



USAID Newsletter

July-August 2012

Regional



USAID Youth Regional Expertise Initiative Group conducts mini event for youth in Kurgan-Tube, Tajikistan. In celebration of International Youth Day, USAID/CAR employees from across Central Asia assisted the leading NGO "Fidokor" to conduct a mini-workshop for youth in Kurgan-Tube, Tajikistan. Twenty young people gained knowledge in how to start a professional career, how to get a grant for an NGO, and how to write a good essay.

Photo: youth during icebreaker exercises

USAID Fighting HIV in Tajikistan and Around the World. The XIX International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2012) took place in Washington, D.C., from July 22 to 27, 2012. Representatives from USAID programs in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan were present at the conference. AIDS 2012 brought together scientists, health professionals, policy makers, and people living with and affected by HIV to assess recent progress and identify next steps in the global response to AIDS. The International AIDS Conference is the world's largest meeting dedicated to a single health issue and is supported by a broad range of government and private-sector donors around the globe. For the first time in 22 years, this year's meeting was held in the U.S. More than 25,000 participants from nearly every country in the world participated in AIDS 2012, including 2,500 members of the media. The conference focused on three issues: science, community involvement, and leadership and accountability. Recent scientific advances in HIV treatment and biomedical prevention, coupled with continued progress in developing countries, have led to renewed hope and optimism across the globe. Since the discovery of AIDS over 30 years ago, the U.S. has played a leading role in HIV science and in translating scientific progress into lifesaving prevention, care, and treatment programs in communities across the country and the world. The United States' AIDS research portfolio represents the largest and most significant public investment in AIDS research in the world.

Kazakhstan



Kazakhstani IT Professionals Visit Cisco. A delegation of Kazakhstani information technology (IT) professionals recently came to the U.S. as part of the VEGA Kazakhstan Business Connections project being implemented by the International Executive Service Corps. The project seeks to expand small- and medium-sized enterprises in Kazakhstan and increase trade between Kazakhstan and the U.S. The delegation stopped in Washington DC, Boston, Houston, and Las Vegas. The participants, all from small and medium enterprises, were introduced to American businesses and given the opportunity to set up joint ventures, acquire new technology, and conduct trade. The Kazakhstan Business Connections project draws upon the Program for Economic

Development formed between USAID and the government of Kazakhstan: *Photo: The participants of the Kazakhstan Business Connections IT business development tour observe a demo at Cisco's Customer Briefing Center in Herndon, Virginia – credit: Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance*



U.S. High-level Visit to Kazakhstan. On August 15, 2012, over 20 regional trade leaders met with the U.S. State Department's Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asia Robert Blake. In the meeting, participants shared their experiences organizing trade partnerships throughout Central Asia, including with Afghanistan and Pakistan. Representatives from logistics, pharmaceutical, and humanitarian supply companies discussed current barriers to cross-border trade. The Chief of Party of our Regional Economic Cooperation project shared his ideas for how to expand trade opportunities for entrepreneurs outside the former Soviet republics. *Photo: Assistant Secretary Blake greets the Chief of Party and Communications Advisor for the USAID Regional Economic Cooperation project.*



Increasing Local Capacity for Perinatal Care. The Quality Health Care Project and the Kyzylorda Oblast Health Department are collaborating to improve the quality of health care services for pregnant women, new mothers, and newborns. The partners are working together to introduce World Health Organization perinatal care guidelines to health care providers throughout the oblast, and results have been impressive. Four local newspapers shared program results and highlighted the Quality Health Care Project and its contributions to these positive changes. *Photo: Course participants work together to develop an action*

plan (QHCP)



New Health Technology Helps Save Lives. USAID has donated four Xpert testing machines for the rapid diagnosis of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR TB) in Kazakhstan. United States Ambassador Kenneth Fairfax joined national health care leaders to celebrate the introduction of state-of-the-art technology in Kazakhstan. This machine allows for a diagnosis of MDR TB within a couple hours as opposed to the few weeks diagnosis currently takes. We are the first donor to bring these machines to Kazakhstan. The National TB Center received a machine, and they will oversee the implementation of Xpert diagnostics in other clinics in Kazakhstan.

Photo: TB Specialist describes working characteristics of Xpert machine



Introduction of Research Methods in the Internet Era. The Center for Life Sciences at Nazarbayev University and the University of Pittsburgh, with the support of USAID, held a workshop titled "Introduction to Research Methods in the Era of the Internet," focusing on research design and statistical methodology in public health and medicine. The aim of the workshop was to increase scientific productivity and encourage scientific networking in countries of Central Asia. Some of the topics covered included research methods, introduction to epidemiology, basic biostatistics, and how to publish your work. Participants learned about the new

journal, Central Asian Journal of Global Health, where they can submit their articles. Participants included young and promising researchers, scientists, and doctoral students from Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries.

Tajikistan

Cross-Border Vocational Education for Youth. USAID and the University of Central Asia's School of Professional and Continuing Education honored graduates at the graduation ceremony in Khorugh, Tajikistan. As part of the USAID Tajikistan Cross-Border Vocational Education program, 21 Afghan students received graduation certificates after completing their studies. These students studied English, Information Technology, Accounting, and Bookkeeping/Cashier procedures. The newly designed curriculum, learning materials, and courses were prepared in numerous languages including Dari and Tajik. *Photo: school graduates.*



USAID Celebrates Graduation of First Interns from Pilot Family Medicine Project.

