



CAPACITY

CENTRAL ASIAN PROGRAM ON AIDS CONTROL IN VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

QUARTERLY TECHNICAL REPORT
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by

JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc. (JSI)

and subcontractors:

**Abt Associates, Boston University, Howard University,
International HIV/AIDS Alliance, and
Populations Services International (PSI)**

I. Introduction:

This quarter was marked by the establishment of the new National Coordinating Committee (NCC) in Tajikistan. Like the CMCC in Kyrgyzstan, the NCC is supra-ministerial and is supposed to serve as the national steward for the National AIDS Program in that country. CAPACITY looks forward to providing support to the NCC through the technical working groups (TWG) from now forward. Seconded staff, now working with the RAC will soon start working as members of the TWGs to help make their operations most productive.

CAPACITY continues to wait for registration in Uzbekistan. Operations there have slowed, but not stopped due to the fact that we are still not registered there. Registration has not been rejected, and that is a good sign.

CAPACITY's work in the area of TB and HIV has been recognized internationally by the acceptance of our abstract to be presented at the Global Health Council's annual conference. In addition, the Global Public Health journal, a peer review journal, invited CAPACITY to submit a paper for consideration for publication, based on the abstract. CAPACITY will submit the paper next quarter.

CAPACITY continues to emphasize the need for participation and collaboration with all stakeholders. We now have signed MOUs with four of five countries in the region, and negotiations are ongoing with Turkmenistan. An MOU was also signed with the CAAP project of the World Bank. Meetings with the CARHAP project of DFID, Project HOPE, AFEW, UNICEF, etc. were held to build collaboration and avoid overlap. CAPACITY has and will continue to make this collaboration a strong part of the project.

Finally, as part of the 60 Plus approach, CAPACITY designed model HIV prevention packages in three countries for IDUs and sex workers. CAPACITY also designed the civil society mobilization strategy. These two components of the 60 Plus approach make up the backbone and the delivery mechanism of the approach. During the upcoming quarters, CAPACITY will continue to develop these components and mobilize resources to make them operational.

II. Programmatic Progress

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

A.1. Regional

Monthly Bulletin

CAPACITY continued to issue the Monthly Bulletin from the regional office every month. The Monthly Bulletin serves the purpose of informing the wide range of stakeholders throughout the CAR on CAPACITY's activities and progress in the region.

Seconded staff orientation

CAPACITY held a regional orientation meeting for the CAPACITY Seconded Specialists in Almaty. The overall goal of this meeting was to prepare CAPACITY Seconded Staff to start working with the National AIDS Coordination Mechanisms (NACM). During this meeting,

Monitoring and Evaluation, Communication, and NGO Liaison Specialists were trained on key aspects of HIV/AIDS, responses to the epidemics, the CAPACITY Project and its strategies and information about CAPACITY's role in M&E, Communications, and Civil Society Mobilization. As follow-up, one-day country-level meetings were held with participation of national AIDS authorities and other counterparts.

An abstract was submitted to the Eastern Europe and Eurasia conference for presentation in Moscow in May 2006 on the subject of staff secondment.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

CAPACITY participated in numerous meetings with various partners: CDC, CARHAP, CAAP, Global Fund trying to develop joint activities and cooperate in the area of M&E strengthening. As the result, together with CARHAP (DfID) and CAAP (World Bank), CAPACITY decided to organize and finalize Terms of Reference for the Joint M&E Mission to Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan which should take place in the next quarter.

An abstract was submitted to the international AIDS conference for presentation in Toronto in August 2006 on the subject of Monitoring and Evaluation support provided to NACM by CAPACITY.

CAPACITY building of PIU for grants selection

An abstract was submitted to the Eastern Europe and Eurasia conference for presentation in Moscow in May 2006 on the subject of capacity building of PIU for grants selection.

Participatory Approach and Collaboration

An abstract was submitted to the Eastern Europe and Eurasia conference for presentation in Moscow in May 2006 on the subject of CAPACITY's participatory approach and emphasis on collaboration to strengthen national efforts against HIV.

A.2. Kazakhstan

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signing

The MOU between Kazakhstan Ministry of Health and USAID on behalf of CAPACITY was signed by Mr. Erbolat Dossaev, the Minister of Health of Kazakhstan, and Mr. Christopher Crowley, Regional Mission Director of USAID/Central Asia on 7 March 2006 in Astana.

Seconded Staff

NGO Liaison Officer – The second round of candidates' evaluation and selection was successfully completed with hiring Rysaldy Demeuova.

Communications Specialists – The recruitment process was implemented and candidates for the final interview were short listed. Hiring of a specialist is in process.

Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist – After selection of the final candidate and signing of the MoU with the Ministry of Health of Kazakhstan, Ekaterina Bumburidi was hired as the M&E Specialist.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Together with CDC CAPACITY co-organized training on the on the new sampling technique to be used for the HIV sentinel surveillance for oblast AIDS-Center epidemiologists.

A.3. Kyrgyzstan

Seconded Staff

During this quarter, the country office conducted a number of separate and joint meetings with Dr. Isakova, Director of the AIDS Unit and Dr. Shapiro, Director of the RAC to discuss and improve the role and scope of work of the Seconded Staff in strengthening both the AIDS Unit and the RAC. The RAC showed interest in using the capacity of seconded staff for its benefit but has not yet made a formal request for assistance. Dr. Isakova provided her comments and recommendations to improve CAPACITY's work in this area. The recommendations were useful in the context of the overall Secondment Strategy review by the CAPACITY Regional office.

