

World Vision Russian Federation
Healthy Mothers for Healthy Children

Final Program Report
(May 1st, 2010 – November 30, 2011)

Cooperative Agreement # 118-A-00-10-00054-00



Program Title:	Healthy Mothers for Healthy Children
Program Sites:	Republics of Ingushetia (all four districts) and Dagestan (Khasavyurtovsky and Karabudakhkentsky Districts)
Program Reporting Period:	May 1 st , 2010 – November 30, 2011
Report Date:	February 24, 2012
Person Preparing the Report:	Irina Shmakova, SPO, WVRF

Table of contents

1. Executive Summary.....	2
2. Program Description.....	2
3. Overview of Program Implementation.....	3
4. Achievements at a Glance.....	10
5. Challenges and Actions Taken to Address Them.....	10
6. Program Sustainability.....	11
7. Lessons Learnt and Conclusions.....	11

Annexes:

Annex 1- Annual Work Plan: Planned and Actual Indicators, FY 2011, FY 2012

Acronyms

ANC	Antenatal Care
CBO	Community-based Organization
FP	Family Planning
HMHC	Healthy Mothers for Healthy Children
MOH	Ministry of Health
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PHT	Prevention Health Team
RH	Reproductive Health
STI	Sexually-transmitted Infections
TOT	Training of Trainers
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WRA	Women of Reproductive Age
WV	World Vision
WVRF	World Vision Russian Federation

1. Executive Summary

Maternal and infant mortality rates in the North Caucasus are three times higher than in the rest of the Russian Federation. According to the Ministries of Health of Ingushetia and Dagestan, the infant mortality rate in 2008 reached 15.2 per 1,000 births in Ingushetia and 16 in Dagestan respectively. This is caused by inadequate primary health care and low level of competence among local level practitioners, coupled with ongoing political and socio-economic instability in the region. Poor reproductive health of women and men, high rates of anemia in pregnancy, and low uptake of family planning are major factors in pregnancy, birth and neonatal outcomes.

In response to this situation, and with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), World Vision (WV) launched a two-year program, entitled "Healthy Mothers for Healthy Children (HMHC)." The program, aimed at helping to improve maternal, newborn and infant health in the two republics of the North Caucasus, Ingushetia and Dagestan, began on May 1st, 2010 and was originally due to finish on April 30, 2012. The program focused on several key areas such as safe motherhood, newborn and infant care, and reproductive health and family planning. Results were to be achieved through raising community awareness of prevention of maternal, newborn and infant illnesses, improving community-based response, and improving the quality of services through capacity-building of first level health providers, building on current and recent health and education programs implemented by World Vision Russian Federation (WVRF) in the region. Ministries of Health (MOH) of Ingushetia and Dagestan provided their support for WV's HMHC program and closely collaborated in the implementation of several activities.

During the program implementation, WV trained thousands of women in antenatal care and provided them with information about maternal health and essential newborn care; trained and mobilized mass media and community groups to increase community awareness on the impact of anemia on pregnancy and birth outcomes; increased capacity and updated skills of health providers in the Lamaze method and quality of antenatal, delivery and post-partum services; equipped health facilities working on maternal and child health with pediatric and Lamaze equipments and supplies.

However, WV's initial program successes were overtaken by increasing operating challenges that had significantly limited the impact of World Vision's work on the lives of vulnerable people in Ingushetia and the neighboring republics. WVRF made several attempts to establish open lines of communication with the Ingush government to clarify the situation, but these attempts were not reciprocated. As World Vision did not foresee an end to these challenges in the near future, the decision was made, in consultation with the senior management team of World Vision's programs in Russia, to end its operations in the North Caucasus region and close its office in Nazran, Ingushetia by the end of December 2011. In light of these circumstances a decision was made, in consultation with USAID, to terminate the program by the end of November 2011.

This final report therefore provides an overview of activities carried out from May 1st, 2010 to November 30, 2011, summarizes main achievements and analyses challenges faced during the program implementation period.

2. Program Description

Program goal:

The overall goal of the program was to contribute to the improvement of maternal, newborn and infant health in the republics of Ingushetia and Dagestan.

Program Objectives and Results:

The main objectives and results of the program were:

Objective 1: Improved Maternal Health: Women and health providers have improved knowledge and practice in prevention of the main causes of morbidity and mortality during pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, delivery and post-partum.

