

# RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

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## About this Brief

This brief presents the achievements of two NGOs that received grants to conduct risk communication and community engagement work under the LHSS Project in the Kyrgyz Republic. It examines the grants' capacity strengthening impact on the two organizations, describes lessons learned, and provides recommendations for donors, implementing partners, and local government partners implementing similar programs. Annexes offer background information and data on the grant component of the program.

Due to vaccine mistrust and widespread COVID-19 misinformation in the Kyrgyz Republic, the USAID Local Health System Sustainability Project designed a grants program to expand its risk communication and community engagement work. The project worked in partnership with the Kyrgyz Family Planning Alliance and the Media Support Center Foundation, two nongovernmental organizations working on public health, gender, social development, and conflict resolution. The purpose of the \$115,000 grants program was to reach communities with reliable, accurate, and up-to-date information about COVID-19, building on products and initiatives developed under previous health emergency response activities. Target populations included women, religious leaders, and low-income and rural populations.

From May 20 to August 15, 2022, the two grantees adapted and disseminated information, education, and communication materials, aiming to increase knowledge about COVID-19 vaccines and boost vaccination coverage by 10 percent in Moskva, Sokuluk, and Ysyk-Ata districts. In December 2021, these three districts, located in Chui region, had a combined average COVID-19 vaccination rate of 29 percent (among those who were eligible for vaccination), compared with the national average of 49 percent at the time of intervention.

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## Grantee Activities and Results

The two grantees, Kyrgyz Family Planning Alliance (KFPA) and the Media Support Center Foundation (MSCF), worked jointly over two-and-a-half months achieving a 3.4 percent increase in vaccination coverage in the three pilot districts of Moskva, Sokuluk, and Ysyk-Ata in Chui region. KFPA facilitated coordination between stakeholders on vaccination; established a referral system of mobilizers, community activists, and religious representatives; and initiated a vaccine voucher system. Complementing these activities, MSCF designed and implemented an information campaign to encourage people to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

From the start, both grantees developed partnerships with the Republican Center for Health Promotion and Mass Communication (RCHPMC), the Kyrgyz State Medical Institute for Retraining and Continuing Education (KSMIRCE), and directors of local health promotion centers, family medicine centers, and the Group of Family Doctors. As a result, KFPA and MSCF strengthened coordination and intersectoral cooperation among local authorities, medical workers, and informal leaders and developed a joint, three-month action plan based on the National Vaccination Deployment Plan for COVID-19. KFPA mapped the vaccination process of three pilot districts. Concurrently, MSCF conducted a rapid assessment of vaccine hesitancy in the three districts to identify the needs of the target population. The assessment was an important step in the process allowing for target population engagement and alignment of interventions with population needs.

During a kickoff roundtable meeting on May 20, 2022, KFPA and MSCF presented the results of the mapping and rapid assessment to district stakeholders (local health promotion center directors, heads of local authorities, and Ministry of Health representatives) and gathered their recommendations and inputs for community mobilization and the vaccination campaign.

## Information and Communication about COVID-19 Vaccination

The rapid assessment revealed that “fake information and myths actively shared on social networks about negative side effects of vaccination were pervasive.” To address this, KFPA partnered with RCHPMC, KSMIRCE, and the USAID Local Health System Sustainability Project (LHSS) to review and adapt existing information, education, and communication materials on COVID-19 prevention and the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination. Together, they developed the *Educational and Methodical Guide on COVID-19 Prevention*, a flip calendar, and posters in Kyrgyz and Russian for community mobilization.

The *Educational and Methodical Guide on COVID-19 Prevention* served as a training guide for 70 community activists recruited by KFPA and representing local authorities, medical workers, women, and ethnic minorities in Moskva, Sokuluk, and Ysyk-Ata districts. Training increased the activists’ understanding of vaccination for COVID-19 prevention and enhanced their interpersonal communication skills to help build people’s trust in the vaccines. In June and July 2022, activists helped mobilize communities and promote COVID-19 prevention and vaccination through a series of home visits, facilitated community meetings, and health messages shared at public events.

During home visits and meetings with residents, community activists distributed flip calendars containing information on COVID-19 prevention measures, vaccine types and manufacturers, the effectiveness of each vaccine, side effects and contraindications, recommendations for vaccination, preparation steps, the importance of getting booster doses, and myths related to COVID-19 vaccination.

The rapid assessment found that another reason for vaccine hesitancy was poor awareness of the benefits of vaccination among religious communities that believed the vaccine was not halal (containing substances sanctioned by Islamic law that it is a sin to take drugs). In response, KFPA customized training and developed information, education, and communication materials for religious groups, working under the authority of the State Commission on Religious Affairs and the Muslim Spiritual Directorate and with the support of Mutakalim,

the Progressive Public Association of Women. KFPA trained 249 people, including imams<sup>1</sup>, khatibiats<sup>2</sup>, and members of women's religious groups on COVID-19 prevention and vaccination, vaccine composition, and how to debunk myths. Community activists distributed Kyrgyz-language posters and booklets about the importance of vaccination from the point of view of Islam during training sessions, at meetings of women and men from religious communities, and to imams at mosques and madrassas<sup>3</sup> in the three pilot districts.



