

RUSSIA FINAL REPORT

September 1997–September 2007

USAID'S IMPLEMENTING AIDS PREVENTION AND CARE (IMPACT) PROJECT



USAID
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Final Report
for the
Implementing AIDS Prevention
and Care (IMPACT) Project in
Russia



September 1997 to September 2007



Russia Final Report

Submitted to USAID

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CONTENTS

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
PROGRAM OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, IMPLEMENTATION, AND RESULTS	2
Introduction	2
Country Context	3
Implementation and Management	3
<i>Implementation</i>	3
<i>Management</i>	4
Russia Program Timeline	5
Program Activities and Results	6
Information Dissemination, Networking, and BCC	6
Evaluation, Surveillance, and Research	6
LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS	7
IMPLEMENTING PARTNER ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS	7
Implementing Partners List	7
<i>AIDS Infoshare</i>	7
<i>Stellit</i>	7

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
BCC	Behavior change communications
BMS	Behavioral monitoring survey
BSS	Behavioral surveillance survey
CDC	US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CSW	Commercial sex worker
FHI	Family Health International
FY	Fiscal year
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
IBY	Institution-based youth
IDU	Injecting drug user
IMPACT	Implementing AIDS Prevention and Care Project
MOH	Ministry of Health
MSM	Men who have sex with men
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
PSI	Population Services International
STI	Sexually transmitted infection
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization
YTC	Youth in transitory centers

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From Fiscal Year (FY) 1998 through 2006, the Implementing AIDS Prevention and Care Project (IMPACT) in the Russian Federation consisted of three primary activities—capacity building in information dissemination and networking, capacity building in behavior change communication (BCC), and the execution of a behavioral monitoring survey (BMS).

IMPACT's work began in the Russian Federation in 1998, when the US Agency for International Development (USAID) provided field support funds to IMPACT to collaborate on HIV/AIDS prevention efforts in Russia. Technical staff from Family Health International (FHI) traveled to Russia to assess opportunities for programming IMPACT's HIV/AIDS prevention funding with special consideration for the need to expand the dissemination of HIV/AIDS information in the country. The team identified AIDS Infoshare, a nongovernmental organization (NGO) to collaborate with IMPACT and the Russian Ministry of Health's (MOH) Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention to develop an information dissemination plan and establish a broad-based HIV/AIDS information network.

IMPACT/Russia continued to provide technical assistance to AIDS Infoshare and the newly formed association called DOM, a network of 11 NGOs working in HIV/AIDS prevention. The focus on strengthening information dissemination expanded to include the facilitation of improved collaboration and exchange of ideas among the association members. This addition to the scope of work was made in an effort to create a strategic focus for HIV programming among association members that could eventually be shared with organizations across Russia.

IMPACT/Russia provided capacity building in BCC via facilitation of two BCC workshops by FHI technical staff for NGOs and private-sector organizations. The workshops focused on building the participants' capacity in the theoretical bases and practical application of strategic approaches to BCC for HIV/AIDS prevention. The first workshop in Moscow (December 2002) also included capacity building in networking and advocacy for the DOM Association. This workshop led to a request for a collaborative workshop on BCC by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) which was held in June 2003 in Tomsk, Russia.

In FY 2004, USAID announced its intention to launch a prevention, treatment, and care program targeting groups that engage in high-risk behaviors and requested that IMPACT amend its scope of work to include a BMS to better inform its programming and strategic direction. FHI technical staff visited the USAID/Russia mission in Moscow and provided training for the health office staff in behavioral data collection, management, interpretation, use, and indicators so that they would be positioned to oversee the BMS. FHI technical staff identified Stellit, a St. Petersburg-based NGO, to carry out the BMS and provided ongoing technical assistance throughout the project.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, IMPLEMENTATION, AND RESULTS

Introduction

USAID began supporting IMPACT/Russia after a formal assessment of the HIV/AIDS/STI situation in the country. USAID/Russia decided to focus HIV/AIDS activities on strengthening

information sharing among NGOs working in HIV/AIDS prevention. As the project progressed, the focus expanded to include not only information dissemination, but also the ability of HIV/AIDS organizations to share information and collaborate with each other. IMPACT/Russia provided capacity building to a network of organizations and supported AIDS Infoshare, a Moscow-based NGO, to facilitate this activity. As the network grew, IMPACT/Russia provided additional capacity building to the DOM network in BCC, networking, and advocacy in an effort to improve HIV/AIDS prevention efforts.