Objective 2: Improved Care of New Born and Infants: Mothers and health providers have improved knowledge and practice of health and nutrition care and support for newborn and infants.

Objective 3: Improved Reproductive Health and Family Planning: Women and men of reproductive age and health providers have improved knowledge and practice of reproductive health and family planning.

Program partners:

As a result of an assessment conducted in both republics, the following institutions were identified and involved as main partners in the program:

In the republic of Ingushetia:

- Ministry of Health of the Republic of Ingushetia
- Spiritual Centre of Muslims of the Republic of Ingushetia
- Institute of Family Health (Moscow)
- Two CBOs, *Women's Initiative* and *Women's Solidarity*

In the republic of Dagestan:

- Ministry of Health of Dagestan
- Association of Family Planning of the Republic of Dagestan

3. Overview of Program Implementation:

Program Activities:

As per approved program proposal and work plan, the following activities were completed during the program implementation period:

Objective 1: Improved Maternal Health: Women and health providers have improved knowledge and practice in prevention of the main causes of morbidity and mortality during pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, delivery and post-partum.

Output 1.1: Women of reproductive age, including pregnant women, have increased awareness of maternal health and nutrition and access to antenatal care

Activity 1.1.1 Two Sessions on ANC conducted for 3000 women by PHTs during grant period

Based on the health needs identified in the two republics, a training in antenatal care (ANC) was designed with a focus on three main topics, namely: 1) maternal and child nutrition, 2) exclusive breastfeeding and complimentary feeding after 6 months, and 3) antenatal care including preparation for delivery, post-partum care, and hygiene of pregnant women. The training was delivered by WV Prevention Health Teams (PHTs), each consisting of a general practitioner, a gynecologist and a pediatrician, to women of reproductive age (WRA), including pregnant women, in the republics of Ingushetia and Dagestan.

In Ingushetia, the trainings were launched in November 2010 and delivered in district antenatal clinics and polyclinics, as well as the Mother and Child Health Centre, located in the Nazranovsky district. 331 trainings were conducted, covering a total of 1,814 WRA, including 1,653 pregnant women among them. The average age of participants was 25.5 years with youngest participants being 16-17 years old. Pre-training questionnaires and a small survey conducted among a select group of women demonstrated a low level of knowledge on reproductive health and antenatal

care among women. The results of post-training questionnaires showed a significantly improved knowledge among women – more than 90% of women responded correctly to the questions.

In Dagestan, the trainings on antenatal care were launched in July 2011 in the Khasavyurtovsky and Karabudakhentsky districts of the republic. Both the population and medical personnel of the districts highly appreciated program activities acknowledging the need for conducting more trainings on reproductive health and prevention related issues. Training attendance was very high, sometimes exceeding 60 participants per training. As a result, in addition to two WV PHTs, chief physicians of both districts created two more PHTs to allow for a wider reach of the population in the two districts. 113 trainings were conducted, covering a total of 2,004 WRA, including 663 pregnant women among them.

Activity 1.1.2 Three CBOs - at least 6 Trainers - trained in the basics of ANC by PHTs

After a thorough assessment of CBOs present in the republic, two CBOs were identified and selected as partner institutions in the program:

- CBO "Women's Initiative": its main focus of work is provision of psychological support to women, and assistance with integration into society. Their target groups include women on maternity leave and unemployed women.
- CBO "Women's Solidarity": its main focus of work is education and psychological support for women. Their target groups include housewives, unemployed women, and young women.

Six representatives from the two CBOs were selected to attend a training of trainers (ToT) conducted by the PHT. The training covered the following topics: healthy nutrition as prevention of anemia, ANC, and hygiene of pregnant women. As a result of the ToT, four women (two representatives from each CBO) were selected as trainers to deliver trainings to WRA.

Activity 1.1.3 48 sessions on ANC conducted for 240 WRA by CBOs

Following the ToT agreements were signed with the two CBOs to deliver sessions on ANC and reproductive health to WRA. The CBOs conducted a total of 32 trainings reaching 184 WRA. Delivery of each session was monitored by PHTs and/or program staff who further coached the trainers, reinforcing their knowledge and skills. Session participants included female students of the Ingush State University, housewives from Ordzhonikidzevskaya, Nesterovskaya and Ekazhevo villages, "Oriflame" cosmetics company personnel and pregnant women from the Zunzhensky district hospital. The topic of antenatal care was well received by the participants who asked many questions concerning women's health.

