

CASE STUDIES

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC TRANSITION INITIATIVE (KRTI)



2010-2013



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Kyrgyz Republic Transition Initiative

Case Studies

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The KRTI Case Study Initiative

Introduction

Following Kyrgyzstan's political transition in 2010, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through its Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI), launched the Kyrgyz Republic Transition Initiative (KRTI) to provide flexible, short term support to address the opportunities and challenges of the transition period and complement other longer-term initiatives of USAID. Since May 2010, KRTI's strategic goal has been to support Kyrgyzstan's efforts to establish a more stable and secure democracy while laying the groundwork for continued long-term development. Based on this mandate, KRTI developed two program objectives: 1.) support the ongoing democratic political transition at the national and local levels; and 2.) address emerging sources of instability and conflict at the community level.

From 2010-2013, KRTI partnered with over 300 local government, civil society and private entities, through nearly 450 small in-kind grants supporting the democratic transition and addressing sources of instability. Like most OTI programs, KRTI awarded small, in-kind grants to local stakeholders, including government, civil society and private entities. To multiply the impact of small activities and achieve a critical mass necessary for change, KRTI clustered grants around specific thematic and issues areas; such as building inclusive, accountable governance, increasing access to objective and reliable information, and expanding services for vulnerable groups. Maintaining a high degree of flexibility, KRTI also targeted smaller issues as they arose, quickly; addressing sources of instability and supporting key government and civil society-led initiatives. Many of the case studies included in this report reflect such issues.

Kyrgyzstan's Political Transition
Popular demonstrations in April 2010 brought a swift and unexpected end to the regime of former President Kurmanbek Bakiyev. A Provisional Government was quickly established, which set a series of democratic milestones. Ethnic violence flared in southern districts in June 2010, destabilizing the country and resulting in hundreds of deaths and as many as 400,000 displaced. Despite the civil strife, the country managed to hold a constitutional referendum in June 2010. The following three years, the country successfully met many of the democratic milestones, including the peaceful transition of presidential power and national and local elections, while implementing democratic reforms.

The Case Study Approach

KRTI commissioned a series of case studies from independent, third party researchers to review a selection of activity clusters and document results and lessons learned. The purpose of these case studies is twofold. First, they are intended to provide an independent, third party perspective on the results of specific clusters of activities. Researchers were asked to evaluate the validity of KRTI's programmatic assumptions and determine whether activities achieved their intended output and outcome objectives. The studies were also intended to evaluate the success of a group of small grants, aggregating outcomes to determine a broader programmatic result. In this way, the studies are a key component of the program's overall monitoring and evaluation effort. Second, these case studies are intended to identify programmatic and strategic lessons learned and provide recommendations to inform future programming. As KRTI ends, initiatives by government, civil society, and the international community will continue to address the themes and sectors KRTI targeted. These case studies will serve as one means of contributing to future efforts. These case studies will also help to inform stabilization and political transition work more broadly within OTI and USAID.

The seven studies included in this publication were conducted from June to September 2013.¹ The case study researchers are professionals with experience and contacts within Kyrgyzstan's government and civil society. Researchers first conducted desk studies of KRTI's project documentation, records, internal evaluations, and press clippings, followed by interviews with KRTI staff who worked on these activities. The researchers were encouraged to conduct external research and review existing literature and resources on the case study topic. Upon completion of the desk review stage, each researcher prepared an inception report which outlined the field research and structure of the case study. Field research techniques included beneficiary, stakeholder, and key informant interviews, focus groups, and site visits based on the intended output and outcome objectives of KRTI's activities. Researchers prepared reports with the results of this desk and field research in a prescribed format, providing not only a review of KRTI activities but also recommendations for future programming initiatives.

KRTI provided background information and logistical assistance to researchers during field research, and suggested contacts and interviewees. To maintain the impartiality and third party nature of this research, KRTI provided minimal feedback regarding the findings of the activities and studies. While this research is intended to build upon, and verify activity evaluations that were conducted during and at the end of each specific activity, KRTI encouraged researchers to go beyond KRTI stakeholders and beneficiaries and examine each issue more broadly. KRTI provided input on reports in regards to formatting, copy editing, and factual errors and occasionally asked researchers to elaborate or provide additional information on specific points, but left the overall content, findings, and recommendations to the discretion of each researcher.

¹ The case studies conducted by M-Vector took place in early 2013 using a different methodology. This information is available in Attachment 2.

Case Study Themes

The case study themes, selected by KRTI, represent some of the most important issues and local initiatives addressed by the program and its key partners. They also incorporate innovative approaches, tools, and techniques that could be replicated or supported by future initiatives.

Supporting Reform in Judicial Selection. In late 2011, media, civil society and the transitional government took aim at what they saw as corruption and nepotism in the selection of judges at the national, regional and local levels. To address these allegations and reform the state Judges Selection Committee (JSC), the transitional president called upon civil society to serve as a watchdog during the selection of judges and recommend changes to the legislation guiding the processes. This led to the creation of an independent coalition of 14 civil society organizations called the Citizens' Council to Control Court Systems (CCCCS). KRTI was quick to respond to this government reform initiative by supporting key CCCS members in a number of activities from late 2011 to 2012.

