

Road to Results

ACHIEVING SUCCESS STEP BY STEP

Start of Pilot Project to Train Midwives to Provide IUD Services in Kyrgyzstan

August 2002

In May 2002, USAID-funded ZdravPlus Project, the Kyrgyz Ministry of Health, and the Jalal-Abad Oblast Health Department launched a very successful pilot project to train 18 rural midwives from Bazar-Korgon Rayon in Jalal-Abad Oblast on contraceptive technology and to prepare them to provide intrauterine device (IUD) services. Jalal-Abad Oblast, situated in the South of Kyrgyzstan, is a poor oblast suffering the consequences of social and political unrest and under-development. Its rural areas in particular suffer from poor availability of health services.

Although many specialists working in primary healthcare in Kyrgyzstan have already been retrained as family doctors, gynecologists remain the only doctors trained and authorized to perform IUD insertions and removals. Midwives can currently provide other methods of contraception, but the lack of access to the most popular and widely used contraceptive method is a concern (the IUD is used by 78 percent of family planning users in Kyrgyzstan). Women living in rural areas often have to travel for hours to obtain an IUD, while others cannot even afford to take the trip.

This pilot project seeks to demonstrate that trained midwives can safely provide IUD services. It is hoped that the pilot will pave the way to expand these services in Kyrgyzstan's many rural areas and, exceptionally, it will also demonstrate that midwives can provide an important clinical service, and need not be limited largely to bureaucratic tasks and serving as doctor's assistants.

Two 12-day training courses were conducted for 18 rural midwives from Bazar-Korgon in May and June. The Jalal-Abad Marriage and Family Center, which has well-qualified, experienced trainers, conducted the training and served as coordinating agency for the pilot project. The

course was based on the training curriculum used by the USAID-funded SEATS project in 1999–2000. However, the duration of the course was extended to allow more time both for theoretical training and for extensive practice, first with models and then with actual patients, under the supervision of the trainers. In addition, increased emphasis was placed on recognizing the indications and contraindications for IUDs. The course also included a contraceptive technology update and addressed counseling issues, both in theory and in practice, in order to ensure that the midwives provide women with a choice of method and do not promote the IUD above other methods.

ZdravPlus' paramount concern with the pilot project is the safety of patients and every effort has been made to protect women through three strategies:

- *Ensuring the midwives' competence before they return to their home communities.* The midwives were required to demonstrate their skills in the provision of all contraceptive methods and in counseling in the classroom. Then, working under the supervision of a trainer using checklists, they had to show that they were consistently competent with real patients in the provision of IUD services and other methods of contraception before they returned to their posts.
- *Providing follow-up visits over a six-month period to monitor and observe the midwives' skills.* The trainers will pay a total of six follow-up visits to each midwife to ensure that their skills remain satisfactory once they have returned to their home communities and, if necessary, to reinforce their knowledge and skills. The follow-up schedule was most intense in the early weeks right after the training, but visits will continue over a six month period.



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

- *Interviewing a sample of clients who had an IUD inserted by the newly trained midwives.* Finally, interviews are being conducted with a sample of the midwives' IUD clients. These visits seek to ascertain the clients' level of satisfaction with the services they received, to check on any complications that may have occurred, and to verify whether they received proper counseling. A first round of interviews was conducted in the second month after the training and a second round will take place five to six months after the training.



To counter the general lack of availability of contraceptives, which is a major problem throughout Kyrgyzstan, UNFPA kindly agreed to

provide a supply of all types of contraceptives for Bazar-Korgon Rayon. In addition, to ensure that the midwives had adequate instruments, ZdravPlus also purchased a small quantity of instruments so that each midwife had a full IUD kit.

The Jalal-Abad Health Promotion Center played an invaluable role by building support for the pilot project among policy-makers as well as reaching out to rural women in Bazar-Korgon, so that they would know that a full range of contraceptive services is available to them close to home.

Three months into the pilot project, the monitoring reports have been very positive. The midwives are seeing significant numbers of women, and observation of their skills by the trainers shows that they are performing very well.

Due to the success of this pilot in a small, rural rayon, data collected in the process of monitoring the safety of clients, including a skills checklist and client interviews, will be used to evaluate the project and will be a valuable measure of how future training of midwives should be conducted.

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 720405
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) 169-2212, 169-1491
Fax: (998-71) 169-1492
E-mail: abt@zdravplus.uz

Office in Tajikistan

155 Rudaki Street, #7-8
Dushanbe, Tajikistan 734017
Tel: (992-372) 245-369
Fax: (992-372) 245-369
E-mail: zdrav@tjinter.com

Office in Turkmenistan

43 Gyorogly Street, # 4
Ashgabad, Turkmenistan 744020
Tel: (993-12) 344-242
Fax: (993-12) 344-547
E-mail: natalyazp@online.tm