

QUARTERLY TECHNICAL REPORT



Third Quarter Report – Fourth Year
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by

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and partners:

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I. Introduction

During this quarter, CAPACITY worked in all Central Asian countries to support national efforts to apply for GFATM round 8. The range of support varied in each country according to the wishes of the governments. Applications for AIDS were submitted in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. An application for TB was submitted in Turkmenistan.

Follow-on, oblast-level capacity building trainings took place in the in four countries with local ASOs. Trainings were conducted by CAPACITY-trained consultant trainers.

In Turkmenistan, CAPACITY continued the implementation of the Youth Center. In addition, preparations are underway, and agreements have been made with the MoH, for the opening of the next two Youth Centers. The MoH has expressed its satisfaction with the Youth Center and its interest in the new ones to be opened during the next quarter.

In Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan, the online information sharing database is being implemented. CAPACITY seconded communications specialists are coordinating these efforts by entering the data, encouraging stakeholders to share their data, and working with national leaders to help them use the data. In Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, each due to different reasons, the online database has not yet been implemented.

Technical assistance by CAPACITY to the small scale prevention models of the TUMAR Project have lead to impressive reach among vulnerable populations. TUMAR is on schedule with its monitoring indicators, and at the model sites, IDUs and sex workers are accessing HIV prevention services.

CAPACITY held a regional management team meeting in Almaty with country directors, country project coordinators, and regional coordinators. During the meeting, discussions took plans and preliminary Y5 country work plans were developed. Following the meeting, country teams fully developed their draft country work plans.

II. Environmental Impact

Like all USAID-funded projects, CAPACITY is concerned with any environmental impact it may be having in Central Asia. Nearly all of CAPACITY's activities are trainings and other capacity building and partnership building activities. Through these activities, there is no environmental impact. However, during the past quarter, CAPACITY received donated condoms from USAID in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. CAPACITY will in turn donate these condoms to local AIDS service organizations, which will each distribute them to HIV vulnerable populations. The goal is to reduce unprotected acts of risky sex by increasing condom use.

While achieving this goal will reduce the individual and population risk of HIV transmission, there is a potential that it could increase environmental risk, if the condoms are not disposed of properly. Therefore, CAPACITY will work with recipient local AIDS service organizations to ensure that they will include in their educational messages about condom use, the proper disposal of used condoms. In doing so, CAPACITY and its ASO partners will be able to minimize the environmental risk of this condom use promotion activity among populations most at-risk to HIV.

III. Programmatic Progress

A. Regional

A.1. Strategy 1: Improve Stewardship of National HIV/AIDS Programs

Strengthening communications among HIV stakeholders

CAPACITY moved forward with introducing the Online HIV Database in CA countries and working with the partners to make it truly a regional tool. Thus, in Kazakhstan, increasing numbers of partners are becoming aware of this tool and are willing to share information for posting online. The Monthly Bulletin is being issued on the regular basis as well.

In Kyrgyzstan, after a long period of restructuring, the CMCC Communications specialist was finally hired who revived information exchange among HIV stakeholders. Thus, he issued an “Events Digest”, “Calendar of Events” and started collecting and entering data into the online database.

In Turkmenistan, CAPACITY continues actively working on introducing new tools to facilitate information exchange. While the online database is still pending due to country-level internet problems, the new information bulletin was developed and is being issued on a regular basis by the seconded communication specialist. This publication was officially approved by the Turkmen Ministry of Health and Medical Industry.

Tajikistan CAPACITY office took the first steps toward using the Online Database. Although there is not yet full support from the National steward, the seconded specialist started working with partner organizations on collecting data for the Database. Thus, CAAP shared information on the awarded grants in Tajikistan and now this information is available online.

In Uzbekistan there is progress with distribution of monthly bulletin and data collection for the database. However, the country is not yet ready to post the relevant information online.

As was reported before, the online database will be updated with CAAP funds and active joint advocacy efforts will be undertaken in the next quarter.

Technical partnership for regional AIDS Treatment Center

CAPACITY participated in the regional Round Table Meeting held in Tashkent on the development of a Central Asia regional Treatment and Care Center for people with HIV. This center will be sponsored by CAAP, with participation from many regional stakeholders, including CAPACITY. CAPACITY has been assisting with the development of the center in the area of treating patients with dual HIV and TB infections.

Technical Assistance for Monitoring and Evaluation

CAPACITY helped the local NGO MedSocInform to revise the TUMAR project database to prevent double counting of clients and to ensure that project indicators reflect the true progress of the project.

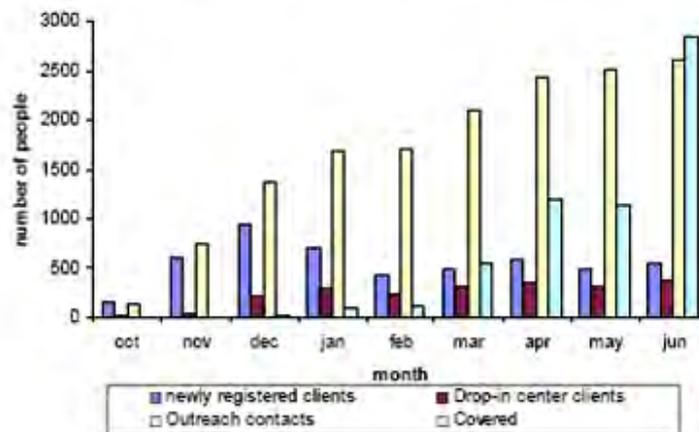
A.2. Strategy 2: Educating and Empowering Vulnerable Populations

Technical Assistance to Small Scale HIV Prevention Pilots

To date, with technical assistance from CAPACITY, small scale HIV prevention pilots with injection drug users and sex workers in four countries have reached 4,818 people. Among all, 1,187 clients visited Drop-in-Centers (4 newly organized DICs, 3 existing centers and 6 Trust Points); 4,290 clients received condoms; 3,110 have gotten brochures; 3,797 clients participated in mini-sessions conducted by outreach workers; 724 clients were referred to HIV testing; 936 to STIs treatment; 209 to detoxification; and 387 to PMTCT services. In total, 266,045 condoms and 35,649 IEC materials were distributed to vulnerable groups.

CAPACITY has helped to organize and facilitate a mid-term regional meeting for the TUMAR project implementing partners. During the one-and-a-half day meeting, CAPACITY provided its vision on the ways to improve implementation of prevention activities, to increase coverage and to ensure future sustainability of this program. CAPACITY also had an opportunity to discuss with local organizations their needs in technical assistance and training.

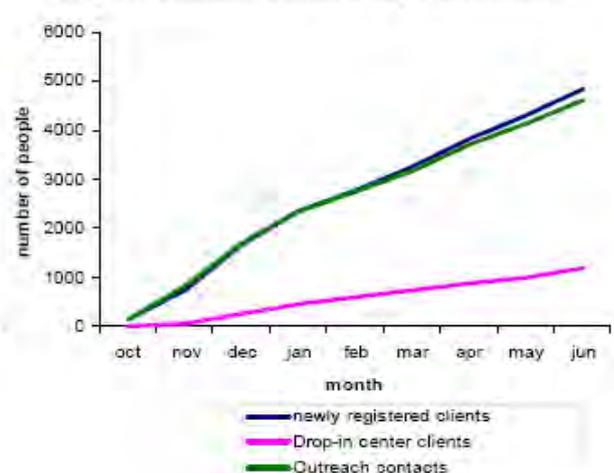
Graph 1. Number of clients by months



Graph 2. Cumulative coverage results



Graph 3. Cumulative number of people reached



Developing IEC materials for the Clients of Sex-Workers

CAPACITY has developed information brochures for clients of sex-workers. These brochures will be translated into local languages and distributed through the sex-workers within the framework of the TUMAR project in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Since this is the first time this type of brochure has been developed and tested in the region, CAPACITY together with the local NGOs organized focus group discussions and adapted both the design and the text of brochures according to the recommendations of sex workers. Further improvement of brochures will happen after they are piloted and more feedback is received from the direct target population.

