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**STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN
TO FIGHT HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC
IN THE REPUBLIC OF BELARUS
FOR 2004-2008**

**MINSK
2004**

ACRONYMS

HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
GF	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
WSW	Women sex workers
HLS	Healthy lifestyle
STI	Sexually transmitted infections
CD MIA	Corrections Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs
PHA	People living with HIV/AIDS
MIF	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoE	Ministry of Education
MLSP	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
MSM	Men who have sex with men
UN	United Nations Organisation
DEP	Needle exchange points
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
RB	Republic of Belarus
NIDC	National Interdepartmental Council on Prevention of HIV Infection and Sexually Transmitted Diseases
NCHE&PH	National Centre of Hygiene, Epidemiology and Public Health
MM	Mass media
AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

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Introduction

1. HIV Epidemic Situation in Belarus

The first HIV case was detected in Belarus in 1987. Over the next 9 years, Belarus remained a country with a low HIV/AIDS prevalence. By the beginning of 1996, 113 HIV cases had been identified in the country. Most of HIV-infects resulted from sexual contacts with infected people.

In June 1996, the first signs of activation of the epidemic situation appeared. An increase of the number of HIV infections was identified in the town of Svetlogorsk, Gomel Oblast (region), among injection drug users. The epidemic process was intensified, and by the end of 1996 the number of reported HIV-infected persons (1021) was 9.9 times higher than the total number over the previous 9 years. The year 1996 can be considered the starting point of the epidemic in which parenteral transmission through injection drug use became the dominant way of transmission in most administrative regions of the country.

In the subsequent years, the number of newly identified cases was as follows: 653 cases in 1997, 554 in 1998, 411 in 1999, 527 in 2000, 578 in 2001, 915 in 2002, and 713 cases in 2003. Throughout this period, the geography of the epidemic increased by involving rural areas, and HIV prevalence rates increased among population groups that were not considered high risk groups for HIV (pregnant women, etc.).

Currently, the epidemic in our country has entered a new phase characterized by the increased share of infections through sexual contacts among all causes of infection and active spread of infection among female population. According to statistical data reported for 1 January 2004, totally 5485 HIV cases (55.4 HIV cases per 100 000 population) were registered in 145 administrative regions. The most affected regions in the country include Gomel Oblast (216.2 HIV cases per 100 population) and the City of Minsk (45.1 HIV cases per 100 000 population).

Young people are dominant among HIV-positive people. Persons of the 15-24 age groups make 54.4%. The main source of infection still is injection drug use, making 73.9. However, there is a trend towards increased number of infected through sexual contacts (in 2001 they made 27.16%, and in 2003 it was 35.5%).

The spread of HIV among women results in the growing number of children born by HIV-infected mothers. Totally, 414 children were born by HIV-infected mothers in Belarus.

Development of the HIV epidemic in the country is boosted by a problematic epidemic situation as regards sexually transmitted infections and the annual growth in the number of officially registered drug users. According to estimates, about 50 000 – 55 000 people in the country use injection drugs.

However, the estimated real number of Belarusian citizens infected with HIV is, at least, 2-3 times higher than the official statistical figure, making today about 11 000 – 15 000 persons.

2. Actions against the Spread of the Epidemic

Actions against the HIV epidemic had been taken in Belarus throughout the entire period prior to the outburst of HIV infection in the town of Svetlogorsk. The main lines of activities of the Ministry of Health had been: preparation and dissemination of information about HIV prevention; training and retraining of medical personnel how to provide support to HIV/AIDS people; mainstreaming HIV prevention into programmes for development of HLS; improvement of legislation to harmonize it with widely accepted principles and norms of international law; prevention of discrimination of people affected by HIV infection. To coordinate the activities, the National Interdepartmental Council on Prevention of HIV Infection and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (NIDC) was organised in 1996, which included representatives from 12 ministries and other national state government bodies.

Since 1996, significant success has been achieved in HIV prevention. The growth rate of new HIV cases has been slowed down; the share of HIV-positive young people in the 15-24 age groups has been reduced; the number of HIV cases among military conscripts has been decreased from 6.7 per 1000 conscripts examined in 1996 to 1.7 in 2003. There are other data that prove the impact exerted by the broad-scale nationwide campaign. However, opportunities to influence the epidemic still remain limited. This is related to the determining impact of a range of social, economic and behavioural factors on the nature and rates of spread of HIV.

