



SUCCESS STORY

Work Heals Scars of Drug Addiction

NGO helps community members to shed drug addiction



Wood engraving is in great demand among occupational workshop clients of rehabilitation center.
Photo: DDRP/OSIAF

“More workshops like this must be established, as drug users in ordinary life are treated with distrust. Here, staying busy with work, we forget about drugs,”

- one of the participants at the Dina center.

To reduce drug addiction and prevent spreading of HIV/AIDS, USAID's drug demand reduction program, implemented in part by the Open Society Institute, and a local NGO Dina opened a rehabilitation center for treated and rehabilitated drug users and former prisoners in Khujand, Sughd Province. Dina's rehabilitation center offers training workshops that enables its clients to receive occupational therapy and obtain professional skills.

Even after shedding their addictions, drug users and former prisoners usually have difficulties adapting in society and finding a job. Through workshops, they learn skills that will help them reintegrate into society. The Dina's rehabilitation center offers such socially useful occupations as horticulture, farming, wood engraving, plastering, and carpentry classes for its patients. The center hopes that their production will bring enough income to support the workshops financially.

NGO Dina has been working with drug users since 1998, and since then it has established the drop-in center for drug users, rehabilitation center, youth education center and drop-in center for vulnerable women, many of them with support from USAID. Its work is regarded with respect by the Sughd Province health authorities, which is a recognition of the contribution Dina made to the provision of medical and social support for people.

A distinctive feature of the Dina rehabilitation center is that it provides treatment through creating a positive environment, rather than through lecturing and medicines. Patients are taught discipline; they begin to live by the center's rules and learn how to plan and make decisions to perform simple daily work, make independent decisions and take care of themselves. Andrei Sapozhnikov, the training workshop manager, believes that labor makes it easier for former drug users and prisoners to reintegrate into society.

“More workshops like this must be established, as drug users in ordinary life are treated with distrust. They must be given a chance for treatment and find themselves in life. Here, staying busy with work, we forget about drugs,” said one of the participants at the center. “And most of all, here we are working for the good of everyone.”