Facilitation of USAID-Donated Condoms

Two countries (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) have received large quantities of USAID donated condoms. CAPACITY worked with USAID to facilitate the shipment, receipt, and customs clearance in the countries. In both Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, the condoms have already been shipped to local HIV prevention sites. In Kyrgyzstan, CAPACITY is now working to facilitate the shipment, receipt, and customs clearance of female condoms donated by USAID.

Training Narcologists to Provide Quality Medical Services to IDUs, including Risk Reduction and Drug-Addiction Therapy

CAPACITY worked together with the TUMAR Project and the Pavlodar Narcology Center to organize a six-day training for narcologists on various risk reduction issues among IDUs. Seventeen narcologists from throughout Central Asia region participated in the training. During the workshop following topics were covered:

- Drug-assisted and alternative methods of detoxification;
- The issue of pathologic drug addiction;
- Drugs available in the Central Asian region: main types, ways of use, model of use;
- Main principles of pharmacotherapy of narcological diseases;
- Clinical discussion of the patient with active participation of workshop participants;
- Screening and short term interventions;
- Stages of behavior change and motivational interviewing;
- Cognitive behavioral approaches to narcological counseling; and
- Substitution therapy.

One of the longer term benefits of this training is that the narcologists working within the small scale prevention projects will be able to provide better services to clients, including risk reduction counseling and various detoxification services.

Support to the Regional Training Center on Harm Reduction among IDUs

CAPACITY participated in the round table in Bishkek organized by the Central Asia AIDS Project (CAAP) to discuss the Regional Training Center on Healthy Lifestyles and HIV prevention among youth. The Center will be based in Bishkek.

A.3. Strategy 3: Improve the Quality of HIV/AIDS Services

Technical Support to the Monitoring and Evaluation and TB/HIV Models Extension and Expansion, etc.

In Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan, CAPACITY is continuing to provide technical assistance in conducting TB/HIV activities in the countries, including scaling up HIV/TB course into other medical institutes of Uzbekistan; meeting with TB/HIV monitoring team members in Tajikistan to discuss the results of the monitoring visits to the TB/HIV pilot facilities (TB/HIV model was integrated into the City health Center #10 and the city AIDS center); and providing technical assistance to the TB/HIV TWG coordinated by the Tajikistan GFATM PIU for the development the draft of a TB/HIV Strategic plan; and continuing to work as the Secretariat for the national TB/HIV TWG under the Kyrgyz TB Coordination Committee in Kyrgyzstan.

Providing Leadership in the VLDP TB/HIV Program

CAPACITY completed its work as facilitator of the Kazakhstan AIDS group in the VLDP course on TB/HIV leadership issue (requested by National Partners). CAPACITY is continuing negotiations with the VLDP trainers group on the results of implementation of developed action plan designed to address its specific integration challenge.

Voluntary Counseling and Testing

CAPACITY is continuing its work on development of VCT model for pilot sites of Kyrgyzstan to improve the current status of VCT services, increase the availability of trained counselors, and access to VCT services, especially by vulnerable populations. Activity plan, report on assessment, draft documents were developed and discussed. As further steps it is planned to develop training materials and conduct trainings on VCT for specialists from pilot facilities. For the next quarter, CAPACITY is planning the same approach for Kazakhstan.

A.4. Strategy 4: Improve Resource-Use to Integrate HIV/AIDS Services

Support for Development of ARVT Treatment Model within Selected PHCs

CAPACITY started the preparations for the upcoming (next quarter) TWG meeting in MoH, which will address the issues of implementing a pilot for integrating ARVT into selected PHCs in Temirtau. CAPACITY provided assistance in the development of necessary documents (agenda, presentations, resolution, etc.) for this meeting.

B. Kazakhstan

B.1. Strategy 1: Improve Stewardship of National HIV/AIDS Programs

Support to development of GFATM 8th Round Application

CAPACITY participated in the partners meeting organized by the Republican AIDS Center to discuss both the results of GFATM Round 7 and the development of the National Application for the GFATM Round 8. During the meeting, a working group was created for the purpose of developing the new application. CAPACITY started providing support in the process of proposal writing. Several meetings were held to define the areas to be covered in the proposal, based on existing gaps in the national program. According to the gaps analysis, the following areas were identified:

- Access to care and treatment, including PMTCT, ARVT, TB/HIV, substitution therapy, ARVT adherence, and strengthening of health care system management;
- Increasing youth awareness about HIV;
- HIV prevention and treatment in the penitentiary system; and
- HIV prevention most at-risk populations.

On the basis of these identified areas of priority, nine sub-working groups were created:

- PMTCT
- Substitution therapy
- HIV/TB
- ARVT and adherence
- Palliative care and support
- HIV prevention among youth
- HIV prevention among most at-risk populations
- STI prevention
- Penitentiary system

CAPACITY provided overall technical assistance in the proposal development process:

- Combining all sub-project proposals into one National Proposal;
- Translation of the proposal from English into Russian and back again; and
- Participated in several subgroups, taking the lead on HIV/TB, and as a member of both HIV prevention among most at-risk populations and ARVT and adherence.

Potential Support for GFATM Round 2 Funds

CAPACITY discussed with KZ GFATM PR – RAC Director Dr. Khasanova – about using some of the remaining Round 2 funds for the expansion of TB/HIV models and for supporting the pilot on team management of ARV patients in Temirtau. At this point, the RAC director is considering this idea, but the situation with the remaining funds from round 2 is not yet clear. Therefore, we need to wait for final clarification before continuing these discussions.

Seconded Staff

Communication Specialist: This quarter, the Communications Specialist made a presentation on the Online Database and its role in collaborative work of partners during a

meeting of national and international partners. Participants were interested in the database and suggested to distribute the web address among all other national and international partners.

In June, the Communications Specialist participated in the regional Educational Seminar for preparing trainers from among the journalists of Central Asia Republics who are writing about HIV/AIDS organized by CAAP and UNESCO. This workshop aimed at the creation of the group of journalists-trainers who will hold onward educational trainings for journalists who are writing about HIV/AIDS. During this workshop, the following topics were covered:

- Increasing journalistic skills on HIV/AIDS issues;
- Stigma and discrimination;
- Legislation in Central Asia; and
- Practical knowledge and skills for trainers.

The workshop is addressing the need for journalists who are writing about HIV/AIDS. During the workshop participants had excursions to the RAC of Tajikistan and non-governmental organizations. The group had a chance to test the media disc (different information about HIV/AIDS in Central Asia) and "Manual for media-trainers". All participants prepared their own 3 days training agenda and it was decided to conduct similar trainings in the countries.

In April, the Communications Specialist participated in the training-seminar called "Self-support groups in Kazakhstan," organized by "Kazakhstan Alliance of people living with HIV."

NGO Liaison Specialist: This quarter, the NGO Liaison Specialist continued working on the second round of training for ASOs. This work was sponsored jointly by CAPACITY and CAAP. The NGO Liaison Specialist actively participated in the organization and implementation of the 5 days of trainings in Karaganda and Pavlodar. (See next section for more information about this activity.)

B.2. Strategy 2: Educating and Empowering Vulnerable Populations

NGO Capacity Building

Following the activity that started during the previous quarter, CAPACITY in cooperation with CAAP continued conducting the series of oblast level Operational/Institutional trainings for ASOs in the frame of Civil Society Mobilization in Kazakhstan. During April these five-day capacity building trainings for ASOs were conducted in Karaganda and Pavlodar oblasts. It is expected that approximately 150 representatives of different organizations will participate in this training across the nation.