3. Strategic Planning Process in Belarus

The strategic plan of actions against the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic was prepared using strategic planning principles. The preparation process included the situational analysis as well as analysis of responses, which was made with involvement of representatives of the ministries, civil organisations and people living with HIV/AIDS.

The situation analysis made in 2003 identified factors contributing to the spread of HIV in the country and helped determine the priority fields in which actions can give the best opportunities to combat the epidemic, including the following:

- Prevention of HIV among drug users;
- Prevention of HIV among women involved in sex work;
- Prevention of HIV among men who have sex with men;
- Prevention of HIV among in the penitentiary system;
- Provision of medical, psychosocial and other kinds of support to people living with HIV/AIDS, including:
 - Better access to high active antiretroviral therapy;
 - Prevention of mother to children transmission of HIV;
 - Organizing services for giving psychological and social support to people living with HIV/AIDS, combating discrimination and stigmatisation based on the HIV status;
- Prevention of HIV/AIDS among female population in the country;

Raising awareness and education on the HIV/AIDS problem among different population groups, and in particular among studying young people, at workplaces and in the armed forces;

Setting the national system of monitoring and evaluation of responses to the epidemic.

Analysis of responses helped identify successful and unsuccessful programmes and actions in the priority fields and determine the reasons for success and failures.

4. Guidelines

The plan was developed given account of the current legislation related to HIV/AIDS prevention and combating and the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted by the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on HIV/AIDS on 27 June 2001 and recommendations of UNAIDS.

The basic guidelines are:

recognizing the HIV/AIDS problem as one of the priority tasks of public health and social development;

interdepartmental approach to prevention activities;

accessibility of prevention measures for all sectors of population, primarily for higher vulnerability population groups;

promotion of healthy lifestyle, safe and responsible behaviour among young people, and participation of young people in responses;

ensuring HIV-infected people access to modern antiretroviral therapy, psychological and social support; protection of human rights for people living with HIV/AIDS;

broader involvement of civil and charity organizations in prevention activities, mobilization of governmental and other resources for prevention of the spread of HIV; and

development of international cooperation on HIV/AIDS.

5. Implementing Organizations and Funding

Organisations implementing the strategic plan include national state governing authorities, other organisations subordinated to the Government, local executive and administrative authorities, as well as civil organisations.

Funding will be provided from the national and local budgets and international funds.

Priority activity lines:

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
1. Prevention of HIV among drug users				
1. Supporting anonymous counselling centres and needle exchange points for drug users (58 in 2004, 65 in 2005, 75 in 2006, 85 in 2007, and 90 in 2008). Developing regulatory frames related to operation of such points and centres	Local executive and administrative authorities, Ministry of Health, civil organisations	2004 – 2008	2004 – 710 000 2005 – 790 000 2006 – 915 000 2007 – 1 040 000 2008 – 1 100 000	National budget, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
2. Educational activities among injection drug users (IDU) through development and dissemination of information materials, introduction of the outreach work and peer education	Local executive and administrative authorities, Ministry of Health, civil organisations	2004 – 2008	2004 – 75 000 2005 – 135 000 2006 – 200 000 2007 – 270 000 2008 – 335 000	National budget, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
3. Improving quality of information, psychological and medical services	Local executive and	2004 – 2008	2004 - 35 000 2005 – 30 000	National budget, Global Fund to

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
for IDU through training of specialists giving various services to drug addicts, strategy of harm reduction from non-medical drug use	administrative authorities, Ministry of Health, civil organisations		2006 – 30 000 2007 – 30 000 2008 – 30 000	Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
4. Introduction of methadone substitution therapy in areas with high injection drug use covering 150 drug users	Local executive and administrative authorities, Ministry of Health, civil organisations	2004 – 2006	2004 - 130 000 2005 – 170 000 2006 – 220 000	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
5. Sentinel surveillance among drug users to study the spread of HIV infections	Local executive and administrative authorities, Ministry of Health, civil organisations	2004 – 2005 2007	80 000	National budget, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
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2. Prevention of HIV among women involved in sex work (WSW)

