TOGETHER FOR HEALTHY FUTURE

Duration: 15 minutes, 59 seconds.

[music playing]

October 2005

Voiceover: Ukraine, October, 2005. The question which asked, “What is family planning?” surprised citizens. Of course: to purchase a car, to build a house, to buy a TV set, a computer, or a washer, to save more money. Some answered that it is a difficult question to consider and answer. Don't know or it is difficult for them to answer.

September, 2011

SVITLANA BEREOHOVA: Family planning for me is not about buying a new refrigerator or a new car. For me, family planning is about planning to have a child, to desire a child and to give birth at the desired time. It is to be happy about the birth and most of all for the baby to be happy with us.

Voiceover: Svitlana is not the only one who thinks this way. USAID’s «Together for Health» project has changed the way people think: the notion of family planning is now actively a part of our lives.

Voiceover: The questions that confront every family are about the correct timing and the number of children one should give birth to, how to prevent unintended pregnancy, and what contraceptives to use. Svitlana and her husband are lucky. Their relationship and their family’s beginning coincided with the work of “Together for Health” project.

SVITLANA BEREOHOVA: When my husband and I met, we were 18. We were students. Then we decided to get married, but we did not plan to have any children – we wanted to enjoy ourselves for some time. We then had to confront the questions about how to plan our family and how to delay the birth of a baby.

SVITLANA BEREOHOVA, OFF-SCREEN: We went to see a doctor, an ob-gyn that provided counseling to us. She is a wonderful doctor, a trainer who was trained at the «Together for a Healthy Future» training. Her advice for us was to start using contraceptives. She told us about benefits and drawbacks of different types of contraceptives. We returned for an examination a year later year to check our health. She then provided counseling on how to prepare for successful pregnancy.
SVITLANA BEREHOVA, OFF-SCREEN: And after 9 months we have a beautiful baby boy born which we named Danylko. We would like to have another baby. But my husband is the only one who works to support the family and in addition to that we don’t have proper living conditions to provide care for a second baby.

SVITLANA BEREHOVA, OFF-SCREEN: We went to see the health provider that we know who told us about the methods that would be the best for us. We received counseling and decided to choose a method. Also, she told us that the best spacing between the babies should be at least 2 and a half to 3 years.

SVITLANA BEREHOVA, IN THE PICTURE: The freedom of choice is extremely important to me. We all have this freedom. And I want to choose my future, when to give birth and how to spend my time.

Voiceover: Clinical training for health providers is the place to learn about FP counseling and modern contraceptives based on EBM. The goal of the training is to teach how to focus on clients needs. During the past 6 years, over 3000 ob-gyns, 2000 family doctors, 3600 midwives, nurses and paramedics have been trained.

Voiceover: A majority of health providers used to think that FP was only for women whom pregnancy was contraindicated.

ANGELA RYBANOVYCH, an ob-gyn at FP Center, Lutsk maternity hospital, project trainer: Our thinking was changed, thanks to the project. Now we understand that family planning is necessary for all- a healthy couple, a health child, a healthy nation- this is what FP is all about.

Bokhonyky village

Table on the building “FAP”

Flyer “Ask health provider about family planning methods”

Voiceover: Training achieved another goal – it brought FP services closer to people living in remote villages. FAP in Bokhonyky.

Voiceover: Midwife-Olena Strutynska had also been trained by the project. She says that the information she had before “Together for Health” about contraception was outdated, virtually inaccessible; we had to refer women to the city gynecologist. Now Olena can provide counseling to women herself, she can help a client to choose a method by taking into account their age and health conditions.
OLENA STRUTYNSKA, FAP midwife, village Bokhonyky: The number of abortion was reduced twice. In particular, women are no longer afraid talking and trust me more now during our counseling. Even when I go to work, or am riding the bus, they come up to me and start talking. They trust me and come to receive counseling more often. Older women even bring their daughters to talk with me.