As a result of these trainings, 54 representatives from 30 AIDS-service organizations improved their knowledge and skills in effective approaches to HIV prevention among the groups most at-risk to HIV, including advocacy, counseling, outreach work and fundraising. Organizations also improved their understanding of the importance of partnerships and collaboration on national and regional level in development and provision of prevention activities.

AIDS Memory Day

This quarter CAPACITY participated in the preparation process of the International AIDS Memory Day and also provided technical support and cooperation to the Kazakhstan Union of PLHIV, which organized and implemented a special campaign dedicated to this Day. On 18 May, 2008, the campaign was held on one of the city squares with participation of youth and national and international partners.

Support to Center for Youth Education on HIV Prevention

At the end of June, CAPACITY participated in the Round Table dedicated to the issues of establishing the Central Asian Center for Youth Education on HIV prevention. At this round table sponsored by CAAP with the Institute of Public Health, this initiative and concept was presented and discussed. As a result of the meeting participants decided to update and finalize the concept taking into account all comments and distribute among partners.

Interventions with Sex Workers

Almaty (Saina, Seiphullina and Auezova streets)

The size of the targeted sex worker population in Almaty is 10,000 (data from the City AIDS Center's assessment). To date, 9,141 sex workers have been contacted (cumulative). 230 sex workers were contacted during the Quarter. There are 9 outreach workers targeting sex workers in Almaty on the Saina, Seiphullina and Auezova, Kurmangazu, Arbat streets and Hotels.

This quarter:

- Trainings: 230 sex workers during 94 trainings;
- Mini-educational sessions: 837 sex workers during 647 mini-sessions (Themes were HIV and AIDS, STI, Communication skills, Responsible behavior, and Condom Use)
- Free Condoms distributed: 8,034
- Brochures distributed: 2,992 (Themes were HIV and AIDS, STI, Condom is my protection, Assess Your Own Risk)

Pre- and post-test results of BCC among sex workers

Location	Pre Test %	Post Test %
Almaty	72	92

Interventions with Vulnerable Youth

Almaty (Bostandyksi district, City Student Clinic based Resource Center): 1 September 2007-31 September 2008

The Vulnerable Youth population at this site (Bostandyksi district, City Student Clinic) totals 65,861 by data of City Statistical Department. Clients of the clinic will be the main target, which averages about 10,000 vulnerable youth annually. Thus, 10,000 will be the contact coverage goal in this program. The program duration is 12 month, and to date 6,571 vulnerable youth have been contacted. This Quarter:

- Peer education trainings/mini sessions: 1,900 (945 male, 955 female) vulnerable youth during 776 trainings

- Alternative activities: 200 (66 males and 134 females) vulnerable youth participated in the work of Tennis Club
- Youth Friendly Counseling: 390 (119 males and 271 females) vulnerable youth were consulted by medical doctors of the Center.

Non-CYPC interventions with Vulnerable Youth (BCC component of CSM)

Almaty city: Almalinski, Jetysuiski, Turksibski districts

The target vulnerable youth population in these site totals 91,716 (City Statistic State Board on quantity of vulnerable youth at age 15-24 living in mentioned administrative districts). These sites were proposed by Republican AIDS Center based on HIV prevalence rates, drug availability, and social and economic environment. To date, 56,307 (27,666 males, 28,641 females) vulnerable youth were contacted (cumulative). This quarter:

- Peer trainings: 2,992 (1,512 males, 1,480 females) vulnerable youth during 378 peer trainings
- Mini-sessions: 5,543 (2,839 males, 2,704 females) vulnerable youth during 2,046 Mini Sessions
- TOTs: 16 participants (7 males and 9 females) participants during 1 TOTs
- Free Condoms distribution: 2,997 condoms
- Brochures distribution: 1,762 brochures

Karaganda city:

The target vulnerable youth population in this site totals 15,619 (City Statistic State Board on quantity of vulnerable youth at age 15-24 living in mentioned administrative districts). Project to date, NGO Saur Pak trained by PSI educational modules contacted 5,893 vulnerable youth in the site (cumulative). This quarter:

- Mini-sessions: 682 (419 males, 263 females) vulnerable youth during 87 mini sessions
- Alternative activities: 909 (459 males, 450 females) vulnerable youth were contacted during alternative activities.

Semipalatinsk city:

The target vulnerable youth population in this site totals 13,970 (City Statistic State Board on quantity of ARY at age 15-24 living in 1 administrative district). Project to date, NGO Istok trained by PSI educational modules contacted 2,191 vulnerable youth in the site (cumulative). This quarter:

- Peer trainings: 89 (55 males, 34 females) vulnerable youth during 7 trainings

Increasing access to Condoms through Social Marketing

- 19,971 units of condoms were disseminated during various events and educational activities;
- 323,361 condoms were disseminated through traditional channels (pharmacies and shops), hot zone distribution and free distribution during educational activities;
- 6,675,757 condoms were distributed during the Project to date.
- 1,346,314 condoms were distributed during this year.

B.3. Strategy 3: Improve the Quality of HIV/AIDS Services

GFATM 8th Round TB Component

In the frame of GFATM Round 8 Proposal Development for the TB component, CAPACITY had a meeting with National TB Center to discuss the details of TB/HIV. CAPACITY informed on what was developed (planned) in HIV/TB direction within the HIV application. CAPACITY explained why it is necessary to include all clinical, diagnostic, and administrative issues to GFATM 8th Round Proposal. The National TB Center Director, agreed on that point and informed that TB/HIV will not be included in the TB application. The National TB Center Director also requested that all regions of the country should be covered by TB/HIV activities.

Collaboration with Partners

This quarter, CAPACITY participated in the planning meeting at the National TB Center. The meeting was initiated by KZ National TB Center to gather necessary information about what was completed and what is planned in TB and TB/HIV directions by International NGOs and what areas needs to be supported financially by MoH. This information was requested by MoH. Different partners (AFEW, Project HOPE, Gorgas, KNCV, CDC, ZdravPlus, KFW , etc.) made a presentation about their activities. CAPACITY also informed on what has been completed and what is planned in TB/HIV area in Kazakhstan.

Support to New TB/HIV Model in Almaty, Kazakhstan

The implementation of the TB/HIV model in Almaty continues. The results to date include:

- An orientation meeting for national and international partners, including the heads of TB and AIDS facilities was conducted.
- The TB/HIV government order (*prikaz*) was signed and issued.
- CAPACITY in collaboration with Project HOPE conducted a set of TB/HIV trainings for TB and AIDS specialists on appropriate management of patients with dual infections. To date, 46 specialists for AIDS and TB have been trained.
- CAPACITY is providing assistance on M&E activities.
- The baseline assessment and the first quarterly visit to the pilot TB and AIDS facilities were conducted.
- The M&E results were analyzed and discussed with the M&E team.
- Recommendations were developed for further M&E visits scheduled for July.

B.4. Strategy 4: Improve Resource-Use to Integrate HIV/AIDS Services

During meetings with health services representatives and health care system managers in Temirtau and Karaganda, as well as with the MOH, that were held in April 2007 and February 2008, it became clear that there were inconsistencies in the opinions on site and changes in the attitudes regarding the issues of integration, particularly ARVT in PHC. Therefore, it was decided:

- To change the current concepts of the Temirtau integration model to a strategy promoting a team approach for medical and psycho-social management of patients under antiretroviral therapy;

- In the future, this approach could be extended further to evolve a team approach for medical and psycho-social management of HIV-infected and AIDS patients in general;
- To conduct meetings with MOH representatives - Dr. Nadirova, RAC General Director - Dr. Khassanova, Deputy Head of Karaganda Oblast Health Department - Dr. Voshenkova on issues relating to the proposed team management approach for HIV/AIDS high-prevalent areas;
- To create a Technical Working Group in Karaganda under the Oblast Health Department, including representatives of AIDS and general health services (hospitals/polyclinics) and NGOs working with PLHIV;
- To hire a national consultant on part-time basis, to work together with the local Technical Working Group;
- To improve the skills of PHC physicians on HIV/AIDS prevention and reduction of stigma and discrimination, by adapting the training manual and module already completed in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

Meetings were held with the MOH and the Karaganda Health Department, following which a government order (*prikaz*) on the creation of a TWG in Karaganda oblast under the MOH was issued. The TWG will consist of representatives of MOH, AIDS service, Health Department, NGOs and international organization. The first expanded meeting of this TWG is scheduled at the beginning of July. The national consultant was chosen and hired. She will draft a strategy on integrating ARVT into PHC, develop an activities plan and develop necessary prikazes. All these documents will be presented at the first TWG meeting.