1. Comprehensive educational activities among women sex workers, including development of information materials, peer education and hot line	Civil organisations, Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	250 000	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
2. Organizing and conducting outreach work among women sex workers in 10 towns of the country. Expanding the network of civil organizations working in this field	Civil organisations	2004 – 2008	200 000	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
3. Improving access to services on reproductive health, counselling, diagnosis and treatment of STI through the network of “trusted” clinics and doctors	Civil organisations, Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	600 000	National budget, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
4. Giving access to HIV/STI sexual	Civil	2004 –	150 000	Global Fund to

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
transmission means	organisations	2008		Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
5. Organizing services for psychological support of women sex workers	Civil organisations	2004 – 2008	80 000	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
3. Prevention of HIV among men who have sex with men (MSM)				
1. Comprehensive educational activities among MSM, including: development of the volunteers network, development and dissemination of information materials, peer education and hot line	Civil organisations, Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	150 000	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
2. Improving access to HIV sexual transmission means	Civil organisations	2004 – 2008	160 000	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
3. Improving access to services on counselling, diagnosis and treatment of STI through the network of “trusted” clinics and doctors	Civil organisations, Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	875 000	international funds Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
4. Organizing services of psychological support to MSM including mutual support groups	Civil organisations, Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	30 000	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
5. Surveying MSM groups in the context of then HIV/AIDS epidemic spreading, including evaluation of the scale and behavioural features connected with HIV risk	Civil organisations, Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	20 000	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds

4. Prevention of HIV among in the penitentiary system

1. Educational and information activities among prisoners and	Corrections Departments of	2004 – 2008	100 000	National budget, Global Fund to
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Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
personnel of penitentiary institutions through training, and development and dissemination of information materials	the Ministry of Internal Affairs (CD MIA), Ministry of Health and civil organisations			Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
2. Organizing medical and psychological support services for HIV infected prisoners	CD MIA, Ministry of Health and civil organisations	2004 – 2008	50 000	National budget, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
3. Giving access to HIV sexual and parenteral transmission means	CD MIA, Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	185 000	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
4. Surveying the HIV/AIDS situation and risk factors in different penitentiary institutions	CD MIA, Ministry of Health	2005 , 2007	10 000	National budget, Global Fund to Fight AIDS,

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
5. Training and retraining medical personnel and other specialists of the correctional system in different aspects of HIV/AIDS/drug use (diagnosis, treatment, prevention and psychological support) given account of the penitentiary system specific features	CD Ministry of Health	MIA, 2005 – of 2008	10 000	Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds National budget, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
6. Giving antiretroviral and palliative treatment to HIV-infected prisoners	CD Ministry of Health and civil organisations	MIA, 2005 – of 2008	1 100 000	National budget, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds

5. Provision of medical, psychosocial and other kinds of support to people living with HIV/AIDS

5.1. Giving access to highly active antiretroviral therapy

1. Giving access to effective treatment	Ministry of	2004 –	4 000 000	National budget,
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Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
for HIV/AIDS using modern antiretroviral therapy and prevention an treatment for opportunistic infections	Health	2008		Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
2. Diagnosis of HIV and opportunistic infections, improving laboratory methods of screening of diseases, including determination of CD4 and viral load	Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	400 000	National budget, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
3. Improving skills of medical personnel in diagnosis, treatment and care for HIV/AIDS patients	Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	50 000	National budget, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
4. Improving conditions of work and protecting against professional HIV infections among medical personnel giving treatment and care for people	Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	200 000	National budget, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
living with HIV/AIDS				Malaria (GF), other international funds
5.2. Prevention of mother to children transmission of HIV				
1. Organizing a working group to coordinate activities related to various types of support to HIV-infected women and children	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, civil organisations	2004	–	
2. Providing health institutions with antiretroviral preparations for medication prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission to all HIV-infected mothers and neonates who need it	Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	120 000	
3. Diagnosis of HIV among children	Ministry of	2004 –	100 000	

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
using DNA-PCR methods	Health	2008		Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF) GF, local budgets
4. Providing free substitution feeding for babies born by HIV-infected mothers, during their first year of life	Ministry of Health, executive authorities	of 2004 – local 2008	150 000	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF) GF, local budgets
5. Development of methodological materials on HIV/AIDS and providing them to specialists in gynaecological and paediatrician services	Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	10 000	National budget, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds
6. Training medical personnel in principles of counselling, prevention of mother to child transmission, regular medical prophylactic examination and treatment of women and children who have positive HIV status	Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	40 000	National budget, Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GF), other international funds