Ministry of Internal Affairs Reform. Following the violence in June 2010, both the government and civil society in Kyrgyzstan took note of ineffectual and corrupt local law enforcement bodies and initiated a process to reform the Ministry of the Internal Affairs (MIA). However, civil society was largely ignored during this process, leading to civil society's eventual withdrawal from the reform process. In the spring of 2012, KRTI supported an alliance of 21 experts and members of civil society organizations, as they turned to the public through a campaign to collect 10,000 signatures, legally requiring the Jogorku Kenesh, Kyrgyzstan's Parliament, to consider the reforms suggested by civil society.

Socioeconomic Mapping & Conflict Analysis in Kyrgyzstan. The April 2010 political revolution and the June 2010 ethnic violence demonstrated the importance of ensuring that both donors and government understand the underlying sources of conflict and tension and channel resources and attention into the most critical areas. To bolster the availability of credible information and data, particularly in the south, KRTI partnered several organizations to conduct research on - and support access to - relevant data sets to inform the design of recovery and conflict mitigation activities in southern, rural Kyrgyzstan. KRTI then went on to fund the collection and mapping of infrastructure activities, and the dissemination of perception survey data and crowd-sourced information on security and the MIA.

Developing a Professional, Objective Media Industry. Over the past three years, KRTI has supported several initiatives to encourage a balanced and viable media industry that provides unbiased, accurate information to citizens. This is intended to counter streams of politically-motivated news - a source of mistrust and instability. To help media broadcasters exercise impartiality and professionalism, expand their revenues, and address industry concerns, KRTI supported the development of a Joint Media Industry Committee (JMIC) as well as multiple rounds of media consumption research.

Increasing Access to Multi-Language Media. Following the ethnic violence that struck southern Kyrgyzstan in June 2010, most, if not all Uzbek language media outlets closed their doors. This caused the ethnic Uzbek population in the region to turn to

foreign media outlets, particularly those from Uzbekistan, for their daily news and entertainment. Building a common civic identity for all citizens of Kyrgyzstan, regardless of ethnicity, is a priority for the national government. KRTI has supported these efforts by bolstering locally based ethnic Uzbek language media outlets in order to present relevant news and information to the large ethnic minority population in the south and encourage civic integration in the region.

Support and Tools for Inclusive and Transparent Local Governance. Improving government responsiveness and accountability, particularly when it leads to inclusive decision-making and citizen engagement, addresses many of the key triggers of instability and conflict, including corruption and nepotism, and fosters a sense of trust and a stake in government initiatives. KRTI has implemented a wide range of activities to build a more responsive, accountable government. This case study will evaluate KRTI's support to NGO Abad an organization working to build strong local governance mechanisms in the south. KRTI awarded seven grants to NGO Abad to train and empower local public advisory boards and local council, and develop and pilot tools to measure local service delivery.

Increasing the Legitimacy, Transparency & Accountability of Urban Development. Urban planning, eminent domain, and freedom of information have all become increasingly controversial issues in the southern city of Osh since the violence in 2010. The mayoral office's implementation of a classified urban development plan, known as the Osh "Master Plan," has enabled the city government to widen a number of streets, and, in the process, demolish private property; including homes and business under eminent domain rights. This controversial issue is a potential flashpoint and threat to the fragile stability in Osh. While OTI does not question the right of the Osh City government to utilize eminent domain to improve city infrastructure, the KRTI program has implemented a number of activities to ensure that residents receive fair compensation for their property, and to encourage and a broader public discourse on urban planning and development.

Building Confidence & Reducing Tensions through Public Infrastructure & Irrigation Rehabilitations. In the aftermath of the April 2010 violence, disgruntled constituents, frustrated by government's inability to show visible signs that it understood the plight of marginalized groups, threatened the stability of the democratic transition. Competition for scarce water resources further aggravated existing tension between ethnicities, and decreased citizen trust in local government. The KRTI response included the improvement of public infrastructure and water infrastructure in target communities where groups prone to, or at risk of, conflict benefit from improved services.

Case Study Researchers



Andrea Barbosa received her law degree from George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and was awarded an “Outstanding Volunteer Service” award for her pro bono work. She completed her undergraduate studies at the same university, graduating Magna Cum Laude in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering and ranking first in her class. Since moving to Bishkek, she has worked with IRG, the World Bank and the United Nations World Food Program. Prior to moving to Bishkek, Andrea worked in Immigration Law with several non-profit organizations in Washington D.C. Born and raised in Colombia, South America, she is fluent in Spanish and English. She is learning Russian and speaks elementary Chinese Mandarin.

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Farrell Styers is a media analyst and social science researcher. He lived and worked in Kyrgyzstan from August 2010 to September 2013, managing numerous research projects and authoring reports for international clients. Prior to his work in Kyrgyzstan, Farrell worked as a quantitative media and polling analyst for a U.S. government contractor in Washington D.C. and the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. His work has been published in *Mining Journal*, a leading industry publication, and *Registan.net*, a website devoted to Central Asia research and analysis. His work was presented at the annual Operational Research and Systems Analysis conference, and he has guest-lectured at several universities on media research and data visualization. Farrell received his Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs from George Washington University.



Kimairis Toogood recently served as Senior Peace-building Trainer and Facilitator with International Alert in Kyrgyzstan, implementing an EU-funded mediation project by training local community-based mediation trainers in evaluative and facilitative mediation. Previously, she served as a Conflict Prevention Officer with the U.S. State Department’s Office for the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization, and as a Conflict Prevention Specialist with the United Nations Development Program in Osh. Kim worked pro-bono with Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, designing, monitoring and evaluating projects on capacity building of local NGOs. Kim published a Springer Publications’ book chapter titled “Civil Society in Central Asia” and is working on an article on “Civil Society Development in Tajikistan” with Associate Professor Anthony Wanis-St. John of American University. Kim is a doctoral candidate at the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University.