C. Kyrgyzstan

C.1. Strategy 1: Improve Stewardship of National HIV/AIDS Programs

During the reporting period a new Secretariat has been formed. It is housed within the Ministry of Health and under the restructured Country Multisectoral Coordination Committee (CMCC). The CAPACITY country team has been closely working with this newly formed Secretariat by providing technical support through its seconded specialists. Moreover, CAPACITY has provided technical support to the CMCC in developing the regulation documents for its six technical sectors and they were approved at the recently held CMCC meeting.

Support to National M&E of the State Program on AIDS

Which agency will be responsible for administering the National M&E system has not yet been determined. In addition, approval of the M&E regulation package is still pending. During the joint annual review (JAR) meetings held in May of the national program “Manas Taalimi” this issue has been raised by experts and put as one of the priority issues to be solved by JAR in September. Following to recommendations given at that meeting, Republican AIDS Centre and CAPACITY country team were requested to present the National M&E system package to MoH key officials and CMCC. The presentation of the M&E system has been appointed for the regular CMCC meeting to be held in late July.

Seconded Specialists

During the reporting period Seconded Specialists’ support to national leader included helping the new secretariat staff settle in and resume operation of the national coordination body. In addition to the work in the secretariat, the **M&E specialist** took the lead in team work on developing the curriculum and methodology for M&E specialists of the National Statistics Committee (NSC) and Ministry of Health. The CAPACITY project has provided financial support as well for this process. As a result this package of curriculum has been approved officially by the Ministry of Health and introduced in the post-graduate curriculum. The specialist has been nominated by the national leader to participate in the regional workshop held in Bulgaria aimed at strengthening national capacity in resource tracking analysis of the funds for HIV/AIDS programming. The participation at this workshop by the specialist will improve the data collection for UNGASS indicator # 1 which is one of the mandatory indicators of the National M&E system.

The **NGO liaison** continued his work on the promotion of civil society participation in the decision making process at CMCC as well. On behalf of the coordination bureau of AIDS servicing NGOs the specialist took the lead in a series of meetings for consolidating the national proposal for the GFATM round 8 on behalf of civil society. During the reporting period, the specialist also took an active part in a series of round table meetings and workshops devoted to the issues on consolidating efforts between civil society and government.

According to the request of the MoH/CMCC secretariat, the new **communication specialist** has been hired and seconded to the secretariat. However, after the three months of probation period and based on his performance evaluation he did not meet the basic requirements that

are indicated in his scope of work. The CAPACITY country office has started a new recruitment process for a communication specialist.

Coordination with Donors and Key Partners

The CAPACITY country team took part in a series of partners' and joint CMCC meetings devoted to the issues on approval of UNDP readjusted HIV/AIDS programmatic document, and approval by CMCC of the national proposals for the 8th round of GFATM.

C.2. Strategy 2: Educating and Empowering Vulnerable Populations

Capacity Building of ASOs

In May 2008, CAPACITY initiated and organized the partners' meeting to provide technical and financial assistance to ASOs, with the purpose to coordinate their efforts in this direction. Representatives of CARHAP, Soros Foundation Kyrgyzstan, GFATM PIU/HIV, AFEW and a number of local AIDS-service NGOs gathered together in the CAPACITY Bishkek office and shared their ideas on how to improve capacity building of ASOs for addressing their urgent needs. International partners as well shared information about their training activities to be carried out in the upcoming months. As a result, it was mutually agreed to exchange information on the trainers to be included into the nation-wide trainers' database, as well as to continue coordination of all the activities towards capacity building of ASOs.

Technical Assistance to TUMAR

During the reporting period, the CAPACITY country team carried out a policy dialogue with the MoH and other relevant agencies for the importation of the donated male and female condoms by USAID within the frame of technical support to AIDS servicing NGOs in the southern part of the country. After a great deal of negotiations with the MoH due to recently occurred issues related to humanitarian aid for Kyrgyzstan, a total of 1,087 000 condoms, both male and female, have been approved for importing to the country. Male condoms have already been distributed to two sites in Osh oblast that are implementing small scale prevention project TUMAR and female condoms are in the process of shipment to the country.

In June 2008, JSI/CAPACITY Regional Director along with CAPACITY country team fulfilled visits to TUMAR sites in Osh oblast. The purpose of the visits was to see the project implementation process, to meet with implementing partners and provide on going technical support.

Interventions with Vulnerable Youth

Bishkek (New Youth Power Center with NGO Intergel'po):

The Vulnerable Youth population at this site (District of Park Fuchik, NGO "Intergel'po") totals 4,000 by data of the District Department of Education. District college and university students will be the main target. The contact coverage goal of this program will be 2,400. The program duration is 12 month, and to date 4,035 vulnerable youth have been contacted. This Quarter:

- Peer education trainings: 312 (140 males, 172 females) vulnerable youth during 127 trainings
- Mini-sessions: 391 (192 males and 199 females) vulnerable youth during 39 mini sessions
- Alternative Activities: 241 vulnerable youth participated in alternative activities (English, Turkish, and Chinese Language Lessons, Computer club, Dance Course, Guitar)
- Youth Friendly Counseling: 221 referral vouchers to the friendly cabinet established by City AIDS Center were distributed among vulnerable youth during mini-sessions and outreach work. Clients of this cabinet can go through STI diagnosis and treatment, as well as VCT for HIV.

Non-CYPC interventions focused on Vulnerable Youth (BCC component of CSM)

Bishkek city: Leninski, Sverdlovski, Pervomaiski, administrative districts

The target vulnerable youth population in these site totals 92,388 (City Statistic State Board on quantity of vulnerable youth at age 15-24 living in mentioned administrative districts). Project to date, 60,893 (28,951 males and 31,942 females) vulnerable youth were contacted in the site (cumulative). This quarter:

- Peer education trainings: 3,158 (1,488 males and 1,670 females) vulnerable youth during 1,132 peer trainings
- TOT: 8 (5 males and 3 females) participated in 1 TOT
- Mini-sessions: 1,933 (967 males and 966 females) vulnerable youth during 104 mini-sessions
- Events: 434 (246 males and 188 females) vulnerable youth during 7 events
- Free Condoms distributed: 4,410

Pre- and post-test results of BCC among vulnerable youth

Location	Pre Test %	Post Test %
Bishkek	66	88

Increasing access to Condoms through Social Marketing

- 1,885,899 condoms were disseminated Project to Date.
- 515,748 condoms were disseminated during this year.

C.3. Strategy 3: Improve the Quality of HIV/AIDS Services

VCT

In June 2008, the CAPACITY country team has organized the first meetings of newly established Thematic Working Groups (TWG) on VCT, in Osh and Karasuu. These meetings have been preceded by preparatory work through needs assessment, drafting a VCT model description paper, establishing TWGs, and drafting normative and other relevant documents related to model implementation. As a result of the TWG meetings, it was agreed to pilot the VCT model with the elements of provider-initiated CT in ten health facilities of Osh oblast,

Osh city and Krarasuu rayon. Two local NGOs “Podruga” and “Parents against drugs,” which are both implementing the TUMAR Project, will also be involved. The model will be implemented during the period of June 2008 - February 2009. With technical support from CAPACITY project, TWG members have drafted an oblast-level Prikaz on piloting the VCT model and currently are in the process of its approval. As soon as the Prikaz is signed, the CAPACITY project will continue its technical assistance for further implementation of the model (design and implementation of information campaign, equipping the pilot facilities with IEC materials on HIV and VCT, training of consultants, monitoring process, etc.).