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
7. Organizing a medical counselling centre for HIV-infected women in the medical services of the town of Svetlogorsk	Medical services of the town of Svetlogorsk and civil organizations	2004	30 000	Local funds, international organizations, civil originations
8. Providing to HIV-infected women free contraceptives through treatment institutions	Local executive and administrative authorities, Ministry of Health	2005 – 2008	3 000	International funds, national budget
Providing counselling services to HIV-infected women and parents of HIV-infected children when they apply for medical help	Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	20 000	National budget
5.3. Giving psychological and social support to people living with HIV/AIDS; combating discrimination				
1. Improving psychological and social support to people living with HIV/AIDS through organization of	Civil organisations, Ministry of	2004 – 2008	600 000	GF, other international funds, national and local

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
mutual support groups in 12 towns of the country	Health			budgets
2. Providing alternative care for HIV-infected persons (training of middle-level medical personnel and parents)	Ministry of Health, civil organisations, Belarusian NGO Red Cross	2004 – 2005	10 000	National and local budgets, GF, other international funds
3. Developing and publishing literature on various aspects of living with HIV	Ministry of Health and civil organisations	2004 – 2006	9 000	National budget, GF, other international funds
4. Mass media campaigns on prevention of discrimination by HIV status	Ministry of Information, Ministry of Health And civil organisations	2004 – 2005 2007 – 2008	100 000	National budgets, GF, other international funds
5. Developing and publishing programmes and recommendations	Ministry of Education,	2005 – 2006 Б1	10 000	National budgets, other international

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
ensuring stay of HIV exposed/infected children in educational institutions	Ministry of Health			funds
6. Training specialists (educators, psychologists, social workers) in counselling and psychological support of people living with HIV/AIDS	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection,	2005 – 2006	10 000	International funds, national budget
7. Social support of low-income families which rear HIV-infected/exposed children (toys, vitamin preparations, etc.)	local executive authorities, Ministry of Health, civil organisations	2004 – 2008	40 000	local budgets, international funds
8. Developing and introducing programmes of psychological follow-up of children born by HIV-infected women	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health	2005 – 2006	10 000	National budget, GF, other international funds

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
6. Prevention of HIV/AIDS among female population in the country				
1. Training medical personnel in counselling on HIV/AIDS problems for reproductive age women	Ministry of Health	2005 – 2008	10 000	National budget, GF, other international funds
2. Giving free testing for 90-95% of pregnant women for HIV; rapid analysis of pregnant women whose HIV status is not known in maternity houses	Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	300 000	National budget, GF, other international funds
3. Giving pre- and post-test counselling on HIV/AIDS issues to reproductive age women, including pregnant women	Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	10 000	National budget
4. Giving psychological and counselling support on HIV/AIDS related issues through centres for social support of families and children	Local executive authorities, Ministry of Education, Ministry of	2005 – 2008	30 000	International donors, national and local budgets

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
	Labour and Social Protection, Ministry of Health			
5. Information campaigns on HIV prevention among women	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture, Belarusian Television and Radio Company, local executive authorities, civil organisations	2004 – 2005 2004 – 2007	40 000 100 000	National and local budgets, GF, other international funds
6. Developing and publishing information materials, video clips on HIV prevention among women	Ministry of Health, civil organisations	2004 – 2007	30 000	GF, other international funds and national budget
7. Social surveys among population to identify the needs in development and	Ministry of Health, civil	2004 – 2008	8 000	GF, other international funds

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
preservation of reproductive health	organisations			and national budget

7. Raising awareness and education on the HIV/AIDS problem among different population groups

7.1. Raising awareness and education on the HIV/AIDS problem among young people

1. Introducing programmes for training in HIV prevention in secondary educational institutions	Ministry of Education	2004 – 2008	20 000	National budget
2. Introducing participatory methods of training in life skills on HIV/AIDS, drug use and STI	Ministries, civil organisations	2004 – 2008	40 000	National budget, GF, other international funds, civil organisations
3. Developing and producing methodological, education, information and visual materials on prevention of HIV, drug abuse and STI among young people, different profile specialists and parents	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, civil organisations	2004 – 2008	70 000	National budget, GF, other international funds

