”. He thought that the good acceptance of the trainings was supported not just by the opportunity for communication but also by the format of the trainings – including the coffee-breaks. The prisoners have highly appreciated this gesture. Usually the institution cannot afford free drinks during trainings and this is a problem.

The content of the training was evaluated by the staff member as profound. Especially important was the technique of “myths breaking”. In the penitentiary setting inmates often lack some equipment and they tend to share or exchange such. That is why, for example, the information about possible HIV infection through a razor has been very impressive for the prisoners.

The trainers from the NGO have been very motivated and thanks to this they have succeeded to motivate also the inmates. Their experience from the outreach work has been a great advantage, because some of the prisoners had known them already. The prison professionals and the NGO professionals have collaborated very well.

Regarding the final result of the trainings the respondent said that he was able to see a certain positive change in the prisoners’ attitudes towards the training topics, but not yet in their behavior. He thinks that the prison conditions impede the substantial and fast change of inmates’ behavior.

As a final conclusion he said that such a detailed and comprehensive training has not been carried out so far, though it is much needed. Their previous experience with NGOs is related to an initiative of the Bulgarian Family Planning Association, who offered testing and counseling for hepatitis C and “Mothers against drugs”, who provided group sessions for drug users.

[Feedback from inmates in Boychinovtsi](#)

In Boychinovtsi the evaluation team conducted five interviews with inmates and one with a staff member. The general impression was that inmates hardly share any experience about drug use. They considered the level of the training presentations too high, having in mind that a huge part of them were illiterate. The respondents had some challenges to keep rules and maintain their interest permanent. Most of them said that they would much easier obtain information through films, clips and games, or through simple presentations.

The respondents shared that the topic on drugs and overdose was the most impressive for them – probably thanks to the video, which was used in this session. The majority of them were honest about the use of drugs before entering the correctional facility. Second rated are the training modules on HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections. Most of the participants have been impressed by the need to use condoms during sex. Many of them shared that they had never used a condom before.

Most of the respondents stated that they have discussed the training topics with other inmates and the latter have been very interested. A great division could be observed between the boys with higher social status and the rest majority.

The format of the trainings faced a significant approval as well. Most of the inmates liked the idea of having external trainers, who were well familiar with the themes. Still one respondent said that he would prefer to talk only to staff members and he felt uncomfortable to communicate with strangers. As a whole all respondents said that they were satisfied with the trainings.

One staff member was also interviewed in Boychinovtsi. He said that the trainings played a positive role for the change of attitudes of the inmates. They started considering the topics and asking questions about different diseases even after the end of the group sessions. The inmates have been especially impressed by the variety of ways to get a sexually transmitted infection and they have stated their will to use condoms in their future sexual relationships. Regarding the drugs, in the beginning of the trainings the prevailing attitude was “I will continue using”, while at the end they started to think more seriously.

A major challenge for the staff members in Boychinovtsi during the trainings was the low educational and social status of the inmates. The respondent thought it would be good to adapt the methodology in a more accessible way. Most of all they need appropriate films and commixes. He also stated the need of on-going training for the staff of the Correctional facility, of NGOs support, additional literature, games, posters and other supporting materials. The staff members have never before received any training on these topics.

Effectiveness of the collaboration between the prison staff and the NGOs

The evaluation of the effectiveness of the collaboration between the prisons and the NGOs was carried out among 23 prison professionals and 9 NGO professionals. From the prison staff 10 persons are social workers from Plovdiv, 10 from Pleven and 12 from Boychinovtsi.

The major part of the prison professionals have faced drug use in prison. Most often they report the use of cannabis and amphetamines and not so often the use of heroin,

methadone or methamphetamine. There are no reported cases of heroin or methadone use among the juveniles in Boychinovtsi.

The prison professionals share that they have experience in working with NGOs. Just for the last 12 months the three prisons have been visited by NGOs between 3 and 15 times. In the majority of cases the main goal of the visits was work with prison inmates, but in some cases it was also training of staff.

Regarding the project “Health education for social prosperity” more than half of the respondents have stated that the provided trainings have been rather effective and 10% define these as very effective (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Evaluation of the trainings under the project “Health education for social prosperity”



Chart translation:

Position 1 - Very effective

Position 2 - Effective

Position 3 - Rather effective

Position 4 - Hardly effective

Position 5 - Not effective

Position 6 - Can't say

Furthermore, one third of the respondents say that they already use often materials and techniques, delivered during the training (Figure 11):

Figure 11. In the last 6 months how often did you use in your work materials/techniques/interventions from those, delivered during the training:

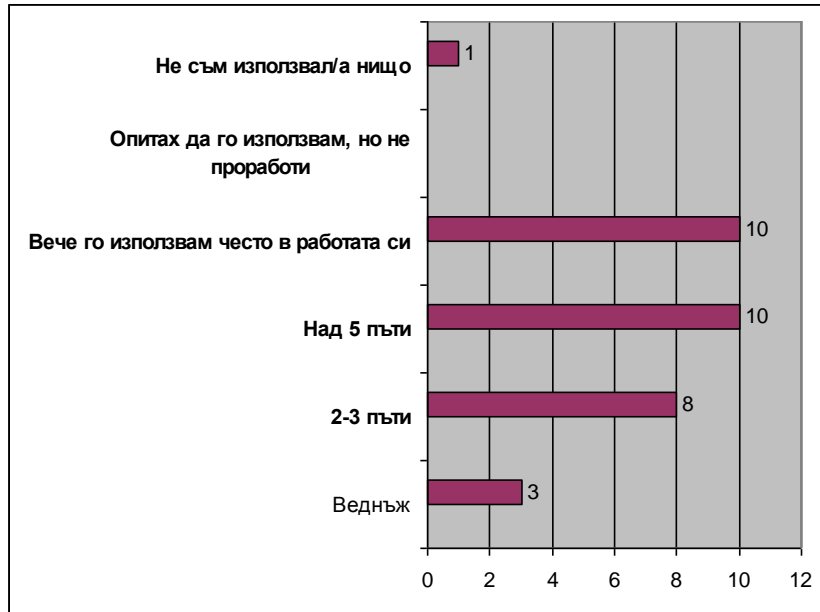


Figure 102. Effectiveness of the collaboration between NGOs and prisons

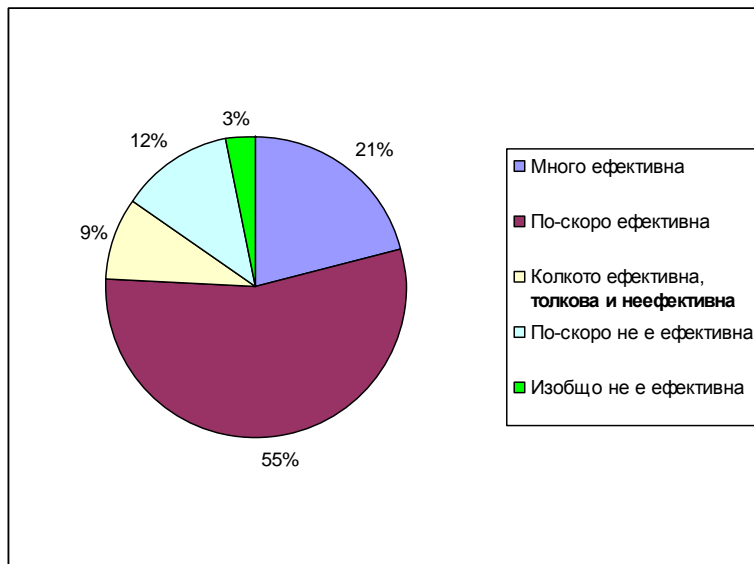


Chart translation:

Position 1 - Very effective

Position 2 - Rather effective

Position 3 - Equally effective and not effective

Position 4 - Rather not effective

Position 5 - Not effective at all

In their comments the representatives of both sides share that professional contacts, sharing and exchange of professional experience increase their effectiveness in regard to the work with prison inmates. The answers also demonstrate mutual respect. NGO professionals say that prison staff knows well the system and the ways to support inmates. The prison staff members say that they learn new and practically useful things from their cooperation with NGOs.

The aspects of NGO work which have been evaluated as effective by the prison staff are group work and trainings in professional skills. Those aspects, evaluated as not effective are: short-term activities/projects, lack of re-socialization and work integration activities for former prisoners. It is also mentioned the discrepancy between the NGO work and the real priorities for prisoners.

It is an interesting finding that the prison representatives consider activities like re-socialization and re-integration of prisoners a responsibility of the non-governmental sector rather than of the state. The same is considered for the social and health interventions with prisoners within penitentiaries, which are perceived as a responsibility of the non-governmental sector.

Both groups of professional share the opinion that around 10-15% of the prisoners served by NGOs will change their behavior in regard to drug use and between 5 and 50% of them will commit a new crime related to drug use. Both groups provide various answers to the question what is mostly missing or needs changes in regard to services in prison (social, psychological, health, educational):

a) preparation for leaving the prison and social and psychological support after release;

b) social work inside the prisons;

c) health service delivery;

d) educational and work qualification activities for prisoners (inside the prisons and after them);

e) better living conditions;

f) preventive work with youngsters.

In the description of the main strengths and weaknesses of the collaboration between NGOs and prisons it is obvious that the opinions of both professional groups coincide in regard to the strengths, but are fundamentally different in regards to the weaknesses (Table 1).

Table 1. Strengths and weaknesses of the collaboration between NGOs and prisons.

NGO staff		Prison staff	
strengths	weaknesses	strengths	weaknesses
Support and trust	Bad attitude towards inmates	Support and trust	Episodic and short lasting activities
Team work and exchange of professional experience	Hardly achievable changes in the behavior of the prison staff	Team work and exchange of professional experience	Assignments of more duties and tasks
		Acquiring new practical knowledge and useful working skills	Insufficient dialogue

Recommendations to improve collaboration given by the prison professionals to NGO representatives are: to provide feedback about the results of the projects and activities; better communication during realization and planning of activities; longer lasting engagements in activities for prisoners.