TB/HIV

Chui Oblast TB Center has applied to GFATM for its 8th round. The proposal consists of two main directions. One of them - strengthening HIV and TB services interaction in Chui Oblast. Chui Oblast was the pilot region where CAPACITY implemented its HIV/TB model during 2005-2007. Applying for the GF grant demonstrates willingness and devotion of the administration of Chui Oblast to continue and improve the activities started during the CAPACITY HIV/TB model implementation. If Chui Oblast is awarded the grant, it will be a good opportunity to not only improve HIV/TB services and care in the Oblast, but also advocate its scaling-up to the rest of the country. Although CAPACITY did not directly assist in the development of this proposal, it is because of previous CAPACITY support that Chui TB Center was motivated and capable to do so on its own. This is a great example of sustained skills, motivation, and if they receive the grant, finances.

C.4. Strategy 4: Improve Resource-Use to Integrate HIV/AIDS Services

Functional Analysis Study

Preliminary findings and recommendations of the functional analysis study conducted in end-February were disseminated, reviewed and agreed with the participating government HIV/AIDS and related service programs in a final workshop in Bishkek held on April 23. The final report with the findings and suggestions for improvements in better aligning HIV/AIDS institutions and actors to implement the national HIV/AIDS strategies has been completed.

Support for NHA HIV/AIDS and TB Sub-Account

An international workshop on NHA HIV/AIDS and TB sub-account, designed and finalized for Kyrgyzstan, was organized jointly by CAPACITY Project, Project HOPE TB, WHO Health Policy Analysis Project (HPAP) and the MOH during April 22-25. In addition to the local specialists from the HPAP, two international trainers from Abt Associates and one from WHO Euro conducted the workshop. A total of 22 participants representing, among others, Ministry of Health, Republican AIDS Centre, National Center of Phthiology (TB), Republican Center of Informatics and Epidemiology, Centre for Health Systems Development, PIU GFATM on AIDS and TB, Project HOPE and CAPACITY Project, had successfully completed the training program. These trained specialists will lead the future work on developing and analyzing the NHA HIV/AIDS and TB sub-accounts in Kyrgyzstan, with needed TA from CAPACITY.

D. Tajikistan

D.1. Strategy 1: Improve Stewardship of National HIV/AIDS Programs

Seconded Staff

During reporting period, the seconded specialists continued to provide technical assistance to the NCC and RAC. As mentioned before, Communication, M&E and NGO Liaison specialists participated in all activities concerned with development of the GFATM Round 8 grant application. All three specialists took an active part in CAPACITY's key programmatic activities described in this report.

The **Communication Specialist** continued promoting major communication tools - RAC monthly bulletins. As usual, key information and events were constantly reflected on the NCC website. Major events supported by the CAPACITY Project were also covered in the RAC monthly bulletin and posted on NCC web-site.

The Communications Specialist participated at the Regional National AIDS Spending Assessments (NASA) follow-up Workshop for Eastern Europe and Central Asia held in Sofia, Bulgaria (May 26 - 1 June).

The Specialist's progress can also be noted in updating the online CAPACITY database (organizations and grant sections).

The **M&E Specialist** conducted a 3-day monitoring visit at the Khujand TUMAR project according to the developed and approved monitoring plan. The M&E Specialist and Dr. Dodarbekov visited the Drop-in-Centers (DIC) and Trust points and met with representatives of implementing partners, including outreach and social workers. A report on the results of monitoring is being prepared.

The M&E Specialist continued to provide technical assistance to the work of the MoH TWG on the establishment of the National M&E System for HIV/AIDS, drug addiction and development of standards for anonymous service delivery in public and non- public health facilities. The model, including registration forms, instructions, and a classifier of anonymous services, was tested on narcology and HIV services in pilot areas. The meeting participants identified pilot sites for implementation and approbation of the model on anonymous registration of clients and provision of services. Results of the testing were assessed and the model was finalized according to the results. The model was approved by the MoH on June 06, 2008.

The M&E Specialist together with CDC, UNAIDS and RAC representatives discussed the M&E constraints faced during development of the UNGASS country report, and made the necessary changes in the SS questionnaires.

In the reporting period, the major input of the **NGO Liaison Specialist** was made in preparation and facilitating the implementation of the National Forum of HIV servicing NGOs. During April and May 2008, the NGO Liaison Specialist organized several meetings with the Organizational Committee of the Forum and provided technical assistance in the committee's work in developing Forum's goal and objectives, agenda, list of invitees, logistical issues, etc. The NGO Liaison Specialist interacted with PSI to ensure the inclusion and participation of their volunteers in the organization of the Forum. She had meetings with

AIDS service NGOs and provided technical assistance in the development of presentations, including the presentation on mechanisms for NGO rotation, election, and membership on the NCC. Being selected as a secretary of the Forum together with other Secretariat's members, she addressed all organizational issues at the Forum. After the Forum, the NGO Liaison Specialist supported the work of the credentials committee elected at the Forum by NGOs including finalization of the Forum's Resolution and other documents. Further inputs of the NGO Liaison Specialist are described under Strategy 2.

Strengthening NACM Regulatory Framework

CAPACITY provided support to the NCC secretariat to disseminate the NCC Operational Manual among partners and collect of their feedback. The inputs of the National AIDS service NGOs for a transparent process of electing NGOs into the NCC were also incorporated into the main document. The document was finalized and translated into Tajik.

Three-Ones Principles

Meetings were held on strengthening of the Three Ones Principles at city and oblast level. Several work meetings were conducted with UNAIDS and the NCC Secretary on development of further activities in this direction. With close involvement of the M&E Specialist, the results of the situation assessment held in 2007 were analyzed and summarized. According to this, it was agreed among partners involved that initially attention will be focused on strengthening the three ones principle in Khatlon Oblast and GBAO. In parallel it was decided to investigate the existing structures in the districts under national jurisdiction to improve coordination and response to HIV at this level.

Collaboration with Partners

CAPACITY had a meeting with Deputy Minister of Health in charge of HIV/AIDS issues and updated the MoH on project activities and plans. CAPACITY met with CAAP mid-term evaluation consultant, Sarah Thomsen. During the meeting CAPACITY shared information on its collaboration with CAAP and carried joint activities, and provided comments and recommendations. CAPACITY had a meeting with the American Red Cross and discussed the general HIV situation in the country and the CAPACITY project activities and achievements. CAPACITY met with newly appointed CARHAP National Coordinator and discussed further collaboration on different directions, including the Three Ones Principles at the oblast level. CAPACITY participated in a Round Table organized by USAID, where current health programs, challenges, and perspectives for the future potential USAID programs were discussed.

D.2. Strategy 2: Educating and Empowering Vulnerable Populations

AIDS Service NGO Forum

On June 3-4, 2008 the National Forum of AIDS service organizations was conducted. Initiated by civil society organizations, the Forum was supported by the CAPACITY project and co-sponsored by the Open Society Institute as well as UNDP and the Central Asian AIDS Project (CAAP). The goal of the Forum was to strengthen the role and effectiveness of activities implemented by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in response to the HIV

epidemic in the country through the integration of efforts and improvement of intra-sectoral and inter-sectoral interaction. The Forum was attended by the whole community of AIDS service organizations – 62 NGOs from different regions of Tajikistan – was also attended by senior governmental officials, the Ambassador of the USA in Tajikistan, representatives from the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Tajikistan, Republican, oblast, and city AIDS centers, Mass Media representatives, and international organizations. At the Forum, the AIDS service NGO community demonstrated their pro-activeness, enthusiasm, and motivation in discussing the issues related to improving interaction and collaboration among themselves, and between them and both national public organizations and international organizations. Civil society organizations had an opportunity to hear about best practices, lead open discussions, and work in small groups. As a result of the Forum, participants presented their group work and jointly made recommendations on each topic discussed, which was then reflected on the resolution of the Forum. In general, the Forum promoted better information and experience exchange between civil society organizations.

