

Report on program and financial monitoring of sub-projects funded by Regional AIDS Fund

Place: Tashkent, Republic of Uzbekistan

Date: April 7-11, 2008

Monitoring of sub-projects funded by RAF within first and second grant rounds conducted on base of RPMU's Memo № 220 of March 18, 2008 during period from April 7 to April 11, 2008. The working group consisted of the Project Executive Director Meimanaliev T.S., KR Country Office specialists (Makhamatov A. – National Coordinator, Kadyrov Z. – RAF Coordinator, Tursaliev B. – Project financial manager, Yuldashev K. – regional M&E specialist, Umarov J. – procurement specialist. The working group visited sub-projects based in Tashkent, Samarqand. Monitoring covered sub-projects of second grant round, which launched in January 2008, and sub-project of first grant round, majority of which have completed their sub-project implementation.

1. Applicant: NGO Rural women support center (1st grant round)

Project name: Raising awareness of rural youth and teachers of Kybray rayon colleges and lyceums on HIV/AIDS prevention.

Address: Tashkent oblast, Kybray rayon, 5a Karamurdsкая street. Contact person: Akramova Nodira Takhirovna, head of sub-project, phone: 187-34-32 (998 71) 162-34-32, (998 71) 63-46-03

M&E results: Grant cod - 338 GR 14 B 13 J 189.

Total amount: of grant is \$ 5000.

Duration: 4 months.

The purpose of this sub-project is to raise awareness of student youth and teachers of Kybray rayon through seminars/trainings on HIV/AIDS issues, prevention and tolerant attitude towards PLWH, increasing professional capacity of NGO employees, volunteers and involvement of wide publicity into process of counteraction against HIV/AIDS spread.

The project aimed at working with this focus group on awareness increase in HIV/AIDS issues and prevention of HIV infection amongst college teachers. It was planned to cover 100 teachers from 7 colleges and 1 lyceum. It was implemented by conducting 4 one-day seminar/trainings in 7 colleges and 2 lyceums; one more lyceum was covered because of high interest in project. 97 teachers were trained, full number of teachers indicated in the beginning was impossible to cover because of examinations. All materials related to training activities: agenda, list of participants, pre and post-training questionnaires to identify level of awareness. In order to raise awareness on HIV/AIDS issues, ways of HIV transmission and prevention of HIV infection eight mini-sessions conducted with quizzes on knowledge received followed by presentation of incentive awards to 2410 college and lyceum students, while number of students planned to be covered was 2400 .

The project implemented in Kybray rayon of Tashkent oblast. The sub-project fulfilled its activities plan without any delays. Final report submitted to national office in a timely manner. National office is located in the same building with Rural women's support center, no rent payment required, there is enough technical equipment available.

The project conducted a round table meeting with involvement of local authorities (khokimiat), law machinery, councilors and representatives of makhalya committee. These parties agreed to support implementation of sub-project proposal. The monitoring group met the project beneficiaries, deputy khokim of Tashkent oblast, Rahimjon Safarovich, who informed about assistance, provided by the khokimiat to sub-project activities implemented amongst law machinery establishments. In addition, meetings held with teachers of Kybray rayon colleges and lyceums, representatives of Navruz, Yolongach ota makhalyas and representatives of rural council, who shared their positive evaluation to the sub-project activities, and underlined that quality of seminars conducted, accessibility of IEM to beneficiaries meet requirements and they expressed their wish to continue initiations started by this project. No specific criticism revealed by monitoring and the project fulfilled its objectives.

2. Applicant:

Republican AIDS Center under the Ministry of healthcare of RUz

Project name: (1st GR RAF) Perfection of national monitoring and evaluation programs on HIV/AIDS through establishing a multisectoral Planning, analysis, response and coordination unit (PARC)

Address: 12, Farkhadskaya str., Tashkent, phone 998-71-276-99-26

Contacts: Giyasova G. M., head of sub-project

M&E results: Grant code: № 326-GR-14-B-19-J-4-JAS-6-YL-1-L

Total amount of grant is \$19960. Duration is 6 months.