At the same time, the country office, with Dr. Isakova and responsible Regional Specialists conducted the first performance evaluations of all three seconded specialists upon their completion of three months of activities with the following outcomes:

- **M&E Specialist:** Excellent job to date. Recommended extension of the temporary employment contract for another three months.
- **NGO Liaison Specialist:** Good job to date. Recommended extension of the temporary employment contract for another three months.
- **Communications Specialist:** Excellent job to date. She was offered a new employment contract, but for personal reasons, she had to terminate her employment with the CAPACITY Project and was not able to accept. The Communication Specialist position was re-posted and recruitment has begun.

Support to Development of Third National HIV/AIDS Program

The country office program team and seconded staff participated in the meetings of the CMCC technical sectors to discuss the Third National HIV/AIDS Program, including National M&E Plan and Indicators. On March 29, 2006, the program was presented to the donor community at the special meeting of CMCC. At the moment, the program is with the Prime-Minister office and is expected to be approved by the end of April 2006.

Collaboration with Partners

CAPACITY staff held coordination meetings with the GFATM Portfolio Manager and PIU/HIV Manager to discuss the process of the 2nd phase of the GFATM grant, and with CAAP (World Bank) and CARHAP (Dfid) representatives to discuss joint M&E activities in Kyrgyzstan. During the meeting with CAAP and CARHAP it was agreed to conduct a joint Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop on M&E in March. Country office representatives also participated in regular USAID Health Partners Meetings where partners exchanged information on their activities. On 17 March in Bishkek, CAAP and CAPACITY signed a Memorandum of Understanding. Joint work plans and operational agreements will be developed in the next quarter.

Monitoring and Evaluation Training of Trainers

The first session of M&E training for the National M&E expert group was conducted on March 27-30 at the CAPACITY office. This is the joint event by CAPACITY and the AIDS Unit. During this training, experts received all necessary information about the main international M&E documents, examples of the M&E systems in other countries, discussed National indicators and possible data collection tools. As a result, there is a team of 15 M&E expert specialists on the national level who will be involved in monitoring of the third national program on HIV prevention for 2006-2010.

A.4. Tajikistan

Seconded Staff

In accordance with the CAPACITY secondment plan and MoU all three specialists: Ms. Zulfiya Tilloeva, NGO Liaison, Mr. Svyatoslav Etimad, Communication Specialist, and Ms. Vera Saidova, M&E Specialist, started their work with NACM during the reporting quarter. In order to ensure smooth functioning of Seconded Staff within NACM the following regional and country-level meetings were arranged:

- Regional Orientation Meeting (6 -7 Feb 06, Almaty). Goal - to prepare CAPACITY Seconded staff to start working with NACMs. Objectives were to:
- Country Level Planning Meeting (20 Feb 06, Dushanbe). Goal - building up joint CAPACITY & NACM Team at the Country Level. Objectives were to:
 - a. Brief the seconded staff on Country AIDS services
 - b. Orient the seconded staff on activities of international stakeholders present in the country
 - c. Introduce the seconded staff to the National strategic plans and programs
 - d. Discuss the needs for 60 Plus implementation including Community Mobilization
 - e. Initiate developing of working plans for the CAPACITY seconded team in compliance with those of RAC.

At the country level meeting, seconded specialists discussed their work plans with relevant representatives of RAC and NCC Secretariat. It was decided to emphasize strong interaction between the seconded specialists and the NACM members through Technical Working Groups to be established within NACM. As a result of these meetings each Seconded specialist developed work plan agreed with NACM and CAPACITY Country and Regional Offices.

Implementation of the secondment plan required an operational agreement between CAPACITY and the NACM. Therefore a Staff Secondment Operational Agreement outlining the rights, obligations, and contributions of each organization in the implementation of the joint staff secondment was developed and signed between the CAPACITY project and RAC.

Development of National Strategic Plan

Since the National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS expired in 2006, partners started the development of the new plan. As a first step in the process, national consultations on Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Care, and Support were conducted jointly by NACM,

UNAIDS and WHO on 27 Jan 06. CAPACITY provided technical assistance to National Experts for the preparation of a situation analysis and participated in the national consultations, advocating for 60 Plus coverage of vulnerable populations. Among measures to be taken CAPACITY proposed to include development and implementation of civil society mobilization, development of unified methodology (determination of coverage, package of services, M&E), coordination and transparency of grant mechanisms.

Interaction with NCC Secretariat

CAPACITY started active collaboration with the newly recruited NCC Secretariat. Secretariat representatives took active part in CAPACITY events, including Round Table and Session of TWG on HIV/TB interaction, meeting on civil society mobilization. In lieu of forthcoming secondment of staff to Secretariat CAPACITY at the request of Secretariat shared with it the Secondment Plan and Terms of Reference of the Seconded staff. NCC Secretariat included collaboration with CAPACITY on M&E, Communication and Civil Society issues into the draft of its workplan. NCC Secretary was involved in the discussion of the draft MoU between CAPACITY and WB CAAP project.

A.5. Turkmenistan

MOU Negotiations

Negotiations took place with the Ministry of Health for an MOU between it and CAPACITY. CAPACITY also began preparations for a trip to Ashgabat in the next quarter with the intent of attempting to set up operations there.

A.6. Uzbekistan

Strengthening NACM

The CAPACITY Project/Uzbekistan continued to participate in regular CCM Management Group and RAC meetings. During this reporting period, CAPACITY/Uzbekistan took active part in one CCM Management Group meeting, where the results of the work of evaluation committee of Global Fund sub-grantees, the procedures of CCM activities, preparation to the country consultation on universal access and others were discussed.