Civil Society Mobilization / Capacity Building among ASOs

The NGO Liaison Specialist continued serving as a focal point for NGOs and coordinated the provision of consultative and training support on institutional and organizational development issues by oblast level consultants/trainers upon the request of NGOs. In the reporting period, several consultations and mini-trainings were conducted with NGOs on different topics related to institutional and organizational development, proposal writing, specifics of working with vulnerable groups, etc in GBAO, Kulyab and Kurgantube of Khatlon oblast, and Sogd.

TA to Small Scale HIV Prevention Projects – TUMAR

In the reporting period the staff continued providing consultative and technical support to prevention model sites in Kurgantube and Khujand. During the visit of the CAPACITY Regional Director to Tajikistan in April 2008, both Khujand and Kurgantube sites were visited. Discussions were held with TUMAR project staff and beneficiaries, where feedback, difficulties, opinions, and impressions were shared. During the visit of Khujand site CAPACITY representatives participated at the Round table devoted to presentation of TUMAR project and results of the baseline survey to partners. This event was widely covered on mass media.

Collaboration with Partners

CAPACITY had a meeting with the newly appointed CARHAP National Coordinator and further collaboration was discussed, especially in the areas of NGO capacity building. CAPACITY met with ACT Central Asia and during the meeting both organizations shared information on their activities on civil society mobilization. On June 5-6, 2008, CAPACITY participated in a National seminar and forum on “Partnership of youth and adults” organized by UNFPA under its Y-PEER Project.

Interventions with Sex Workers

Dushanbe (Karabolo street, Disco Dousti, Disco Sitara, café Farahnoz)

The target sex worker population at these sites totals 4,000 and to date 2,872 sex workers have been contacted (cumulative). This quarter:

- Trainings: 113 sex workers in 17 peer trainings

- Mini-educational sessions: 201 sex workers in 63 mini sessions (Themes were HIV and AIDS, STI, Communication skills, Responsible behavior, and Condom Use);
- Free Condoms distributed: 34,610 condoms
- Brochures distributed: 1,140 educational brochures (Themes were HIV and AIDS, STI, Condom is my protection, Assess Your Own Risk);

Pre and Post Test Results of BCC among sex workers

Location	Pre Test %	Post Test %
Dushanbe	29	49

Interventions with Vulnerable Youth (BCC component of CSM)

Dushanbe city: micro districts ## 46,61,63, “Sahovat”, “Giprozem”, Sovetsky – 1, Sovetsky – 2, Diagnostika

The target vulnerable youth population in these sites totals 48,000 (City Statistic State Board on quantity of vulnerable youth at age 15-24 living in mentioned administrative districts). Project to date, 30,225 (18,185 males and 12,040 females) vulnerable youth were contacted in the site (cumulative). This quarter:

- Peer education trainings: 1,958 (1,440 males and 518 females) vulnerable youth during 532 peer trainings
- Mini-sessions: 1,371 (789 males and 582 females) vulnerable youth during 868 mini-sessions
- Events: 400 (240 males and 160 females) vulnerable youth during 2 events in target sites such as Movie nights, Action dedicated to healthy lifestyle and Discos.
- Free Condoms distribution: 386 condoms
- Brochures distribution: 2,771 educational brochures

Pre and Post Test Results of BCC among vulnerable youth

Location	Pre Test %	Post Test %
Dushanbe	65	97

Increasing access to Condoms through Social Marketing

- 1,220,877 condoms were disseminated Project to date.

D.3. Strategy 3: Improve the Quality of HIV/AIDS Services

TB and HIV Services Interaction

CAPACITY visited the City Health Center #10 and the City AIDS Center, where the TB/HIV model was implemented. On 14 April 2008, a *prikaz* of the City Health Administration was issued on improving the delivery of services for patients with TB/HIV, which authorizes the implementation of the TB/HIV Model in the CHC #10.

The TB/HIV M&E team conducted a monitoring exercise at the CHC #10 in April 2008. CAPACITY had a meeting with the TB/HIV monitoring team members to discuss the results

of this exercise. During these discussions, it became obvious that refresher trainings on TB/HIV, and particularly trainings on VCT for TB Specialists, are necessary. Discussions were then held with Republican AIDS Center specialists about developing a Module on VCT training for TB specialists and conducting these trainings in August - September. These trainings will be conducted in collaboration with the UNDP TB/HIV Coordinator.

In addition, CAPACITY provided technical assistance to the TB/HIV TWG coordinated by the GF PIU for the development of the draft TB/HIV strategic plan.

Collaboration with Partners

- CAPACITY had meeting with UNODC National Project Officer to discuss possible collaboration on the issue of Substitution Therapy.
- CAPACITY participated in the social event, devoted to World TB Day, organized by project HOPE with support of USAID and Global Fund.
- CAPACITY participated in a meetings of the TWG on TB/HIV.

D.4. Strategy 4: Improve Resource-Use to Integrate HIV/AIDS Services

Workshop on Mapping of HIV/AIDS and Related Services

In the reporting period extensive preparatory work was undertaken to promote the implementation of a functional analysis of current institutional structure roles and relationships on HIV/AIDS programs. In collaboration with the National Coordination Committee on HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria, the checklists/questionnaires were distributed and respective data was collected among all institutions of the Ministry of Health and other ministries implementing HIV/AIDS programs. On June 24th the first workshop was conducted with key stakeholders and partners including representatives from HIV/AIDS, blood transfusion, TB, Narcology, Dermato-venereology, SES, reproductive health, infectious diseases, primary health care services as well as the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Labor, and Ministry of Defense. Participants of the workshop presented activities and programs implemented by respective institutions and led active discussions on improving HIV/AIDS services, interactions, and coordination between different service providers, as well as the possibilities of integrating some HIV/AIDS services into primary health care. The results of the above exercises are currently being analyzed. The findings and recommendations are planned to be disseminated, discussed, and agreed upon during a final workshop to be held in August.

Reduction of HIV-related Stigma and Discrimination among PHC Staff

Discussions were held with concerned partners on developing/adjusting the module on reduction of stigma and discrimination for PHC workers. The provisional composition of the TWG on adjusting the module was defined.

E. Turkmenistan

E.1. Strategy 1: Improve Stewardship of National HIV/AIDS Programs

Strengthening NAPC Communications

Implementation of communication tool: This quarter, with assistance of CAPACITY, the National AIDS Prevention Center has started implementation of a communication tool – monthly information bulletin. Starting from April, after approval of the MoH, the information bulletin is being issued and is being widely disseminated among partners.

Communication specialist: CAPACITY Communication specialist continued collecting information for the NAPC database and promoted strengthening of information exchange among partners. On June 11, at the UNTG meeting, CAPACITY presented the concept of improving communications among partners. It is worth noting that all partners attending the meeting recognized the importance of strengthening communications among partners and have expressed readiness to support CAPACITY’s effort in this area.

Support for GFATM Round 8 Proposal Writing

CAPACITY participated in the CCM meeting devoted to writing a proposal to the GFATM Round 8 for the TB component. Following the CCM meeting, CAPACITY participated in several meetings on proposal development. CAPACITY has assisted in putting elements of HIV prevention into the proposal.

MCH Forum

CAPACITY participated in the 11th Annual CAR MCH Forum which was held in Ashgabat on April 8-9, 2008. Along with issues on maternal and child nutrition, the issue of quality of care and HIV and AIDS was on the agenda of the forum.