Activity 1.1.4 Three women's groups established to pass messages on ANC

Two informal community-based women's groups were established on the basis of Vocational School#4 in Ingushetia to disseminate messages on antenatal care to WRA through peer education. 43 women were trained by PHTs on such issues as the role of healthy nutrition in the prevention of anemia; breastfeeding; antenatal care, and personal hygiene and care during pregnancy. During the training, ten most active women were selected as peer educators to conduct lessons for their peers.

Activity 1.1.5 Twenty-four peer-to-peer lessons on ANC elements held by members of women's groups, with at least 120 WRA reached

Trained members of women's groups conducted a total of 36 lessons reaching a total of 112 WRA. Peer participants, who included relatives, friends and colleagues, showed great interest in the subject-matter asking many questions, and requested more sessions on related topics to be conducted in the future. The lessons were monitored by PHTs who also participated in the discussions, and provided recommendations and feedback to women – peer educators.

Activity 1.1.6 At least 10 formal/informal community groups (faith leaders, NGOs, women's, youth groups) involved in training WRA on anemia prevention

Faith leaders

An agreement was reached with the Spiritual Center of Muslims of the Republic of Ingushetia (Muftiyat) to participate in the program as one of the partner institutions. Training of the Imams (Muslim spiritual leaders) and students of the Islamic Institute of Ingushetia was agreed upon to facilitate their skills in advocacy with men's groups on reproductive and maternal and child health issues. Training on healthy nutrition and anemia prevention was conducted for the Imams by the PHT's therapist and urologist, with more than 25 participants attending the training. All of them found the training useful and promised to share information among their families and mosque parishioners.

Youth groups

Two youth groups were identified and formed to conduct training and further disseminate messages on anemia prevention among WRA. One group was formed among students (medical nurses) of the Medical Department of the Ingush State University. 32 students received training on anemia prevention, exclusive breastfeeding and hygiene of pregnant women. Another youth group was formed at the Polytechnic College of Ingushetia. Here, 60 students (30 female and 30 male participants) received training on healthy nutrition and anemia prevention.

Discussions were held with Medical Vocational School#4 and local youth CBO, *Youth Parliament in Ingushetia*, to form youth groups to disseminate messages on anemia prevention; an agreement for collaboration was reached with both of them.

Activity 1.1.7 Six journalists reached with health messages (anti-anemia campaign)

Three journalists from local mass media: from "Perspectiva" newspaper, from "Ingushetia" newspaper and a chief editor from the Polytechnic College newspaper were briefed about anemia prevention and STIs as part of mass media mobilization efforts to broadcast and publish articles on anemia campaign topics. An agreement for future cooperation was reached.

Activity 1.1.8 Five (5) articles published, 5 radio broadcasts transmitted on campaign topic

A cooperation agreement was signed with local radio station "Angusht" to transmit radio broadcasts on anemia prevention campaign topics. A total of 11 broadcasts were conducted during the program implementation, including:

- Reproductive health, STIs prevention – 7 broadcasts;
- Breastfeeding - 3 broadcasts;
- Healthy nutrition and anemia prevention – 1 broadcast;

Journalist Adam Hachubarov of *Ingushetia* newspaper published three articles on 1) STIs prevention, 2) breastfeeding, and 3) healthy nutrition and anemia prevention. Articles were prepared with support from PHT's specialists.

Activity 1.1.9 Two TV broadcasts on campaign topic

Three TV broadcasts were shown in the local TV program "Health": one on STIs prevention featuring a training on the subject-matter, conducted in collaboration with the Institute of Family Health, and an interview with PHT's gynecologist; the second – on breastfeeding with participation of PHT's pediatrician; and, the third one on healthy nutrition and anemia prevention with participation of PHT's therapist.

Activity 1.1.10 40,000 brochures and 1,000 posters disseminated on campaign topic

The following materials (brochures, booklets and posters) on anemia prevention campaign topic were developed by the Institute of Family Health, and published and disseminated by WVRF in Ingushetia and Dagestan:

- Poster "Breastfeeding" - 500 copies (250 copies in Ingushetia and 250 in Dagestan).
- Booklet "Until your child is born" - 5,000 copies (2,500 copies in Ingushetia and 2,500 in Dagestan).
- Booklet "Start from the Beginning" - 10,000 copies (5,000 copies in Ingushetia and 5,000 in Dagestan).
- Brochure "This Concerns Everybody. What You Need to Know About STIs" - 10,000 copies (5,000 in Ingushetia and 5,000 in Dagestan).

