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PRESS RELEASE

IMPLEMENTING SOCIAL MARKETING IN TAJIKISTAN WITHIN USAID PROJECT "I KNOW!"

On February 6, 2009 at the project "I know!" held a coordination meeting for representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations, international donors and the pharmaceutical network. In view of the second year of the project implementation this meeting will facilitate development in cooperation with partners the social marketing strategy which will ensure wide access of the population to modern quality contraceptives.

The project "I know!" is financed by the United States Agency on International Development (USAID). Starting from October 2007 the project provides support to local NGOs in achieving 60% coverage of women of reproductive age with reproductive health and family planning services in Dushanbe, and districts of Rudaki, Kulob, Jomi and districts of Rumi and Bokhtar in Kurgan-Tube area.

The project closely collaborates with the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Tajikistan, city and provincial health departments, reproductive health centers, hukumats, women's organizations and associations, private medical facilities and pharmaceutical institutions, pharmaceutical manufacturers as well as public organizations "Ghamkhori", "Nakukor" and "Gender and Development".

During the first year of implementation, in order to ensure sustainable access to modern contraceptives in Tajikistan, "I know!", with the support of the Center for State Control of Pharmaceutical and Medical Activity of Republic of Tajikistan and the Ministry of Health registered the oral contraceptive "Oralcon" and the intrauterine device "Copper T-ENOVA 380 A" for sale in Tajikistan. Both products are manufactured by FAMY CARE, an Indian pharmaceutical company. USAID provided for the humanitarian delivery of 4,000 ampoules of the Depo-Provera injections. These were then distributed through reproductive health centers in "I know!" target areas.

To increase understanding of contraceptive options and help families to use them properly, "I know!" developed education modules for the staffs of educational NGOs in target areas. In total, 50 workers from the project's partnering NGOs – Nakukor, Gender & Development, and Ghamkhori – were trained by PSI staff on improved training methods for family planning. "I know!" also developed education modules for health workers. With support from the Ministry of Health, province and city health departments, 67 health providers representing the nursing staffs of medical facilities from Dushanbe and the Rudaki, Kulob and Rumi districts were trained on family planning consultation methods. A total of 27,166 women of reproductive age were informed on reproductive health issues and family planning.

In order to improve quality of the family planning services it is planned with support from the Ministry of Health to train another 206 pharmacists, 110 medical staff and cover around 70 000 women of reproductive age with information-education component on reproductive health and family planning.

The USAID "I know!" project is one of the many assistance projects implemented in Tajikistan by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on behalf of the American people. Since 1993 the American people through USAID have provided more than \$300 million in assistance programs that support economic growth, democratic institutions, health care, and the education system of Tajikistan.

For more information please refer to Mrs. Shodiya Mirhaidarova, Country Program Coordinator of "I know!" project.
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