*Training for religious community members in Moskva district.*

## Contributions from Nontraditional Partners

Ethnic Kyrgyz people (migrants from other parts of Central Asia) who reside in Sokuluk and Ysyk-Ata districts<sup>4</sup> are adamant opponents of vaccination. These ethnic minorities abide by a strict interpretation of Islam, so KFPA sought the support of the state and civil society partners. These nontraditional partners were crucial in mobilizing religious communities and disseminating messages about COVID-19 vaccination. The State Commission on Religious Affairs, the Muslim Spiritual Directorate, immunologists, local authorities, and imams co-facilitated trainings and engaged religious groups in sessions to increase awareness about the importance of vaccination.

Religious leaders actively participated in mobilizing religious groups. One lesson is that professional and accessible information about vaccination, tailored to the needs of the religious community, is a main factor in changing attitudes toward COVID-19 vaccination. KFPA held a total of 10 training sessions for religious communities in each district, with the content customized for their needs, norms, and concerns regarding vaccination, such as vaccines' composition, for example. An activist from Moskva district noted that one imam who took part in the training session invited several people to get vaccinated the next day. In Ysyk-Ata district, an authoritative local resident with azhy status<sup>5</sup> used his influence to urge people to get vaccinated, using himself as an example.

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<sup>1</sup> For a Sunni Muslim, the imam is a religious leader who provides community service and sometimes counseling.

<sup>2</sup> Religious leader of a district.

<sup>3</sup> Islamic educational institution

<sup>4</sup> Ideat Temirbek uulu. April 2018. *Integration Issues of Ethnic Kyrgyz in Kyrgyzstan: The Example of Kyrgyz Who Moved from Tajikistan*. Available at <https://www.pluralism.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Temirbek-uulu-ideat-English-Apr2018-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> A person obtains this status after completing the pilgrimage (Hajj) to Mecca in Saudi Arabia.

The Muslim Spiritual Directorate’s 2020 fatwa on COVID-19<sup>6</sup> (Annex 2) affirms the positive effects of vaccination and refutes vaccination myths. The fatwa affirms that vaccines do not contain ingredients prohibited in Islam. However, the religious community in the three pilot districts (represented by village imams and madrasa employees) were not aware of the fatwa. KFPA helped disseminate the fatwa and recruited 22 imams in the three districts to mobilize religious communities to participate in COVID-19 trainings, distribute vouchers to religious households, and spread the word about the benefits of vaccination during Friday Namaz.<sup>7</sup>

## Results in the Beneficiary Population

A main challenge keeping the target population from seeking vaccination was a lack of information combined with misconceptions about vaccination. In June of 2022, the LHSS target for the program was a 10 percent increase in vaccination in the three districts. As Table 1 shows, vaccination coverage increased by 5.4 percent in Moskva district, 2.7 percent in Sokuluk, and 3 percent in Ysyk-Ata district (average of 3.4 percent increase). Informational and educational activities conducted directly with the target population were important contributors to this change, as was the timely provision of mobile vaccination services.

The 10 percent target was not met due to an abbreviated implementation timeframe (one and half months) and the lack of availability of the Pfizer vaccine, which residents of these districts reported a strong preference for. Robust community engagement and outreach has been a challenge in the Kyrgyz Republic due to varying levels of trust in COVID-19 vaccinations and vaccine effectiveness. However, the groundwork done has paved the way for more engaged and effective community outreach for COVID-19 vaccines and beyond. LHSS and grantees developed approaches that can be used in future vaccination campaigns and are a model for how to reach and meet communities where they are. Additional findings and recommendations are discussed in the *Experiences and Lessons Learned* section of this brief.

Table 1. Overview of Vaccination Coverage in the Three Pilot Districts <sup>8</sup>

Coverage	Moskva district	Sokuluk district	Ysyk-Ata district	Total/Average
Population	109,833	245,851	165,605	521,289 (Total)
Target population subject to vaccination (Unvaccinated residents aged 18–65 in the three pilot districts)	31,706	55,869	45,015	132,590 (Total)
Vaccination target numbers (10 percent) per district	3,171	5,587	4,501	13,259 (Total)
Vaccination percentage increase in pilot districts as of August 15, 2022 (Source: LHSS/KFPA)	5.4%	2.7%	3.0%	3.4% (Average)
Number of people vaccinated during the period June 1 - August 15, 2022 (Source: LHSS/KFPA)	1,720	1,494	1,266	4,480 (Total)

<sup>6</sup> A fatwa is an authoritative document in Islamic society, a normative legal source of Islamic law that documents the conclusions of Islamic scientists, who have authority on specific issues. A fatwa is initiated by Islamic judges (qadis) or at the request of the Majlis (Muslim Council).

<sup>7</sup> Prayer time

<sup>8</sup> Data source for vaccination numbers: Family medicine centers of Moskva, Sokuluk and Ysyk-Ata districts.

