



Youth Engagement in the field of substance abuse

HARM REDUCTION

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Substance abuse training in Tajikistan

In Tajikistan, Khujand City, Villa Maraini, the IFRC Reference Centre for drugs, held the third training course financed by UNDEF on 'Youth Engagement in the field of substance abuse'. The 30 motivated and engaged participants made a final declaration to share with their national leaders. The National Societies involved came from the Red Crescents of Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey. Local NGOs representatives were also invited to the meeting from Tajikistan and Turkey. The official languages used were English, Russian and Fharsi.



Including youth in the field of drug abuse

Five days of lessons, workshops, working groups, peer education and the sharing of stories from former drug users enriched the experience, especially from the youth attendees. Massimo Barra, the Villa Maraini founder declared, "It's always a great success to work with youth. This new generation shows us that despite the general stigma and lack of courage to work for the drug users in their National Societies, they have no problem to face this big challenge and to consider drug addicts as a sick person which needs all our support, according to Strategy 2020. I'm sure that these trainings will enable them to be

an active actor in this field when they return back home, as it happened in Kenya and Kyrgyzstan".

Protecting the most vulnerable

Beyond the basic knowledge shared during the training about how to deal with drug users or how to organise harm and risk reduction activities and campaigns, the discussions focused on the issue of health service access for those hard to reach populations. The workshop also offered an opportunity for participants to develop and discuss practical advocacy exercises. "If the priority of the Movement is the most vulnerable people, who are more vulnerable than drug users?", added Massimo Barra. The Secretary General of the Tajik Red Cross, who took part in the seminar, together with the representative of the United Nations, said:

"Next year the three youth declarations signed by the youth representatives of around 30 National Societies will be unified in one final declaration and delivered to the leaders of each National Society to foster positive public opinion on the need to support the youth in the dissemination and action in the field of the humanitarian drug policies".