M-Vector Research & Consulting is an international company providing a range of services: from collection and analysis of market and social information to development and introduction of management decisions, trainings for top-managers and other company members on effective management and marketing. M-Vector works with local and foreign commercial companies and international donor organizations, providing them with research, consulting, and training in Central Asia, Kazakhstan and Russia. The company has offices in Almaty, Bishkek, Osh, Dushanbe, and Khudjand.

Supporting Reform in Judicial Selection

By Andrea Barbosa

I. Executive Summary

Following the 2010 revolution and ethnic conflicts in the south, Kyrgyzstan went through a constitutional reform that included restructuring the judiciary and the judicial selection process. Changes included the creation of the Council on the Selection of Judges (CSJ), which was tasked with reviewing applications and nominating candidates to the Supreme Court (SC), the Constitutional Chamber (CC) and local judgeships around the country.

The formation of the CSJ, as well as the selection of judges in 2011, was highly criticized for its lack of transparency, resulting in the formation of the Citizens' Council to Control Court Systems (CCCCS). The CCCCCS, an independent coalition of 14 civil society organizations, acted as a watchdog, and aimed at ensuring awareness and increasing engagement of the public in the selection of judges.

As a result of civil society's involvement, public opinion was made a factor in the consideration of candidates. The selection process was also suspended until 2012, when amendments to the laws were approved, and a new selection process that used more objective selection criteria, including an electronic test, standardized interviews and a voting stage, was put in place.

During this period, civil society, with the support of KRTI, implemented several initiatives with the goal of increasing awareness and citizen engagement in the judicial selection process, while increasing the transparency and accountability of the judiciary. Activities included a nationwide media campaign, a telephone hotline where citizens across the country could report abuses by judges nominated to the positions, a website, public receptions and press conferences. Civil society also monitored court hearings and the selection process in 2012, including parallel scoring of candidates for crosschecking and validation. KRTI also supported the CSJ with 25 computers in order to avoid interruption in the selection process and any lack of consistency in ranking and voting.

The results of this case study showed that KRTI's fast and flexible response model allowed its civil society partners to implement their initiatives timely, quickly and efficiently, and to build the momentum required, at the right time, for long-term support of the ongoing judicial and legal reforms. The initiatives increased awareness and engagement in the process of nominating, screening and selecting judges, and the demand for these services continues to rise, illustrating the growing trust that citizens have on the services provided and their positive effect on the judicial reform. Civil society activities were also successful at engaging citizens in the selection process, by allowing for the proper collection and consideration of citizens' complaints during the selection process.

Although there is still much room for improvement, these activities increased transparency and promoted accountability of the process, which became more open and introduced objective criteria. Civil society activities also had several secondary unintended outcomes, including the positive change in attitude of judges across the country and members of the CSJ, who began collaborating with the CCCCCS. Finally, the results of this case study showed that the CCCCCS had the influence, leadership skills and right ideas to provide a strong foundation for further initiatives that are essential for promoting transparency of the judicial system.

II. Background

The year 2010 marked the history of Kyrgyzstan as the country went through a violent revolution that resulted in a change of political power and interethnic conflicts in the south. Following these events, the country went through a constitutional reform, introducing a parliamentary – presidential political system, headed by interim president Roza Otunbayeva. A working group was created, aiming at implementing and harmonizing the existing laws with the new constitution, which included reforms to the judiciary and the judicial selection process. However, building an independent, transparent and fair judiciary continues to be one of the greatest threats to Kyrgyzstan's ongoing political transition.²

Significant changes to the judicial system, linked to the selection of judges marked the year 2011. In June 2011, Parliament adopted the new Law *On the Council for the Selection of Judges of the Kyrgyz Republic*. Based on this new law, Parliament created the CSJ, a body consisting of 24 members – eight civil society representatives appointed by parliament's ruling coalition, eight by opposition parties, and eight by an association of Kyrgyz judges.³ The Council was tasked with reviewing applications and nominating candidates to the SC, the CC and the 452 local judgeships around the country. On 27 July 2011, the CSJ began screening applications, for the 35 vacancies in the Supreme Court and the 11 vacancies in the Constitutional Chamber, basing its selections solely on a candidate's interview performance.

The formation of the CSJ, as well as the selection of judges –caused a turbulent public resonance, and became highly politicized.”⁴ Civil society argued that the CSJ had been formed behind closed doors, without any public debate, and with no set criteria or transparency. They criticized its members and accused them of having dubious reputations and links to powerful politicians. Allegations by civil society of corruption and nepotism also surfaced during the selection process.



Volunteers review judicial selection documentation

According to experts and observers, the time provided for the nomination was extremely short, and the process was not advertised widely. There was also discrepancy in the duration of personal interviews, ranging from 6 minutes for some candidates to 53 minutes for others, and candidate's ethical principles were not widely considered.⁵

In response to these allegations, President Otunbayeva called upon civil society to serve as a watchdog during the selection of judges, creating the CCCCS, an independent coalition of 14 civil society organizations, including lawyers and NGOs such as the

² See Musabaeva, Anar. *Principles of Judicial Conduct as a Basis for Credibility within the Judicial System of the Kyrgyz Republic*. Case Study. INTRAC for Integrity Action and the Association of Attorneys of Kyrgyzstan. December 2012; see also, KRTI project document for BIS239.

³ KRTI project document for BIS239.