Coverage	Moskva district	Sokuluk district	Ysyk-Ata district	Total/Average
Number of people vaccinated during the period June 1 - August 15, 2022 <b>(Source: RCI)</b>	2,505	1,609	1,418	5,532 (Total)
Number of people vaccinated with the 1 <sup>st</sup> dose during the period June 1 - August 15, 2022 <b>(Source: LHSS/ KFPFA)</b>	737	401	293	1,431 (Total)
Number of people vaccinated with the 1 <sup>st</sup> dose during the period June 1 - August 15, 2022 <b>(Source: RCI)</b>	1053	409	438	1,900 (Total)
Number of people vaccinated with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> dose during the period June 1 - August 15, 2022 <b>(Source: LHSS/ KFPFA)</b>	524	642	606	1,772 (Total)
Number of people vaccinated with the 2 <sup>nd</sup> dose during the period June 1 - August 15, 2022 <b>(Source: RCI)</b>	663	717	609	1,989 (Total)
Number of people vaccinated with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> dose during the period June 1 - August 15, 2022 <b>(Source: LHSS/ KFPFA)</b>	459	451	367	1,277 (Total)
Number of people vaccinated with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> dose during the period June 1 - August 15, 2022 <b>(Source: RCI)</b>	789	483	371	1,643 (Total)



*Community mobilization in Ysyk-Ata district.*

KFPFA trained 70 community activists on COVID-19 vaccination. The activists distributed 300 posters and 500 booklets on COVID-19 prevention and vaccination to religious groups and other members of the target population in Moskva, Sokuluk, and Ysyk-Ata districts. They distributed 100 flip calendars, 10,200 vaccination vouchers, and other promotional materials to households. As of August 15, 2022, 4,480 people in 102 villages of

Chui region (16 villages in Moskva, 68 in Sokuluk, and 18 in Ysyk-Ata) had been vaccinated through the voucher system and during public and capacity development events (Table 2).

*Table 2. Vaccination Statistics in Three Pilot Districts of Chui Oblast (June 1 - August 15, 2022)*

Location	Staffing	Performance
Moskva district	20 activists worked in 16 villages (12 local government authorities)	3,655 people informed 1,720 people vaccinated with LHSS's support 1,251 vaccinated through a mobile vaccination team 469 people vaccinated via Feldsher Obstetric Point/Family Group Practice 1,449 vouchers used/submitted by residents to the vaccination point
Sokuluk district	30 activists worked in 68 villages (19 local government authorities)	4,946 people informed 1,494 people vaccinated with LHSS's support 771 vaccinated through a mobile vaccination team 723 people vaccinated via Feldsher Obstetric Point/Family Group Practice 1,270 vouchers used/submitted by residents to the vaccination point
Ysyk-Ata district	20 activists worked in 48 villages (18 local government authorities)	3,655 people informed 1,266 people vaccinated with LHSS's support 212 vaccinated through a mobile vaccination team 1,054 people vaccinated via Feldsher Obstetric Point/Family Group Practice 5,029 vouchers used/submitted by residents to the vaccination point (some residents submitted the voucher but refused to receive the Sinopharm vaccine)

With supervision and coordination from the RCHPMC Communications Department, MSCF designed and launched a media campaign, which was conducted in parallel with KFPA's work to improve COVID-19 prevention and awareness. The campaign used online and offline channels to reach more than 3.3 million people (Table 3).

*Table 3. Overview of the Online and Offline Media Campaigns*

Activity	Reach (Number of People)
Social media posts	864,073 (Instagram: 366,884; Facebook: 497,189)
Videos	2,210,000
<i>Total reach, online and TV campaign</i>	<i>3,074,073</i>
Vaccination newspaper articles publications	100,000
Information materials on utility bills	112,000
Information posters in public transportation	280,000
<i>Total reach, offline campaign</i>	<i>492,000</i>
<b>Total Reach, Both Campaigns</b>	<b>3,356,073</b>

MSCF conducted the online campaign using local and national television, social media, well-known news outlets, and video portals. In July 2020, MSCF produced 10 animated and interactive informational videos in Kyrgyz and Russian, encompassing gender, religious, and social aspects of vaccination:

- *Islam and Vaccination*
- *Myths about Vaccines*

- Vaccine Promotion: Enjoy Life
- Video with Mr. Azamat Ulanov, National Celebrity/Actor Promoting Vaccination
- How Vaccines Have Been Saving Humanity
- How Vaccine Works
- Motherhood and the Importance of Vaccination
- Video with Mr. Erkin Ryskulbekov, Popular Video Blogger Promoting Vaccination
- Islam and Taking Care of Health
- Health Care Workers Explaining Vaccination



Screenshot from COVID-19 vaccination video featuring Ms. Azamat Ulanov, a national celebrity.

MSCF prepared and published 26 social media posts (Annex 3, Tables 4 and 5) sharing information about vaccination and immunization and debunking COVID-19 myths on the pages of opinion leaders (journalists and bloggers), media outlets (see Annex 3), and social networks (Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube in Kyrgyz and Russian). MSCF also held two contests for social network users, aimed at getting subscribers to not only like the post, but also tag their friends to make them think about the information. For example, an “Immunization Training” post reached 33,951 users and received 189 likes. Social media posts always used hashtags and acknowledged USAID, KPPA, and the sources of the information.

Leading TV channels aired videos in August and September, reaching 2.2 million people (Annex 3, Table 6). MSCF also promoted videos on COVID-19 vaccination through the National Public Broadcasting Corporation’s video portal (reaching 167,000 people) and on MSCF’s own website and YouTube channel (with 16,000 subscribers) in Russian (<https://youtu.be/Q6eNblJXTNU>) and Kyrgyz (<https://youtu.be/uTh82oa3czw>).

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Since most social media users interact with these platforms' "stories" features, in June and July MSCF highlighted KFPA's activities and posted 380 stories on Instagram and Facebook.<sup>9</sup> Topics included the types of vaccines available, experts' opinions, and statistics on the coronavirus.

