

**Quarterly Report
April - June 2009**

Institutionalizing Best Practices in Maternal and Child Health

USAID Contract No.: GHS-I-00-07-00002-00
Order No.: 04

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I. Outline of project purpose and project approach

John Snow, Inc. (JSI) and the Institute for Family Health, Information and Research (IFH-IR) are pleased to present this third Quarterly Report for the Institutionalizing Best Practices in Maternal and Child Health (IBP-MCH) Project, covering the period April - June 2009. The IBP-MCH Contract (GHS-I-00-07-00002-00) was executed on September 30, 2008. The overall goal of the project is to decrease maternal and infant mortality in Russia by improving access to, and use of, high quality reproductive health (RH) and maternal and child health (MCH) services in target federal districts through the introduction and replication of international best practices to improve birth outcomes and maternal health.

While the IBP-MCH Project continued its administrative start up activities during the third quarter of implementation, technical start up has been delayed. Nevertheless, the team has continued to move forward as completely as possible under the current circumstances, specifically by planning activities and developing tools that are not directly related to the project deliverables pending approval.

II. Summary of significant events during reporting period

Finalization and Signing of subcontract with Institute for Family Health Information and Research (IFH-IR): The IBP-MCH team went to great lengths to produce a subcontract that will allow the project to fund IFH-IR's activities in accordance with both USAID regulations and obligations to the Russian Federation. To this end, the IBP-MCH management team sought legal advice from several sources, and ended up realigning the project budget. These efforts culminated in a signed subcontract on June 1, 2009.

Delayed Implementation: On June 5, 2009, in accordance with FAR Part 52.249-14 "Excusable Delays" incorporated into the IBP-MCH contract, JSI notified the USAID Contracting Officer of delayed implementation of contractual obligations. USAID has delayed the approval of the IBP-MCH project deliverables, due to the challenging new dynamic of the Ministry of Health in Russia. Without deliverable approval from the USAID COTR, JSI has not progressed in programmatic work. The deliverables have been submitted to USAID but are awaiting approval include the Life of Project Implementation Plan, List of Proposed Regions within Federal District Levels, and the Proposed list of Partner Institutes at the Federal District Level.

Administrative Activities: The IBP-MCH team and project continued to grow, with the following administrative activities taking place during the quarter:

- A new Power of Attorney was established for Chief of Party Natalia Vartapetova
- 9 additional local staff were hired on a part time basis
- A contract for renting additional office space for the project was signed
- Internet and telephone connections were installed in the new office space
- Furniture including desks, office chairs, bookcases and a water cooler were acquired for the new office
- Anna Karpushkina was formally hired part time as IFH-IR director
- A Bank account was set up for IFH-IR
- An origin waiver request was submitted to USAID for the purchase of computer equipment
- The management team began work on an Operations Manual

The project is well positioned to implement activities rapidly.

III. Status of activities of project tasks

IFH-IR have written three letters to MOHSD at their request explaining activities under MCHI I and MCHI II projects, previous IFH collaboration with MOHSD under former authorities of the Ministry, and planning activities for the IBP-MCH project. These letters were presented to USAID in advance and the approved letters were sent to MOHSD. The MOHSD officials requested all materials for health providers developed within the USAID projects to evaluate them. IFH sent the materials in June. After that MOHSD sent all these materials to the Federal Obstetrics, Gynecology and Perinatology Center named after V.Kulakov. The MOHSD officials expected to have a conclusion from the Center in September. After that they will invite IFH-IR for a meeting to discuss possibility of political support.

IV. List of Major activities planned for next quarter

- The IBP-MCH team is planning to come to an agreement with the MOHSD on work plans and finalize the selected regions for the Project.
- Complete furnishing of new office space, including computers.
- Complete hiring of IBP-MCH technical staff.