PARC – 2 second grant round, total amount is 50 000\$

The project has enough resources to fulfill its objectives, both in terms of human resources, hired on a contractual base and in terms of office space as well equipped with all required technical facilities to hold round table meetings, counselling, and talks. Accounting-reporting documentation is held in accordance with donor requirements.

While implementation of PARC-1 International expert Larisa Bashmakova and local lawyer were invited to develop general procedures for PARC functioning. The experts with involvement of interested partners (UNAIDS, Central Asian AIDS Control Project, CAPACITY Project, etc.) prepared and proposed for consideration of CCC the following documents: Amendment to Provisions on PARC unit; Protocol on expectancies between PARC unit and partners; Terms of references for staff members; Work plan for upcoming period.

According to objective on PARC's technical capacity strengthening, the rooms, provided by Republican AIDS Center, repaired, proper furniture and software purchased.

By start-up of the project, the PARC-2 unit staffed with specialists as follows:

1. Project manager
2. Coordinator
3. Monitoring and evaluation specialist
4. financial monitoring specialist
5. Informational exchange specialist
6. Public relations specialist
7. IT-specialist

The project goal is to perfect national monitoring and evaluation programs on HIV/AIDS through establishing a multisectoral Planning, analysis, response and coordination unit (PARC).

Republican AIDS Center, Central Asian AIDS Control Project and CAPACITY Project provide technical assistance to PARC.

In connection with development of website (www.ccmparc.uz) domain name and hosting purchased, the website is planned to launch in April-May 2008 on Russian, Uzbek and English languages.

13 Protocols on expectancies ratified between the PARC unit and interested partners, which identified the unit as a part of national coordination mechanism. Partners from eight ministries determined to gather and submit data flows to CCC ad partners.

Specialists of the PARC unit actively participated in development of Strategic Program on counteraction to HIV-infection spread in Republic of Uzbekistan for 2007-2011 in part of monitoring and evaluation and coordination of partners' activities along with issues on the unit development.

Jointly with Republican AIDS Center and by agreement with interested organizations and CCC the PARC unit developed a «Manual on monitoring and evaluation of Strategic Program on counteraction to HIV-infection spread in Republic of Uzbekistan for 2007-2011»

Besides, the PARC unit specialists plan to train M&E specialists from the state establishments on work methodology, after which to start data collection and analysis according to available indicators.

On February 1-2, 2008 trainings held for specialists of Kara kalpak Republican, oblast and Tashkent city AIDS Centers. Participants acquired comprehensive knowledge about the M&E Manual, methodology of using indicators to gather and analyze data. Wishes and opinions of seminar participants to be taken into account while further collection of basic data. Two specialists from each region participated in the seminar, and trainers and specialists from republican AIDS Centers, PARC, and Global Fund on HIV/AIDS.

Significant direction of the PARC sub-project was development of a single informational exchange system. This direction is conditioned by need to develop a toolkit for collection and analysis of statistical data on results of partners' activities in framework of state programs on HIV counteraction in Republic of Uzbekistan.

It is worth to underline that the project achieved its goals and objectives while evaluating the PARC sub-project. Ratification of Protocol on expectancies between PARC CCC and interested partners identified function of the PARC unit as an essential tool for monitoring and evaluation, coordination and informational exchange amongst all partner organizations (state and international) within Strategic program of \republic of Uzbekistan on counteraction to HIV-infection spread.

Recommendations:

1. To prepare a consolidated country report on activities conducted in field of HIV-infection counteraction
2. To identify objectives upcoming in he next year.

3. Applicant: NGO Ishonch va Khayot (2 grant round)

Project name: Providing non-medical care and support to HIV-positive children and their family members

Address: apart 4, build 2, Nakkoshlik, Tashkent, Uzbekistan 700135

Contacts: Usmanova Tursunoi, Executive Director, phone: +(99897) 3382260

M&E results: Grant code 444R24S33WB

Total amount of grant is \$ 20000.

Duration: 9 months.

Project is aimed at the following:

- Implementation of multidisciplinary approach in providing help to HIV-positive children
- Ensuring complexity and decentralization of providing medical and psychosocial assistance.
- Providing palliative help to children, home-based patronage, preparing for ARVT receive, providing social accompany services of medical-prophylactic units, help while hospitalization, legalization of pension and allowances.
- Psychological counseling to family members of HIV-positive children, holding self-help groups for family members of HIV-positive children, distribution of food-kits to HIV-positive children and their family members.