MSCF reached more than 400,000 people through the offline campaign, which highlighted the importance of vaccination through messages visible on public transportation, in newspapers, and information from the national electricity company in Chui oblast. As a result of COVID-19 vaccination posters being displayed on 40 minibuses in Moskva, Sokuluk, and Ysyk-Ata districts, 288,000 passengers<sup>10</sup> received the following messages:

- Vaccination is necessary even if a person has had COVID-19 because if they are reinfected, vaccination will strengthen the immune response.
- COVID-19 vaccines protect against the development of severe disease and death when a person is infected with any strain of COVID-19.
- A third dose of the vaccine is needed for people aged 60 years and older, since their immunity is weaker after two doses compared to youth.

In July and August 2022, around 100,000 people received COVID-19 vaccination messages as a result of MSCF's coordination of four articles in leading newspapers:

- Vaccination and pregnancy (interview with the professor and president of the Kyrgyz Association of Obstetricians and Gynecologists).
- Implementation of the National Deployment and Vaccination Plan (NDVP) for COVID-19 vaccines (interview with the Director of the Republican Center for Immunoprophylaxis).
- Vaccination against COVID-19 is safe for people with endocrine diseases (interview with a representative from the Endocrinology Center in the Ministry of Health).
- We must not forget that COVID-19 is still dangerous (interview with the head of the Republican Scientific and Practical Center for Viral Infection Control at the nongovernmental organization, Preventive Medicine).

## Grantee Capacity Strengthening

The LHSS grantees noted the following changes as a result of the grants program:

- **Stronger institutional and organizational capacity to coordinate and work cohesively with public and private sector partners and attract employees, experts, and funding.** The results of pre- and post-tests conducted at the beginning and end of the project indicate an increase in awareness of the methods to prevent coronavirus infection by all specialists, including KFPA employees. The experience of working in new areas will allow KFPA and MSCF to gain access to new resources and donors in related fields, such as routine vaccination among infants and children - an area of strong interest to projects financed by UNICEF, the World Health Organization, and USAID in the Kyrgyz Republic
- **Enhanced communication skills to work in the health sector, with religious leaders, and at the community level.** This was MSCF's first experience working with the Department of Health, Republican Center for Health Promotion and Mass Communication, and religious groups. As a result, MSCF's staff reported that they strengthened their skills in building effective relationships with stakeholders. Additionally, MSCF staff gained the ability to negotiate with and reconcile different stakeholder perspectives.

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<sup>9</sup> <https://www.instagram.com/stories/highlights/17943174563046443/>

<sup>10</sup> 40 minibuses \* 20 people per run \* 6 runs per day \* 60 days = 288,000

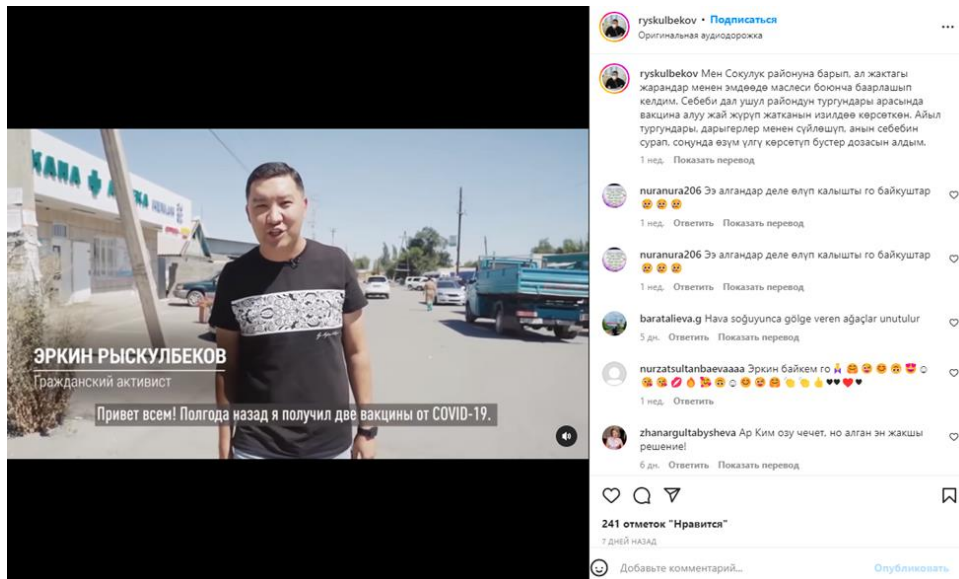


## Experiences and Lessons Learned

KFPA engaged with trusted community institutions and leaders to build partnerships among local authorities, religious communities, and medical workers in three pilot districts. This approach anchored KFPA’s activities in the communities where they worked, increasing the likelihood that their activities would be sustained.

MSCF produced a large amount of media content and contextual advertising in a short time. Due to tight deadlines and the need to coordinate with a diverse range of partners, the creation of media products required more organizational resources and effort. The grantees highlighted the following lessons from the media campaigns:

- **Carefully selected media influencers enabled MSCF to convey information more efficiently and precisely.** One achievement is the increase in the number of vaccinated Kyrgyz citizens through the involvement of local celebrities and bloggers. Videos featuring Kyrgyz influencers elevated awareness of COVID-19 vaccinations. One of the three pilot districts (Sokuluk) was highlighted in a documentary video with Mr. Erkin Ryskulbekov, a local influencer who has 238,000 followers on Instagram.
- **Customizing content for religious communities bolstered information dissemination among those communities.** The campaigns included two specialized videos targeted at religious community members. The videos were developed jointly with specialists from the Muslim Spiritual Directorate and professors at Kyrgyz Islamic University. These specialists were invited to address religious, academic, and spiritual issues related to COVID-19. Local authorities also took part in the creation of the video. Distributing the videos through religious communities’ internal channels supported rapid dissemination of the information.



