

### **Regional Steering Committee Meeting**

Regional Steering Committee Meeting of Central Asia AIDS Control Project took place on February 5, 2008. The issue on sub-project proposals (SPP) approval in sum more than \$50,000 USD was included into the agenda. In course of the meeting, Regional AIDS Fund Coordinator who also acts as Regional Technical Evaluation Committee Secretary familiarized the RSC members with the results of sub-project proposals technical evaluation received during the Second RAF grand round.

National Coordination Committee meeting took place in Tajikistan on February 25 presided over by Tajik Vice Prime-Minister, Mrs. Rakiya Kurbanova. The following issues were discussed among those included into the meeting agenda: plan of the HIV/AIDS epidemic counteraction program introduction in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period of 2007-2010; report on HIV/AIDS epidemic counteraction program implementation and also new National Technical Evaluation Committee staff on SPP evaluation in the Republic of Tajikistan was approved.

## **COMPONENT 1. REGIONAL COORDINATION AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

### **Sub-component 1.1. Regional HIV/AIDS Coordination and Policy Development Conferences and workshops**

#### **Videoconference**

The issues on measures implementation in the frame of Components 1 and 2, administrative and financial issues were discussed during the videoconference which took place on February 22, 2008. Besides the RPMU staff and World bank Project Coordinator, Ms. Dorothee Eckertz, National Coordinators as well as the World bank country offices staff took part in it. The Project staff carry out an every day work on International conference “HIV Epidemic in Central Asia and Neighboring Countries: Surveillance Approaches and Challenges for Control and Prevention” preparation. The conference will take place in Bishkek on March 11-13, 2008. All necessary logistic arrangements (tickets booking, hotel reservation, invitation letters for NGO members) is being carried out.

The RPMU staff has started the preparation to the Second International Conference on HIV/AIDS issues in Eastern Europe and Central Asia “Access improvement, prevention, care and treatment” (Moscow, May 2008).

Letter addressed to Ministry of Justice of Kazakhstan, Mrs. Balieva Z. was prepared. In the letter her participation in the 19<sup>th</sup> International Conference on drug harm reduction in Barcelona, Spain, is asked.

### ***Sub-component 1.2. Surveillance and Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Systems.***

#### **Electronic surveillance program**

- Local consultant in the field of support in electronic surveillance system designing over HIV and AIDS cases in Central Asia was hired;
- Negotiations with the International consultant on electronic surveillance software program development (time-table, issue of payment) are being conducted for further contract signing. The consultant was selected on the basis of International tender.

- Terms of study tour on experience introduction and use of ES software program were coordinated with the National AIDS Prevention Center in Ukraine. Dates of the trip were also defined: March 23-29, 2008. Participants number and staff was defined in coordination with the Republican AIDS Centers directors. Study tour budget draft was prepared. All necessary logistic procedures (tickets, hotel accommodation) were carried out.

### **Sentinel Surveillance (SS)**

- According to the Working Plan of the RPMU team for 2008, the detailed working plans of SES and SS over HIV/AIDS cases in the countries were agreed with the Project participant countries regional AIDS centers directors as well as with CDC.
- Negotiations with the companies-suppliers of tests for SES produced in Russia and by Ebbot company are in progress now. By the companies' request, all calculations on countries' needs in tests for SES for 2008 were made.
- The request to certify laboratory equipment for HIV anti-bodies detection and their further testing was made. Regulating documents were received from Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan in a form of health ministries orders and governments' resolutions. In Uzbekistan the information on this issue is being collected.
- Supply of the second test lot for SES to the Kyrgyz republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan is being implemented.
- The request to finance SES questionnaires replication was prepared and sent to UNDP.

### **Strengthening M&E system**

On February 6, 2008, M&E Regional Technical Working Group meeting took place in Almaty. M&E specialists from the Republican AIDS Centers as well as M&E specialists seconded to the National Coordination Committees, representatives of a number of international organizations such as UNAIDS, CDC/USAID, CARHAP/DFID, AFEW and GFATM took part in it.

The participants of the meeting discussed the aims of M&E Regional Technical Working Group (RTWG) establishment in the field of HIV prevention, RTWG Regulations draft as well as M&E activity plans for 2008. Also the list of the RTWG members was discussed.

One of the issues at the meeting was the discussion of Services Classifier draft on HIV prevention, treatment and care in central Asian countries and other steps in its promotion in the countries of the region.

National Coordinators have prepared quarter reports on SPP indicators of the First RAF grant round which was submitted to the RPMU M&E specialist.

