

Letter of support to WHO application for changes in the Essential Medicines List pertaining to
mifepristone-misoprostol for medical abortion

The Tajik Family Planning Association (TFPA) is pleased to provide this letter and comments in support of WHO's application for changes in the Essential Medical List pertaining to the provision of mifepristone-misoprostol.

TFPA is a voluntary, self-governed, non-commercial organization established by free will for association of citizens in order to fulfill their objective to advocate for the basic human right of all women, men and young people to make free and informed choices regarding their own sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). TFPA in its operations put emphasis on the sharing of information, advocating, providing services and subscribing to services in order to advance the sexual and reproductive health and rights of the citizens, with special focus to unwanted pregnancy, as well as unsafe abortion.

- TFPA commends WHO for providing strong leadership to ensure increased access to safe abortion care and welcomes the proposed changes for the provision of mifepristone-misoprostol for medical abortion in the Essential Medicines list.
- TFPA acknowledges that the proposed changes, including the move to include mifepristone-misoprostol in the Core Model List of Essential Medicines, are in line with latest evidence which confirms that provision of mifepristone-misoprostol is safe and effective for medical abortion without the need for specialized medical care and direct supervision.
- TFPA further acknowledges that the suggested changes will contribute to increasing access to mifepristone-misoprostol for medical abortion, which is essential for provision of safe abortion services in Tajikistan and to address the adverse consequences of unsafe abortion, including high maternal morbidity and mortality.
- TFPA recognizes that the proposed changes provide a great opportunity to increase access to safe abortion care. Access to contraception and safe comprehensive abortion care in Tajikistan remains a challenge and complications due to unsafe abortion are a significant cause of maternal morbidity and mortality. In Tajikistan the poorest, youngest, least educated and most marginalized women are most impacted by lack of access to safe abortion care, and are most vulnerable to unsafe abortion.
- TFPA supports the removal of the statement "where permitted under national law and where culturally acceptable", which is unnecessary and serves to perpetuate abortion-related stigma. Lack of access to safe abortion care is exacerbated by abortion-related stigma, poor knowledge of abortion and SRHR, and what the Guttmacher-Lancet Commission on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights calls "a persistent discrimination against women and girls, and an unwillingness to address issues related to sexuality openly and comprehensively."

Signed by:

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