*Mr. Erkin Ryskulbekov, a popular blogger/local influencer, posts about receiving a COVID-19 booster dose in Sokuluk village, his hometown.*

Both grantees noted challenges. KFPA experienced the following challenges:

- **Limited choice among vaccines.** In June and July, only the Sinopharm vaccine was available. Meanwhile, most people preferred the Pfizer vaccine, due to its internationally recognized status and reported higher trust in “Western” vaccines.
- **Weather conditions affecting mobile vaccination.** Conducting informational and educational activities on vaccination during severe weather was difficult for medical personnel, community activists,

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and the mobilized population. Abnormal heat resulted in mobile teams' inability to conduct long trips, because of vaccine storage requirements. For example, since refrigeration bags were not adequate in the unusual heat, mobile teams in Ysyk-Ata district could not reach destination households and had to return to the vaccination facilities and reschedule visits to meet vaccination plans.

- For MSCF, collaborating and working with RCHPMC was time-consuming. Video releases were scheduled for July and August, but RCHPMC's lengthy reviews of the scripts required a delay to August and September.

## Recommendations for Donors, Implementing Partners, and Local Government Partners

Grantees recommended the following actions to help ensure the success of future grants programs:

- **Encourage and support grantees to adequately estimate costs for transportation.** MSCF staff traveled frequently to the pilot districts. If the grant had included sufficient funds for travel expenses, MSCF staff could have been more effective in making mobile visits to vaccinate people and collect feedback for analysis.
- **Always obtain photo permissions.** During a field visit to one of the pilot districts, KFPA took photos of the vaccination process for later use in the media campaign. However, the partner representing KFPA did not request permission to use the images, so they could not be used due to ethical requirements.

The following are recommendations to promote sustainability:

- **Ensure activities are supported by local authorities.** During implementation, local authorities in the three pilot districts issued normative documents (orders and directives) about COVID-19 prevention measures. These remain relevant and will support future vaccination activities.
- **Share COVID-19 information, education, and communication materials in other regions.** The grantees' materials on COVID-19 vaccination and its benefits can be used in other regions.



*A community activist distributes information, education, and communication materials to households.*

- **Continue mobilizing the population to get COVID-19 vaccinations in Chui region and other parts of the country.** Trained community activists—including deputies of local kenesh (council), representatives of local health promotion centers, and imams from every pilot district—can ensure community mobilization activities are in place. Now that the Pfizer vaccine patch has been deployed to

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vaccination points throughout the country, local authorities must follow the National Vaccination Plan and ensure the population gets vaccinated. The voucher system can be used by local authorities, health care organizations, community leaders, and the civil society sector to further mobilize the population to get vaccinated.

- **Adapt or use the training guide for community activists.** The *Educational and Methodical Guide on COVID-19 Prevention* can be adapted and/or used by other interested organizations. For example, the KSMIRCE Academic Council plans to introduce this guide in the institution's curriculum.



*Ms. Meerim Zakirova, the head of the social sector for the Sokuluk district state administration (far right), participates in a two-day training course on vaccination for community activists.*

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“The most important thing is to start with yourself and lead by example. Together with other deputies, we provide full information from verified sources on the vaccine’s composition and its benefits and use accessible language ... [We] invite immunologists who explain the vaccination process in detail, we work together with state agencies and local government.” *Baktygul Koloeva, deputy of a local kenesh (council), Sadovoye village.*

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## Annex I.

Table 4. Comparative Analysis of the Vaccination Number Reports of the Republican Center for Immunoprophylaxis (RCI) and Kyrgyz Family Planning Alliance (KFPA) from June 1 – August 15, 2022

District	Period	KFPA data			RCI data		
		1 <sup>st</sup> dose	2nd dose	3rd dose	1 <sup>st</sup> dose	2nd dose	3rd dose
Moskva	June 1-30	47	144	159	210	231	160
	July 1-31	533	159	250	636	162	495
	August 1-15	157	221	50	207	270	134
	<b>Sum</b>	<b>737</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>1053</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>789</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1720</b>			<b>2505</b>		
Sokuluk	June 1-30	129	151	100	131	225	128
	July 1-31	120	226	130	126	227	130
	August 1-15	152	265	221	152	265	225
	<b>Sum</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>717</b>	<b>483</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1494</b>			<b>1609</b>		
Ysyk-Ata	June 1-30	85	383	188	220	385	191
	July 1-31	124	157	132	126	158	133
	August 1-15	84	66	47	92	66	47
	<b>Sum</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>606</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>371</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1266</b>			<b>1418</b>		