Output 1.2: Health providers have increased skills in antenatal, labor and delivery, and post-partum care services

Activity 1.2.1 50 obstetricians and feldshers at Feldsher points in Ingushetia and 175 in Dagestan trained in Lamaze

51 specialists (35 obstetricians and 16 feldshers) in Ingushetia received a ToT on the Lamaze method. The training was delivered in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health of Ingushetia and included both, lectures, visuals and distribution of printed materials. The pre- and post-training questionnaires indicated a significant increase in understanding of the subject-matter: while pre-training questionnaires showed only 35% correct responses, the post-training questionnaires demonstrated almost 90% correct answers.

Moreover, participants expressed concerns about the absence of the Lamaze equipment at their institutions and requested assistance in equipping feldsher points and outpatient departments with the Lamaze equipment. They emphasized that this method should be used in health institutions to prevent negative effects related to child deliveries and expressed their willingness to actively promote and apply it.

Activity 1.2.3 40 Feldsher points/Ambulatories in Ingushetia and 60 in Dagestan provided with supplies for Lamaze

Supplies for Lamaze (130 carpets, 160 balls, 40 scales) and scales for pregnant women were provided to 40 feldsher points and ambulatories in Ingushetia, and 60 feldsher points and ambulatories in Dagestan.

Activity 1.2.4 Trained gynecologists-obstetricians, obstetricians and feldshers conduct 100 Lamaze classes for 300 women attendees monitored by PHT teams

Trained gynecologists-obstetricians, obstetricians and feldshers conducted Lamaze classes for WRA, including pregnant women, in several districts of Ingushetia. During the classes, an instructional video on the Lamaze method was demonstrated and exercises shown to the women. A total of 67 classes were conducted reaching 140 WRA. PHT specialists monitored the delivery of the Lamaze classes. Women participants actively participated in the classes and said that they would continue to do exercises at home.

Activity 1.2.7 35 gynecologists/obstetricians in Ingushetia and 13 in Dagestan trained in prevention, diagnostics and treatment of intra-uterine infections and STIs

The training on "STIs; Intrauterine infections; Diagnostics, treatment and prevention" was conducted by the Institute of Family Health for 36 gynecologists and 2 neonatologists in Ingushetia. The Institute's trainers used a variety of teaching methods, visuals and printed materials. All participants gave a very positive feedback and noted a high level of the training and of the trainers.

Activity 1.2.8 25 gynecologists/obstetricians in Ingushetia and 13 in Dagestan trained in safe management of complications of pregnancy, labor and PP stages

The training on "Safe management of complications of pregnancy, labor and post-partum (PP) stages" was conducted for 51 specialists (32 gynecologists and obstetricians from Ingushetia and 19 from Dagestan). The training was conducted by the trainers from the People's Friendship University of Russia in collaboration with the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Ingushetia.

The trainers used a variety of training methods including lectures, role plays, interactive discussions, slide shows and educational materials. Participants took active part in the training, and expressed their appreciation for the high level of the training and of the trainers.

Activity 1.2.9 Four ultrasound specialists (2 from Ingushetia, 2 from Dagestan) received professional upgrading on intrauterine abnormal fetal development outside the North Caucasus

Four ultrasound specialists (two from Ingushetia and two from Dagestan) were selected to attend an ultrasound diagnostics certification program at the Russian State Medical University. Upon completion of the program the specialists received certified diplomas; the program allowed the participants to acquire new skills that they would use in their day-to-day work to improve maternal and newborn health in the republics of Ingushetia and Dagestan.

Objective 2: Improved Care of New Born and Infants: Mothers and health providers have improved knowledge and practice of health and nutrition care and support for newborn and infants.

Output 2.1 Mothers have increased knowledge and practice in essential care of their new born

Activity 2.1.1 Four sessions on the Essentials of Newborn Care conducted for 1000 new mothers by World Vision PHTs during grant period

PHT's pediatrician conducted sessions on the essentials of newborn care for new mothers at the Maternal and Child Health Centre, as well as other medical institutions (antenatal clinics, central hospitals, pregnancy pathology departments) of the three districts of Ingushetia. A total of 35 sessions were conducted reaching 502 new mothers, including 390 pregnant women among them.