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
4. Giving young people access to counselling and psychosocial support and HIV protection means	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, civil organisations	2004 – 2008	50 000	National budget, GF, other international funds, civil organisations
5. Developing hot lines networks to give information about HIV, drug use, STI and reproductive health to population	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, local executive authorities, civil organisations	2004 – 2008	40 000	National budget, GF, other international funds, civil organisations
6. Organising and conducting special topic cultural and entertainment events	National state governing authorities, local executive authorities, civil organisations	2004 – 2008	300 000	National budget, GF, other international funds, civil organisations

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
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7.2. Raising awareness and education on the HIV/AIDS problem at workplaces

1. Implementing at workplaces educational and awareness programmes on HIV/AIDS, including educational activities at working hours, and dissemination of printed materials. Taking measures against discrimination and stigmatization on the ground of the HIV status	National state governing authorities and other organisations reporting to the Government, local executive authorities	2004 – 2008	50 000	International funds, national and local budgets
2. Developing and disseminating programmes, educational materials and methodological recommendations for effective preventive interventions at workplaces given account of gender, age, religious and other features and degree of vulnerability of different groups of workers	National state governing authorities and other organisations reporting to the Government, local executive authorities	2004 – 2005	20 000	International funds, national and local budgets
3. Integrating training programmes on	National state	2004 –	10 000	International funds,

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
<p>HIV/AIDS into the existing sectoral programmes of training and retraining of personnel, as well as the instructions on occupational hygiene and safety precautions. Using the existing workplace programmes on promotion of healthy lifestyle concerning also such issues as alcohol abuse, drug use, reproductive health to highlight various aspects of the HIV/AIDS problem</p>	<p>governing authorities and other organisations reporting to the Government, local executive authorities</p>	<p>2008</p>		<p>national and local budgets</p>
<p>4. Information and education activities among leaders and employees of trade and commercial firms and private businessmen</p>	<p>National state governing authorities and other organisations reporting to the Government, local executive authorities</p>	<p>2004 – 2008</p>	<p>20 000</p>	<p>International funds, national and local budgets</p>

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
5. Improving access of employees to means for protection against HIV and STI, confidential or anonymous counselling and testing for HIV	National state governing authorities and other organisations reporting to the Government, local executive authorities	2004 – 2008	10 000	International funds, national and local budgets

7.3. Raising awareness and education on the HIV/AIDS problem in the armed forces

1. Improving and implementing scientific, methodological and practice activities on HIV prevention in armed forces and training all categories of officers, educators, anti-aircraft officers and medical personnel on different HIV/AIDS aspects	Ministry of Defence	2004 – 2008	50 000	National budget, international funds
2. Organising training in HIV/AIDS/drug abuse issues among	Ministry of Defence	2004 – 2008	40 000	National budget, international funds

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
military conscripts on regular terms				
3. Developing and publishing information and education materials on HIV/AIDS/STI/drug use for different level military units	Ministry of Defence	2004 – 2008	10 000	National budget, international funds
4. Ensuring opportunity for voluntary testing for HIV/STI among different categories of servicemen and providing counselling in medical institutions of the armed forces	Ministry of Defence	2004 – 2008	10 000	National budget
5. Providing access to infection protection means for personnel of the armed forces and servicemen of all categories	Ministry of Defence	2004 – 2008		National budget
6. Disseminating experience on HIV/AIDS prevention in armed forces among other uniformed units (internal forces of the Ministry of	Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Health	2004 – 2008	50 000	National budget, international funds

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
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Internal Affairs and its units, Ministry of Emergencies and State Committee of Border Guards)

8. Setting the national system of monitoring and evaluation of responses to the epidemic

1. Developing the system for monitoring and evaluation of the HIV/AIDS situation and responses to the epidemic spread, including the general concept, guidelines, indicators, methods for collection and analysis of information, implementing units and sources of funds	Ministry of Health	2004 – 2005	10 000	National budget, GF, other international funds
2. Developing and introducing a computerized information analysis system for monitoring and evaluation based on CRIS, charactering social and medical aspects on the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the country, as well as efficacy of the existing programmes	Ministry of Health	2004 – 2005	30 000	National budget, GF, other international funds