National Strategic Program

The CAPACITY Project/Uzbekistan actively participated in weekly meetings on evaluation of Strategic Program on Response to HIV/AIDS Epidemic in Uzbekistan for 2003-2006. At these meetings, such issues as Evaluation Plan, major stakeholders' participation in the evaluation process, evaluation tools and identifying the organizations for providing the evaluation were discussed.

Report on CAPACITY activities in 2005 and Plan for 2006 for UNAIDS and RAC

According to UNAIDS request, CAPACITY/Uzbekistan team provided the report on all project activities in 2005 and plans for 2006. The similar report was submitted to RAC for its usage in the evaluation of National Strategic Program.

Regional Orientation Meeting for the CAPACITY Seconded Staff

Within the reporting period, seconded specialists on M&E and Communications were actively involved into the work of NACM, in particular into evaluation of National Strategic Program, preparation of various reports and required documentation for CCM meetings, etc. Also, the seconded specialists from Uzbekistan took part in the CAPACITY Regional Orientation Meeting in Almaty where they received major information regarding the CAPACITY Project strategies, as well as overall information on HIV epidemics and the role of partner organizations in fighting AIDS all over Central Asia.

National Consultation on Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support” in Uzbekistan

CAPACITY Project/Uzbekistan participated in the Conference on “National Consultation on Universal Access to HIV Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support” in Uzbekistan. The main purpose of the Conference was to evaluate the current situation and preparation of activities to provide universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support for the people living with HIV.

Seconded Staff

In January, Mr. Akmal Makhamatov joined the republican AIDS Center of Uzbekistan as Communications Specialist.

B. Strategy 2: Educating and Empowering Vulnerable Populations

B.1. Regional

Civil Society Mobilization Strategy

- CAPACITY 60 Plus Approach consists of three components: model development to test and determine the necessary components of the minimum comprehensive package of preventive services, community mobilization to implement the package on a broad scale, and resource mobilization to fund the scaled-up implementation.
- A draft framework for CAPACITY’s Civil Society and Resource Mobilization for scaled-up implementation of preventive services was distributed among the national and international partners. Comments from the partners were received for the document, which will be incorporated in the framework.
- The goal of the CAPACITY community and resource mobilization strategy is to build organizational, institutional, and programmatic capacity among NGOs and civil society, in order to mobilize a broad geographic scale-up of successful models of preventive services among vulnerable populations, specifically IDUs and sex workers.
- To achieve the goals of the mobilization strategy, CAPACITY will facilitate the following activities:
 - Implement assessment of community organizations’ capacity in order to select and motivate appropriate organizations in four countries of Central Asia to participate in CAPACITY’s mobilization strategy;
 - Develop umbrella models to support NGOs and AIDS service organizations to coordinate large numbers of CBOs to integrate HIV/AIDS related prevention, care, and treatment services and scale-up interventions and activities;

- Develop scale-up strategy jointly with selected NGOs to achieve broad geographic coverage of IDUs and sex workers with minimum comprehensive packages of HIV/STI prevention services through strengthening capacity of existing CBOs and the creation of new CBO networks;
- Capacity development of NGOs, government AIDS service organizations, and civil society , including PLHA networks;
- Project proposal and work plan development with selected NGOs and government AIDS service organizations;
- Fund-raising among donors to support scale-up activities by NGOs and CBOs;
- Formation of country-level working groups on the 60 Plus Strategy;
- Monitoring and Evaluation of and scale-up activities; and
- Scale-up of HIV prevention interventions by the CBOs.
- Series of meetings with civil society representatives are being conducted for selecting organizations that will take part in the mobilization.

Increasing availability of Condoms

386,460 units of condoms were exported to Tajikistan. 502,652 units of condoms were disseminated during the quarter. For comparison, 948,608 units of condoms were disseminated during 1st quarter 2005. PSI CAR implemented Quarter Cost Share MBO for 92%. 2 countries (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) were absent in Sales procedure (see report below by countries).

B.2. Kazakhstan

Development of the prevention models

Two models on HIV prevention for IDUs with 60 Plus coverage of minimum comprehensive package of services were developed in two sites of KZ – Acsu, Pavlodar Oblast, through the NGO and Almaty city through the governmental organizations. Proposals will be formatted according to donor requirements and submitted for funding over the next few months.

Civil Society Mobilization

Ten oblasts were selected in Kazakhstan for implementation of community mobilization strategy: Almaty city and the oblasts of Almaty, Jambyl and Aktybinsk in South Kazakhstan, Atyrau and Akmola in West Kazakhstan, and Karaganda and Pavlodar in North Kazakhstan.

Meetings were conducted with representatives of NGOs and AIDS centers in Almaty city and the oblasts of Almaty, and South Kazakhstan oblasts to select the most active NGOs that will work for mobilization of civil society for increased coverage of vulnerable populations with prevention activities. The Republican AIDS center took part in the organization of the meetings. Remaining oblasts will hold similar meetings during the next quarter.

During the meetings NGO representatives supported the development of the “umbrella” model in oblasts, as well as formation of the Thematic Working Groups with representation of major partners at oblast level. Candidates for the role of umbrella organizations were nominated.

Monitoring and Evaluation

CAPACITY successfully negotiated with the Pavlodar Oblast AIDS Center for a combination of baseline survey for the CAPACITY Prevention Models and annual HIV sentinel surveillance survey. Protocol for the survey is developed and is now being finalized.