E.2. Strategy 2: Educating and Empowering Vulnerable Populations

Youth Center

In April, the Youth Center director and the CAPACITY country representative attended the study tour with PSI in Almaty to learn first hand the best practices for implementation of Youth Centers. After returning, the YC Director made a presentation on the study tour to the YC staff and volunteers to help build capacity for improved YC implementation. As of May, the psychologist, gynecologist, and dermatovenerologist have started providing counseling services to at-risk youth in Ashgabat. As of June, the YC volunteers began a summer outreach program for the country’s at-risk young people. HIV education activities are being held at the recreation facilities throughout the city every weekend. The YC outreach activities were covered by local media – the newspapers “Neutral Turkmenistan” and “Nesil”

During this quarter, the following activities were implemented and contacts were made:

- 129 Trainings with 523 (298 males and 225 females) ARY in Ashgabat;
- 6 on-site mini sessions covering 28 (7 males and 21 females) ARY in Ashgabat;

- 76 Condoms were distributed during sessions;
- 127 IEC materials and 42 condoms were distributed to ARY during trainings;
- 334 ARY attended mini-session during outreach work;
- 49 ARY received psychologist's counseling (19 males and 30 females);
- 34 ARY received gynecologist counseling (6 males and 20 females);
- 17 ARY received dermatovenerologist counseling (9 males and 8 females);
- 1,590 ARY participated in alternative to risky behavior activities (807- computes class, 72 - chess, 682 - table tennis, 29 - English class);

The total number of ARY contacted during this quarter was 2,362.

The following additional progress was made regarding the Youth Center:

- The Youth Center logo was finalized and was sent to the MoH and Youth Union for information. With the new logo, promotional materials such as T-shirts, baseball caps and key rings were issued.
- After approval of the questionnaire by the MoH, the baseline survey was launched.
- The Youth Center was visited by the State Department CAR Assistance Coordinator, Dean Fischer, USAID TM Country Representative Ashley Moretz, and USAID TM Health Program Manager Lena Samarkina.
- The YC staff was briefed about compliance with the USG family planning regulations – TIAHRT amendment and Mexico City guidelines and was provided with Russian copy of the above mentioned papers.
- A training module for the YC volunteers was adapted and translated into Turkmen. The design and text of IEC materials for the YC were finalized.

World Day against Drug Use and Illicit Drug Trafficking

In collaboration with the Information Center of the MoH, CAPACITY held a poster contest among students attending art school. The event was designed to be an educational event on HIV prevention for youth at the city disco.

Operational Development/Institutional Development Training

The plan of activities that was developed during the OD/ID training was finalized during this quarter. It was sent to the MoH for review and approval was subsequently received. Copies of the approved plan were sent to the trainers to start preparations for its implementation.

F. Uzbekistan

F.1. Strategy 1: Improve Stewardship of National HIV/AIDS Programs

Creating and Ensuring Functionality of a Unified Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) System of Country Activities for the Response to the HIV epidemic

The Republic of Uzbekistan follows the Three Ones Principle: National AIDS Coordination Committee (NACC) was established and has been functioning since 2003; a new National Strategic Program for the response to the HIV epidemic for 2007-2011 was approved by the NACC in July 2007, and the National Monitoring and Evaluation System was developed and approved in December/2007.

With the purpose to increase the national capacity to conduct M&E of the National Strategic Program implementation, CAPACITY supported an initiative of the Republican AIDS Center on training of head physicians/managers of regional AIDS centers. Participants of the training were acquainted with the national “Manual on monitoring and evaluation of the National Strategic Program.” Moreover, the participants studied/discussed tools and approaches for collection and analyses of information in accordance with national and program indicators.

Working Group (WG) on National Proposal Development for GFATM Round 8

In accordance with a MoH order, CAPACITY was included in the list of WG members on national proposal development for GFATM round 8. The CAPACITY Country Director advocated for the inclusion of “60 plus” indicators, a comprehensive package of prevention services for vulnerable groups and HIV/TB services interaction. All these suggestions were discussed by the WG and were accepted for the national proposal. Moreover, it is necessary to underline that CAPACITY’s suggestion on scaling up HIV/TB services interaction was included into both HIV and TB components of the proposal. The proposal was approved by NACC during the meeting held in June, 2008. CAPACITY also rendered technical assistance to national experts in proposal development.

Seconded Staff

During the reporting period, CAPACITY’s **Community Liaison Specialist** worked closely with national and international partners (NACC, RAC, CAAP) on community mobilization issues. Within the frame of the bilateral agreement with CAAP he was actively involved in the preparation of upcoming (July, 2008) CMS training on project proposal development for potential CAAP sub-recipients. In particular the Community Liaison Specialist was in charge of coordinating the following organizational and programmatic issues: selection of trainers, development of agenda and list of participants, drafting MoH order, and invitation letters for participants.

According to the MoH order, CAPACITY **M&E Specialist** was included in the list of WG members on national proposal development for the GFATM round 8 and was actively involved into WG activities. His main contribution was M&E development indicators for the national proposal based on national and program indicators.

Following a series of meetings on preparation of the first National Annual UNGASS Report that started in the previous reporting period, the M&E Specialist provided technical assistance to the Technical Working Group (TWG) on finalization of the report. During the meeting that was in April, TWG members discussed and considered the UNGASS report questionnaire filled by experts of the governmental, international organizations, and NGOs and provided their feedback. The report was done within the CRIS system, translated into English and submitted on June 2, 2008.

Furthermore, the M&E Specialist was the leading trainer for a 2-day M&E training of the head physicians/managers of regional AIDS centers held in April, 2008 in Tashkent.

In May 2008 Community Liaison and M&E Specialists together with other representatives of Republican and Oblast AIDS Centers participated in the training on data analyses, collected within the frame of Sentinel Surveillance conducted in 2007. The main purpose of the training was to train participants on national reports development on behavioral survey of target groups (IDU, sex workers, MSM, pregnant women and patients with STI symptoms) and preparation of draft review of Sentinel Surveillance results 2007. The statistical software Epi Info was used by participants for the data analysis. The presentations of the Sentinel Surveillance results will take place at the national M&E conference in August 2008.

During the reporting period, **CAPACITY Communications Specialist** within the frame of creating a sustainable communication system of interaction between partners on response to HIV epidemic took active part in the development of the final design of PARK/NACC web site (www.ccmpark.uz). Information prepared by him was included into the web site. He was also in charge of preparation and dissemination of PARK/NACC monthly bulletins. Moreover, the Communications Specialist has collected the following information:

- List of ASOs, including NGOs;
- List of programs and projects on HIV/AIDS in the country;
- List of ASOs and NGOs awarded with grants;
- List of developed and approved national protocols and training plans on different program directions of HIV/AIDS; and
- Information on trainings and consultants.

The Communications Specialist also took part in the WG activity on preparation of review of drug addiction in Uzbekistan.

F.2. Strategy 2: Educating and Empowering Vulnerable Populations

Mahalla Leaders Involvement to Increase Awareness of HIV Prevention and Reduce HIV Stigma and Discrimination Towards Vulnerable Groups among the General Population

Initial meetings with Mahalla leaders from different regions of the Uzbekistan indicated their interest and readiness to work in HIV prevention. However, it was recognized that to act as a main partner in the implementation of prevention programs, Mahalla leaders needed additional skills and knowledge on issues concerning prevention activities among the population. In this regard, CAPACITY assisted national partners in developing a training module for Mahalla leaders on HIV prevention and stigma and discrimination reduction towards vulnerable groups. This was approved by the RAC/MOH and the Republican

Mahalla Fund. Based on national partners request, CAPACITY provided TA to translate the training Module into Uzbek.

With the aim to ensure sustainability of these efforts CAPACITY initiated the development of a joint plan of action with national and international partners (“Health 2” Project/WB, RAC, Republican Mahalla Fund, Institute of Health/MOH and CAPACITY) on increasing the level of population awareness on HIV prevention with Mahalla involvement in 5 pilot regions of the country.