USAID Quality Health Care Project presented diplomas to medical interns who recently completed their one-year internships in preparation for careers as family doctors throughout Tajikistan. The ceremony took place at the Post Graduate Medical Institute Family Medicine Clinic in Dushanbe's Health Center #1. Representatives from USAID, the USAID Quality Health Care Project, the Tajik Postgraduate Medical Institute, the Ministry of Health Department on Medical Education, and international donor partners gathered to celebrate the occasion. After 165 doctors were trained in family medicine with the assistance of USAID, 12 were selected to take part in a pilot internship program through the USAID Quality Health Care Project. These interns received intensive training at the Tajik Postgraduate Medical Institute, which is considered the best clinical training center in Central Asia. The interns earned the highest scores of all of this year's interns on their graduation exams and have expressed their willingness to continue their medical education as part of a further two-year internship program.

Photo: medical interns.



Youth Learn New Skills at Summer Camp. Forty-five participants from target regions of the Zarafshon Valley, Rasht Valley and Badakhshon gathered in Romit for a six-day summer camp from July 6-11 to meet their peers from other parts of the country and advance their civic responsibility and leadership skills. USAID is fostering youth leadership in Tajikistan through a series of summer camps organized by Counterpart International in the framework of the Young Leaders Program. Summer camps promote exchanges and relationship building among youth from various parts of the country, strengthening their communication, leadership and civic

responsibility skills and allowing youth the opportunity to meet government officials and other experts in youth issues. *Photo: happy youth at camp.*

Turkmenistan

USAID renews public-private partnership with Chevron Nebitgaz. In July, USAID extended its long-running partnership with Chevron in Turkmenistan, marking the fourth year of cooperation on education, agriculture and economic growth programs. Since 2009, Chevron provided over \$4 million for USAID programs in Turkmenistan. Over the last two years, this corporate funding has represented approximately 15% of USAID's total country budget. Cooperation with corporate donors such as Chevron has allowed USAID to continue programs that would have otherwise been eliminated due to budget cuts and to amplify the development impact of other programs with enhanced financial support.



International Exhibition and Scientific conference. USAID was invited to participate in the July 19-21 conference called "Achievements of Health Care System in Turkmenistan" organized by the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry of Turkmenistan. At the request of the Ministry of Health, USAID prepared three presentations on fighting HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. The first presentation described USAID's approach in the struggle against HIV/AIDS in Central Asia. The remaining two presentations gave practitioners a glimpse of breakthroughs in TB prevention and treatment and the epidemiological situation with TB in the world. *Photo: USAID Turkmenistan Country Manager Benjamin*

Chapman meets a pharmaceutical vendor on the exhibition floor.



USAID and the Academy of Sciences Hold International e-Governance Best Practices Presentation. USAID held a presentation on "International Practice in the Management of Electronic Documents" in cooperation with the Academy of Sciences of Turkmenistan. Representatives from several Turkmenistan Government institutions, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Communication, the Ministry of Economy and Development, and the Ministry of Finance participated in the seminar. International experts and Turkmen government officials discussed best practices in e-

Governance in Estonia, Russia, the United States and other countries. Participants had a chance to analyze legislative components of building e-Governance systems, issues in governmental database management, and other countries' experiences in managing e-Taxation and e-Health systems. The presentation underlined the importance of strengthening government institutions through the use of modern technologies in civil service.

Photo: U.S. Ambassador Robert E. Patterson (at left) opens the seminar with a greeting message to Turkmen civil servants.

Uzbekistan



Coordinating Care to Make a Difference in the Fight against TB. Every week, the top physicians and nurses from the Samarkand hospital, outpatient clinics, and TB center meet to strategize about stopping the spread of TB. Dr. Buranova from a rural health clinic, leads a team of 50 nurses whose work includes going from home to home looking for people with symptoms of TB. The chief TB dispensary physician, Dr. Mukaddas Shukurova, shared her experience coordinating patient follow-up with this program. "We are training communities that TB is curable. If someone has TB, they don't need to hide their status from their neighbors and families.

When we first started working in the community, people had a lot of questions and were not informed about TB. Now, if we have a health fair, over 100 people show up eager to get more information or to take a TB test." The health care teams of Samarkand are reaching out to migrants and their families to make sure they access care when they are home. School children and mothers are being trained to identify the symptoms of TB. *Photo: community health nurses are reaching out to stop TB.*



World Day against Drug Abuse. As part of its TB prevention efforts among people who inject drugs and people living with HIV, the USAID Dialogue on HIV and TB project observed World Day against Drug Abuse from August 2-4, 2012. The project conducted a three-day event at the Tashkent City AIDS Center. Physicians from National and City AIDS Centers and the City TB Dispensary provided a comprehensive package of medical services including X-ray examination, voluntary counseling and testing (VCT), and consultations on HIV and TB related issues. More than 140 people who inject drugs or people living with HIV took advantage of the voluntary and confidential services with the assistance of the project

outreach workers. *Photo: participants waiting for a TB screening at a mobile clinic (Dialogue Project).*

For more information about USAID in Central Asia go to:

Website: <http://centralasia.usaid.gov>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/USAID.Central.Asian.Republics>

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/USAIDCentralAsianRep>

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Twitter: <https://twitter.com/#!/USAIDCtrAsia>

Or, contact Michelle Blau, Development Outreach and Communications Specialist at: mblau@usaid.gov