Girls! Oh, Lubasha, come on in! Dear, what happened?

Voiceover: Luba has lived in Bokhonyky for 20 years already. But it was only when the project started to work here that it became possible to receive information, answers to her questions, and professional advice on her reproductive health here. She can now get free contraceptives.

Voiceover: Luba’s husband works as a driver, Luba works as a cashier-accountant in the village council. Her older son is 12 years old, and her younger son is 3 years old. I have so much work to do. I can’t even describe it!

LUBOV SOLODA, IN THE PICTURE: I am a busy person because I have a job in order to make a living and a family to care for. I’m pleased that we have a facility in our village that we trust. I remember the times when we used to go to rayon because they had good specialists working there. It was inconvenient because I was burdened with my household chores, work and children. I had to stand in line if I wanted to see a doctor. Now we have a family doctor in the village that helps us with everything. My husband and I went to FAP the other day and the midwife told us about how we can choose the best contraceptives for our family. I make all health related decisions myself now and plan my young family.

“Our life! Our health! Our choice!”

Voiceover: Svitlana Dubyna- a TfH trainer uses joyful and interactive techniques to shape the right attitude towards FP among the students of technical college. These techniques change their behavior and help them to become more confident adults capable of making responsible choices. This is how the project works to reach such sustainable future goals. They will definitely share this information with their friends and who knows maybe one of their friends will become a volunteer.

A GIRLS DRESSED AS A VOLUNTEER speaks in front of the camera: Hello, please, take part in our action «in support of healthy life style»!

Voiceover: Project volunteers are on the streets and squares of Ukraine– it’s a common thing these days. Live communication occurs through the word of mouth approach and dissemination of BCC materials containing easy to understand information about FP. During the 6 project years more than 2 million brochures, flyers and informational leaflets were distributed among population.
45 years old woman speaks in front of the camera: In fact, it’s a cool action. I think if we had similar actions when we were young our generation would have fewer problems.

Voiceover: Elina is 21. She is a university student. Volunteer. She came to the project training 4 years ago. She was amazed by the information she received.

ELINA PASIHOVA, volunteer: I was pleased to share it with my friends. They became interested. In particular, a lot of my friends went to participate in the training and now we’re volunteers. We’re helping social services, sharing a lot of information, and putting information on the Internet. Our society struggles with the problem – our parents don’t want to talk to us about sexual life, therefore children have to search for this information elsewhere on the streets.

Voiceover: Elina says that teenagers can receive much needed information on the streets from peer-volunteers these days: peer to peer initiatives works best.

ELINA PASIHOVA, volunteer: I think that family planning in my view – it’s freedom of choice for a woman, for a man and for their happy family. This information changed my life forever. I was glad to receive it.

Voiceover: The goal of the US Agency for International Development is to bring quality family planning and reproductive health services services to a larger public and especially youth. The multi-pronged approach, developed and implemented by the project in collaboration with Ministry of Health established a synergetic interaction between health providers, pharmacists and the public. The project laid a strong foundation for further development and dissemination of family planning concepts in Ukraine under the National Program for Reproductive health of the Nation 2015. To date, the project covered approximately 65% of the population of Ukraine population: informed citizens come to the project to meet with trained health providers. The family planning culture of valuing human life, and having the right to choose responsibility is taking the front lines. Ukraine is a step closer to the healthy future!

TOGETHER FOR HEALTHY FUTURE!

SVITLANA DUBINA, Head of non-governmental organization «Informational-educational center «VIS»: The project not only does what it says, it ensures scientific and multi-pronged approaches and it provides support to individuals of reproductive age. And if they say that they have contraceptives, it means they have it. And if they say that they are disseminating it for free within the community, we also guarantee it.
OLENA KOBRINA, head of board, NGO Regional Institute for European Development: I was very amazed that I provided educational sessions to 3000 people during 4 years – men, the unemployed, youth, youth groups, and family clubs. And of course, I couldn’t remember all of them but even today I’m approached by couples with holding hands, saying to me: «Thank you for the information that you provided us with. It helped us to plan a family, give birth to a healthy baby».

