

## World AIDS Day in Uzbekistan Country Office



Uzbekistan Country office has used the opportunity of the World AIDS Day to once again highlight that HIV/AIDS is not only a health problem, but it is also a development problem that threatens human welfare, socio-economic advances, productivity, social cohesion, and even national security. The date was also used as an opportunity to more widely publicize the Regional HIV/AIDS control project and the World Bank's new global plan launched on the eve of World AIDS Day and designed to strengthen the Bank's response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic at country, regional, and global levels. Two consecutive events devoted to that day and held in the country office on December 2 were mutually complimentary.

The journalists from the biggest Uzbek press agencies Turkiston press and Uza, web publishers and youth papers gathered in the World Bank country office for a press conference arranged from Bishkek office linking Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Chris Lovelace, country manager for Kyrgyz Republic, greeted the press conference participants and the floor was given to Tilek Meymanaliev, Central Asia HIV/AIDS Control Project coordinator. The Project coordinator informed the journalists about the current status of project components and explained the opportunities for the journalists provided by the Project. After that he answered a series of questions. Martin Raiser, World Bank Country Manager for Uzbekistan participated in the event.



Immediately after the press conference a PIC dialogue was held on the efficient collaboration of donors and NGOs in rolling back the spread of HIV/AIDS global epidemic. The participants of the dialogue included the agencies implementing donor projects on HIV/AIDS such as Counterpart International, ZdravPlus (funded by USAID), CAPACITY (funded by USAID), World Vision, JICA and



others. Also were present NGO "Soglom Kelajak" (Healthy Future), NGO "Istiqbolli Avlod" ("Generation with bright future"), Republican AIDS Center, AIDS Fund "East-West", Global Fund and others. Several commercial sex providers also participated in the dialogue.

The main discussion was launched around the graph presented in the World Bank's new global plan and showing the trend of increasing global spending on HIV/AIDS. The question asked was: with worldwide level of HIV/AIDS funding having surged from US\$300 million in 1996, to approximately US\$ 8 billion in 2005, WHY will more people become infected with HIV, and die from AIDS, this year than in any previous year. The discussion revealed some organizational problems and the problems in monitoring and evaluation of the projects focusing on HIV/AIDS. Also the participants mentioned regional disparity in project coverage: major of the project being implemented in the capital city. Commercial sex providers explained why they don't use some of trust points or trust rooms, especially those established by the government. They are not sure that they can stay anonymous, not sure that they can get any medical support. The girls present at the discussion have trust to some NGOs and some individuals, outreach workers, employed in those NGOs. The formal Dialogue was followed by informal discussion during which the commercial sex providers were provided with packs of condoms given by World Vision.

## December 2005



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