

Tajikistan

ZDRAVPLUS COUNTRY PROFILE

The USAID-funded ZdravPlus Project in Tajikistan supports Government reform efforts by providing technical assistance and training in health reform, health financing, family medicine, and pharmaceutical policy. Initial training for doctors and nurses as primary health care personnel in partnership with ORA (Orphans, Refugees Aid) International has resulted in plans to develop a family medicine training center in Dushanbe. ZdravPlus also provides grants for community health initiatives and helps develop health promotion campaigns.

Policy Environment for Health Reform

In 1998, the Government of Tajikistan adopted a National Program of Health Care Reform. The reform strategy is comprehensive and aims to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of health care throughout the system while placing renewed emphasis on preventive health and primary health care. The strategy further aims to strengthen management skills, reform health care financing, create incentives for innovation and health worker performance, encourage privatization, and strengthen pharmaceutical policy and the pharmaceutical sector.

The government reform strategy is supported through the WHO-financed health reform unit housed within the Ministry of Health – the Somoni Group. The Somoni Group, composed of innovative medical and health system professionals, works to coordinate international donors working in the health sector to implement the reform strategy and make concrete steps in rolling out health reforms to all the oblasts of Tajikistan. A World Bank loan was designed to improve the quality and efficiency of primary health care service delivery in select pilot sites and an Asian Development Bank loan provides financing for medical equipment and supplies, as well as training for health workers. The Aga Khan Foundation also plays an important role in providing clinical training and health systems development, primary in the oblast of Gorniy Badakhshan.

ZdravPlus Implementation Strategy

ZdravPlus has been working in Tajikistan since 2000 in partnership with the Somoni Group. Through a cooperative agreement with ORA (Orphans, Refugees Aid) International, ZdravPlus provides technical assistance, training,

and mentoring to support the government health reform program. To date the focus has been to provide clinical retraining and mentoring in primary health care to Tajik doctors and nurses by western-trained family physicians working with ORA International. In March 2002, the Tajik Ministry of Health approved the ZdravPlus project strategy for working in the areas of family medicine, health systems development, and population involvement activities at the national level.

Developing Family Medicine

ZdravPlus and ORA have trained a number of physicians in family medicine. The next step in developing family medicine in Tajikistan is to establish a Family Medicine Training Center (FMTC) in Dushanbe. The FMTC retraining program for primary health care physicians will enhance their clinical knowledge and skills, as well as their ability to better respond to the population's health needs.

The training program will start with a Training of Trainers (TOT) course in fall of 2002. Twelve trainers will enter an 11-month TOT at the newly established FMTC. The FMTC is located in Polyclinic #8 and is a joint venture of ZdravPlus/ORA, the Ministry of Health, the Post-Graduate Institute, the Medical Academy, and Polyclinic #8. Trainers attending the course will be competitively selected from the faculty of the Post-Graduate Institute and the Medical Academy, as well as from the oblasts, and will receive training from the ZdravPlus/ORA family doctors. Upon

Tajikistan at a Glance

- Capital: Dushanbe
Population: 6.2 million
Area: 143,100 sq. km
- GDP (US\$, millions): 1,870
Gross National Income Per Capita: —
Health Expenditure as % GDP: 6%
- Annual Population Growth Rate: 2.4%
Total Fertility Rate: 3.3
Life Expectancy at Birth: 69
Infant Mortality Rate: 20
Maternal Mortality Rate: 120

World Bank World Development Report 2001



The USAID-funded ZdravPlus Project provides technical assistance and training to improve the health of Central Asian populations by improving health delivery systems

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graduation from this TOT course, the new family medicine trainers will return to their home oblast to serve as qualified trainers.

Health Systems Development

The Somoni Health Reform Plan provides a broad framework for implementation of health reform and health systems development throughout Tajikistan. To support this plan, major ZdravPlus activities will include:

- Building local capacity and disseminating information about broad health finance reforms to all levels of the health system. ZdravPlus will support and provide technical assistance to the World Bank and Somoni Health Reform Teams to develop products and training materials to provide training to oblast and rayon level health staff, who will then extend the training to health providers. Training will be provided on health reform and health financing, health information systems, and pharmaceuticals and drug policies.
- Developing a broad health financing strategy, establishing geographic resource allocation mechanisms, developing additional sources of health sector funding, introducing new provider payment systems, formalizing population cost-sharing, and financial planning and determination of the guaranteed benefits package.
- Providing technical assistance to the Ministries of Health and Finance in implementing funds flow mechanisms and new provider payment systems for hospitals and primary health care in pilot sites.

Community Health and Population Involvement Activities

ZdravPlus believes that an important component of health reform is the involvement of the community in the process. It is important that the population understands their health rights and responsibilities and that they are empowered to address particular health needs in their communities. To help foster the population's involvement in these two areas, ZdravPlus

is supporting various health promotion campaigns and a small grants program in Tajikistan. The small grants program, to be implemented by ZdravPlus partner Counterpart Consortium provides small grants (up to \$2,500) to community organizations undertaking projects designed to improve the health status of the population in their community.

Program Successes in Tajikistan

Family Medicine Training

ZdravPlus and ORA have provided a number of training courses for Tajik physicians and nurses on family medicine and general practice. Participants to date have included 55 physicians from throughout Tajikistan, 65 physicians from Dushanbe, and 80 medical students. This training course includes lectures and practical hands-on seminars. Participants receive a Russian version of John Murtaugh's "General Medicine," a Tajik version of "Where There is No Doctor," and a basic diagnostic kit containing a stethoscope, blood pressure cuff, and otoscope during the training.

ZdravPlus has provided training for nurses in Dushanbe, Kojand, and Kurgan Tepe and training nursing trainers at the Republican Nursing Center at the national Post-Graduate Medical Institute. ZdravPlus also is contributing to the development of a four-year undergraduate nursing curriculum. The Ministry of Health is approving the training-of-trainers and retraining program for nursing, as well as the undergraduate curriculum.

Building Capacity of the Ministry of Health

ZdravPlus is providing capacity building and technical assistance in health financing and management to the Ministry of Health to better leverage health sector loan resources, including working closely with counterparts to develop financial analysis of the rationalization plan. This assistance included a recent study tour for high-level MOH officials to learn how primary health care is organized and financed in the United Kingdom.

For more information

Office in Kazakhstan

39 Begalina Street
Almaty, Kazakhstan, 480100
Tel: (3272) 915-775, 919-433
Fax: (3272) 919-409
E-mail: office@zplus.kz

Office in Kyrgyzstan

1 Togolok Moldo Street
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan 720000
Tel: (996-312) 663-816, 663-708
Fax: (996-312) 661-024
E-mail: abt_bish@infotel.kg

Office in Uzbekistan

16 Bozbozor Street
Tashkent, Uzbekistan 700007
Tel: (998-71) 169-1490, 169-2211
Fax: (998-71) 169-1492
E-mail: abt@zdravplus.uz

Office in Tajikistan

155 Rudaki #6
Dushanbe, Tajikistan
Tel: (992-372) 243-347
Tel: (992-372) 218-244
E-mail: zdrav@tjinter.com

Office in Turkmenistan

c/o Central Tuberculosis Hospital
3 Bikrovinskaya Street
Ashgabad, Turkmenistan 744015
Tel: (993-12) 344-548
E-mail: jmaleski@online.tm