

## **Let's Talk about our Health**

### **Program on Women's Health Prevention and Promotion in the Russian Chechen Republic**

#### **Context**

The selective abortions, the abortions at home, the lack of knowledge about motherhood, the low level of education, the insufficient care granted for the pregnant women across prenatal consultations, the large number of early marriages and of childbirths encouraged by the local politicians, the lack of knowledge at girls and boys on how to preserve their reproductive health, the frequent congenital malformations, the high mortality rate among mothers and newborns, the transmission of HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Diseases, the increase in cancer cases: all these testify about the numerous health problems affecting the Chechen population, and particularly the women.

The health issues are covered only to a very small extent by the local media, while when they are addressed, it is mostly on a positive and complimentary angle, which the most often does not reflect the reality.

There are no health awareness programs, neither in schools nor in the higher education institutes. Lacking the necessary information and training, the nurses organize from time to time meetings in order to share their knowledge and their own life experience. Since the Chechen culture prohibits talking about intimate subjects in mixed groups, these topics are simply not addresses for the most of the time.

In order to address these health-related gaps, we would like in 2017, in cooperation with teachers, medical staff, media, NGO leaders and young volunteers to set up a Program on Women's Health Prevention and Promotion.

#### **Goal**

Creating/setting up of the "Let's Talk about our Health" Program on Women's Health Prevention and Promotion within the traditional Chechen society, in order to improve the Chechen women health.

#### **Objectives**

- Disseminating information on women's health issues
- Providing Training in women's health for various teachers, medical staff, media, NGO leaders
- Raising public awareness and educating people on how to improve women's health

#### **The beneficiaries**

About 1000 beneficiaries : 500 students, 200 school pupils, more the 80 representatives of the medical community, around 10 journalists, more than 20 NGOs working with women and youth, more than 200 women participating or having participated in other programs of local associations.

#### **Project description**

Coordinated by the ACER-Russie French association, the current project is focused on addressing various aspects of mental and psychological health, of sexual and reproductive health, of physical health as well as of health in relation to the environment, by proposing a Program on Women's Health Prevention and Promotion to be executed in the Russian Chechen Republic, with the support of local associations.

We will capitalize on its previous experience in order to create a flexible and adapted program, likely to be accepted by the Chechen society, and thus able to be implemented by various specialists or groups.

To carry out this program, the following activities will be accomplished:

### **Phase 1. Program Creation/Setting up**

Production of 15 video tutorials, each one providing an introduction to a specific health issue. Addressing a particular topic in the form of role plays, each tutorial will also constitute a support for stimulating the reaction of the spectators to the corresponding health issue.

production of 5 fifteen-minute video documentaries, each one intended to be broadcasted by different local television stations.

Conducting roundtables with doctors from different specialties, who will be delegated to elaborate recommendations in the form of simple and accessible brochures.

Holding round tables with journalists, who will be delegated to organize the dissemination and promotion of the program " Let's Talk about our Health" in the media.

Testing the produced videos and collecting feedback within a representative sample of the population targeted by the project.

At the end of this first phase, the outcomes of the "Let's Talk about our Health" program will consist of 15 video tutorials, 5 documentaries and several information and 6 recommendations brochures.

### **Phase 2. Appropriation of tools by the specialists delegated to disseminate the program to target populations**

- training of doctors (Different specialties,15 doctors in urban areas and 15 in rural environments)
- training of school nurses (25 in urban areas and 25 in rural areas)
- training teachers at the Vocational Training Institute of Chechnya (200 teachers)
- training of NGOs (especially of those working with women and young people) in the knowledge of this program, such as to be able to include it in their social projects.

At the end of phase 2, a round table will be organized, presenting the project results and the feedback on the implementation of the program, with the participation of doctors, journalists, NGO representatives and officials from the two participating ministries.

### **Results**

Will be informed and formed :

- 30 doctors in urban and rural areas
- 50 school nurses
- 200 teachers
- 20 members of NGOs working on health programs
- 30 members of the professional community and the population will be aware of this program and will know that it is to be done.

### **Phase 3. Dissemination of the program to the target audience**

The program will be implemented during the various events organized by the Prevention Department of different hospitals, particularly in rural areas and in health centers, as well as within the meetings specially organized in schools, in higher education institutes, or in NGOs working with women and young people.

After watching the video tutorials with the participants, the trainer will open the dialogue by inviting the audience to participate, react and propose ideas to solve the situation, find a way out of this critical situation, suggesting them to consider examples from their own life or from their neighbors, colleagues or friends experience.

As large part of the audience will probably found themselves in the staging of the health issue addressed by the video tutorial, the program will also have a therapeutic effect. This technique is

suitable for use in closed cultures, since it allows people to identify with the problem without revealing themselves

An exchange will be further carried on between the trainer and the audience, and will end with the dissemination of informative brochures including preventive measures and advices.

#### Result

- 200 pupils in urban and rural schools will understand that they must take care of their health and learn how to do it;
- more than 200 women participating or having participated in other programs of local associations
- 500 students will attend trainings about the reproductive health, will learn how to counteract domestic or family violence;
- 80 members of the medical community will understand that keeping silence about beatings doesn't mean to preserve the culture but to commit a crime;
- 20 members of NGO will understand the importance of health program;
- 10 journalists will know how to speak and write about health, how to spread true information on population health conditions in Chechnya.

#### The long-term effects of project on the community and/or beneficiaries.

1. Thanks to this project, we involve all those who are confronted to the health problem and we build relationships between them : specialists, beneficiaries, members of NGO and media. We think that **these relationships** will produce long term effects as they will progressively become **working relationships**.

2 Involving pupils and students in the project will produce long term effects as in the future they will create a family, take care of their reproductive health, will understand the consequences of early marriages, will take care of their health. They will know which specialists to call as soon as signs of disease appear. **Thanks to their information and training, we build a healthier future.**

3 An other long term result : we form nurses and teachers who will work in schools with pupils within the framework of this Health Program in the future (minimum 3 years). **If this program is accepted by authorities, it will become compulsory for the whole republic.**

4.The third long term result of this project is the extended possibility of using our methods. Indeed our methods are adapted to the local environment, to the traditional culture. **And so they can be used by the specialists in other closed cultures. This project may become a model for the other regions of North Caucasus.**

#### Dates of the program:

Phase	Dates
<b>Phase 1.</b> Create a program to preserve the health of "Let's talk about health"	4 months
<b>Phase 2.</b> Appropriation of tools by the specialists delegated to disseminate the program to target populations	3 months
<b>Phase 3.</b> Dissemination of the program to the target audience : schools, universities, women's clinics.	5 months