## Annex II. Vaccination Trends in Moskva, Sokuluk and Ysyk-Ata Districts from June 1-August 15, 2022

Figure 1. Vaccination Curve in Moskva District

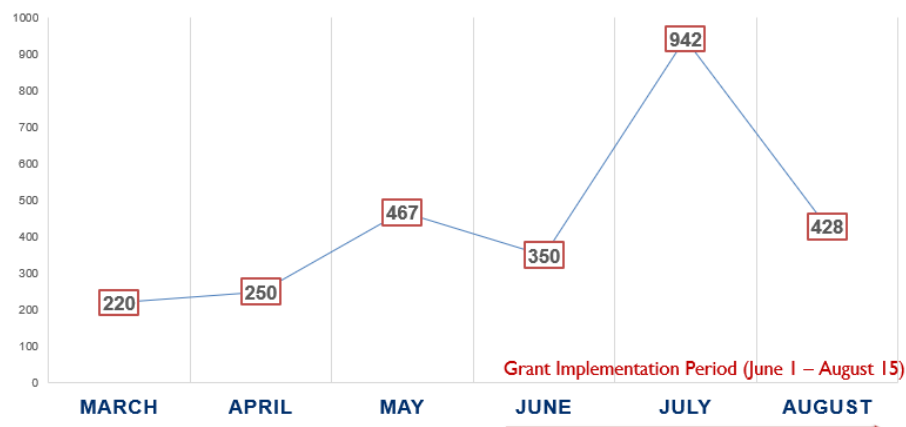


Figure 2. Vaccination Curve in Sokuluk District

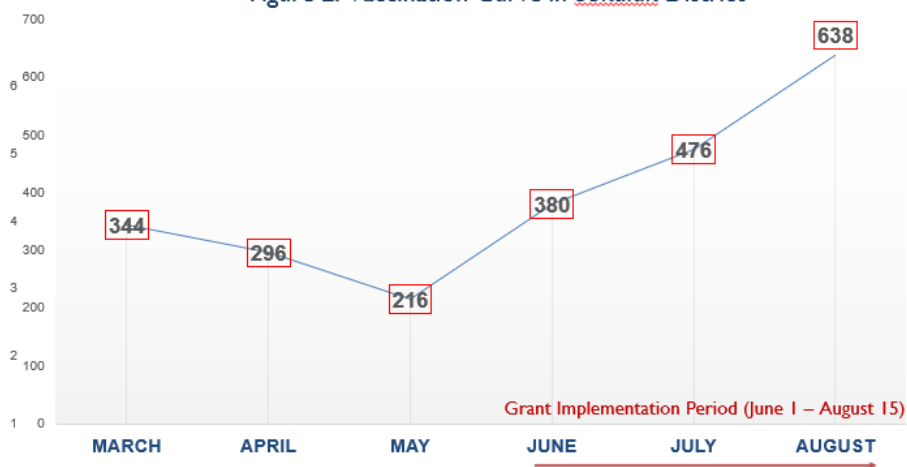
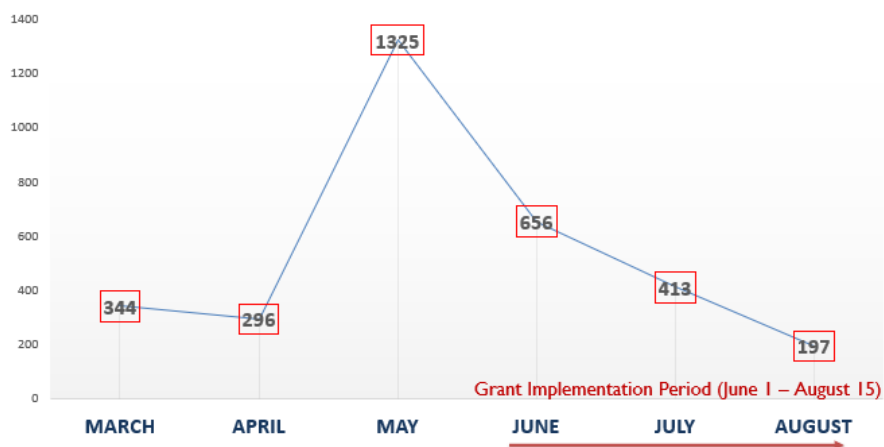


Figure 3. Vaccination Curve in Ysyk-Ata District



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## Annex III. Fatwa on COVID-19, Muslim Spiritual Directorate, Kyrgyz Republic

Based on the VII Convocation, a fatwa regarding COVID-19 vaccination was issued:

### Fatwa No. 01

COVID-19 continues to spread across the globe; accordingly, it is important to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Health officials and medical experts encourage people to prevent their risk of infection, including choosing to vaccinate to prevent serious illness and death. The benefits of vaccination are clear, and sharia encourages people to follow recommendations made by healthcare professionals. Islam principles do not suggest and objection to vaccination as the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic has concluded that there is no harm in vaccination against COVID-19.

Therefore, the Council of Muslim Scholars of the Kyrgyz Republic is not against voluntary vaccination for the purpose of preventing the disease COVID-19. This fatwa is confirmed by other authorities, including the International Fiqh Islamic Academy and Dar Al-Ifta Al-Missriyyah, an internationally renowned religious institute.

### Original Text in Kyrgyz

КЫРГЫЗСТАН МУСУЛМАНДАРЫНЫН ААЛЫМДАР КЕҢЕШИ

Кыргызстан мусулмандарынын Аалымдар Кеңешинин VII чакырылышынын чечиминин негизинде COVID-19 илдетине каршы эмдөөдөн өтүү жөнүндө төмөнкүдөй фатва чыгарат:

#### № 01 ФАТВА

Өткөн жылы COVID-19 пандемиясы канчалаган адамдардын өмүрүн алып кеткендиги бүткүл дүйнө жүзүнө белгилүү. Тилекке каршы акыркы учурларда ооругандардын саны көбөйүүдө. Ошондуктан, бүгүнкү күндө коронавирус инфекциясына каршы эмдөө алуу маселеси өтө актуалдуу болууда. Саламаттыкты сактоо кызматкерлеринин пикири боюнча оорунун жайылуусун токтотуучу жалгыз ыкма -- бул адамдарды массалык түрдө эмдөөдөн өткөрүү болуп саналат.