Interventions with Sex Workers

Almaty (Saina, Seiphullina and Auezova streets)

The target sex worker population at this sites totals 3,000, and, to date, 2,960 sex workers have been contacted (cumulative). This quarter:

- Trainings: 969 sex workers during 51 trainings
- Mini-educational sessions: 430 sex workers (Themes were HIV and AIDS, STI, Communication skills, Responsible behavior, and Condom Use)
- Condoms distributed: 3,884
- Brochures distributed: 3,660 (Themes were HIV and AIDS, STI, Condom is my protection, Access Your Own Risk)
- Trainings of Trainers (TOT): 8 participants to become outreach workers during 1 TOT (3 were chosen to join the outreach team making a total of 9 outreach workers in Almaty)
- Edu-tainment events: 34 participants in 1 event (Joint activity between CAPACITY/PSI and City AIDS Centre focusing on HIV/AIDS, STI prevention, and condom use).

Interventions with Vulnerable Youth

CAPACITY Youth Power Center (CYPC) in Almaty (Rabochii poselok).

The CAPACITY Youth Power Center was opened this past quarter in Almaty. An opening ceremony was held and attended widely by mass media and by partner stakeholders. There was a tremendous interest among partners to collaborate on issues related to vulnerable youth.

The target of vulnerable youth population at this site totals 6,073 and to date 1,894 have been contacted (cumulative). This quarter:

- TOTs: 19 participants during 1 TOT
- Peer education trainings: 551 vulnerable youth during 58 peer trainings conducted by 10 peer educators (Average pre- and post-test scores are 62% and 90% respectively. Themes include HIV/AIDS/STIs issues, personal risk assessment, ways of protection and condom use, linkage between HIV/AIDS and injecting drug use, and availability of referral system to free VCT, STI treatment)
- Mini-sessions: 353 vulnerable youth during 61 mini-sessions
- Events: 401 vulnerable youth during 24 events
- Alternate activities: 1,227 vulnerable youth (Activities include English Lessons, Leader School, Kazakh Lessons, Theater club, Aerobics, Karate, Bingo, Fancy work, Youth club, Tourism, Guitar classes, First medical help, Art therapy, “United Kingdom” section)

- Peer Outreach: 413 vulnerable youth were contacted in non-traditional sites (streets, parks, discos, etc) (Themes include HIV/AIDS issues, personal risk assessment, and ways of protection and condom use and availability of treatment, social services and alternatives).
- Youth Friendly Counseling: 114 vulnerable youth received counseling by 2 counselors (gynecologist and psychologist) (Themes include reproductive health related issues, contraception, family planning, prevention of STIs, problems of personal development, interpersonal communications, existential problems, psychology of sexual relationships, psychology of self development, referral to friendly cabinet of a women's clinic and CITY AIDS center on free VCT and STI testing and treatment).
- Condoms distribution: 229 condoms
- Brochures distribution: 1,281 brochures

Baseline and follow-up evaluation will be conducted with the vulnerable youth target population to determine the success of the CYPC models. Evaluation protocol and questionnaire have been drafted.

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, 11,434 vulnerable youth were contacted (cumulative). This quarter:

- Peer trainings: 3,067 during 355 peer trainings
- Mini-sessions: 552 vulnerable youth during 75 mini-sessions
- Events: 652 during 9 events (Events include joint disco at school # 76 [cost share with Advertising Agency Ovatsiya], March Seminar for Coordinators, peer educators, and outreach workers [cost share with CITY AIDS Center], Youth forum of trainers [cost share with UNESCO and City AIDS Center, NGO Equal to Equal].
- Condoms distribution: 2,775 condoms
- Brochures distribution: 3,776 brochures

Karaganda city:

The target ARY population in these site totals 78,093 (City Statistic State Board on quantity of ARY at age 15-24 living in mentioned administrative districts). Project to date, NGO Saur Pak trained by PSI educational modules contacted 583 vulnerable youth in the site (cumulative). This quarter:

- Peer trainings: 98 vulnerable youth during 12 peer trainings
- Mini-sessions: 194 vulnerable youth during 23 mini-sessions
- Events: 300 vulnerable youth during 1 event (joint disco at night club Fantasy)

Taraz city:

The target ARY population in these site totals 62,558 (City Statistic State Board on quantity of ARY at age 15-24 living in mentioned administrative districts). Project to date, NGO Jambul Jastary contacted 1,186 vulnerable youth (cumulative). This quarter:

- Peer trainings: 172 vulnerable youth during 11 peer trainings
- Activities/Success Story: NGO Zhambyl Zhastary had written a project proposal with vulnerable youth component using PSI techniques and modules and won the grant issued by Counterpart Consortium.

Semipalatinsk city:

The target ARY population in these site totals 55,881 (City Statistic State Board on quantity of ARY at age 15-24 living in mentioned administrative districts). Project to date, NGO Istok contacted 783 vulnerable youth (cumulative). This quarter:

- Peer trainings: 83 vulnerable youth during 2 peer trainings

Increasing access to Condoms through Social Marketing

- During the Quarter, 386,460 gross of condoms were exported to Tajikistan;
- Sales Team applied to MOH on continuation of Favorite certificate Export license;
- 6,826 units of condoms were disseminated during various events and educational activities;
- 495,826 condoms were disseminated through traditional channels (pharmacies and shops), hot zone distribution and free distribution during educational activities;
- 24,780 units of condoms were disseminated around Hot Zone Streets targeting CSWs and clients of CSWs (Saina and Seiphullina streets, Almaty);
- New Pricing Policy was started in Kazakhstan;
- Meeting with Heineken on further possible dissemination of Favorite condoms through Heineken distributional channels and joint activities on HIV prevention and Condom Social Marketing in Almaty.