⁴ See Musaeva. *Principles of Judicial Conduct*.

⁵ See AAK Report: *Assistance to Increase of Transparency and Capacity Building of the Council for Selection of Judges of the Kyrgyz Republic*. February 2012. See also, Interview 1.

Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society (CDCS) and the Institute of Public Analysis (IPA). Upon its formation, CCCCS set up two goals: to ensure that potential candidates and the wider public were aware of an understood the new selection process, and to engage the general public in the process of nominating, screening and selecting judges. Rita Karasartova, Director of IPA, led the CCCCS and all civil society activities.

The selection process went from 25 July until 16 August 2011 and was closely monitored by civil society and other organizations, including the Association of Attorneys of Kyrgyzstan (AAK). During this period, the CSJ and the Council of Judges (CJ) received multiple complaints from citizens related to candidate's records. However, there was no process in place to address or register these complaints. Although these complaints were attached to the personal files of respective candidates, the CSJ only took into consideration the quantity of complaints and not the complaint itself, giving negative points to candidates with too many grievances regardless of their type or the basis for them. There were also allegations that the CSJ ignored complaints received on candidates they wanted to move forward.⁶

Ultimately 29 candidates for the Supreme Court and 11 candidates for the Constitutional Chamber were proposed to the President, who then submitted 14 Supreme Court and three Constitutional Chamber candidates for Parliament approval.⁷ Once again, civil society denounced the lack of transparency and openness of the selection process and held peaceful protests in Bishkek and Osh. Critics questioned the apparent reshuffling of judges among the different courts without regards to their qualifications and competence, and the conflict of interest of successful candidates who were also members of the CSJ. The legitimacy of the process was also questioned, as candidates for the Supreme Court were announced for all 35 positions, even though only three positions were vacant.⁸

Ultimately the country could not reform its judiciary in 2011, as it had originally planned. The President withdrew her decision, and on 28 September 2011 established a commission tasked with preparing proposals on amendments to the laws regarding the judicial system. The Government announced that all judges would be reelected and that the public opinion would be one of the factors that would influence the formation of new courts.⁹ The draft laws were approved by Parliament on 7 October 2011, but were vetoed by the President on 15 November 2011.¹⁰

Following the President's decision, some parliamentarians proposed dissolving or re-electing members of the CSJ. However, civil society defended the CSJ and its members in order to prevent any political influence on the judicial system and maintain its independence. Civil society believed that dissolving or re-electing the Council would create a precedent of arbitrariness and dominance of the legislative branch over the judiciary. Instead, civil society opted for focusing its efforts on modifying the selection process, while building capacity in the CSJ. The head of the CSJ, Zamirbek Bazarbekov, was forced to resign due to insufficient qualifications and complaints that questioned his reputation, and Shamaryl Maychiev was elected as his replacement.

⁶ See Musabaeva. *Principles of Judicial Conduct*; see also, Interview 1.

⁷ Parliament votes on candidates but does not do interviews.

⁸ See Musabaeva. *Principles of Judicial Conduct*; see also, Interview 1; KRTI project document for BIS 239.

⁹ See KRTI project document for BIS 183.

¹⁰ See Musabaeva. *Principles of Judicial Conduct*.

During the period of 10 August - 29 October 2011, civil society, with the support of KRTI, implemented several initiatives to inform the public of the process of forming courts using a nationwide media campaign, a telephone hotline where citizens across the country could report abuses by judges nominated to the positions, public receptions and a press conference. Information received through the hotline and public receptions was systematized and presented to the government and the President with the aim to improve legislation on the court system and to inform the selection of judges. Simultaneously, a number of organizations and donors hosted a training seminar for the members of the CSJ, focused on making the selection of judges more transparent and based on the highest standards of competence and integrity.¹¹

In order to help inform and improve the legislation regulating the formation and functioning of the court system, OTI agreed to extend its support until April 2012. This time activities focused on monitoring ongoing cases through independent observers and monitors, while continuing to increase citizen's awareness through the telephone hotline, media campaign and public receptions. Information collected through the monitoring activities was made available to the public through the website www.koom.kg.

The judge selection process resumed in 2012, after amendments to the laws were adopted.¹² Under the new changes to the law, the CSJ gain the power to override the president's veto during the selection of SC and CC candidates. However, it cannot do so during the selection of candidates for local positions, which, if vetoed by the president, are forbidden from reapplying for one year. A three-prong selection process for judges consisting of an interview, a competency test and an evaluation of the accuracy of the candidates' tax statements was also introduced in the amendments.¹³

In order to consider these criteria in a more transparent way, the CSJ also borrowed equipment from the CDCS for a limited time and used locally developed computer software to rank applicants on their capacity as potential judges. The rankings and voting records of all members of the CSJ were posted and made available to the public on the CSJ's website and on koom.kg. Using the new selection process, the CSJ selected 32 candidates for Supreme Court from 92 applicants, and 5 candidates for Constitutional Chamber from 35 applicants.

To ensure consistent and reliable monitoring of the Supreme Court judges' selection process, OTI continued its support to civil society's initiatives until October 2012 and monitored the new SC and CC selection process. OTI also provided 25 computers to the CSJ in order to avoid interruption in the selection process and any lack of consistency in ranking and voting.

Despite the new selection criteria and the use of a computerized scoring system, which allowed for verification and transparency during testing, there were discrepancies

¹¹ The seminar took place in 3-4 November 2011 and was co-organized by the OSCE Centre in Bishkek. Following the training, OSCE and other partners prepared the report "Selection of Judges in the Kyrgyz Republic and International Standards on Judicial Independence" released on 30 March 2012, and gave a series of recommendations on the judge selection process.

