

# 5. World forum against drugs – Vienna March 12<sup>th</sup> 2016

## 3 Balkan project –

## Recovery organizations involved in WFAD regional project

Presented by Boro Goic

Celebrate Recovery, NGO for re-socialization of former addicts, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

RUN – Recovered Users Network

# Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia



# Project objectives, vision, goals

- The project objective was to improve the participation and position of marginalized groups who abused drugs in society and that this consequently affects their position, independence and equality in society
- One year project, online survey, in person meetings, conferences.
- Identification of all actors working in the addiction field in both public-governmental sector and among civil society organizations
- Ensure greater visibility of all relevant stakeholders in the project and encourage them to cooperate more often – Brochure
- Identify and assess the needs of mapped actors and encourage them to act proactively

# Project objectives, vision, goals

- **Goals:** improve our involvement, to develop closer cooperation with governmental sector, to see how we can counteract harm reduction strategies, to work on visibility of our organisations, to influence current drug policies on national but also on local level
- **Vision:** first year to assess what needs to be done, second year to work on strengthening capacities of our organisations, third year to act proactively, fourth year to get sustainability in objectives

# Project partnership

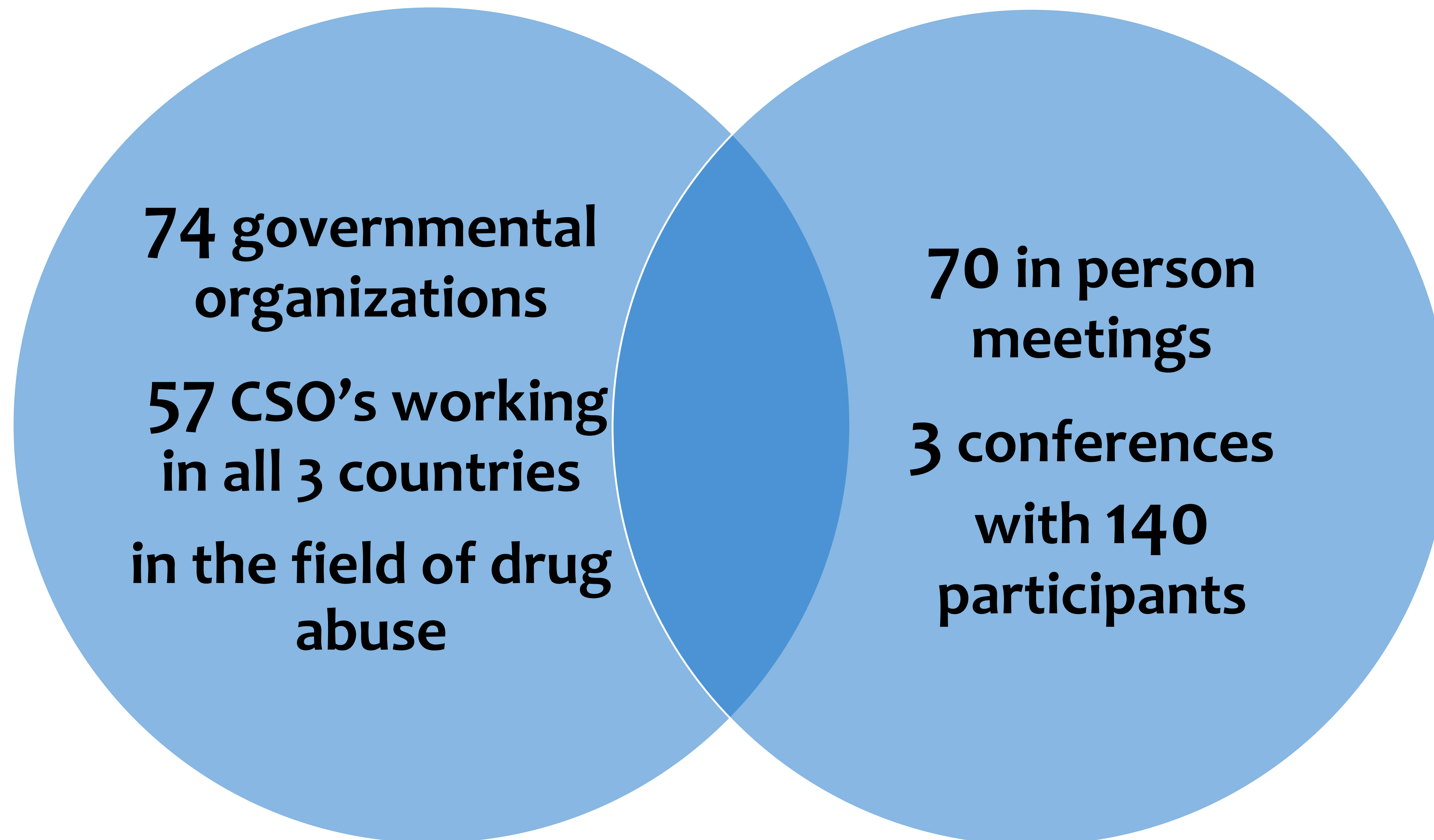


# Partnership experience

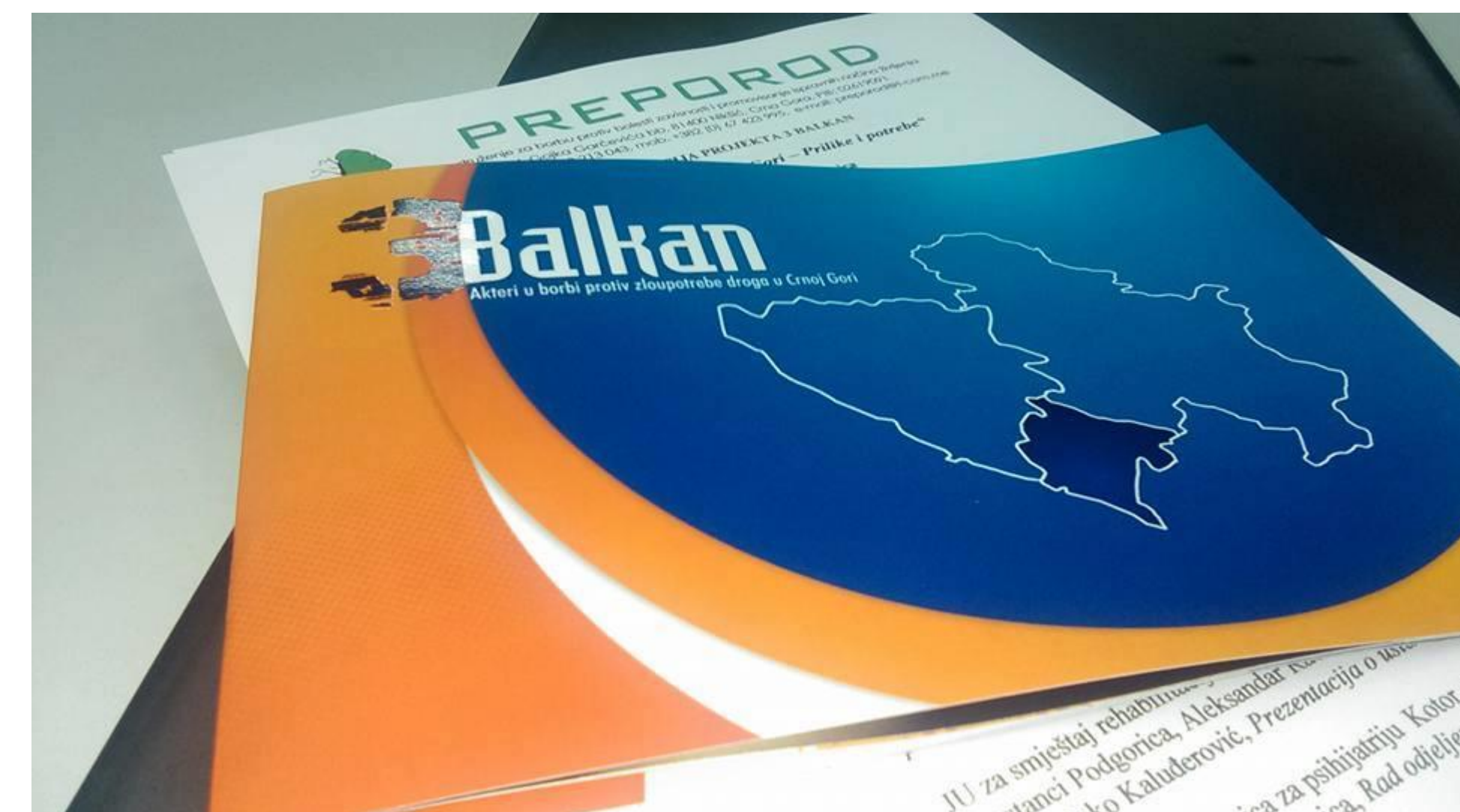


**Cecilia Hajzler, Project coordinator**  
**Restart – Novi Sad - Serbia**

# Results



# Conferences in Belgrade, Sarajevo, Podgorica



# Results of a needs assessment

- **Insufficient financial resources**
- **Stigmatization of addicts and recovered addicts**
- **Insufficient cooperation among institutions which deal with the same issue**
- **The need to strengthen human resource capacity, the need for qualified personnel, the need for translated scientific literature**
- **Public indifference to any problem in the addiction field**
- **There is a need for motivation towards systematic solutions of social problems – it all comes down to personal motivation and enthusiasm**

# According needs assessment we need...

- **to provide information on addiction, different type of treatments, recovery options and to sensitize the public for the condition**
- **to raise public awareness in order to overcome prejudice**
- **to get balanced National Drug Strategy**
- **to work on establishment of the national Office for Drugs, a professional team of experts responsible for the coordination and supervision of all activities and creation of drug policy**
- **to work on educational programs for personnel working in both the public and in the CSO sector**

# According needs assessment we need...

- to provide better cooperation among all actors in the addiction field
- to provide balanced approach to drug treatment options, equal number of harm reduction programs and programs with full recovery at its core
- to suggest best practices that indicate positive examples of some approaches
- to work on programs of systematic re-integration on national level
- to encourage recovered addicts to participate in treatment and actively engage to create more public services that are better suited to diverse needs

# Recovered Users Network

- **Established 2013**
- **Specific advocacy platform governed from EURAD**
- **CSO (33 organizations), individuals and groups of people engaged in recovery work**
- **Vision “raise the voice of the recovery movement, by contributing to constructive and respectful drug policies, for individuals, families and communities”**
- **Mission “a network which provides a voice for recovered drug users to promote and share the experience of recovery, on both political and practical levels”**



# The harms of drugs

## Harms to the user:

**Health: mortality and morbidity, overdoses, infections, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, accidents, mental health problems, social marginalization, reduced life satisfaction, self-harm, involvement in crime, homelessness**

## Harms to family and friends :

**Emotional problems, child abuse/neglect, broken relationships, chaotic lives, financial problems**

## Harms to community/society:

**Crime, burden to health and social services, costs of law enforcement, loss of productivity, loss of social capital/trust, obstacle to development in developing countries**