B.3. Kyrgyzstan**Civil Society Mobilization Strategy**

The Project conducted four working meetings in Bishkek, Chui, Jalal-Abad and Osh cities for representatives of the respective oblasts which were chosen as pilot sites to present the Civil Society Mobilization Strategy to the donors and NGO communities. As a whole, the strategy was accepted by the society. All comments and ideas expressed during the meetings are now being reviewed and incorporated into the strategy concept paper. These meetings were conducted in close collaboration and cost sharing with AIDS Unit and GFATM PIU/KG and are a good example of professional partnership.

During the meetings NGO representatives supported the development of the “umbrella” model in oblasts, as well as formation of the Thematic Working Groups with representation of major partners at oblast level. Candidates for the role of umbrella organizations were nominated.

Development of Project Proposals on HIV prevention among SW and IDU

Two hired consultants, Valeryi Kuinov and Olga Kostuyk conducted ground work including meetings with key partners and site visits with the purpose to develop project proposals for the prevention models implementation among SWs and IDUs. The following sites were proposed for interventions: Osh city for SWs and Karasuu rayon for IDU. Proposals are being finalized and their final versions are expected to be presented by the end of April 2006. .

Interventions with Vulnerable Youth

CAPACITY Youth Power Center (CYPC) in Bishkek (Leninski district)

The CAPACITY Youth Power Center was opened this past quarter in Bishkek. An opening ceremony was held and attended widely by mass media and by partner stakeholders. There was a tremendous interest among partners to collaborate on issues related to vulnerable youth.

The target of Vulnerable Youth population at this site totals 36,983 by data of City Statistics Board). To date 1,935 ARY have been contacted. This quarter:

- **TOTs:** 31 participants during 2 TOT.
- **Peer education trainings:** 1,048 vulnerable youth during 440, 45-minute peer trainings (Average pre- and post-test scores are 78.6% and 94.3% respectively. Themes include HIV/AIDS/STIs issues, personal risk assessment, ways of protection and condom use, linkage between HIV/AIDS and injecting drug use and availability of referral system to free VCT, STI treatment)
- **Mini-sessions:** 963 vulnerable youth during 107 mini-sessions
- **Events:** 109 vulnerable youth during 2 events.
- **Alternate activities:** 114 vulnerable youth (Activities included English Lessons, Turkish Lessons, Computer courses, and Debate Club).
- **Peer Outreach:** 963 vulnerable youth contacted in non-traditional sites (streets, parks, discos, etc. Themes include HIV/AIDS issues, personal risk assessment, and ways of protection and condom use and availability of treatment, social services and alternatives).
- **Youth Friendly Counseling:** 22 vulnerable youth by 1 counselor who provided counseling/psychological services to help them cope with the broad range of human problems such as personal development, interpersonal communications, existential problems, psychology of sexual relationships.

Baseline and follow-up evaluation will be conducted with the vulnerable youth target population to determine the success of the CYPC models. Evaluation protocol and questionnaire have been drafted.

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

Bishkek city: Leninski, Sverdlovski, Pervomaiski, Oktyabrski administrative districts

The target vulnerable youth population in these site totals 171,362 (City Statistic State Board on quantity of vulnerable youth at age 15-24 living in mentioned administrative districts). Project to date, 9,876 vulnerable youth were contacted in the site (cumulative). This quarter:

- Peer education trainings: 3,453 during 1,444 peer trainings

- Mini-sessions: 1,082 vulnerable youth during 107 mini-sessions
- Events: 242 vulnerable youth during 4 events
- Condoms distributed: 274 condoms
- Brochures distributed: 371 educational brochures.

Increasing access to Condoms through Social Marketing

- Willingness To Pay Analysis was continued in Bishkek;
- Possibilities to import condoms from Kazakhstan legally using existing pharmaceutical partners were investigated;
- Situational Analysis Technical Paper was presented to Regional Office in Almaty on current situation relating to customs problems and official obstacles to import technical assistance condoms into country without any taxation based on bilateral intergovernmental Agreement signed between USA and Kyrgyzstan in June 1993;

B.4. Tajikistan

Civil Society Mobilization

The concept of the Civil Society Mobilization was discussed and agreed with national partners, including Mr. Mirzoev, Head of RAC, and Mr. Ghaibov, NCC Secretary. Also draft CSM strategy was disseminated among partners for their comments. CSM implementation started from conducting CSM Assessment Meetings in Dushanbe and oblasts of Tajikistan. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss CSM concept with partners, motivate NGOs to participate in scaling up response to HIV epidemics, identify “umbrella” NGOs, which will act as main catalysts of CSM process in oblasts and establishment of oblast level TWG to coordinate CSM activities.

The first assessment meeting on Civil Society and Resources Mobilization in HIV/AIDS area was held on 29 March 2006 in Dushanbe in collaboration with NCC Secretariat. The meeting was attended by representatives of NACM, USAID, international organizations, the ministries and government departments and more than 40 NGOs.

Outcomes:

- Participants agreed with the proposed concept of CSM, however, pointing out that interaction of umbrella model participants is still unclear.
- As TWG should be function of NACM, a regulation on TWGs should be developed under NCC Secretariat supervision (group on TWG Regulation development was selected during the meeting) and approved by NCC.
- NGO representatives filled in questionnaires and received home tasks, based on which umbrella NGOs and participants of regional ToT will be identified.

During the meetings NGO representatives supported the development of the “umbrella” model in oblasts, as well as formation of the Thematic Working Groups with representation of major partners at oblast level. Candidates for the role of umbrella organizations were nominated.

Analogous meetings will be conducted in Sugd and Khatlon oblasts and GBAO in April 2006. At the conclusion of the meetings, the unified resolution on civil society mobilization strategy in the country will be developed and presented.

