Alcohol, drug, tobacco and doping prevention by non-governmental organizations in Sweden 2003–2012

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Background
In Sweden, there is a strong political belief that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are important in health promotion and prevention, particularly in the areas of alcohol, drugs, doping and tobacco (ANDT). The Government therefore annually allocates about 2 million euros for this work. This study highlights the involved NGOs, added values and obstacles within NGOs ANDT prevention and conditions required for a successful preventive work.

Method
The study is based on 375 project grants including 190 unique projects implemented by 60 NGOs between the years 2003–2012 (Figure 1). In surveys every two years, a total of 168 questionnaires were answered by 112 different project leaders. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used for analysis.

Results
There is a wide range and variety of different NGOs working with ANDT prevention. Added value of NGOs prevention work is that they counterbalance the public sector, have a familiarity and cultural competence that are important for the target groups and they possess a unique force in its voluntariness. Perceived barriers are short-term project funds, time constraints, limited target group, lack of knowledge and trust from the surrounding society. Successful ANDT prevention requires a well-functioning organization with clear structures and support functions, a goal-oriented and knowledge-based work, support from the public sector and R & D as well as collaboration between different actors.

Conclusion
With good organisational conditions and proper support NGOs can be an important complement to public ANDT prevention. They have an ability to reach and attract vulnerable target groups not reached by public interventions. There is a unique power and determination in NGOs.

Main messages
NGOs play an important role and are an important complement within ANDT prevention. NGOs uniqueness creates an important added value in ANDT prevention.