¹² Laws "On Constitutional Chamber", "On Status of Judges of the KR", and "On Council on Selection of Judges of the KR" were adopted by the Parliament and signed by President Atambayev in May 2012. See Musaeba. *Principles of Judicial Conduct*.

¹³ See Musaeba. *Principles of Judicial Conduct*; see also, OSCE Final Report.

between the scoring stages and the final voting stage of the examination, and many candidates that received high scores after the first two stages, did not pass the final voting stage. As a result, civil society continued to criticize the politicization during the selection process and the CSJ's lack of transparency.

The final results of the 2012 selection were adopted and all SC and CC positions were filled. Nevertheless, civil society continued to monitor the work of the CSJ during the selection of candidates at the local level in the spring of 2013 and continues to provide citizen's with a platform to submit their complaints. Several additional projects have also been created in order to increase the awareness of the population with regards to the judicial selection process and the judicial system. The candidates for local judgeships were selected by the CSJ and submitted to the President for his approval. The President recently annulled results, without justification, claiming that he was answering to civil society's petition.¹⁴ New amendments to the law have also been suggested including the elimination of the final voting stage during the selection process.

III. Activities Implemented by KRTI

Between 10 August and 29 October 2011, OTI implemented grant BIS159, which supported CCCCS's initiatives to inform the public about the formation of the country's judicial institutions through a nation-wide media campaign, and to engage citizens in the nomination of judges through the establishment of a telephone hotline. These activities aimed at building trust among the citizenry and improving inclusive governance, transparency and the rule of law by increasing citizen's awareness of and engagement in the process of nominating, screening and selecting judges to positions in the Supreme Court and its Constitutional Chamber, as well as in the local courts.

The nation-wide media campaign was designed to promote the telephone hotline, and included advertisements on TV, printed media, such as fliers and banners, and press conferences that were broadcasted nationally. The telephone hotline was available for anybody from any location and allowed CCCCS to reach out to all corners of the country. Through these calls, CCCCS was able to collect data from citizens across the country reporting abuses by nominated judges. CCCCS also used the hotline to inform citizens about the judicial selection process (deadlines, required documents, etc.).



Poster on Judicial Selection Hotline

¹⁴ Just like the CSJ, the president is required to give justification/explanation for his decision. After the CSJ recommends candidates, the selected candidates are sent to the President. When the President rejects them, he must give explanation. For Supreme Court positions, the candidates recommended by the President need approval of Parliament. For local judges, there is no need for Parliament approval. Parliament votes in secret and gives no explanation at all. See also, News Article: *Kyrgyz President signs decrees of dismissal and appointment of local judges*, <http://eng.24.kg/community/2013/02/25/26097.html>; Press Release: *Civil Council is concerned about the unmotivated deviation of President Atambayev A. regarding all candidates for inter-district courts*, http://www.koom.kg/view_material.php?id=2070.

The public reception was organized in Bishkek, and aimed at complementing the telephone hotline by allowing citizens to bring any documentation in support for their complaints. The reception, however, was limited to those who could physically get there, so it primarily worked for Bishkek and Chui citizens.

All the feedback collected through the hotline and the public reception was systematized and presented to the CSJ, the President, and Parliament with the purpose of informing the selection of judges for Supreme Court and Constitutional Chamber. This information was also presented during three press conferences on 13 September, 27 September and 11 October 2011.

In November 2011, CCCCS realized that collecting information through the public reception and hotline was not enough, and there was a crucial need for monitoring the courts to help inform and improve the legislation regulating the formation and functioning of the court system. Therefore, in December 2011, OTI agreed to extend its support to CCCCS until April 2012, through grant BIS 183. This extension aimed at enabling civil society to monitor both the judge selection process and ongoing cases through independent observers and monitors, while continuing to increase citizen's awareness and engagement through the telephone hotline, media campaign and public receptions.

The scope of the monitoring was limited to procedural aspects. Monitoring sheets were developed based on the norms of the Criminal and Civil Procedures Codes to allow observers to properly identify any violations of the appropriate legal proceedings. Through the establishment of this civilian control mechanism, monitoring activities allowed for the collection of information on violations of due process in the administration of justice. In addition to procedural violations, monitors also collected basic quantitative data such as the number of cases per judge and the availability of technical equipment in the courtrooms. Monitoring was performed in seven courts in Bishkek and one court in Karakol.¹⁵

IPA recruited independent observers on a competitive basis. Monitors consisted mainly of law school students, but gradually involved more law school graduates and qualified lawyers¹⁶. Trainings on monitoring were performed and included discussions of the monitoring procedures, monitoring questions and analysis of each item of the monitoring sheet, the monitor's code of conduct in the courtroom, and techniques of observation. However, due to the low availability of lawyers, IPA also had to use its network of human right defenders in the region to perform additional monitoring activities.¹⁷

The information collected through the monitoring activities was immediately made available to the public through the website www.koom.kg, launched in January 2012, as well as through social networking pages such as Facebook¹⁸ and Twitter¹⁹. Information on the website also included any ongoing reforms in the judicial system, and statistics on the number of complaints received through the public reception and hotline. Upon

¹⁵ A partner helped with the monitoring in Karakol. See IPA Final Report: *Analysis of Compliance with Trial Standards*; see also, IPA Final Report: *РЕЗУЛЬТАТЫ МОНИТОРИНГА СУДЕБНЫХ РАЗБИРАТЕЛЬСТВ В Г. БИШКЕК* [Results of Trial Monitoring in Bishkek], 2012; Interview 3.

