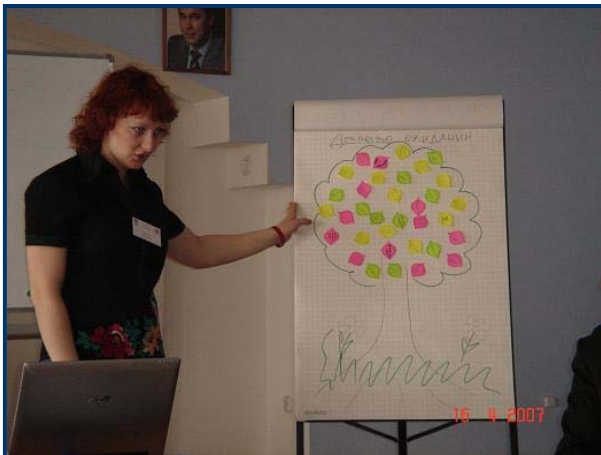


Irkutsk Workshops Focus on Improving Reproductive Health Services for Women in Russian Prison System

In collaboration with the Red Cross National Society of the Russian Federation (RRC), AIHA recently conducted two trainings designed to improve the quality of reproductive health services for women in Irkutsk Oblast penal colonies and settlements.



Russian Red Cross trainer Ekaterina Dvorak leads an exercise during the training for medical professionals. Participants were asked to write down what they hoped to gain from the workshop thereby creating a “tree of expectations.”

A training for eight correctional system medical workers from the East Siberian oblast was held April 16-19. The workshop focused on upgrading participants’ clinical skills in areas such as STI diagnosis and treatment, contraception and family planning, reproductive rights of inmates, HIV, ART, patient counseling and support, and helping women prisoners make a successful transition following their release.

A workshop for 22 non-medical professionals – such as inmate team chiefs, prison psychologists, NGO representatives, and others who work with inmates – was

conducted April 18-20. Topics discussed during this training included STIs and HIV, stigma and discrimination, contraception and family planning, reproductive rights, behavior change, peer counseling, and treatment adherence, as well as effective adult learning strategies.

This project directly benefits a total of 1,804 women living in three penal colonies in Bozoi, as well as women living at a prison system settlement in Taishet, and may serve as a model for improving reproductive health services in other parts of the Russian Federation.

Published in the Spring 2007 edition of “Connections,” a quarterly newsletter highlighting the American International Health Alliance’s development programs in the EECA Region.