In May, 2008 under the framework of the Joint Plan, an orientation meeting for the representatives of Regional AIDS Centers, Regional branches of Mahalla Fund, and the Institute of Health was held in Tashkent. These organizations will be involved in HIV prevention activities at the regional level. The main goal of the meeting was to develop and accept regional Work Plans on joint activities. During the meeting the detailed regional implementation plans were developed and signed by representatives of partners. Participants also discussed a methodology of conducting an initial survey and improved their skills on working with an electronic database on entering data and processing the results of the initial survey. This database was developed and presented to the participants by CAPACITY’s IT Specialist.

As the next steps of the Joint Plan implementation, the following activities will be implemented:

- An initial evaluation of population awareness on HIV prevention in pilot regions;
- ToT for Mahalla leaders and specialists of the Institute of Health;
- Monitoring of HIV prevention activities among population; and
- Final evaluation of population awareness on HIV prevention in pilot regions.

Collaboration with local NGO “Social Initiatives Support Fund” (SISF)

Within the frame of a joint activity with SISF CAPACITY provided technical assistance for ToT entitled “Conducting educational activities among youth on HIV prevention and drug addiction reduction.” Participants of the training were active young people, representatives of local NGOs from 7 regions of Uzbekistan (Karshi, Samarkand, Ferghana, Namangan, Kokand, Andijan and Tashkent). During a 3-day training, participants improved their knowledge and skills on communication with the target group, youth at-high risk, on HIV prevention and drug addiction reduction issues. During the training they studied particularities of conducting public events as well.

Prepared trainers had an opportunity to apply gained knowledge and experience in conducting the action, “We are for healthy life style, we have no time for anything else!” which was held in a park in Tashkent. More than 1,500 young people at the age 15-25 took part in the action. Through interactive, informal methods the information on HIV problems, drug addiction and healthy life style was introduced to the participants. Action was widely covered by national mass media.

In July 2008, the regional trainers will participate in conducting similar actions in the regions of Uzbekistan which will be organized with technical assistance from CAPACITY.

Regional MARA Workshop

WHO Regional Office for Europe has organized the capacity building workshop “HIV/AIDS Prevention among Youth Including Youth At-High Risk” for health care providers (HCP) to deal with sex workers, MSM, IDU, as well as with the mainstream youth population. The workshop was held on June 20, 2008 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan and hosted by the WHO Tajikistan Office. The goal of the sub-regional workshop was to strengthen the technical capacity of key partners in countries to assist national programs to reach and deliver services for most-at-risk adolescents. New training materials aimed to help governments strengthen the abilities of HCP to respond to adolescents more effectively and with greater sensitivity recently developed by WHO were presented and discussed. Moreover, during the workshop all participants had an opportunity to share their experience, challenges, achievements and plans.

CAPACITY provided financial support to Anna Mogilnikova, CAPACITY/PSI Youth Programs Coordinator to participate in this workshop. During the event Ms. Mogilnikova had a unique opportunity to share best practices in the field of HIV prevention among youth in Uzbekistan with the colleagues from other countries and to improve skills in HIV prevention.

Interventions with Sex Workers

Tashkent (Chilanzar district)

The target sex worker population at this site totals 5,000 and to date 5,612 sex workers have been contacted (cumulative). This quarter:

- Mini-educational sessions: 264 sex workers in 168 mini sessions
- Free Condoms distributed: 1,406
- Brochures distributed: 1,037 (Themes were HIV and AIDS, STI; Condom is my protection, Access Your Own Risk)
- Medical referrals: 224 sex workers were referred to medical services and 72 received medical treatment for STI

Pre and Post Test Results of BCC among sex workers

Location	Pre Test %	Post Test %
Tashkent	50	95

Interventions with Vulnerable Youth (BCC component of CSM)

Tashkent city: M-Ulugbek, Mirabad, Yunusobod districts

The target vulnerable youth population in these site totals 134,549 (Republican Statistical Center of Uzbekistan, 2005 for quantity of vulnerable youth at age 15-24 living in above mentioned administrative districts). Project to date, 73,824 (38,293 males, 35,531 females) vulnerable youth were contacted in the site (cumulative). This quarter:

- Peer education trainings: 1,013 (543 males, 470 females) vulnerable youth during 210 peer trainings
- Mini-sessions: 7,291 (3,344 males, 3,947 females) vulnerable youth during 2,432 mini sessions
- Peer Education Event: 637 (241 males, 396 females) attended 4 events
- Condoms distributed: 4,152
- Brochures distributed: 7,768

Pre and Post Test Results of BCC among vulnerable youth

Location	Pre Test %	Post Test %
Tashkent	47	97

F.3. Strategy 3: Improve the Quality of HIV/AIDS Services

TWG on the Revision of the VCT Manual

In connection with the new strategic program for the response to the HIV epidemic in Uzbekistan for 2007-2011, the MoH developed a strategy to ensure adequate access to VCT. Under this strategy, the MoH initiated a revision of the existing national VCT Manual (developed with Global Fund TA) with the purpose to bring it to conformity with WHO VCT Protocols. CAPACITY in collaboration with WHO, provided technical assistance to the group of the national experts for Manual revision. The revised VCT Manual was distributed among national and international experts for the references. After receiving the references from national leading specialists and international partners the revised Manual will be submitted to the MoH for its consideration and approval.

Ensuring Sustainability of HIV/TB Activities in Uzbekistan

Since July 2005, the HIV/TB services interaction model has been implemented in Uzbekistan. Significant work on TB detection, registration, treatment and prevention in HIV patients is being conducted.

With the purpose to ensure the sustainability of HIV and TB services interaction, the multilateral agreement (TMA, project GFATM on TB and CAPACITY/USAID) on development and incorporation of the training course into Tashkent Medical Academy (TMA) curriculum was signed. After development and successful approbation of the training course in TMA within the 2007-2008 academic year, the MoH initiated scaling-up and incorporation of the training course into curriculums of all medical institutes of Uzbekistan.

According to the MoH order, the GFATM TB project and CAPACITY rendered technical assistance to conduct a series of trainings on the preparation of the regional medical institute's teachers inclusion of the TB/HIV course into the curriculum. The training was conducted in Samarkand (for Samarkand and Bukhara Medical Institutes), in Andijan (for Andijan Medical Institute and Ferghana branch of TMA), and in Urgench for Urgench branch of TMA and Nukus branch of Tashkent Pediatric Medical Institute. During the trainings the participants studied particularities of HIV/TB infection diagnostics, clinical course and treatment in HIV patients, and ART and VCT implementation approaches. As a result 39 teachers from chairs of infectious diseases, skin and venereology diseases, GP and TB were trained.

Beginning September 2008 the course will be incorporated into curriculums of all medical institutes of the country.

F.4. Strategy 4: Improve Resource-Use to Integrate HIV/AIDS Services

Implementation of Partners' Joint Plan on Integration of HIV/AIDS Services into PHC

With regard to PHC system reform in Uzbekistan, PHC providers are to carry out more duties on population sanitation and prevention of various infections. Thus, active PHC specialists' efforts are focused on prevention and reduction of the most dangerous diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, STI, tuberculosis, and drug addiction.

CAPACITY rendered technical assistance to the WG of national experts established according to the MoH Order on development of the Training Module for PHC providers. The training module will cover the issues of HIV prevention and reducing HIV stigma and discrimination towards vulnerable groups. In March 2008, the WG successfully completed its work. After presentation to the leading national experts and receiving positive references, the training module was approved by TIAME/MoH. Within the frame of joint plan realization (Health – 2/WB, CAPACITY/UZ), the training module is planned to be incorporated into curriculums of TIAME in August 2008 and GP Training Centers in September 2008. According to the order of the MoH, two 4-day ToTs are planned to be conducted in July 2008. As the next step the team of regional trainers will be responsible for conducting trainings for PHC providers in all regions of Uzbekistan.