¹⁶ These lawyers were not paid by OTI's project, but through other CCCCS' donors, such as Radio Free Europe, who supported a lawyer to manage [koom.kg](http://www.koom.kg). See KRTI project documents; see also, Interviews 3.

¹⁷ See IPA Final Report: *Analysis of Compliance with Trial Standards*.

¹⁸ [www.facebook.com / www.koom.kg](https://www.facebook.com/koomkg)

¹⁹ <https://twitter.com/koomkg>

receipt of complaints, judges were immediately ranked on the website, and these rankings were the most popular among visitors. The website also allowed visitors to leave comments for judges. The website is still active to this date, and has on average 4,000 weekly users.²⁰

The hotline and public receptions continued during this period, with some minor improvements. Thanks to the additional funding received, CCCCS was able to provide legal advice on procedural rules to callers and public reception visitors, as well as a more detailed analysis of the collected data. Information on how to upload complaints to the website was also given during phone conversations, as well as information on the IPA office location, where callers with more complicated cases could come in person and have short consultations with the attorneys on staff.²¹

"IPA considered many donors but realized that OTI's mechanism worked better because OTI has flexibility of funding, and getting a grant does not depend on deadlines and applications. Compared to other donors, OTI works in more urgent circumstances, which allowed IPA to respond to the situation in a timely manner."

Rita Karasartova, Director of IPA

Following the adopted amendments to the laws in the spring of 2012, OTI extended its support to the CCCCS from 1 July until 30 October 2012, through grant BIS239, in order to ensure consistent and reliable monitoring of the resumed Supreme Court judges' application and selection processes. Previous hotline, public reception, media campaign and website activities also continued. Adhering to the same guidelines and training received by the CSJ, and in compliance with the law, two observers conducted monitoring of the selection process. The observers performed parallel evaluation and ranking for all candidates in order to crosscheck final CSJ decisions. This allowed civil society to obtain reliable information about the level of competency of candidates and made it possible to carry out a comparative analysis with the scoring of the CSJ. Additional lawyers were recruited under this grant to assist in analyzing data prepared and submitted to the CSJ on a weekly basis. All information collected through monitoring activities, as well as the scoring of candidates by the CCCCS and the CSJ was posted on civil society's website.

Simultaneously, through grant BIS257 running from 18 September until 30 October 2012, OTI supported the CSJ by providing 25 computers to be shared by members of the CSJ during all judges' selections. This support was provided in order to avoid interruption in the selection process and any lack of consistency in ranking and voting, since the original equipment borrowed by the CSJ during the selection of Supreme Court members had to be returned.

IV. Observed Outcomes and Achievements

KRTI-supported Activities Provided a Timely, Quick and Efficient Response to the Call for Greater Transparency of the Judiciary and the Judicial Selection Process

The significant changes to the judicial system in 2011, including the non-transparent

²⁰ See IPA Final Report: *Analysis of Compliance with Trial Standards*.

²¹ During short consultations attorneys collected factual information on pending cases and court hearings. The attorneys would then research the applicable law, and produce a concise opinion, followed by a visit to the court to monitor the hearing and outcome of the particular case. See Interview 3.

creation of the CSJ, were followed by hard criticism from civil society, and called for the formation of the CCCCS in 22 July 2011 to act as a watchdog during the selection process. Upon its formation, CCCCS set up two goals: to ensure that potential candidates and the wider public were aware of and understood the new selection process, and to engage the general public in the process of nominating, screening and selecting judges. Given the short period of time between the formation of CCCCS in July and the beginning of the selection process in August, the CCCCS found itself in urgent need of donor support in order to implement quick and effective activities that would achieve these goals.

KRTI's fast and flexible response model allowed its civil society partners to implement their initiatives timely, quickly and efficiently, and to build the momentum required at the right time for long-term support of the ongoing judicial and legal reforms. According to respondents involved in the direct implementation of all CCCCS initiatives, availability of funding was a critical issue for the prompt and proper implementation of activities.²²

Despite efforts to apply for funding from several donors, the lack of history of donor support of some of the organizations involved in these activities, as well as the extensive application process required by some donors, created an obstacle for CCCCS to begin its operations promptly.

The timely response from KRTI allowed for a quick and efficient implementation of civil society initiatives, which led to the revision of the whole process of the selection of judges in 2011, including amendments to the legislation. In fact, because CCCCS activities became known and powerful in a short three-month period, the President herself, and the Ombudsman's office requested CCCCS to continue their work as they believed that the group [was] best positioned to do so due to the high trust in them from the administration, judges, civil society and ordinary citizens."²³

These major changes seen at the beginning of the judicial reform process are good evidence of the visibility of CCCCS activities and the great influence that civil society's response had on decision makers. Although there were other factors and other entities that also influenced these decisions, the Government's reaction confirms that civil society's involvement was needed at that particular moment and was a key factor in the transition to a more transparent judiciary.

KRTI-supported Activities Successful at Increasing Awareness and Citizen's Engagement in the Judicial Selection Process

"Peer pressure is helpful when trying to address openness. Before civil society's involvement there was no openness. Civil society was very active and their involvement was needed in order to rebalance the picture."

Fabio Piana, Senior Human Dimension Officer, OSCE Centre in Bishkek

Civil society's nation-wide media campaign, hotline, public receptions and website aimed at achieving CCCCS's two main goals to ensure wider public awareness and

²² See Interviews 2 and 3.