60 Plus HIV prevention model development

Valeryi Kuinov, CAPACITY Consultant, visited Tajikistan with the objective to design prevention models aimed at coverage of at least 60% of vulnerable population (IDUs and sex workers) with minimum comprehensive package of HIV prevention services. Khujand (Sugd oblast) was selected as model site for prevention activities for sex workers, while Kurghan-Tyube (Khatlon oblast) was identified as site for IDUs-targeted model. Model development process included consultations with RAC, partners (CARHAP, GF, DDRP, Tajik Association of Harm Reduction), oblast AIDS Centers, health providers (oblast STI and Narcology clinics), NGOs from model sites. Final versions of proposals are expected in middle of April.

Interventions with Sex Workers

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

The target sex worker population at these sites totals 4,000 and to date 838 sex workers have been contacted (cumulative). During the present quarter, 247 sex workers were contacted during 21 trainings and 17 mini-educational sessions. Mini-sessions were held covering the themes of HIV and AIDS, STI, communication skills, responsible behavior, and condom use. 1,303 free *Favorite* condoms and 515 brochures (themes include HIV and AIDS, STI, condom is my protection, assess your own risk) were distributed. Edu-tainment event were held with 80 participants in Disco Dousti.

A meeting was held with the HIV/AIDS Prevention Officer at UNICEF/TJ on possible cooperation on the new UNICEF project targeting adolescent prostitutes and drug users, age 10-24, through local NGOs. UNICEF is interested in the education component for sex workers (ToT for outreach workers modules, training modules).

Khojand (Chkalovsk street, 34 micro district (Chumchuk – Aral), 13 micro district, Disco Sezam, Panchshanbe Disco Baltika)

The target sex worker population at this sites totals 2,000 and to date 933 sex workers have been contacted (cumulative). During the present quarter, 226 sex workers were contacted during 15 trainings and 125 mini-educational sessions. Mini-sessions were held covering the themes of HIV and AIDS, STI, communication skills, responsible behavior, and condom use. 970 free *Favorite* condoms and 396 brochures (themes include HIV and AIDS, STI, condom is my protection, assess your own risk) were distributed. Edutainment event were held for 150 participants in Disco Sezam.

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, 10,572 vulnerable youth were contacted in the site (cumulative). This quarter:

- Peer education trainings: 1,608 vulnerable youth during 310 peer trainings

- Mini-sessions: 407 vulnerable youth during 94 mini-sessions
- Events: 1,113 vulnerable youth during 16 events in target sites such as Discos.
- Condoms distribution: 573 condoms
- Brochures distribution: 4,274 educational brochures

Khojand city: micro districts Shelkovik, Yava and Kayrakkum district

The target vulnerable youth population in these site totals 37,300 (City Statistic State Board on quantity of ARY at age 15-24 living in mentioned administrative districts). Project to date, 7,614 ARY were contacted in the site (cumulative). This quarter:

- Peer education trainings: 910 vulnerable youth during 256 peer trainings
- Mini-sessions: 333 vulnerable youth during 57 mini-sessions
- Events: 1,452 vulnerable youth during 17 events
- Condoms distribution: 121 condoms
- Brochures distribution: 2,020 educational brochures

Increasing access to Condoms through Social Marketing

- 7,230 units of condoms were disseminated during various events and educational activities.
- 152,172 condoms were disseminated through traditional channels (pharmacies and shops), hot zone distribution and free distribution during educational activities.
- 32,094 units of condoms were disseminated around Hot Zone Streets targeting sex workers and clients of sex workers in Dushanbe and Khujant.

B.5. Turkmenistan

Youth Power Center Proposal

A \$200,000 proposal was written and submitted to through USAID to INL for launching a HIV prevention and drug demand reduction program with high risk youth in Turkmenistan.

B.6. Uzbekistan

Community Mobilization Strategy

Based on RO materials on Civil Society/Community Mobilization Strategy, CAPACITY Project/Uzbekistan has developed a plan of realization of the Community Mobilization Strategy for targeting high-risk groups via involving communities, trust points and NGOs into work on AIDS prevention in Uzbekistan. The concept paper was approved by RO and shared with the partners. CAPACITY received full support from “Mahalla” Foundation and World Vision. The Meeting with interested partners is planned to be held during the next quarter.

Technical Working Group on HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment among IDUs

CAPACITY Project/Uzbekistan took active part in three meetings of Thematic Working Group (TWG) on HIV/AIDS prevention, care and treatment among IDUs. These meetings take place once a month for sharing information and experience, developing shared understanding of existing problems and facilitating their agreed solutions.

Interventions with Sex Workers

Tashkent (Chilanzar district)

The target sex worker population at this sites totals 9,000 and to date 2,191 sex workers have been contacted (cumulative). During the present quarter, 507 sex workers were contacted during 118 trainings and 141 mini-educational sessions covering the themes of HIV and AIDS, STI, communication skills, responsible behavior, and condom use. 922 free *Favorite* condoms and 2,441 brochures (themes include HIV and AIDS, STI, condom is my protection, assess your own risk) were distributed. Edutainment event was held with 178 sex workers and 36 clients in Tashkent.

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 ARY at age 15-24 living in above mentioned administrative districts). Project to date, 23,009 ARY were contacted in the site (cumulative). This quarter:

Peer education trainings: 6,041 vulnerable youth during 2,151 peer trainings (Pre and Post test scores were 34.31% and 98.31% accordingly).