Activity 2.1.2 Three community events organized to promote exclusive breastfeeding and appropriate, timely addition of complementary food

A community event on promotion of exclusive breastfeeding and timely addition of complementary food was conducted in cooperation with the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Ingushetia in June 2011. The training was held following WHO's recommendations on the need to organize more educational workshops for medical specialists. It was attended by 44 state health specialists who received educational materials and were taught practical skills to conduct consultations.

Activity 2.1.3 Design and distribute brochures to promote exclusive breastfeeding and diversity in infant diets

A booklet on exclusive breastfeeding was designed and published in the amount of 5,000 copies. 2,500 copies were distributed among WRA through health institutions and at various events in Ingushetia, and 2,500 copies were distributed in Dagestan.

Output 2.2 Health providers have improved skills in management of newborn and infant care, nutrition, and prevention of illnesses

Activity 2.2.1 Training Module delivered to 15 pediatricians and neonatologists in Ingushetia and 25 in Dagestan on "Complications of new born during labor and delivery. Newborn management technique"

A training module on "Complications of newborn during labor and delivery. Newborn management techniques" was delivered to 53 specialists (pediatricians, neonatologists, obstetricians, gynecologists) from the four districts of Ingushetia and 29 students from the Medical Faculty of the Ingush State University. The training was organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Health of Ingushetia and delivered by a specialist from the Saint-Petersburg State Medical Academy. A variety of teaching methods were used by the trainer, including lectures, interactive dialogues, visuals and dissemination of educational materials. The training was very well received by the participants who asked many questions after the session.

Activity 2.2.6 40 Pediatric Cabinets in Ingushetia and 60 in Daghestan provided with basic supplies to work (baby scales, measuring tools, small pediatric exam tables)

40 pediatric cabinets in Ingushetia and 60 in Dagestan were provided with basic supplies to work. The supplies included auxanometers, tables and baby scales.

Objective 3: Improved Reproductive Health and Family Planning: Women and men of reproductive age and health providers have improved knowledge and practice of reproductive health and family planning.

Output 3.1: Women and men of reproductive age have increased knowledge of reproductive health, prevention of STIs, family planning and healthy lifestyles

Activity 3.1.1 2000 women directly trained on reproductive health and STI prevention by PHTs

PHTs conducted trainings on reproductive health and STI prevention for WRA at the Maternal and Child Health Centre as well as medical institutions of the three districts of Ingushetia. A total of 35 trainings were conducted, reaching 502 WRA, including 390 pregnant women among them.

Activity 3.1.6 3 Youth groups - at least 9 trainers - trained in healthy lifestyle practices and reproductive health by World Vision PHTs

PHT specialists conducted a training on "Healthy Lifestyle and Reproductive Health" for students at the Polytechnic College of the Republic of Ingushetia. The training covered a wide variety of topics, including early sexual life, preparedness to sexual life and personal hygiene. Due to local cultural sensitivity around these issues, a separate training was conducted for girls and boys. A total of 60 participants attended the training (30 female and 30 male participants).

Activity 3.1.9 Two CBOs - 4 trainers - trained in the basics of reproductive health by PHTs

PHT conducted a ToT on "Reproductive Health and STI prevention" for six women representatives from two CBOs, *Women's Initiative* and *Women's Solidarity*, identified as program partners. The training focused on improving women's knowledge of reproductive health issues. Four women (two representatives from each CBO) were selected as trainers to conduct peer education on reproductive health issues among WRA.

Activity 3.1.10 3 women's groups - 30 women - established to pass messages on reproductive health

CBO trainers conducted 11 trainings on reproductive health issues among WRA. A total of 90 WRA were reached with reproductive health messages. Participants included 55 students from the Ingush State University, 20 housewives and 15 other group representatives (lawyers, teachers, accountants) from Ordzhonikidzevskaya, Nesterovskaya and Ekazhevo villages.

The trainings included such topics as reproductive health, including that of young women, hygiene and STI prevention. All participants were WRA, including first-time pregnant women; they actively participated in the trainings, asked many questions and noted usefulness and importance of imparting such knowledge to future mothers.