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
3. Making basic behavioural, serological and epidemiological surveys for the information analysis system for monitoring and evaluation	Ministry of Health, civil organisations	2004	10 000	National budget, GF, other international funds
4. Equipping departments on HIV/AIDS prevention of the national and regional centres of hygiene, epidemiology and public health with computer equipment for monitoring and evaluation of the HIV/AIDS situation and interventions and responses	Ministry of Health	2004 – 2005	25 000	GF, other international funds
5. Making annual research according to the developed monitoring and evaluation programme	Ministry of Health, civil organisations, CD MIA, National state governing authorities and	2004 – 2008	50 000	National budget, GF, other international funds

Activities	Implementing organisations	Period of implementation	Unit of measurement (conventional units)	Sources of funding
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other
organisations
reporting to the
Government

Expected outcomes of the Strategic Plan of Actions to Combat HIV/AIDS in the Republic of Belarus for 2004 – 2008

1. Prevention of HIV among drug users:

60 percent of injection drug users will have access to sterile syringes, bleachers and information on safe behaviour; Outreach and peer education methods will be introduced in 15-20 towns with high drug use prevalence; Substitution therapy methods will be applied in areas with high drug prevalence rates covering 150 drug users annually; Opportunities will be made broader for drug users to receive good quality information, psychological and medical services.

2. Prevention of HIV among women involved in sex work:

Centres of information, medical and psychological support to women sex workers will be organized in 6 towns of the country.

3. Prevention of HIV among men who have sex with men:

Centres of information, medical and psychological support to MSM will be organized in 6 towns of the country
MSM will have access to HIV protection means.

4. Prevention of HIV among in the penitentiary system:

100 percent of prisoners will have access to HIV prevention information, condoms and bleachers;
The peer education method will be introduced in all institutions of the corrections system.

5. Giving medical, psychological and other support to people living with HIV/AIDS:

Access to antiretroviral treatment (95% of all in need) and psychological support will help improve quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS, which will reduce adverse impacts of the epidemic;

Groups of self-support and mutual support will be organized in 10 towns of the country;

Development of human resources will help improve prevention and treatment activities and quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS;

Mother to child prevention of HIV will be organized across the country using modern protocols and technologies.

6. Prevention of HIV/AIDS among female population in the country:

Reproductive age women will have access to testing for HIV; all pregnant women will have access to testing for HIV based on informed consent;

All reproductive age women and pregnant women will have access to HIV/AIDS counselling services.

7. Raising awareness and education on the HIV/AIDS problem among different population groups

Education programmers and awareness-raising campaigns in mass media will facilitate modification of behaviours among people of risk groups, preventing further spread of HIV as well as stigmatization and discrimination of people living with HIV/AIDS;

Educational process in basic schools, vocational schools, secondary special institutions and higher educational institutions of the country will include issues on prevention of HIV/AIDS/STI and drug use according to the developed programmes using modern methods;

Prevention activities among young people will be based on using of methodological, information and visual materials;

Prevention activities will involve psychology educators, social workers, medical personnel of educational institutions, multi-profile centres and other institutions giving medical, social and counselling support to young people;

Young people will have better access to HIV sexual transmission prevention means through education, reduced prices for condoms and expanded network of trade organizations selling condoms.

8. Setting the national system of monitoring and evaluation of responses to the epidemic:

The national system of monitoring and evaluation of HIV/AIDS responses at different levels has been developed;

Approval of the national system of monitoring and evaluation of HIV/AIDS will allow enhancing the existing HIV surveillance system, including 2nd generation principles of sentinel surveillance. National specialists will be trained in issues of monitoring and evaluation.

The computer system of monitoring and evaluation will be adapted and introduced at the national and regional levels.

Monitoring and evaluation of plan implementation

Monitoring and evaluation of plan efficacy will be made based on the developed methodologies and criteria using sentinel surveillance and data of survey of behaviour and risk factors among different population groups.

The Ministry of Health is the coordinating authority. Information on the progress of the strategic plan is presented every year at the sitting of the National Interdepartmental Council on Prevention of HIV Infection and Sexually Transmitted Diseases involving also the UN Theme Group for HIV/AIDS and civil organizations.

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