



**“Continuing Scale of Response to HIV in Uzbekistan
with Particular Focus on Most at risk Populations and
Strengthening System and Capacity for Universal
Access to HIV Prevention, Diagnosis, Treatment and
Care in Uzbekistan” Project**

*funded by the Global Fund to Fight
AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria*

Project Newsletter

December, 2012



Uzbekistan

Summing up the year 2012

Dear colleagues and partners,

The year 2012 has been challenging, but fruitful and productive. We would like to thank our partners for their hard work and strong collaboration in achieving set targets on ensuring strong HIV response in Uzbekistan. We are glad to present the main Project results in 2012 in this issue of the Project Newsletter.

Zakir Kadirov, Project Manager



Results and achievement in 2012

Prevention

- ❖ Over **35000** people from most at-risk populations (MARPs) from all regions of the country have been reached by HIV prevention services, aimed to reduce high risk behavior;
- ❖ Over **34000** young people received HIV prevention services through mini-sessions on peer-to-peer education and HIV related information education materials

Treatment, care and support

- ❖ **6 021** people living with HIV are currently receiving antiretroviral treatment
- ❖ **7 395** courses of treatment of opportunistic infections has been provided
- ❖ **10 052** courses of treatment of sexually transmitted diseases provided
- ❖ **4 279** people, living with HIV (PLHIV) and their family members benefited from social-psychological support services
- ❖ **788** medical specialists trained on Integrated Management of Childhood Illness (IMCI/HIV course)
- ❖ **98 %** of infants born to HIV positive mothers received ARVT prophylaxis
- ❖ ARV drugs worth **1 850 000 USD** procured;
- ❖ Drugs for treatment of opportunistic infections amounting to **370 000 USD** procured;
- ❖ Non-pharmaceutical goods – diagnostic tests, single use instruments and equipment amounting to **4 200 000 USD** procured;
- ❖ National clinical protocols on antiretroviral treatment in adults and adolescents, prevention of mother to child transmission, management of hepatitis B and HIV co-infection developed.

Strengthening systems and capacity for universal access to HIV prevention, diagnosis, care and support

- ❖ **180** specialists from across the country trained on infection control in healthcare facilities
- ❖ **1 149** patronage nurses trained to educate PLHIV and their family members on HIV and prepare them for home based care
- ❖ **1 218** people trained as volunteers to advocate safe blood donations
- ❖ **4 400** nurses trained to empower communities to make informed and rational use of invasive procedures.

Summing up the year 2012 – the year's highlights

Forum unites Partners, involved in HIV response

November 12, 2012 – *The Partners' Forum, initiated by the Women's Committee brought together all the partners involved in the spread of HIV infection in the country towards more active efforts for a sustainable and comprehensive response to achieve universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support for people living with HIV (PLHIV).*

The Forum is a platform for effective dialogue, the consolidation of all efforts of government, civil society and international organizations in confronting HIV infection."

I. Basitkhnova, Chairman of the Women's Committee



World AIDS Day 2012 event attracts over 700 participants



November 30 - World AIDS Day, supported by the Project in partnership with the Social Initiatives Support Fund, UNFPA and other organizations was attended by UNDP Deputy Resident Representative Mr. Jaco Cilliers, representatives of national and international organizations and over 700 college students and schoolchildren. The event promoted HIV safe and healthy lifestyle behavior.



Results of countrywide Sentinel Surveillance serve effective HIV response

May 2-3 - Sentinel Surveillance is an important component of epidemiological surveillance, enabling monitoring of the epidemic among most-at-risk populations and collection of data, helpful in designing preventive interventions. Under the Project national HIV Sentinel Surveillance was conducted in Uzbekistan in 2011 and in 2012 the findings were analyzed. Results of the Sentinel Surveillance were presented at the National Conference.



Summing up the year 2012 – the year's highlights

People, living with HIV meet for strategic planning

December 12, 2012 - representatives of initiative groups of people, living with HIV (PLHIV) from all the regions of Uzbekistan met for a 3-day meeting in order to develop the NGO “Ishonch va Hayot” Strategic Plan for 2013-2016.

The participants were highly motivated to develop the Strategic Plan, which will serve as the guideline in future activities on serving the needs of people, living with HIV across the country and strengthening their role in addressing issue of PLHIV and improving their livelihoods.

“So far there have been disparate initiative groups of PLHIV in different regions of the country. Now with the Project’s support we are going to unite all these groups, so that together we are a power improve quality of their lives and fight stigma and discriminations ”

Victoriya Ashirova, chairperson of the NGO “Ishonch va Hayot”



Project implementation in 2012 rated A2 by the donor and acknowledged by Multisectoral Expert Council

The implementation of UNDP HIV Project in Uzbekistan in 2012 received a strong A2 rating by the donor – the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which means achievement of all targets. This has been possible due to the strong partnership with government agencies, civil society and international organizations at all levels of joint activities from planning to implementation and monitoring.