### **Sub-component 1.3. Human Resources Development Regional Training Courses (RTC)**

First Central Asian ToT basic on anti-retroviral therapy (ARV) among adults for multidisciplinary teams was conducted in Tashkent on February 11-15, 2008. That course was conducted by CAAP under the assistance of American International Health Alliance (AIHA), UNIFEM and Ministry of health of Republic of Uzbekistan in the frame of Regional Training Center on treatment and care for PLWH formation and development in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The main characteristic of the course was training of trainers (ToT) in

multidisciplinary teams (MDT) on PLWH treatment, care and support issues. For this purpose every Project-participant country -Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan sent two MDT consisting of a doctor, a nurse and a social worker. Totally, 24 specialists from CA countries in the field of PLWH treatment and care took part in the training course. Specialists of Regional training and information center on PLWH support and treatment in Eurasia (Kiev, Ukraine) became the trainers of this training course.

Draft project on trilateral treaty on cooperation in the field of regional training center on work with youth establishment and support between RIPCSO, National Center of healthy lifestyle formation and the RPMU was prepared in Kazakhstan. The treaty draft is under consideration of interested parties.

ToR for the Regional Training Center trainers' selection was prepared for the further competition conducting.

The UNESCO comments on manual on HIV prevention issues among youth were received.

The arrangements for the round table on institutionalization of Central Asian training and information center on harm reduction issues (Bishkek, March14, 2008) are being carried out.

### **Communication Strategy Promotion**

In February the work of Communication Coordinator and Strategist was focused on:

- Information updating of the Project website. Information about the main February events (RSC, training course on PLWH treatment and care in Tashkent, national trainings in the frame of Component 2, M&E meeting, the CAAP staff trip to Vilnius) is placed on the Project web site.
- Preparation to the Third RAF grant round information campaign conducting. The correspondence with National offices was being carried out. Information message about the Third grant round launching translated into state languages of the Project-participant countries was up-dated.
- Press release was prepared together with CDC on SS forthcoming international conference in Bishkek. Action plan for planning press-conference was drafted.
- ToR on the Project electronic document turnover software program "CAAP E-office" design was discussed with the RPMU team. Taking into account all the remarks and proposals it was decided to lead individual discussions with every RPMU employee with the purpose to explain the advantages of this system introduction.
- Negotiations with EurAsEC press-service were conducted. The logotype sample of this organization was received with the aim to use the logotype jointly with the Project one. The request was made to InCom company on changes making possibility with the purpose to introduce EurAsEC logo into the site banner.

## **COMPONENT 2. CENTRAL ASIA AIDS FUND**

### **Grant Activities**

During the month the work was carried out on preparation of country quarter reports on events conducted by SPPs financed by RAF in the frame of the 1<sup>st</sup> grant round on the basis of monthly reports collecting and analysis.

Final evaluation of SPPs goals achievement which had completed their activity will be done after the final program monitoring conducting after the working group visit on the spots according to the prepared detailed plan of monitoring visits to all Project-participant

countries. The group will be consisted of the RPMU representatives, NTEC and the Project National office M&E staff.

In February the efforts of the Component 2 Coordinator were focused on the organizing and coordinating trainings for 2 Grant Round sub-recipients in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. This training aims to build institutional capacity of AIDS service organization that work with the high vulnerable groups. Thus during the second decade of February 11-15, training was organized in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. 29 representatives of AIDS service organizations participated on this training.

On 25 of February, a similar training was organized in Uralsk, Kazakhstan. This training will be followed by 5 more trainings that will be organized in March. 150 representatives of AIDS service organizations are expected to attend the trainings in Kazakhstan.

Guidance was provided to and due diligence was ensured for the 2 Grant Round large sub-grantees.

Preparations for the third grant round were started and are in progress. The time frame of the 3<sup>rd</sup> GR information campaign start was postponed.

Round table with participation of the Project National Coordinator of the Republic of Uzbekistan, head of the Epidemiology Department of Tashkent Institute of Advanced Medical Studies (TIAMS), Republican AIDS Center and CDC was organized in Uzbekistan in the frame of realization of TIAMS sub-project on the second generation surveillance introduction. The working plan as well as issues of further coordination and this sub-project support were discussed during the round table.

### **Working meetings, training tours and business trips**

On February 1, Component 1 Coordinator and National Coordinator in the Kyrgyz Republic met with head of the UNDP Project “Kyrgyz Republic Government support in HIV/AIDS counteraction”, Mrs. Isakova A. The goal of the meeting was the discussion of joint activity in the field of country religious leaders involvement to the prevention measures activity. It was agreed that the UNDP Project will provide assistance to the representatives of the Muslim Spiritual Board of the Kyrgyz Republic in drafting of the grant proposal for participation in the 3<sup>rd</sup> RAF grant round. It is expected that the Islamic University (Bishkek) representatives will also be involved.

