



PRESS RELEASE

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No Action Today, No Cure Tomorrow - U.S. and Afghan Government Officials Celebrate World Health Day

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN | APRIL 6, 2011 – USAID representatives joined the Afghanistan Ministry of Public Health, the World Health Organization (WHO), members of Parliament, health officials, and the international community today to celebrate World Health Day in Kabul. Under the theme “No Action Today, No Cure Tomorrow,” the event highlighted the growing threat of antimicrobial resistance and called attention to the need for policymakers, civil-society and patient groups, health practitioners and prescribers, pharmacists and dispensers, as well as the diagnostic and pharmaceutical community, to develop a comprehensive plan to minimize health risks from exposure to microbes.

For World Health Day 2011, the WHO is calling for intensified global commitment to safeguard antibiotics and other antimicrobial medicines for future generations. USAID Senior Deputy Mission Director Robert Hellyer said, “USAID is proud to be working in partnership with the Ministry of Public Health to strengthen pharmaceutical systems, and promote rational medicine use and good dispensing practices.”

Antimicrobial resistance, and its global spread, threatens the continued effectiveness of many medicines used today to treat infectious diseases. Antimicrobial resistance is not a new problem, but one that is becoming more dangerous. Urgent and consolidated efforts are needed to avoid regressing to the pre-antibiotic era.

Around Afghanistan, USAID is supporting national and provincial hospitals in developing drug and therapeutic committees, training pharmacists in modern pharmaceutical management practices, and raising public awareness of the importance of proper medicine use. This week, USAID’s Strengthening Pharmaceutical Systems project began regional training workshops on good dispensing practices for 112 pharmacists working at the Ministry of Public Health. Good dispensing practices include the delivery of the correct drug to the right patient, in the required dosage and quantities, in a package that maintains acceptable potency and quality, and with clear drug information. Training will take place in Balkh, Hirat, and Kabul provinces and will continue through the month of April.

For more than 20 years, the world has celebrated World Health Day on April 7. This day was chosen to commemorate the adoption of the WHO constitution on April 7, 1948. Around the globe, thousands of events mark the importance of good health for productive and happy lives. # # #

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