Multisectoral Expert Council (MEC) meeting, held in December acknowledged Project achievements in all areas of the Project interventions. It should be mentioned that collaborative initiatives enabled wider participation of PLHIV and AIDS service NGOs in Multisectoral Expert council - MEC approved 4 new members of MEC from NGO sectors.

Summing up the year 2012 – prevention

Reaching out to most at-risk populations

Effective prevention is the main barrier to any epidemic, including HIV. Consequently, prevention among high risk groups is among priority area of Project interventions. Collaborative efforts with the Project sub-recipients and partners result in active preventive interventions among vulnerable groups in all regions of Uzbekistan - over 35 000 people from them were reached with HIV prevention services.



Young people at the forefront of HIV prevention in Uzbekistan

Among its activities to scale up HIV prevention in Uzbekistan the Project targets youth. The Project joins efforts with “Kamolot” Youth Movement – the largest youth organization in the country with a wide network all across the country. As a Project sub-recipient “Kamolot” carries out interventions all across the country to raise awareness on HIV, sexually transmitted diseases and advocate healthy lifestyle. Peer to peer education, mini-sessions in schools and colleges, volunteering in HIV programming and distribution of informational-educational materials make the core of prevention interventions among young people.



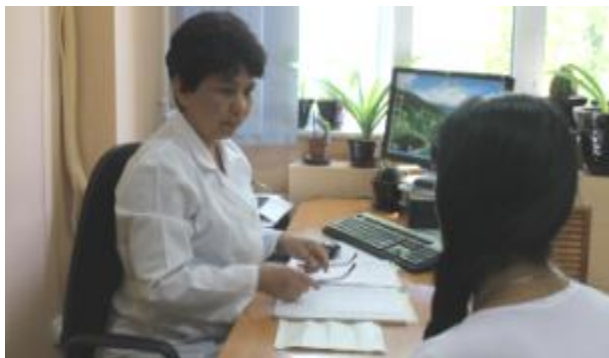
“As we are peers, young people feel free to approach us with various questions and concerns, share their fears, perceptions and misperceptions on HIV issues. So together, we have a strong foundation to empower them against HIV.”

Zebiniso Muhsinova, peer educator

Summing up the year 2012 – treatment, care and support

Steps towards universal access to antiretroviral treatment

Ensuring universal access to ARVT remains an urgent issue in Uzbekistan. Project efforts aim to support the government of Uzbekistan that strives to fulfill the obligations under the international agreements. Under the made commitments, over 6021 people have got access to ARVT and are enabled to live active and healthy lives despite HIV.



“I got pregnant being HIV positive. Thanks to the doctors’ efforts and antiretroviral therapy and prophylaxis, my daughter was born healthy.

Nargiza, 32 years old

Enhancing capacities of medical professional

In order to maximize the impact of the comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment, care and support initiatives, carried out in the country the Project actively supports the national efforts to strengthen the healthcare system and create an effective barrier to HIV epidemic through empowering medical professional and service providers.

The Project joins efforts with the Ministry of Health and its divisions to train medical professionals on provision of medical services to people, living with HIV - antiretroviral treatment, treatment of opportunistic infections, pediatric AIDS, co-infections and other areas.

During the trainings we acquired not only the medical approach but, but also its psychological aspect – how to talk to patients, how to make a patient's HIV-status known – these are of great help in our work”

Kadembay Turebayev, Nukus city

Summing up the year 2012 – changing attitudes towards HIV and PLHIV

Engaging media to fight stigma and develop tolerance towards PLHIV

While treatment and medical procedures are of extreme importance in enabling PLHIV lead healthy and active lives, changing public attitudes and promoting tolerance towards PLHIV is another key aspect. Consequently, UNDP is working in Uzbekistan to ensure the creation of a social environment that allows for the suitable prevention, treatment, care and support of individuals living with HIV and AIDS. Activities in this area include sensitizing opinion makers in regards to the HIV/AIDS issues and advocating greater tolerance towards PLHIV through empowering media.

Series of trainings for journalists resulted in empowering representatives of various national and regional media to better understand challenges that face PLHIV, issues of stigma and discrimination and use non-discriminatory language in order to convey correct messages and attract public attention to these issues.



The national and regional journals and newspapers, featuring articles by the trained journalists are reaching out to the wide audiences, communities and families across the country. They challenge common misperceptions related to HIV, its transmission and advocate tolerance towards and acceptance of PLHIV as full-fledged members of the society.



Summing up the year 2012 – strengthening system and capacity for universal access to HIV prevention, diagnosis, treatment, care and support

Palliative care aims to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family. In this regard building capacities of nurses, who provide services to the PLHIV and educate family members, is essential component of antiretroviral programming. Over 1000 patronage nurses, trained under the Project are delivering palliative care services to PLHIV and their families in 5 regions of the country.

Empowering communities to make informed and rational use of invasive procedures is another important component, aimed to stop HIV transmission through medical procedures. 4400 nurses, trained on this issue are delivering safe medical services and educating community members.

