

USAID funded Georgia HIV Prevention Project

The goal of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) funded Georgia HIV Prevention Project (GHPP) is to support HIV prevention among high-risk groups in order to avert the spread of HIV to the general population. GHPP, awarded to RTI International and its subcontracting partners, Save the Children International and Program for Appropriate Technologies in Health (PATH), works with a number of local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to develop and implement HIV prevention activities for most-at-risk populations (MARPs).

GHPP, funded at over 6 million USD, is a five-year effort that began on February 4, 2010, and will end on December 12, 2014. The project works at the individual, community, societal, and policy levels to reduce HIV-related stigma and discrimination in Georgia. Activities in 2010-2011 were implemented in 6 major cities of Georgia (Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Telavi, Zugdidi, Batumi and Rustavi). Since 2012, the project has been operational in Tbilisi, Kutaisi, Batumi and Rustavi.

GHPP develops and implements HIV prevention activities for most-at-risk populations, specifically injecting drug users and their partners, men who have sex with men, female sex workers, and at-risk youth. GHPP works through local NGOs to increase HIV counseling and testing efforts for all target groups through drop-in centers and mobile labs.

As a part of its youth-focused component, GHPP in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) of Georgia has successfully pilot-tested a consolidated Healthy Lifestyles Curriculum (HLC) in Tbilisi and Telavi. In 2012, the use of HLC was institutionalized in all secondary schools nationwide.

GHPP has placed special emphasis on strengthening technical capacity of local government and nongovernmental organizations to design, manage, implement and monitor HIV/drug prevention interventions in the country. GHPP has been providing technical assistance to NCDC and other relevant institutions to foster the process of institutionalization of the national HIV surveillance and M&E frameworks.

In March-June, 2011, GHPP conducted the first BSS in Georgia among school and university students in Tbilisi. The survey has generated reliable data about the HIV/AIDS related knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of youth (15-24-year olds) in the capital city.

To empower local civil society organizations GHPP, through a merit-based competitive process, provides small grants to local NGOs for implementation of HIV prevention interventions in various target groups.

GHPP has made significant efforts to reduce HIV stigma and discrimination in the country. GHPP in partnership with media universities in Tbilisi elaborated a manual for faculty members of school of journalism on the coverage of HIV and drug addiction issues. The Training module on HIV media reporting has been already incorporated into the training course of future journalists.

GHPP in partnership with the USAID funded project “SUSTAIN” provides training sessions on HIV among health care workers to reduce HIV associated stigma and discrimination within health care settings.

GHPP established and operates youth-targeted website www.geoyouth.ge to provide youth and their parents with accurate and reliable information about high-risk behaviors in a non-threatening and private manner.

In 2010-2011, GHPP-produced six public service announcements on HIV-associated stigma reduction that are frequently aired on public TV channels. In 2011, project produced a short, 20-minute long educational movie “Stigma” featuring an inspirational story of people affected by HIV/AIDS. The GHPP-produced educational movie and vide-clips have been posted on popular websites www.myvideo.ge and www.youtube.com.

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