The office is located in 3-room building; one room is designed for HIV-infected children, equipped with all required equipment necessary for stay of children. Second room is designed for counseling, holding talks and trainings; the third room is under get-up. The sub-project works in partnership with National Research Institute of virology, National Research Institute of pediatrics and Republican AIDS Center. Multidisciplinary team consists of pediatrician, nurse, social worker. 70 HIV-infected children covered up to now, palliative care services provided, food-kits distributed. There is a helpline on treatment, care and support while HIV/AIDS functioning in the office. The project documentation includes client

registration journal and journal on services provided, and journal on activities conducted.

NTEC proposed not to purchase a personal computer while approval of the sub-project proposal. It weakens development of clients' database, as a project objective, noted the project manager Usmanova Tursunoi.

Receiving a professional legal counseling by the project clients is also problematic. Status of social worker and outreach-worker is not secured legally. It is needed to form up a legal base for social workers, it is recommended to raise issue of providing trainings for professionals under TashGU, the Ministry of social labor enlists this profession in its the professions list but there is a need revise a curriculum of training this specialist considering requirements of current situation. The project manager expressed her request for international consultant to revise the training curriculums.

In general, the project implemented in accordance with its calendar plan of activities.

Recommendations:

1. To start registration of non-medical services in a hard (paper) format and holding a database of project clients.

4. Project «High-level coverage of intravenous drug users (IDU) and commercial sex workers (SW) with main package of services on HIV prevention on 7 sites of Central Asia»

Grant recipient: John Snow Research and Training Institute Inc.
Regional Director JSI- David Housner

Countries/regions, the project is implemented by
Public Foundation «MedSocInform », Almaty, Kazakhstan
Almaty City AIDS Center, Almaty, Kazakhstan
Public Foundation «Jardem», Akcy, Kazakhstan
Public Foundation «Podruga», Osh, Kyrgyzstan
Public Foundation «Parents against drugs», Karasuu, Kyrgyzstan
Soghd oblast AIDS Center, Khudjand, Tajikistan
Samarkand oblast AIDS Center, Urgut rayon, Uzbekistan

Project has the following goals:

Expanding package of HIV-prevention services;
Expanding coverage of SW and IDU by preventive measures;
Improving access of vulnerable groups to preventive activities;
Reducing stigmatization and discrimination of drug-users and commercial sex workers by law machinery;
More intensive involvement of state and non-state structures, medical organizations into prevention work with vulnerable groups;

Strengthening capacity and thorough involvement of NGOs into preventive activities amongst IDU and SW;
Creation of new or promotion of existing syringe exchange units for IDU;
Creation of center/club to organize and hold prevention-related activities, and to provide counseling services, to conduct self and mutual help groups;
Increasing awareness and skills on HIV-related prevention amongst vulnerable groups, employees and specialists of medical establishments;
Developing system of implementation of joint preventive activities, single accounting, and client assigning system;
Ensuring anonymous and available services on prevention, diagnostics and treatment of STD for SW;
Informing IDU and SW about services available for them at state establishments;
Increasing number of volunteers (outreach workers) to conduct preventive work amongst vulnerable groups;
Developing mechanism of efficient monitoring and evaluation system for preventive activities conducted.

Introduction

Monitoring of TUMAR project implemented in 7 pilot model sites. In addition, Coordinator of RAF met with JSI management to discuss progress of project implementation. Monitoring accomplished during a period from March to April. Implementation on field was examined in all four Central Asian countries Kazakhstan (Almaty AIDS Center), Uzbekistan (Samarkand AIDS Center), Kyrgyzstan «Podruga» and Tajikistan (interview with employees of CAPACITY project in terms of project implementation in 2 sites in Khudjand and Kurgan-Tyube)

General information about project development and implementation in chronological order.