- Events: 448 vulnerable youth during 6 events in target site such as discos.
- Condoms distributed: 1,743 condoms
- Brochures distributed: 12,473 educational brochures

Capacity Building and Cooperation with Other Partners

Through regular meetings and ad-hoc requests for assistance support has been provided to the Republican AIDS Center and the national AIDS program on evaluation of the 2003-2006 Uzbekistan National AIDS Program.

Technical assistance has been provided to the Global Fund/Uzbekistan on monitoring and evaluation of Global Fund grantees. In this quarter, training was provided for Global Fund grantees on how to create effective interventions with high risk groups, including advocating for use of unique identifier codes and database systems in order to track progress towards reaching high coverage.

A meeting was held with UNICEF in order to provide technical assistance and advice on UNICEF's national program on improving HIV prevention services to the most vulnerable adolescents. UNICEF and CAPACITY/PSI will work together to provide support to the national HIV program targeting vulnerable youth.

Increasing access to Condoms through Social Marketing

- 854,400 units of condoms were imported and a new pricing policy was developed starting from March 06;
- Free condoms began to be distributed, targeting sex workers in Tashkent with 3,771 distributed condoms;

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

C.1. Regional

ARV Selection, Procurement, and Pricing

As countries begin ARVT rollout, the initial challenges in ARV management appear to be in the area of selection, procurement, and pricing. For this reason, a data collection instrument is being designed to assess national decisions around selection of ARV medicines, including use of generic ARVs and dosage forms; procurement mechanisms for ARVs; ARV prices; and quantification methods. This questionnaire will be distributed over the upcoming quarter so that results can be reviewed and collated.

TB and HIV Services Interaction

Discussions were held with Project HOPE about possible collaboration in the area of TB/HIV interaction. Collaboration between our two organizations is well underway and will continue with meetings in the next quarter.

CAPACITY received notification that our abstract on our TB/HIV model, which was submitted to the Global Health Council for presentation at the annual conference in Washington, DC in May/June 2006 was accepted. An abstract on this subject was also submitted to the international AIDS conference for presentation in Toronto in August 2006.

Results of TB/HIV efforts to date include:

- Technical Working Groups formed in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyzstan.
- Methodological guidelines/recommendations and protocols developed
- National orders/prikazes signed by MoHs, approving methodological recommendations and protocols
- New registration forms designed for all three countries and already approved.
- About 350 health practitioners trained on TB/HIV
- About 120 specialists trained on M&E of TB/HIV service linkages indicators and registration forms
- National Teams of trainers established
- National M&E Teams established

VCT

Discussions have taken place with AFEW about possible collaboration in this area. A working plan on VCT has been developed. Probable first model site will be in Bishkek. Preliminary preparation work for an introductory/orientation Round Table on VCT in Bishkek has been started.

C.2. Kazakhstan

TB and HIV Services Interaction

CAPACITY is continuing its work with the TB/HIV working group in Kazakhstan and in collaboration with partners (Project HOPE, Turksib TB Dispensary).

C.3. Kyrgyzstan

Promoting Interaction of AIDS and TB Services

Training on management of patients with dual infection (TB/HIV):

23 health care specialists from the model sites in Chui oblast were trained during the second training on management of patients with dual infection. The training was provided by national trainers and showed good results: average pre-test score was 45% and average post-test score reached 87%. The next steps planned for the next quarter, will be implementation of the HIV/TB model

Collaboration with partners:

Country office representatives met with the Project HOPE delegation to coordinate the activities of both projects on HIV/TB and participated in the Round Table with Partners on Assessment Preliminary Results made by the Project HOPE. As a result, CAPACITY and Project Hope exchanged relevant information and expressed mutual agreement to collaborate in CAPACITY's HIV/TB model implementation.

Obstacles to ARVT Initiation and Adherence

While ARVT medical services have been successfully established in Kyrgyzstan, patient uptake of ARVT program has been alarmingly low. Of the 49 documented AIDS patients that qualify for ARVT in Kyrgyzstan, 32% (19 patients) have chosen to refuse ARVT and the adherence among those being treated is variable. This response rate is typical in IDU populations globally and can be expected in neighboring countries as they begin to roll out ARVT services. As such, in order to optimize efficiency of treatment programs, there needs to be interventions and programs to improve patient willingness to initiate and maintain ARVT. A research protocol is being developed for rapid assessment to identify barriers to ARVT initiation and adherence in Kyrgyzstan. It is expected that the assessment tool can be used in other settings and will provide some insight into programmatic and policy changes to promote ARVT adherence. The field work is expected to be conducted in the next quarter.

C.4. Tajikistan

Trainings of Health Care Providers on Interaction of AIDS and TB services

Four 3-day trainings on detection and treatment of patients with dual HIV/TB infection were conducted in accordance with the Prospective HIV/TB Interaction Plan in Tajikistan for 2005-2007. The objective of the trainings was to increase trainees' knowledge about peculiarities of TB infection in HIV-infected patients, its clinical pictures, proper methods of detection, differential diagnostics and verification; the expertise and practical skills of combining ARVT and anti-TB treatment in HIV-positive patients with TB; guidelines about HIV/TB inter-service mechanism, organization of case management and best practices on joint service provision. 77 health specialists from HIV, TB, and Primary Health Care facilities increased their average knowledge level from 32.9% (pre-test results) to 86.3% (post-test). Totally 116 specialists from the model site (Dushanbe) were trained on HIV/TB interaction issues by the team of National Trainers, thus building capacity for successful implementation of the model.

National TB/HIV Round Table and TWG session

MoH disseminated HIV/TB model description, prepared by CAPACITY, among partners with request to identify areas of their possible contribution and participation in the model implementation. The objective of the meeting was to discuss the following issues:

- progress of HIV/TB model implementation;
- possible areas of partners' contribution;
- needs and obstacles for model implementation; and
- partners' comments and recommendations on model description.