In 2004, the focus of the IMPACT project changed again. Following the dramatic growth of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Russia, USAID decided to launch a prevention, treatment, and care project targeting affected populations in 11 regions. In an effort to better inform this programming, IMPACT/Russia carried out a BMS focusing on four affected groups in three regions.

Country Context

Russia's HIV/AIDS epidemic has been considered one of the fastest growing epidemics in the world. During the period of the IMPACT project in Russia, the number of patients with officially registered HIV/AIDS cases grew 100 percent, and the epidemic is still concentrated among groups that engage in high-risk behaviors, including commercial sex workers (CSW), injection drug users (IDU), and men who have sex with men (MSM). HIV/AIDS cases are considered to be significantly underreported among these groups, as they are highly marginalized in Russian society. In recent years, there has been a rise in new infections among the general population as well, leading to an increase in political commitment to a national response.

Implementation and Management

Implementation

In late 1998, FHI staff traveled to the Russian Federation at the request of USAID to assess the opportunities for programming IMPACT funding with a special focus on the identified need to expand the dissemination of HIV/AIDS information in the country. The IMPACT team held a series of meetings with eight organizations and government agencies working on HIV/AIDS prevention activities and drafted a workplan. The workplan identified one local NGO, AIDS Infoshare, to collaborate with FHI and the MOH's Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention. During the implementation phase, FHI technical staff traveled to Russia to provide technical assistance to AIDS Infoshare and to conduct workshops and seminars.

As the project evolved and the scope of work changed to include the BMS, additional FHI staff traveled to Russia to train USAID staff in behavioral research practices and to select a local implementing partner. Staff from FHI's Department of Evaluation, Surveillance, and Research conducted several more trips to provide technical assistance to the local implementing partner, Stellit. During the final year of the project, staff from Stellit visited FHI's Arlington office to work with FHI technical staff to finalize the BMS and its report.

Management

Because of the relatively small amount of funding and the limited scope of work of the project, FHI elected not to establish a country office in Russia. Instead, staff from FHI headquarters managed the project and served as the liaison to USAID/Russia, the MOH, and the local NGO partners. According to FHI operating practices, an associate director served as the acting country director, making relevant decisions relating to project management and overseeing the project's overall progress while the program backstop was responsible for daily management of project activities.

Russia Program Timeline

Activities	FY 1998				FY 1999				FY 2000				FY 2001				FY 2002				FY 2003				FY 2004				FY 2005				FY 2006				FY 2007							
	Quarter				Quarter				Quarter				Quarter				Quarter				Quarter				Quarter				Quarter				Quarter											
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4				
Information Sharing, Networking, BCC																																												
Initial assessment and workplan development	■																																											
Technical assistance in information dissemination									■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■																				
Training workshop on HIV/AIDS prevention information and risk-reduction networking													■																															
BCC course													■								■																							
BMS																																												
Establish evaluation research agenda for Russia																					■																							
Training of USAID health office staff																									■																			
Assess locations and select local research partner																									■																			
Develop operation plans for implementation of mapping and data collection																													■															
Conduct training of field staff																													■															
Collect data																														■	■													
Draft final report																															■	■												
Disseminate findings																																								■				

Program Activities and Results

Information Dissemination, Networking, and BCC

Training workshop on HIV/AIDS prevention information and risk-reduction networking

The five-day course provided training on state-of-the-art HIV/AIDS prevention techniques and methods relevant to Russia, as well as international best practices. The workshop was offered to 11 NGOs. The participants formed a new HIV/AIDS prevention network for Russia to embrace information exchange, mutual support, training, and individual skills building.

Course in BCC, networking, advocacy, and public relations

The three-day course was offered in Moscow in December 2002 to the DOM Association—a network of 12 NGOs working in HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and support throughout the Russian Federation. The course was designed to (1) build the participants' capacity to design and implement an advocacy and public relations campaign built on a solid understanding of the strategies and principles of BCC, and (2) to strengthen the DOM Association's capacity to build and sustain a network by studying lessons learned from networks in other countries. In addition, the IMPACT project provided in-depth analysis of three participating NGOs' BCC campaigns.