Дарыгер адистердин айтуусуна таянып, инфекция жугуу коркунучуна кабылгандар үчүн оорунун алдын алуу ыкмаларын колдонуу кажет. Ал эми медициналык эмдөөлөр азыркы мезгилде илдеттин алдын алуунун эң таасирдүү каражаттарынын бири болуп саналат.

Эмдөөнүн пайдасы менен зыяны медицина илимине таандык. Ал эми мындай учурда шарияттын өкүмү медициналык жактан чыккан натыйжага карап берилет. Ошондуктан Кыргыз Республикасынын Саламаттык сактоо министрлигинин эмдөөгө жооптуу болгон органдарынан жана тиешелүү тараптардан текшерүүлөрдөн өтүп, жоопкерчиликтүү, тажрыйбалуу дарыгерлер тарабынан COVID-19га каршы эмдөөнүн зыяны жок деген тастыктоосу болсо, эмдөөгө Исламда каршылык жок.

Ошондуктан Кыргызстан мусулмандарынын Аалымдар Кеңеши COVID-19 илдетинин алдын алуу максатында ыктыярдуу түрдө эмдөө алууга каршы эмес.

Пандемия илдети бүткүл дүйнөнү каптагандыктан жогорудагы фатваны “Эл аралык Фихх Ислам Академиясы” жана “Даруль-ифта мисрия” сыяктуу дүйнөдөгү таанымал уюмдар жана фатва идараларынын чечимдери тастыктайт.

## Annex IV. Outreach Campaigns: Themes and Engagement

Table 5. Overview of Facebook Posts (June 1 – August 15, 2022)

Post Theme	Link	Likes	Reach	Shares
What Is Immunization? (June 5, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0z66kjGdvvg27XL23UgyF8UTJnpSHTECT7EQqf7FVxfwECjoZZvSyghM3fvxehuhM!">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0z66kjGdvvg27XL23UgyF8UTJnpSHTECT7EQqf7FVxfwECjoZZvSyghM3fvxehuhM!</a>	106	28,048	7
Training in Immunization (June 10, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0SDwShhTRKyeJnKS5oCxoDMvt52ikz7WPWxzqAZIsR5rIXtskvTREk2WfVuosd5hkl">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0SDwShhTRKyeJnKS5oCxoDMvt52ikz7WPWxzqAZIsR5rIXtskvTREk2WfVuosd5hkl</a>	189	33,951	7
Are COVID-19 Vaccines Safe? (June 13, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid02Y8eADPUSUavi6o4TVxAENLFe3p9NwGqAwstLb3bgUjdWQieUzDXjP2bXltGK7m2fl">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid02Y8eADPUSUavi6o4TVxAENLFe3p9NwGqAwstLb3bgUjdWQieUzDXjP2bXltGK7m2fl</a>	73	14,946	4
Vaccinate! (June 20, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid028e2mK43RbykoZLuJFN67tjj2NfPzEN4NSb9fcEeqcVRcODuhgkei3Cksd2DVCpyFl">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid028e2mK43RbykoZLuJFN67tjj2NfPzEN4NSb9fcEeqcVRcODuhgkei3Cksd2DVCpyFl</a>	153	66,601	8
Did You Know? (June 22, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid02CMPodx26BqvdhVpSYRyoLsZJ25LrnZPdKSHjAqZzsaRTd58FIYqeGUWn6crSfhGl">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid02CMPodx26BqvdhVpSYRyoLsZJ25LrnZPdKSHjAqZzsaRTd58FIYqeGUWn6crSfhGl</a>	68	24,200	15
Vaccination and Health (June 27, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0HWCPwYzSMiQJrznRphMKtCM8EA4C9e7GAuYQTankRYjeJN7GUUnvYEj2NwJyRktmzl">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0HWCPwYzSMiQJrznRphMKtCM8EA4C9e7GAuYQTankRYjeJN7GUUnvYEj2NwJyRktmzl</a>	77	22,297	8
Competition for Journalists (June 30, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0GzVijYTeQ2h4Kv3p78Zn4CrqgCnSTbThH6u6ZbinWy64N3WtpgnRGEzCBSCu7TA9l">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0GzVijYTeQ2h4Kv3p78Zn4CrqgCnSTbThH6u6ZbinWy64N3WtpgnRGEzCBSCu7TA9l</a>	59	62,316	10
COVID-19 Antivaccination (July 4, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0j8SZSmwF6UbuoGd7N6xXChhRqgESgCP8gBtxK3fKRymgMA2snF53KXgakgn9okl9l">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0j8SZSmwF6UbuoGd7N6xXChhRqgESgCP8gBtxK3fKRymgMA2snF53KXgakgn9okl9l</a>	71	20,499	1
Types of Antivaccination (July 6, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid02oFcU4LTv9fcmhUXNpmmdzZHk8jryyV4WHfGqfjF8AdbGDL9AYmTR37xZZGSJ9kXl">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid02oFcU4LTv9fcmhUXNpmmdzZHk8jryyV4WHfGqfjF8AdbGDL9AYmTR37xZZGSJ9kXl</a>	19	5,392	4
Fake Information on Vaccination (July 7, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid08HQESPIVtDNG38bTqbj5Sm3RnFHR9jevImYhchSjeqGcELFCMDkHNZ3uYYV8JkU9l">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid08HQESPIVtDNG38bTqbj5Sm3RnFHR9jevImYhchSjeqGcELFCMDkHNZ3uYYV8JkU9l</a>	66	20,256	5
Expert Opinion on Vaccination (July 25, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0J92IMFvWwMRWjAKUgJBFiMamg4cBmB49ffvBfZ8rGm7AsSnaBVeHO6Ca5zuIvZZl">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0J92IMFvWwMRWjAKUgJBFiMamg4cBmB49ffvBfZ8rGm7AsSnaBVeHO6Ca5zuIvZZl</a>	3	327	1
COVID-19: News (July 29, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/videos/1123114521890175/">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/videos/1123114521890175/</a>	12	23,988	–
Information on COVID-19 Vaccines (August 3, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid064SQ92R62QUhwuEKwq4kCfM7KVAAasy5F3LEdp9LqdbtmqyhhsFVwnxmkY3CMMcfpl">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid064SQ92R62QUhwuEKwq4kCfM7KVAAasy5F3LEdp9LqdbtmqyhhsFVwnxmkY3CMMcfpl</a>	71	24,855	2
COVID-19 and Vaccination (August 5, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0atLdYK8ZjzwyBUJ2L9Af3UTrjMdPfnB8yRxxkQ8FDiLdMlmjHu58JbqCcvBn9YvZnl">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid0atLdYK8ZjzwyBUJ2L9Af3UTrjMdPfnB8yRxxkQ8FDiLdMlmjHu58JbqCcvBn9YvZnl</a>	58	15,452	4