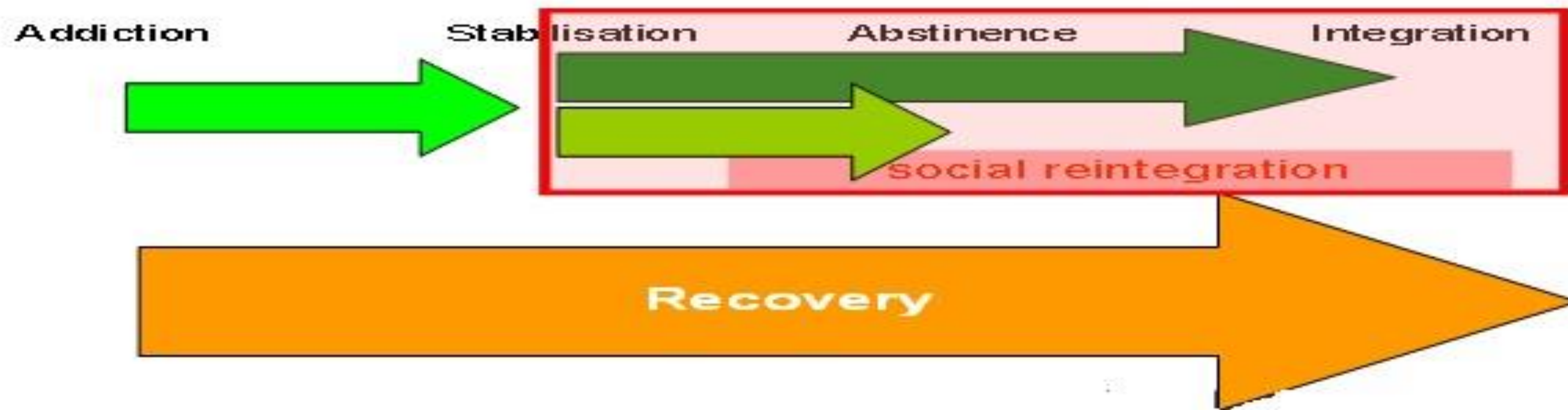
# Recovery – definition

**“Recovery is about people (re)building meaningful lives, where individuals can realize their aspirations, be treated with respect and dignity, and contribute to society”**

**The essence of recovery is a lived experience of improved life quality and a sense of empowerment... the principles of recovery focus on the central ideas of hope, choice, freedom and aspiration that are experienced rather than diagnosed and occur in real life settings rather than the rarefied atmosphere of clinical settings.**

**(Best and Laudet 2012)**

# Recovery and how we can define it



The term RECOVERY implies a process through which an individual is enabled to move from their problem of drug use, towards a life without drugs as an active and contributing member of society. (Scottish Government 2008)

# Motivation to seek drug free treatment

**RUN research from 2014 emerged motivation factors to seek treatment:**

- Family and Peers (“My parents helped me a lot. They talked me into entering. I wasn’t really sure, but I understood or they made me understand that I had to face my problems, or wouldn’t ever overcome that disease.”)**
- Loss (“I arrived at the point of no return, I hit the bottom and I didn’t have any other choice, than coming in to a recovery program, or ending my life.”)**
- Health (“I was suddenly hospitalized and I felt a world full of loneliness around me.”)**
- Need for change (“When I would look at myself in the mirror and I didn’t recognize myself for what I used to be.”)**

# The importance of motivation to seek drug free treatment



**Jovan Bulajic, President**  
**Preporod – Rebirth – Niksic - Montenegro**

# Why is motivation so important

- **Lack of will because of numerous unsuccessful attempts**
- **Disbelief about any possibility to recover – accepting the situation**
- **It is important also for other methods and ways**

# Process of motivation

- **Examining of existence of any motives (how and for what reason he/she came here)**
- **Checking the rightness of motivation**
- **Personal example as the best motive**
- **Influence somebody`s willingness**
- **Dealing with expectations and possible situations**
- **Practicing reactions (what if ...)**

# Process of motivation

- **Phenomenon of ``burning of boats``**
- **Work with families (informing families about process / continuous work after entering the treatment)**
- **Drug free treatment selection and first contact**
- **Reintegration advantages**

# Recovery and harm reduction services

- **Harm reduction, understood as the provision of health and social services to active drug users, can never replace primary prevention and treatment/rehabilitation as the main strategy in global, national and local drug policies**
- **Harm reduction initiatives fail to address the bulk of drug-related harm, but are nonetheless essential to assist drug users with their acute problems**
- **Harm reduction can lead to recovery and recovery is the ultimate harm reduction measure**

**( Findings for UNGASS 2016)**

# Recovery and harm reduction services

- In general, providing drug treatment alone (e.g. substitute prescribing) without additional support or services had only limited and inconsistent effects on recovery from addiction and so being on therapy for multiple years seems to actually erode a persons cognitive ability and so can be said to delay the onset of recovery in that persons life.