²³ See KRTI project documents.

engagement in the selection process. Information collected during this case study showed that these activities indeed increased awareness and engagement in the process of nominating, screening and selecting judges between the periods of August 2011 and October 2012. The media campaign helped raised awareness about the hotline, public reception, and website. These in turn engaged citizens' in the selection process.

The success in increasing awareness and citizens' engagement in the selection process can be measured by the level of trust and involvement that citizens have with CCCCS and its activities. Throughout the course of the projects' implementation, CCCCS developed and maintained a good reputation. Following the success of the initial media campaign, hotline, and public reception, and the positive reaction to these activities, the further demand for these services by citizens, judges and government officials led to the enhancement of civil society's response. In order to better inform and improve the legislation regulating the formation and functioning of the court system, civil society added monitoring activities to their portfolio, increased the number of public receptions, hired qualified lawyers that could address citizens' complaints in a more efficient way, and created a website that allowed all information collected to have a wider reach among citizens.

Currently, however, there is no existing media campaign advertising civil society activities; yet, after the completion of all projects supported by OTI, the hotline and website continue to function, despite the low availability of funds. The demand for these services is still there and continues to grow, clearly illustrating that more and more people are learning about these services and trust the positive effect they may have on the judicial reform.

"The number of visitors to the website now averages three or four thousand people a week, which is a good sign of the growing interest of the population in the activities of the judiciary. IPA has continued these activities without donor support because there is a demand. IPA became well known and people keep coming without the need for further advertisement. [The website] is also famous among judges."

Rita Karasartova, Director of Institute of Public Analysis

The nature of civil society activities also allowed for greater engagement of citizens in the judicial selection process. The activities implemented by civil society allowed for the collection of data on the moral character and qualifications of nominated judges. All the feedback collected was systematized and presented to the CSJ, the President, and Parliament for their consideration during the selection process, and was made available to the public through the Koom.kg website. In fact, public opinion was made one of factors in the selection process of judges.

Unlike previous practices, where complaints from citizens were received by the CSJ and ignored, the activities organized by civil society allowed for the proper collection and consideration of these complaints during the selection process. In fact, these complaints were one of the factors behind the selection of a few qualified judges, such as the head of the CJ, and the President's rejection of unqualified judges in 2011.

KRTI-supported Activities were Successful at Improving Transparency and Promoting Accountability of the Judiciary and the Judicial Selection Process

CCCS activities aimed at informing the selection process and amending legislation that regulates the formation and functioning of the court system, while improving inclusive

governance, transparency, and the rule of law. Information collected during this case study showed that although there is still much room for improvement, these activities indeed improved transparency and promoted accountability of the process between August 2011 and October 2012.

“The Deputy of the Supreme Court [was] ranked high during the selection process, but she did not give any money. However, she says that in general, there are cases when people do give money to be selected, but without giving any money she got her spot.”

Shamaral Maychiev, Head of CSJ

CCCCS initial activities focused on collecting information from ordinary citizens about the work of judges, including information on candidates' abuse of authority, violation of procedural rules and questionable moral characters. Although this type of information was received by the CSJ prior to civil society's involvement, due to the lack of procedures, and possibly the lack of transparency of the CSJ, these complaints were not systematized or considered properly during the selection and recommendation to the President in 2011. According to Shamaral Maychiev, CSJ Head, “With the 2012 process, there is still some room for corruption, but the process is better now than it was before.”

Through its media campaign, hotline and public receptions, civil society was able to gather this data and present it to the President in an organized way, in order to inform her decision during the selection process. Through the creation of the website koom.kg, civil society was able to create a platform for citizens to post and read these complaints, as well as to find and monitor information on the selection process.

“I cannot say if Otunbayeva’s decision was at all influenced by complaints from civil society, [but] Otunbayeva was able to see that the professional level of the candidates was not good, and so the results were annulled.”

Chynara Satkynalieva, AAK Project Coordinator

After reviewing the information provided by civil society, President Otunbayeva withdrew her decision, and the country could not form its judiciary in 2011, as it was initially planned. The president also called for amendments to the laws related to the judicial selection process and announced that public opinion would be taken into consideration during the selection of judges. Although many other factors likely influenced the President in making her decision, the information

provided by civil society was critical in revealing the level of competency of the candidates and allowed the President to stay faithful to promoting transparency and accountability of the process. Given her support for CCCC activities and her request for further monitoring of the selection process by civil society, there is no doubt that civil society's involvement was welcomed and perceived in a positive way.

Additionally, the amendments to the laws included changes to the selection process and the selection criteria, moving from an entirely subjective process based on unregulated interviews, to the use of more objective criteria that included a computerized test, a scoring system, and standard interview questions.

The process was also more open to the public, and allowed not only for the presence of monitors in all stages, but also for the immediate publication of results on the civil society's website. Although results of the 2012 election were still less than perfect and were highly criticized, moving towards a more open process that allowed third parties to monitor and validate results, showed a new inclination for more transparency.

“The scoring was done on a computer and the results appeared immediate (2-3 minutes) in database, reducing the possibility to change results. Candidate knew immediately what their score had been. During the third stage, the vote of each Council member was also shown on the database, so it was possible to see who voted for whom. All information was accessible for civil society and media. Two video cameras recording the interview process were placed during the selection process. One was focused on the candidate and one on the CSJ members.”