Post Theme	Link	Likes	Reach	Shares
Expert Opinion on Maternity and Vaccination (August 11, 2022)	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid034uPV7uSkaF3VFodHMkoKMDgbG2pAUDSkd5hr3eYim72wtskonY9t4f7mGtnGr87sl">https://www.facebook.com/mediasabak.org/posts/pfbid034uPV7uSkaF3VFodHMkoKMDgbG2pAUDSkd5hr3eYim72wtskonY9t4f7mGtnGr87sl</a>	39	15,571	2

Table 6. Overview of Instagram Posts (July 1 – August 15, 2022)

Post Theme	Instagram Link	Likes	Reach	Shares	Saves
Competition for Journalists on COVID-19 (July 1, 2022)	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Cfc_Vc_q8rO/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Cfc_Vc_q8rO/</a>	122	39,738	30	65
Antivaccination (July 4, 2022)	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Cfla6ssWoE/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Cfla6ssWoE/</a>	63	27,132	8	19
Types of Anti-Vaccinationists (July 6, 2022)	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CfqINo5soqI/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CfqINo5soqI/</a>	183	13,664	35	37
Fake Stories about Vaccination (July 8, 2022)	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CfvYRGaMps4/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CfvYRGaMps4/</a>	96	17,504	8	48
Islam and Vaccination (July 15, 2022)	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CgCLNqBsOu8/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CgCLNqBsOu8/</a>	71	1,297	26	35
Competition for Journalists (July 20, 2022)	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CgON3TKqCVv/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CgON3TKqCVv/</a>	89	31,527	12	50
COVID-19: News (July 29, 2022)	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CgISKrIKhkv/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CgISKrIKhkv/</a>	31	1,648	3	2
Information on COVID-19 Vaccines (August 3, 2022)	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/CgyLSg5omgu/">https://www.instagram.com/p/CgyLSg5omgu/</a>	114	29,116	6	31
COVID-19 and Vaccination (August 5, 2022)	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/Cg3mHqXlxN4/">https://www.instagram.com/p/Cg3mHqXlxN4/</a>	70	25,686	2	11
Expert Opinion on Maternity and Vaccination (August 11, 2022)	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/p/ChH68O_ovVx/">https://www.instagram.com/p/ChH68O_ovVx/</a>	56	20,809	6	29

Table 7. Media Products Spot Confirmation on National and Local Television

Media Products	Channel	Date	Reach
6 animated and interactive videos	KTRK	August 2022	1,000,000
2 special videos	Ala-Too 24	August 2022	510,000
2 animated videos 2 interactive videos 2 informational videos 2 special videos 1 live program	TNT Kyrgyzstan	August 11–15, 2022	190,000



Media Products	Channel	Date	Reach
2 animated videos	TVIKG	August 2022	510,000
2 interactive videos			
2 informational videos			
2 special videos			
1 live program			
<b>Total</b>			<b>2,210,000</b>



### Local Health System Sustainability Project

The Local Health System Sustainability Project (LHSS) under the USAID Integrated Health Systems IDIQ helps low- and middle-income countries transition to sustainable, self-financed health systems as a means to support access to universal health coverage. The project works with partner countries and local stakeholders to reduce financial barriers to care and treatment, ensure equitable access to essential health services for all people, and improve the quality of health services. Led by Abt Associates, the five-year project will build local capacity to sustain strong health system performance, supporting countries on their journey to self-reliance and prosperity.

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