Outcomes of the meeting include:

- Partners acknowledged the necessity and appropriateness of the model on the whole;
- Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan is ready to support IEC campaign on HIV/TB among vulnerable populations, PLWHA, TB patients and medical workers;
- SINO project will support scale-up of the model in their 4 pilot districts;
- NGO CARITAS (Luxembourg) is interested in introduction of the model into penitentiary system;
- Medical Institutes reported on introduction of HIV/TB issues into curricula;
- TWG discussed needs and obstacles for model implementation and decided to find out internal resources to overcome them. As for needs that cannot be met by existing resources, they will be reported to NCC on HIV, TB and Malaria through its Secretariat; and
- TWG reviewed comments and recommendations made by HOPE Project and UNDP on model description and noted that many comments are already clarified in the HIV/TB protocols developed by HIV/TB TWG and approved by MoH. Response to comments was compiled and sent to partners by MoH.

In overall, CAPACITY had number of bi- and multilateral meetings with partners (Head of TB/HIV TWG, Project HOPE, Red Crescent Society of Tajikistan, ZdravPlus, Project Sino, CARITAS, PSF, IFRC TJ, AKHF, Merlin) to discuss issues of collaboration on TB/HIV interaction. Also CAPACITY is a member of TB IEC/BCC Thematic Working Group led by Republican TB Center.

C.5. Uzbekistan

Promoting Linkage of AIDS and TB services

Onward Training for Medical Specialists on TB/HIV

With technical assistance and supervision from CAPACITY, 2 final three-day trainings for medical specialists from model regions (Tashkent City and Tashkent Oblast) on detection and treatment of patients with dual HIV/TB infections were conducted by the CAPACITY-trained national trainers. Overall, the trainings have covered more than 200 specialists from both AIDS and TB Services. The HIV/TB Model has been already started to be implemented in medical institutions of Tashkent city and Tashkent region, and in April-May it is planned to provide next step of M&E activities organized by National M&E Team.

Collaboration with Other Stakeholders

Meetings were held with Project HOPE to discuss issues of collaboration in the TB/HIV model implementation.

HIV/TB and ART Course

During the meeting with Global Fund, it was decided to jointly develop the Courses on Interaction of AIDS/TB services and ARVT for Tashkent Institute of Advanced Medical Education (TIAME) with the purpose of integration into its curriculum. The Courses are a sustainable result which will remain and continue working in the direction of Interaction of AIDS/TB services and ARVT after the CAPACITY Project and Global Fund complete their activities in Uzbekistan. It was agreed that CAPACITY/Uzbekistan would provide technical assistance to a group of national experts in HIV/TB Course development, and Global Fund would support the development of ARVT part. The Courses were developed during this reporting period, and will be approved by TIAME academic council in April. After that, TIAME teachers will be trained so that they will educate medical specialists from other regions of Uzbekistan.

In addition, as per the request of health care specialists, film describing HIV replication used during the trainings, was adapted into Russian and Uzbek languages for future use in the framework of HIV/TB curriculum of TIAME.

World TB Day activities

The CAPACITY Project/Uzbekistan participated in the series of events, where interested organizations, such as WHO, HOPE/TB, Abt Associates/ZdravPlus, discussed the activities planned for the World TB Day. One such event was the Conference organized in Tashkent TB Institute. More than 50 TB specialists and representatives of MoH and international organizations participated in it. During the Conference, international organizations briefed in details on the work done in TB and progress achieved.

Training on Materials Development organized by HOPE TB Project

The CAPACITY Project/Uzbekistan team took part in the training organized by HOPE TB Project with support of Johns Hopkins University. During 3 days of training, a number of presentations on promotional materials was developed for World TB Day, a lot of products were developed (radio spots, posters, booklets, brochures, TV promotions, etc.) and finally almost all of them were pre-tested among target groups: patients, doctors, nurses and general population.

CAPACITY Project/Uzbekistan was included into a Thematic Working Group (TWG) on TB information and educational work, which is to approve all the materials developed on TB problem no matter which organization developed them.

ARVT

ARVs have been recently procured in Uzbekistan, ARVT is just starting, and after the medical specialists trained during ARVT training will have some initial experience, it is planned to provide further ARVT training based on questions and queries that arise during the first months of providing ARVT.

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

D.1. Regional

Some preliminary activities were initiated jointly by CAPACITY, ZdravPlus and other relevant partners to agree on the broad strategies to address secondary prevention of STIs for prevention of HIV transmission, and support the grant proposal development process of the national programs for the World Bank regional project on HIV/AIDS.

D.2. Kazakhstan

Patient Flow Analysis

Following modifications of the assessment questionnaires – based on the feedback received from a number of colleagues/partners and the specific objectives of the assessments, a final pre-testing of the amended questionnaires was conducted. The questionnaires were then finalized according to the pre-test results, translated into Russian, the sampling frame for the assessments in Karaganda was finalized and agreed with the relevant oblast officials, and the assessment team was given an orientation and instructions to initiate data collection. Thus, all needed preparations were completed to kick-off the interviews/data collection for Questionnaire 1 (functionality and funding assessments) and Questionnaire 2 (patient-flow assessment). Also, the preliminary work in creating the electronic database for the collected information was done.

The assessments are currently well in progress. However, some problems were encountered in completing the interviews and data collection work by end-March – according to the original plans. There was an unexpected change in the leadership of the Karaganda Oblast Health Department, which had stalled the implementation process for some time. The interviews and data collection work, however, are mostly done, and have been rescheduled to finish in April.