Regional JSI office organized and held a Regional seminar for key Project participants, October 22-24, 2007, Almaty, Kazakhstan. This seminar had the following objectives: a) Presentation of the Project main components; b) Discussion of program and financial-administrative issues; c) Discussion of presumable difficulties in Project implementation and possible ways-out; d) Consideration of accounting-reporting documentation, including monitoring and evaluation. At the end of seminar, during a competition session the Project name and logo were developed. The project acquired a name Tumar.

In October-November 2007, the Project launched its implementation on the model sites. Six model sites (except Almaty AIDS Center, Kazakhstan) hired necessary staff and purchased office equipment for offices and Communication Centers (CC). Workshop meetings with national and local partners held in all sites, agreements of collaboration signed with purpose to ensure smooth project implementation. Start-up of the Project activities in Aksu, Kazakhstan, covered in mass media (Appendix

3). Three communication centers formed up within the Project: in Kazakhstan (Aksu), Kyrgyzstan (Karasu) and Tajikistan (Kurgan-Tyube). City mayor visited the opening ceremony of CC in Aksu (Kazakhstan). The ceremony was transmitted on a local television.

Public Foundation “MedSocInform” developed a database software for Tumar project (<http://www.tumarproject.info>). The “MedSocInform” employees visited each model site with purpose to hold trainings on filling in and utilization of the Project database. All model sites were prepared to hold initial survey. However, because of regular Sentinel surveillance on some of the sites (SS), it was decided to conduct initial survey on sites which are not covered by sentinel surveillance (Kurgan Tyube, Tajikistan; Karasu, Kyrgyzstan; Chkalovsk and Karaikum (Khudjand), Tajikistan. On sites, where SS is available, determination of initial situation and analysis of the Project results will base upon SS data.

In February 2008, the NGO “MedSocInform” held a regional seminar for external M&E specialists. Representatives of all four countries participated in the seminar. During February-March, experts made monitoring visits and submitted their recommendations on improvement of project’s activities on each model site.

Problems revealed and recommendations on their elimination

Because of legislation on regulation of money flows coming from outside existing in Uzbekistan, AIDS Center of Samarkand oblast (Uzbekistan) did not have access to Project’s financial resources, and in this regard the Project’s start-up was delayed. Taking into account the long delay in project implementation, the Project Executive Director and RAF Coordinator applied to Ministry of healthcare of RUz to help while monitoring visits to RUz on April 10, 2008. Taking into account that no results followed from this request in course of May, it was decided to solve this issue with regional management of JSI, which acts as an umbrella organization both in fiducial and technical terms as well.

On the meeting with JSI-Tumar management that took place on June 23, 2008, it was decided to return 25000 USD, transferred to Samarkand AIDS Center’s account with subsequent administration of financial resources by Regional Office. RPMU will fulfill control after implementation of obligations and agreements achieved on the meeting of June 23.

Despite the delays with funding, Samarkand AIDS Center implements objectives identified in the project framework. Distribution of syringes and condoms held thanks to the Global Fund resources.

Once again, the problem was revealed in Almaty AIDS Center, where the project implementation started with delay. High overload of employees with their main functions caused the delay. In order to operationalize this site’s activities it was recommended to hire a project coordinator on a part-time base.

Meeting at UNDP

April 9, 2008

The meeting participants: Rustam Mamadjanov (Focal manager), Kamola Mirzoeva (AFA) and Bakyt Tursaliev (FM). Issues of project reporting raised on the meeting.

Documentations and reporting. Documentation and reports available at national office were reviewed. Expense supporting documents are available, but needs to be systemized and normalized in terms of filing in order to easy search of requested information. It is recommended to start payments register (on base of RDP) for a month and to prepare a consolidated data by expense categories and date of request submission. Agreement was achieved that RDP registers will be made for all period passed.

Fixed assets. Requirement on submission of reports on fixed assets purchased in 2007 was not completely prepared, but on assets purchased for national office only. This report requested to be completed and submitted no later than 25.04.08. Inventory of equipment purchased for national office and regional training center is held. Equipment meant for the center stored at AIDS Center in a packed condition. The office equipment serialized with inventory number and accessible. Remark made on telephonic station, it did not comply with modification indicated in acceptance documents. It is requested to reveal a reason jointly with UNDP and submit an explanation note.

Reporting issues on grant recipients.