Summary of Results:¹

Objective 1: Improved Maternal Health: Women and health providers have improved knowledge and practice in prevention of the main causes of morbidity and mortality during pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, delivery and post-partum.

Output 1.1: Women of reproductive age, including pregnant women, have increased awareness of maternal health and nutrition and access to antenatal care

- 1,814 women of reproductive age in Ingushetia and 2,304 in Dagestan trained in ANC;
- 2 CBOs identified and trained in ANC (ToT for CBO representatives: 6 representatives trained, 4 women selected as trainers);
- 32 sessions on ANC conducted for 184 WRA by trained CBOs;
- 2 women's groups established and trained on ANC (43 women trained; 10 women selected as peer trainers);
- 36 peer-to-peer lessons on ANC elements held by members of women's groups for 112 WRA;
- 2 formal/informal groups formed and involved in training WRA on anemia prevention;
- 3 journalists reached with health messages (anti-anemia campaign);
- 11 radio broadcasts transmitted and 3 articles published on nutrition, breastfeeding, STI prevention (covering 5,000 beneficiaries);
- 3 TV broadcasts conducted on nutrition, health and anemia prevention, breastfeeding, STI prevention;
- 20,000 brochures and booklets (covering 60,000 beneficiaries) and 500 posters (covering 1,000 beneficiaries) designed and disseminated in Ingushetia and Dagestan

Output 1.2: Health providers have increased skills in antenatal, labor and delivery, and post-partum care services

- 51 specialists (35 obstetricians and 16 feldshers) trained in Lamaze in Ingushetia;
- 40 Feldsher points/Ambulatories in Ingushetia and 60 Feldsher points/Ambulatories in Dagestan provided with supplies for Lamaze;
- 67 Lamaze classes conducted for 140 women in Ingushetia;
- 36 gynecologists/obstetricians and 2 neonatologists trained in prevention, diagnostics and treatment of intra-uterine infections and STIs in Ingushetia;
- 51 gynecologists/obstetricians trained in safe management of complications of pregnancy, labor and PP stages (32 from Ingushetia and 19 from Dagestan);
- 4 Ultrasound specialists (two from Ingushetia and two from Dagestan) trained in ultrasound diagnostics outside the North Caucasus.

Objective 2: Improved Care of New Born and Infants: Mothers and health providers have improved knowledge and practice of health and nutrition care and support for newborn and infants.

Output 2.1 Mothers have increased knowledge and practice in essential care of their new born

- 502 new mothers trained in essentials of newborn care in Ingushetia;
- One breastfeeding event organized in Ingushetia;
- 5,000 brochures designed and distributed to promote exclusive breastfeeding and diversity in infant diets in Ingushetia

Output 2.2 Health providers have improved skills in management of newborn and infant care, nutrition, and prevention of illnesses

- 53 specialists (pediatricians, neonatologists, obstetricians, gynecologists) in Ingushetia trained on complications of newborn during labor and delivery;
- 40 pediatric cabinets in Ingushetia and 60 pediatric cabinets in Dagestan provided with basic supplies to work (baby scales, measuring tools, small pediatric exam tables);

¹ For detailed results against planned and actual indicators, see Annex 1 – Annual Work Plan: Planned and Actual Indicators, FY 2011, FY 2012.

Objective 3: Improved Reproductive Health and Family Planning: Women and men of reproductive age and health providers have improved knowledge and practice of reproductive health and family planning.

Output 3.1: Women and men of reproductive age have increased knowledge of reproductive health, prevention of STIs, family planning and healthy lifestyles

- 502 women trained on reproductive health and STI prevention;
- 2 Youth groups - at least 6 trainers - trained in healthy lifestyle practices and reproductive health;
- 2 CBO - 4 trainers - trained in the basics of reproductive health;
- 90 women reached by CBOs with reproductive health messages.