Voluntary blood donorship - Ensuring safety of donor blood for transfusions requires, securing adequate and reliable supply of blood. The Project works on mobilization of the general population to voluntary blood donorship through conducting advocacy and informational-educational activities in mahallas (local communities) across the country. 1218 trained volunteers are advocating volunteer blood donorship across the country.



Summing up the year 2012 – strengthening system and capacity for universal access to HIV prevention, diagnosis, treatment, care and support

Ensuring effective barrier to HIV in healthcare facilities

The national strategic goal of the Public Health system is to provide quality health care and creating a safe environment for patients and medical staff in organizations engaged in medical activities.

In this regard, one of the Project priority directions is supporting the Government's efforts in ensuring safety of medical invasive procedures. In order to enhance effectiveness of work in this direction the Project has carried out assessment of healthcare facilities in 5 regions of Uzbekistan: Andijan, Ferghana, Namangan, Samarkand and Tashkent oblasts (regions).

The research focused on assessing the safety of invasive procedures, including HIV safety, availability of single use instruments, safe blood and its components in the healthcare facilities.

Under the assessment recommendations on improvement of existing public health practices including safe behavior of medical specialists and patients have been developed. Also, based on assessment and WHO recommendations a procurement list of single use instruments and consumables has been developed and approved by the Ministry of Health.

Thus, procurement and delivery of single use instruments and consumables for healthcare facilities are among priority Project commitments in 2013. These initiatives aim to ensure a strong barrier to HIV transmission in healthcare setting and safe medical services to all patients.



“A safe injection is one that does not harm the recipient, does not expose the provider to any avoidable risks and does not result in waste that is dangerous for the community. Unsafe injection practices can lead to transmission of blood borne pathogens, with their associated burden of disease.”

“WHO best practices on injections and related procedures toolkit”
March 2010

Summing up the year 2012 – building capacities of national partners

As the Principal Recipient of Global Fund grants, UNDP carries out activities aimed to capacity building of national partners in sub-project implementation.

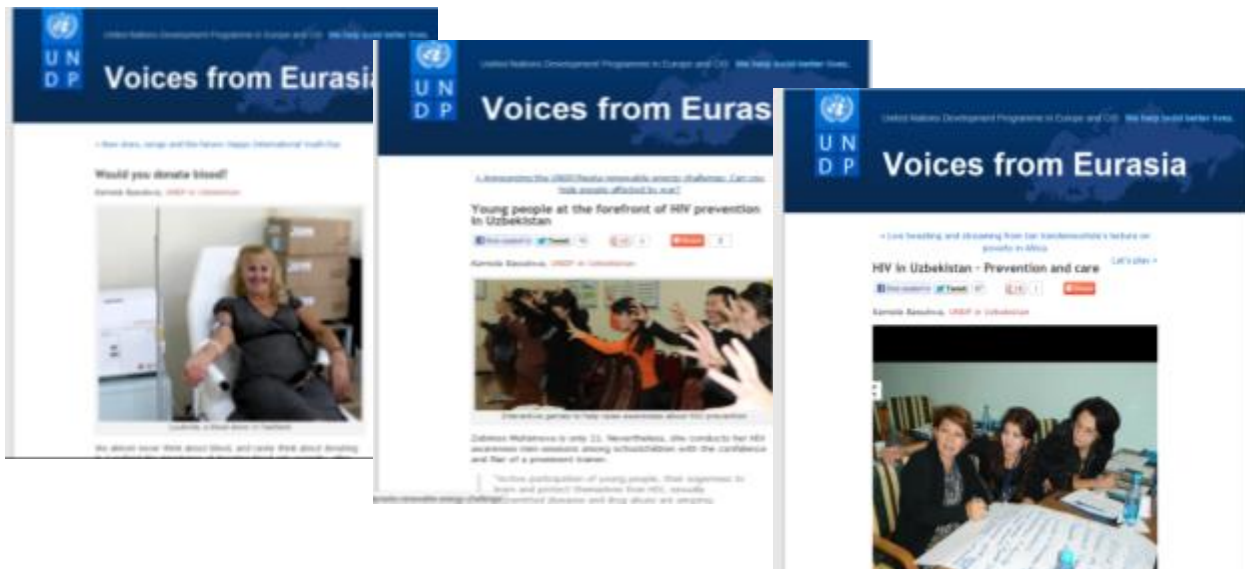
In accordance with the procedures and requirements of the Global Fund and UNDP, capacity assessment of project sub-recipients was conducted with the purpose to determine the needs of organizations and to strengthen their capacity aimed to improve the efficiency of the project. Capacity Development Plan, developed per assessment results became the main instrument of further capacity building of national partners.

Following series of trainings enabled Project sub-recipients expand their knowledge in various financial, legal, administrative and logistical issues to ensure quality project implementation, as well as ensuring that services they provide are in full compliance with the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan in all areas.



International e-media outreach

Project blogs featured in Voices from Eurasia



Project engaged in Really Simple Reporting - our web-page on AKVO platform launched

<http://www.akvo.org/rsr/project/573>



Project featured in UNDP-GF News Update



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