ROMAN SAVKA, head specialist, Volyn oblast state health administration: I was among the first group of individuals to receive the training. I really liked it and I think that I received a lot of information that helps me even today to work in family planning and reproductive health area.

ALINA DYSHKANT, family doctor: I remember how it was in maternity hospitals in the past: you got pregnant or came for an abortion and after an abortion one gets an IUD and that was it. You did not have any right to choose, you did not have clear information about the methods of contraception. I provided a lot of counseling sessions to many families, that didn’t even knew about methods of contraception. The project enabled us to convey this information easily to women, and the general population. And now women can make the right choice of contraception methods by talking with a family doctor.

MARIA HOHOSHA, deputy head of Volyn oblast state health administration: We managed to integrate FP issues by taking some of these responsibilities from ob-gyns and sharing it with family doctors, Paramedics and midwives, FAPs and ambulatories. The project trained a lot of medical professionals. Thanks to the project, “Together for Health” staff have helped us to develop our local RH program by 2015, that was approved by the oblast council, and we have the resolution of Oblast state administration. To have a program means to have the money allocated towards the program.

NINA SHEVCHUK, deputy director on humanitarian education and training, Vinnitsa technical college: Considering my age, and my extensive experience, I have never thought that I would be involved and be talking about these issues. Therefore, I’m thankful for the education provided to us. These trainings help us teachers, educators, and mentors to convey our knowledge to young people and gain it here. So, I think this project should be continued.

LUDMILA HROBOVA, Deputy Head of Vinnitsa rayon state administration: On behalf of myself and social services for children, people and families who are socially disadvantaged, we would like to ask you to continue the project. We’re ready to work with and collaborate. We thank leaders and coordinators of the project for the cooperation; these are the people we have been interacting with on a regular basis and we actually became very close friends.
ANGELA RYBANOVA, an ob-gyn, FP Center, Lutsk maternity hospital, project trainer: Doctors were not the only ones who benefited from this work; the population gained valuable insight through the BCC activities. The oblast received a lot of free contraceptive and we appreciate the project for this because clients really need them. They would probably want to use a certain method of contraception but they can’t afford it and now thanks to the project they can use hormonal methods which they couldn’t afford in the past.

NADIYA OLEKSIENKO, resident of Bokhonyky village, Vinnitsa oblast: Oh, look. I came and got some contraceptives for free. I took some condoms for my daughter. This is great – I don’t have to go to the city to get it. It takes awhile to get to the city from the village by bus and it takes so much of my time to stand in line to get on a bus. I’m glad that we have people who provide us with such an opportunity. I wish prosperity to the project and us to receive better quality services and contraceptives for free.

SVITLANA DEMCHUK, “Together for Health” project coordinator in Volyn and Rivne oblasts: The most important thing is that our Ukrainian nation started to care about its reproductive health. And most of all that health providers are motivated and capable of providing family planning and reproductive health services that are in line with international and European standards. This is great. Also I would like to thank the US Agency for International Development, the US Government, and the American people for such an amazing and great opportunity to implement such a wonderful project in Ukraine, the project that we call “Together for Health».

NATALIA ANTONUK, Together for Health” project coordinator in Vinnitsa and Khmelnytsk oblasts: We have been working together for five years, we became friends; we became strong, smart, educated and open. We changed our country. The people who had been communicating with us and still communicate with us are totally changed individuals now. I want us to stay together. May be, will not be the same team where we work but we will keep in touch no matter what happens. We will always be together.

[CLOSING CREDITS]

THE FILM WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THROUGH THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID) BY THE «TOGETHER FOR HEALTH» PROJECT.

THE CONTENT OF THE FILM DOESN'T NECESSARILY REFLECT THE VIEWS OF USAID OR THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

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