Recommendations to improve collaboration given by the NGO representatives to prison professionals are related with facilitated access to the prisoners. NGO representatives think that it is necessary to change inner rules in order to ensure easier and more regular access to imprisoned clients. This view is not shared by prison professionals who believe that the inner rules shouldn't be changed.

The question whether the presence of NGO staff improves the climate and relationships in prison (both for staff and prisoners) was answered "no" by 68% of the respondents. This stems from the perception that by entering prisons NGOs realize projects with the aim to maintain themselves, while for the prison staff it means more work and tension. Still 32% who answered "yes" believe that strangers in the prison raise the spirit and bring diversity in the everyday life of prisoners.

Final outcomes and recommendations

The evaluation presented in this analysis shows that the applied model has been successful to ensure an effective transfer of knowledge to prison staff members, on one hand, and to prison inmates, on another. It also contributes for a positive change in their attitudes and to some extent – of the behavioral practices. Furthermore, the project contributes for the development of working relationships between prison and NGOs.

There is a relatively high level of satisfaction from the trainings in all involved prison staff and a great part of them share to have learned new things, which they apply in their everyday work. This has also led to improvement of their results at workplace and to obtained new and better working methods.

Among the prisoners there is an increased level of information and special interest towards the topics, related to drug use and sexually transmitted infections. They highly appreciate the suggested training format and especially the involvement of external experts, interactive approaches, the use of video materials and the accessibility of the delivered information. The prison staff members themselves report that the trainings have led to changes in prisoners' attitudes towards different risk practices. The interviews conducted after the trainings with inmates make it clear that a good connection has been established with most of them, which supported the acceptance of the matter.

One of the main objectives of the project “Health education for social prosperity” was to help build a good relationship between the penitentiary system and NGOs. The interviews with prison professionals show that regardless the initial skepticism about the benefits of such projects good working relationships were built during the process. Both sides demonstrate readiness to continue their joint activities, not just for the themes of the current project but principally. The harm reduction training for trainers received positive feedback from the social workers, engaged in the trainings. They all support the statement that this is a strongly neglected theme which needs a serious attention in the penitentiary and could lead to improvement of the inmates' health status.

There are few main challenges related to the realization of the project activities. On the first place, this is the difference in the way in which prisons and NGOs function. The penitentiary institutions have a strongly centralized and hierarchic structure, while the NGOs are rather flexible. This difference lies in the basis of the initial hard collaboration. In this regard the previous negative experience with NGOs of some prisons provoked some distrust and suspiciousness about the reason. These problems however were overcome during the process and good relationships were achieved.

Another challenge comes from the insufficient material resources in the penitentiary institutions, which stems from the chronic underfinancing of the system. The periodic reforms in the sector bring high stress for the staff, including uncertainty for their workplaces. All these factors put at risk the sustainability of such interventions and loss of capacity already built. The huge overload of the prison social workers is directly linked to these factors and it provokes resistance to extra initiatives and duties. This extreme overload of the prison staff does not allow them to effectively participate in processes and impedes their everyday work.

The project-based approach is assessed by the prison professionals as inappropriate because it is related to lack of sustainability in the work with inmates. The problem is that the projects usually have limited implementation time and there are no opportunities to continue the work and sustain the new working models. As a result it is impossible to achieve a long-term and substantial change in the prisoners' behavior.

It could be concluded that despite some difficulties, the activities of the project "Health education for social prosperity" have generally achieved the objectives and could be evaluated as successful. A satisfaction is in place in all involved parties – prisons, NGOs and most of all – prison inmates. Moreover, there are positive changes in the information levels and attitudes in the trained prisoners. The project has built a stable ground for collaboration and effective joint work between prisons and NGOs.

Based on the collected and analyzed information some main recommendations could be outlined for future similar initiatives in the penitentiary:

1. The prison professionals, engaged in health trainings need to receive regular and quality information. They need to be provided with opportunities for professional development, including though additional remuneration.
2. NGOs need to exert efforts to maintain good contacts with prisons. They should purposefully seek funding sources to continue the work.
3. A special attention should be paid to building a good relation between trainers and prison inmates, as this fosters participants' interest and motivation.
4. Prison staff members together with external experts can make preliminary selection of the training participants, taking into account different needs (drug users and non-users, huge difference in educational status). For this reason it is appropriate to adapt the training modules for each auditory.
5. It would be good to present the training topics in a more accessible way, especially those containing more theoretical information. The interactive training methods are accepted very well by the target group.
6. The evaluation methodology needs to be improved and adapted to the abilities of the prisoners. It would be appropriate to use open-question inquiries fitting to the educational status of the inmates. Special time must be dedicated to fill these.

7. The training should be longer and more detailed. This would increase the involvement of the participants and create circumstances for more interactive communication.