## What will it take to foster closer alignment between these approaches?

- Greater understanding of the contribution of both approaches
  - Joint training
  - Referral between services
  - Shift in funding
  - Willingness to set aside ideological disputes in favor of meeting the needs of clients
  - Development of peer led initiatives
- (N. Mc Kageney)

# Why recovery should be aim of any drug policy

- Recovery is worth promoting as the ultimate, achievable outcome for most individuals with substance use disorders
- Recovery has a long term positive effect on individuals, families and communities
- Recovery should be the focus and aim of treatment and the patient's health should be the central concern. This may result in many more people getting better and fewer people remaining in expensive, clinical treatments in the longer term
- Recovery is focused on strengths and assets of a person, and not their weaknesses and deficits
- Social investment in individuals, their future and the well being of their family is important in many aspects

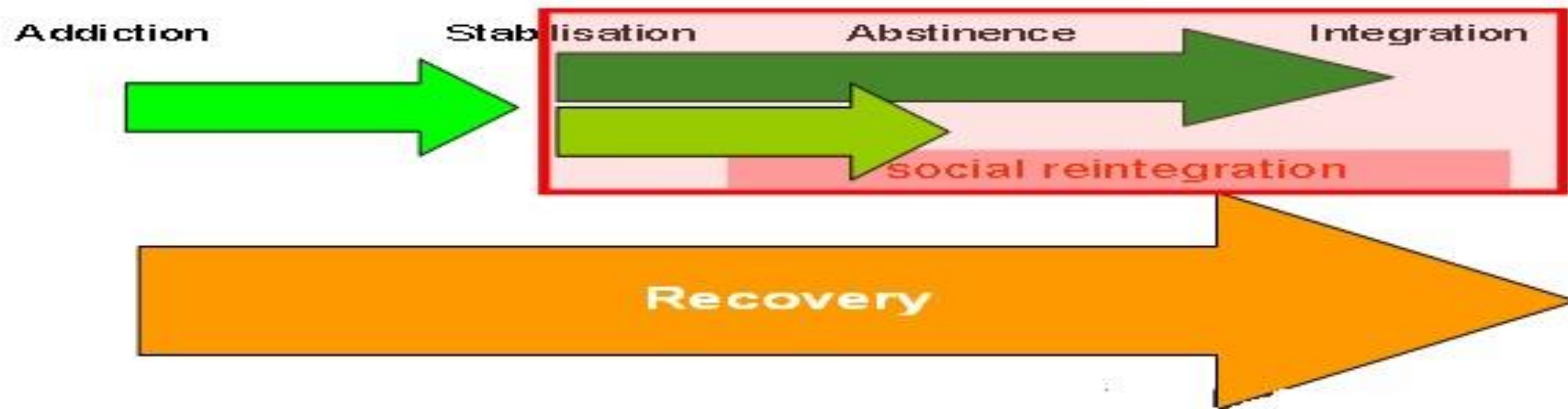
# Why recovery should be aim of any drug policy

- **Recovery oriented systems of care have a potential to enhance recovery capital (mental health, self-esteem, resilience, family support, peer support) that a person can bring to bear on the initiation and maintenance of recovery**
- **Empowerment of people who want to pursue a change in life and get back to society as active and contributing members**
- **Drug use is a recoverable condition and in many cases is not the original problem but the solution to the problem. Often the removal of addiction without action to address underlying problems can make that person more vulnerable.**
- **Quitting addiction has an economic impact on reducing the costs of life long maintenance treatment, the cost of unemployment and lack of productivity as well as the social costs related to the families and affected communities**

# The best practices in drug policy

- A fundamental difference between this strategy and those that have gone before is that instead of focussing primarily on reducing the harms caused by drug misuse, our approach will be to go much further and offer every support for people to choose recovery as an achievable way of dependence. (UK Government 2010)
- Our ultimate goal is to enable individuals to become free from the dependence; Supporting people to live a drug free life is at the heart of our recovery ambition
- The ambition for more people to recover is legitimate and deliverable. Previous strategies focused on reducing crime and drug related harm to public health, where the benefit to society accrued from people being retained in treatment programs as much as from completing them. However this allowed a culture of practice that gave insufficient priority to an individual's desire to overcome drug dependence. (NTA2012)

# Implication of Recovery



# Promote Recovery !!!!



# Promote Recovery !!!!



**Thank you for your attention**