Financial reporting of GR. Monitoring of reporting procedures in NGO displayed many shortages in keeping reports; both GR and UNDP as well do not have single understanding of requirements and reporting. Main weakness is that NGPO does not have any supporting documents to expenses made and no records made in account books of GR. It seems that the GR does not assume any responsibility for reporting on SPP and that it is a full competence of AFA only. According to UNDP normative documents and specifics of its work in the country, UNDP acts as a grant recipient and commences all contracts with leadership of organization receiving a grant. For instance, supporting documents (invoices or deeds on services fulfilled) do not have verification of GR involvement into acceptance of goods and services within the grant, and AFA acts as a transferring person for GR. Such a reporting approach makes a huge load to AFA (even if they were 2 people) and may lead to efficiency problems in the future (preconditions already formed up). That is why is needed to shift responsibilities from AFA to GR with clear identification of functions and responsibilities for reporting on SPP.

Hiring of second AFA. Hiring of additional two AFA specialists was discussed. The WB approved hiring of one additional specialist, which is enough grounded to ensure implementation of procedures established and work between UNDP and GR. Hiring of one assistant for AFA caused by large number of small grants and need in logistics on grants and project activities of Component 1. Nevertheless, hiring of second assistant for AFA is unsuitable because post of responsibility for reports submission cannot be completely displaced to UNDP. Although, discussion was made on hiring of two specialists, it became reasonable to hire only one

specialist and a part-time accountant and to create proper conditions to keep reporting of SPP within the organizations.

Reporting forms. Since UNDP has specifics in working with small grants there is a need to change standard reporting forms required for GR. The FM should provide new reporting forms for GR and UNDP until 20.04.08 for consideration and further approval (all recommendations made by UNDP in this regard taken into account). No regular reporting was submitted by GR while the first grant round because of non compliance between UNDP and RPMU requirements. Since the first grant round's grants completed, it is requested to submit final financial reports by GR together with UNDP.

Taxability within the project. The UNDP representatives declared that all payments within the project are released taxes and no tax payment was made from the project in 2007.

Financial monitoring of NGO “Rural women’s support Center”

On April 7, 2008, financial manager of RPMU, RAF Coordinator and National Coordinator in RUZ made a monitoring visit to the grant recipient in terms of financial reporting, accounting and recording transactions for activities held within the project. The random check of availability of supporting documentations and compliance of reports to RAF requirements was made. In general, evaluation of financial management is satisfactory.

- Personnel. The monitoring group met with a manager of organization (accountant was not on place). Organization follows the accounting procedures for NGOs effective in the country.
- Funding. The grant considered to be closed at the moment. The receipt of funds implemented through UNDP. Funds spent, mainly, for trainings and workshops. No equipment purchased.
- Documentation. The framework agreements and their appendixes, including the budget, are filed. The project documentation kept in a separate folder and includes only reports and payments requests directed to UNDP. Other files like bank, cash, advance reports, memos and agreements were not filed. The documents from different files were crosschecked and no contradictions revealed. Particularly, direct seminar costs checked out, sheets on distribution of inventory holdings, advance reports and expense documents available.
- Accounting. Bookkeeping was not hold in NGO's record books, initial documents filed only in UNDP books. Check of any records was not possible due to absence of the accountant during a visit
- Reporting. Reports submitted to UNDP for cash receipt and payment to third parties checked up. All the reports according to UNDP forms available and filed in a separate folder. It was requested to prepare a final detailed activity

report on collation of actual costs against budget data within the framework agreement, and it was agreed to submit it in a one week time.

Financial monitoring of grant recipient, NGO Ael (Samarkand)

On April 8, 2008, made a monitoring visit to the grant recipient in terms of financial reporting, accounting and recording transactions for activities held within the project. The random check of availability of supporting documentations and compliance of reports to RAF requirements was made. In general, evaluation of financial management is poor.