Training course in BCC

The success of the Moscow workshop led to a collaboration between FHI and UNICEF to provide further capacity building in BCC to Siberian NGOs in Tomsk, Russia in June 2003. This course was three and a half days in duration, was offered to representatives from five NGOs from the Siberian region, and was based on a newly-developed BCC course from FHI. The workshop focused on building the capacity of participants in the theoretical bases and practical application of strategic approaches to BCC for HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and support programs.

Evaluation, Surveillance, and Research

Training on surveillance, indicators, and data use for program evaluation

This four-day training was given to USAID/Russia staff in the health office and provided an overview of the collection of behavioral data and the various methods for selecting respondents and sampling.

Behavioral monitoring survey

The BMS was based on standard survey methods used to monitor HIV epidemic trends and assess the impact of HIV prevention programs. The primary purpose of the BMS in Russia was to quantify and assess changes over time in the level of high-risk sexual and injecting drug practices in areas where USAID will be implementing HIV prevention projects for specific affected populations. The BMS collected data in three geographical areas—St. Petersburg, Orenburg, and Irkutsk. Five target groups were focused on—IDUs, CSWs, MSM, institution-based youth (IBY), and youth in transitory centers (YTC). The BMS was conducted through a

series of cross-sectional surveys using probability-sampling techniques and standardized questionnaires covering topics including sociodemographic characteristics, types of sex partners, condom use, injection drug use practices, knowledge of HIV and STI stigma and discrimination, HIV test access, and exposure to HIV prevention programs. A final report was developed and disseminated in each of the target cities.

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Because of the relatively small size of IMPACT programming in Russia, a country office could not be supported. This arrangement was reasonable given the scope of the project but made program management more challenging. Despite the lack of an established country office, FHI managed to nurture productive relationships with counterparts, provide valuable capacity building, and carry out a behavior surveillance survey (BSS) that continues to inform current programming.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

Implementing Partners List

AIDS Infoshare

AIDS Infoshare played a key role in the growth and strengthening of both government and nongovernmental AIDS organizations in Russia. As a local implementing partner in the IMPACT project, AIDS Infoshare served as the lead organization in efforts to unite various organizations and agencies working in the HIV/AIDS field. FHI provided training to the newly formed network of organizations, the DOM Association, and conducted a seminar in developing a public relations campaign. In addition, FHI worked with AIDS Infoshare to build the capacity of local organizations to deliver HIV/AIDS information and services.

Stellit

Stellit is a local research organization affiliated with the Department of Sociology at the Russian Academy of Sciences. Based in St. Petersburg, Stellit has conducted research studies with IDUs, CSWs, MSM, and youth, and has conducted BSS and seroprevalence studies for international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), Population Services International (PSI), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In addition, Stellit conducts outreach activities and implements prevention activities among affected communities.

Stellit was selected as the IMPACT project's local partner to carry out a BMS in Russia. The survey provided baseline information on sexual and drug-using risk behaviors, knowledge and attitudes about HIV/AIDS, and health seeking behaviors of the members of five affected groups: MSM, IDUs, CSWs, YTC, and IBY. The results of the BMS are being used by USAID to inform program managers and planners in designing a tailored HIV/AIDS prevention, care, and treatment program. The protocol for the BMS was finalized in January 2005 and approved by FHI's Protection of Human Subjects Committee in April 2005. Mapping of each target group began in April 2005, in each of the three selected cities: St. Petersburg, Orenburg and Irkutsk. FHI and Stellit trained all principal investigators and site coordinators in the mapping methods in an effort to determine the social and geographic dynamics of the target groups.

IMPACT began training in data collection for all supervisors, coordinators, and interviewers in June 2005, immediately following the conclusion of the mapping. FHI provided in-depth technical assistance in the completion of the survey, completion of the data entry and cleaning, data analysis, and report writing. In early FY 2007, the BMS report was finalized and disseminated in each of the three selected cities with national and local stakeholders and program planners.