On February 1, Component 1 Coordinator, National Coordinator in the Kyrgyz Republic and the consultant on Regional Training Center on harm reduction promotion (RTC HR) met in Bishkek with representatives of WHO Bureau in the Kyrgyz Republic namely WHO country office head, Mr. Moldakulov O. and STD/HIV/AIDS country programs in the Kyrgyz Republic, Mrs. Karymbaeva S. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss possible cooperation in the field of RTC HR institutionalization, perspectives and development variants of information and resource regional center on harm reduction as well as other activity directions in this field.

On February 6, the RPMU Executive Director met with Zhagorky Kenesh (Kyrgyz Parliament) Speaker, Mr. Madumarov A.K. The agenda of the meeting was: information providing on the CAAP activity; discussion of the joint activity in the field of legislation improvement on HIV/AIDS issue and involvement of the Project-participant countries parliaments representatives; information on events conducting by the Inter-parliament Working Group established in the Project frame in 2007; discussion of the new Inter-

parliament Working Group members from the Kyrgyz Republic; discussion of the joint cooperation in the frame of the events planned by the Project for 2008.

On February 19-21, the Project specialists group (Component 1 coordinator, regional public health specialist, national consultant on RTC HR promotion in the Kyrgyz Republic) as well as President of harm reduction association in the Kyrgyz Republic were on working visit in Vilnius, the Lithuanian Republic.

During three days the specialists got acquaintance with the organizational structure and Eurasian harm reduction network activity, its secretariat and training center activity. Agreement was achieved on close cooperation in the field of trainings arrangements in the frame of harm reduction programs and support of the regional HR resource and information center in the Kyrgyz Republic.

Component 2 Coordinator had a meeting with AFEW representatives. The main goal of the meeting was to get familiar with the new AFEW ACCESS project, that will be implemented in Central Asia and to ensure that there will be no duplications with the grant awarded under RAF.

On February 12-13, Communication coordinator and strategist was on working visit in Bishkek. He participated in the Working group meeting on preparing of regional SPP request for the participation in the 3<sup>rd</sup> RAF grant round. He also had meetings with the Capacity Project information specialist and a number of Kyrgyz journalists.

Project Financial Manager had a meeting with UNDP new liaison officer, Mrs. Zhorabekova K. Mr. Kurbanov S., the UNDP Project Regional Coordinator and Mrs. Dusebaeva M., UNDP Financial Specialist for the Republic of Kazakhstan took part in the meeting. The issues on the UNDP and RPMU communication and reporting improvement were discussed. The issue on working meeting arrangement for all AFA country specialists was risen since these specialists are newly hired, therefore, they have some misunderstanding of the RPMU reporting demands. In course of the meeting UNDP was asked to provide reports for 2007 to eliminate any divergences between RPMU and UNDP.

Procurement specialist was on business trip in Astana, where he took part in the conference on information technologies procurement by the World bank financed projects.

From February 28 to March 2008, CAAP National Coordinator in Kazakhstan was in Moscow where she participated in the meeting of the "Science" program committee of the forthcoming International conference on HIV/AIDS in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The goal of the meeting was the final designing of the conference scientific program.

### **RPMU Juridical, Financial and Procurement Issues**

#### **Financial issues:**

World bank financial management senior specialist, Mr. John Ogallo conducted the monitoring of account and reporting system as well as financial documents for the purpose of proper drawing up. The results of this monitoring will be provided by the report.

Due to contract termination with Mrs. Gapirova D., the Project disbursement specialist, the issue of new employee hiring was discussed. ToR on disbursement specialist hiring was sent to the World bank for its future approval.

#### **Financial reporting:**

The RPMU Financial Manager carried the analysis and restructuring of the components and expenditures due to restructuring of the budget plan in the Annual budget. These changes reflected in the software program. Budget for 2008 was placed into the system. The issue of budget revising for 2007 was discussed with the World bank and the revising was adopted.

Audit:

The issue of audit conducting terms was discussed with the World bank. In particular, the proposal to start the audit in the middle of May was received. In its turn, RPMU has requested to define audit starting terms a month earlier. The request to replenish account for the last quarter of 2007 was sent to the World bank but the financial resources were not received by the special account due to the World bank technical problems. Financial resources transfer is expected to be realized in March.

Procurement Issues:

Procurement specialist's activity was focused on the following:

Preparation of the individual plans, contracts and the RPMU duties and their sending to the World bank for approval;

Preparation of the Project training plan final version and its sending to the World bank for approval;

Opening of offers on MIS software program adaptation;

Evaluation and contract signing with the company on MIS software program adaptation;

Opening of the received bids on SS laboratory equipment supply. Beginning of technical and general evaluation of the proposals;

Selection of International consultant on SES over HIV cases software program design;

Improvement of the CAAP "tenders/bidding" web site section;

ToR revising on the Project/CDC Program Manager hiring. ToR was sent to the World bank for approval.

---

Project site [www.caap.info](http://www.caap.info)