- **Personnel.** The monitoring group met with a manager and accountant of organization. Organization follows the accounting procedures for NGOs effective in the country, but in terms of the RAF grant these rules were not followed. Despite recommendations during repeated trainings, the Organization did not develop simple instructions on internal policies to regulate the project management, with job descriptions of staff members involved into the project, which contributed to weakened management and reporting within the grant.
- **Funding.** The grant is under closure right now. The receipt of funds implemented through UNDP directly to service and goods providers. Besides, computer equipment was purchased through UNDP in 2007.
- **Documentation.** The framework agreements and additional appendixes including a budget are filed in a separate folder. Documentation on expenses is in different places and not systemized, there was no bookkeeping on bank, cash, advance reports, memos and agreements, which brought to non transparency and consolidation of data. Documentations from various folders checked up and shortage of supporting documents revealed (for instance, some transactions do not have time-sheets and distribution sheets, not all contracts have proper selection documents and job descriptions of consultants hired). In particular, requests for payment submitted to UNDP checked up and partial absence of disburse documents and memos or expense reports.
- **Accounting.** Accounting of financial transactions is not available, registers or books on basic documents are not in place. The reason, why the accounting was not properly held, was explained that UNDP is to do the whole accounting and contracting, and NGO provides its services as a group of individuals. NGO does not receive any cash except salary payments. The documents at UNDP were also checked up in terms of compliance and availability of proper documentations. According to UNDP rules, there are significant disagreements and defects revealed.

- Reporting. As a result of grant accounting did not exist in the organization, financial reporting in accordance with RAF forms was not available both at organization and UNDP as well. The requests and reports submitted to UNDP were checked up but they were unit grant payments and do not provide a complete statement on disbursement for a concrete period. All the requests are available and comply with UNDP forms and filed in separate folders. It was requested to prepare a final detailed activity report on collation of actual costs against budget data within the framework agreement, and it was agreed to submit it in a one week time.
- Equipment and materials. The stationery purchased for workshops. Procurement and writing off are on place. Computer equipment was purchased and passed from UNDP according to acceptance report. The equipment is available but was not recorded properly. It is requested to conduct all the procedures of recording the equipment into the balance and including in account books and submit documentation to national coordinator.
- Audit. The RPMU was informed that organization goes through audit conducted by fiscal entities on a regular base, but no audit statements were represented

Financial monitoring of grant-recipient – Public AIDS Center of Samarkand (within the larger JSI grant)

On April 8, 2008, made a monitoring visit to the grant recipient in terms of financial reporting, accounting and recording transactions for activities held within the project. The random check of availability of supporting documentations and compliance of reports to RAF requirements was made.

Evaluation of financial management did not take place due to absence of financial transaction within grant.

- Personnel. The monitoring group met with a manager and accountant of organization. Organization follows the accounting procedures for NGOs effective in the country. Although, the organization has its own internal regulations norms, it was requested to develop simple instructions on internal policies to regulate the project management, with job descriptions of staff members involved into the project to ensure effective grant management.
- Funding. The grant is facing problems with receiving a first tranche and is at solution stage. The receipt of funds and withdrawal is regulated by state controlling bodies in terms of assistance reasonability. The RAF's expenses were not covered by other donors or partners.
- Documentation. The framework agreements and additional appendixes including a budget are filed in a separate folder. Since tranche is not received yet, no payments made, but expenses (staff salaries for 5 months) took place on base of the management decision. The activities in partnership

with other organizations foreseen in the proposal been conducted, but disbursement documentation due to be submitted to RAF not prepared and not submitted. It is requested to prepare a full report on bills from the RAF beginning from its start-up (01/11/07), otherwise, there are no verifications for expenses (accountant says that no payroll accounting took place in order to avoid tax penalty fees, but once money transferred all proper payroll for previous period will be made). Signed contracts with consultants checked up and job descriptions are in place.

- Accounting. As the management of organizations states accounting of financial transactions will be made on base of requirements for state entities which received a grant. Experience requested for financial management of grants is available, because they have previous experience of getting assistance from other donors.
- Reporting. Forms of financial reporting developed by JSI based in Almaty and available at organization. So far, no reports submitted to Almaty. It is requested to prepare a report for previous period and agreed with JSI to submit it in a one week time.

In addition, visit was made to national office of JSI in Tashkent, but unfortunately, financial staff was out of office while their visit. The problem of impossibility to receive funds coming from Almaty, discussed with Director of CAPACITY representative in Tashkent.