4. Achievements at a Glance:

- Over 5,100 women of reproductive age (WRA), including pregnant women and new mothers in Ingushetia and Dagestan, increased their knowledge on antenatal care, essential newborn care and reproductive health through a variety of formal trainings and informal information sessions;
- At least 150 health providers (obstetricians, gynecologists, neonatologists) in Ingushetia and Dagestan have increased skills in antenatal, labor and delivery, and post-partum care services through capacity-building programs;
- Two community-based organizations (CBOs) and several community-based women's groups trained to assist in disseminating health messages to community leaders and WRA (a total of 49 women trained, and 14 women identified as peer trainers). 296 informational sessions delivered by these CBOs and groups to WRA;
- Public awareness on campaign topics (anemia prevention and healthy nutrition, breastfeeding, reproductive health) raised through the mass media (11 radio broadcasts, 3 articles and 3 TV broadcasts) and dissemination of educational materials (25,000 brochures and booklets and 500 posters);
- 40 feldsher points/ambulatories in Ingushetia and 60 in Dagestan provided with supplies for Lamaze; 40 pediatric cabinets in Ingushetia and 60 in Dagestan provided with basic supplies for assessment of infant health;
- Strong partnership established with state health providers in Ingushetia and Dagestan;
- Skills of medical specialists in Ingushetia and Dagestan considerably improved due to high quality trainings provided by leading specialists from Moscow and Saint-Petersburg and capacity-building programs organized in Moscow;
- Overall impact of the program was increased due to cooperation established with the Spiritual Board of Muslims of Ingushetia which enjoys great authority among local communities.

5. Challenges and Actions Taken to Address Them

- Late start of the program: while the start date of the program was indicated as May 1st, 2010, the program was finally approved by USAID only in July 2010. As a result, the actual implementation of the program did not start until October 2010 which was due to the fact that the Russian Federation's legislation requires international organizations to notify the Ministry of Justice about start-up of a program one month in advance. However, WV used

this time to prepare for the launch of the program, conduct consultations and meetings with potential partners and program staff, and develop a detailed working plan and other program documents

- Logistical and organizational challenges: identifying training venues took extra time and effort as most of available rooms in health facilities were poorly equipped; preparation and mobilization work among women beneficiaries took longer than initially anticipated as more meetings and discussions had to take place to raise women's interest and awareness of the need to acquire such knowledge and skills; procurement of the Lamaze and cabinet supplies was delayed due to the changes in prices. This resulted in late start-up of some program activities.
- Selection of partner institutions: identification and selection of a partner institution to conduct trainings for medical specialists (Activities 1.2.8, 1.2.9) took longer than expected as medical institutions delayed the submission of their bids on the advertised tender. The I.M. Sechenov First Moscow State Medical University was selected as a partner institution in the 4th quarter, however the signing of the partner agreement was delayed due to the change of leadership at the University. This resulted in the delay of several program activities.
- Increasingly challenging operating environment and office closure: the most significant challenge presented itself over the course of the past few months of the program implementation when World Vision began to encounter increasing operating challenges that significantly limited its ability to operate in the region. Attempts to resolve the situation did not yield successful results. As a consequence, World Vision decided to end its operations in the North Caucasus, close its office and withdraw from the region, thereby terminating program activities ahead of the planned schedule.

6. Program Sustainability

A sustainability plan envisioned for the program was to ensure that community and health facilities take responsibility for and feel ownership of program results, and that community structures and health facility outreach services continue beyond the life of the program. These objectives were reached to a large extent.

For example, the program included activities aimed at encouraging participation of community members thereby ensuring that they are rooted and owned by the communities. Activities were also conducted to train and empower community groups (CBO representatives, women and youth groups) to participate in improving the health of their families and communities. Training sessions delivered by CBOs and peer women were monitored by PHTs who coached the trainers, further reinforcing their knowledge and skills. Channeling the messages through CBOs and peer women contributed to strengthening the society, the culture of volunteerism, and sustainable dissemination of information beyond program duration.

The program paid great attention to increasing capacity of health providers through various trainings and capacity-building programs thereby enlarging the scope and quality of service provision. Provision of equipment to health facilities helped reinforce them, especially those located in rural areas as they experience shortage of all types of equipment.

7. Lessons learnt and Conclusions

- Cultural and religious context plays a very important role when working with local communities. It should be taken into consideration when designing and implementing program activities.

- Buy-in should be sought from state authorities from the very beginning of the program, ideally at the program design stage, to ensure that all needs of the region are taken into account, and that program activities respond to those needs.
- Active support and involvement of the Ministries of Health of Ingushetia and Dagestan in the program has demonstrated the real need and demand for continued efforts aimed at improving maternal, newborn and child health in the North Caucasus region.
- Response received from local communities equally showed the need to increase community awareness and knowledge on maternal and child health issues in the region.