

Increasing access to quality-assured drugs

GDF workshops promote local manufacturing

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND – Representatives from pharmaceutical manufacturers across central Europe gathered in the Ukrainian capital in October 2005 for a workshop meant to increase the supply of anti-TB drugs that meet that meet the World Health Organization's (WHO) quality, safety and efficacy standards.

The workshop was the second in a series of three training initiatives that GDF has coordinated with WHO's Department of Medicines Policy and Standards (PSM), as part of the WHO TB Prequalification Project. The first workshop in the series was held earlier this year in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Attended by inspectors of drug regulatory authorities and quality-control managers of pharmaceutical companies from countries in south and south-east Asia, the workshop helped participants better understand the process of prequalification, in hopes of accelerating the process.

The third training workshop is scheduled for January 2006 in Beijing, China.

The workshop series seeks to give more manufacturers the knowledge and means to adopt WHO good manufacturing practices (GMP) and quality standards. By expanding the pool of GMP-qualified manufacturers, the GDF hopes to increase and diversify the number of products available to countries that have been qualified through the TB Prequalification Project. The GDF has played a leading role in this project. In 2001, it established a list of prequalified anti-TB drugs to increase access to drugs that meet WHO standards. Only those drugs produced by prequalified manufacturers may be considered for inclusion on the list.

Other GDF workshops

In collaboration with Management Sciences for Health (MSH), GDF recently conducted two drug management workshops:

- Hanoi, Viet Nam. From 7-11 November, GDF consultants working in south-east Asia and the western Pacific attended a regional workshop on management of anti-TB drugs.
- Paris, France. From 18-23 October, in conjunction with the International Union Against TB and Lung Disease's 36th World Conference on Lung Health, a workshop was held on *Strengthening medicine supply in national TB control programmes: practical guidelines and tools*.

For information or ideas about future GDF workshops in your country or region, please write to

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