Shamaral Maychiev, Head of CSJ

To further promote transparency, the CSJ was able to identify the need for continuing the use of the computerized testing system without interruption. During the 2012 election, the CSJ borrowed the equipment from the CDCS in order to test and rank applicants on their capacity as potential judges. However, the CSJ faced the risk of interrupting this process as the borrowed computers had to be returned. Through OTI's assistance, the CSJ was provided with 25 computers to be used during the selection process, and ensured that these transparent practices could be used consistently and throughout the duration of the selection process.

CCCCS activities also had several secondary unintended outcomes. Judges across the country and members of the CSJ showed a positive change in attitude towards civil society's initiatives, seeing themselves as partners of civil society, rather than the opposition. Judges began to attend public receptions in order to interact directly with citizens, answer their questions and defend their decisions in response to some of the complaints received. Judges welcomed the monitoring and followed appropriate legal procedures, leading to more just decisions, a practice that was not common before any monitoring activities began.

“Judges were aware of the monitoring and that the results of the monitoring would be published on the website. When monitoring started they tried to require monitors to wear a badge, but based on legislation any ordinary citizen can come and sit during a court hearing without a badge. Now it is easier to attend the hearing because it is well known that civil society does monitoring. When judges started recognizing monitors they began to change the way they behaved and to act in accordance with procedures. Before the monitoring judges did not do this and did not follow procedures.”

Rita Karasartova, Director of IPA

With a new sense of trust on civil society, judges also began to ask CCCC for help, as some of them complained that they were being pressured from local authorities to make certain decisions, and they lacked financial and technical support. The Supreme Court invited civil society representatives for a discussion on how to move forward, something never done before.

Similarly, the CSJ began to cooperate with CCCC and asked for support, as they also have no financial or technical support from Parliament. The CCCC raised all these issues to Parliament, and although Parliament has not provided any assistance, this collaboration has led to the CSJ improving their selection practices and adhering to more transparent standards. During the recent selection of local judges, the CSJ finally selected qualified and capable candidates for the positions, and properly followed selection procedures.

To further support the effort of the CSJ and its members to become more transparent, the head of the CSJ Shamara Maychiev opened his own unofficial personal blog, Shamara.kg, where he presents statistics on previous and current candidates. Mr. Maychiev explained that he started this blog when he realized that with the level of transparency in the CSJ, any discrepancy with the opinion of Parliament or the President would be blamed on corruption. Therefore, by providing all the information on his blog, which is advertised on his Facebook page and has about 4,000 followers including 1,500 lawyers, Mr. Maychiev believes he can demonstrate the transparency of his decisions as well as those of the CSJ.

KRTI- supported Activities Create a Strong Foundation for Further Initiatives

Similar activities to those of the CCCCS have been implemented by other organizations. However, aside from monitoring activities, which have taken place since early 2006, the idea of a hotline, a public reception, and a website that would allow citizens to give their complaints and receive information on the judicial system was nonexistent. Nonetheless, the appearance of similar activities by other organizations, including the CSJ²⁴, demonstrates the strong foundation created by civil society activities, particularly in the early stages of the selection process in 2011.

The AAK, for example, implemented a project with the Soros Foundation from November 2011- March 2013, where they set up workshops, public receptions, press conferences, and telephone consultations all around the region for civilians to complain about judges and their work and receive information on the candidates. OTI is also supporting a new website, sot.kg, where all judicial decisions are published.

The information collected during the case study showed that the CCCCS had the influence, leadership skills and right ideas to provide a strong foundation for further initiatives that are essential for promoting transparency of the judicial system. These examples demonstrate that people welcome the information provided and the mechanism for voicing their discomfort with the work of the courts. More importantly, it shows that people believe in the positive effects that their engagement may have on judicial reform.

V. Challenges Observed during the Implementation of Activities

During the course of the projects' implementation, CCCCS faced some challenges and programmatic issues that undermined the effectiveness of the activities and prevented civil society from achieving greater results.

"This was the first time when these 26 candidates were actually good. It was the first time when the selection process had started to work well with the Council. IPA did its own testing in parallel and we all could see what the CSJ was doing. It was the first time when testing and results were the same."

Dinara Oshurakhnukova, Head of CDSC

²⁴ The CSJ is now very active online and publishes similar information on their official website.

Lack of Financial Capacity

CCCCS experienced difficulties with securing funds in support of its activities. Despite the prompt financial support provided by OTI, IPA's lack of history of donor support, combined with the extensive application process required by some donors, prevented IPA from securing additional funds to further support and expand its activities. Although, other CCCC members, such as CDCS, assisted IPA in reaching out to the international community for support, lack of funds were a problem during implementation and continue to pose a challenge for the efficient continuation of the activities.

"Lawyers have left again because there is no financial support. So it is difficult. People know that IPA collects complaints, so they still come, but [IPA] don't have the resources."

Dinara Oshurakhnukova, Head of CDCS

CCCCS was forced to work with limited expert personnel, and had no option but to use students, who sometimes, due to the lack of expertise, were not able to accurately monitor the selection of judges. For example, according to Rita Karasartova, if IPA had had additional funding, they would have hired more professionals for monitoring, rather than students. More experts would have been useful in scenarios when a candidates' ability to communicate eloquently deceived the student monitors, and looked as if the candidate had knowledge on a certain legal topic, resulting in higher scores. A legal expert would have likely seen beyond the fancy rhetoric and would have given lower scores to these candidates.²⁵

Due to the lack of funding IPA was not able to hire enough lawyers to perform monitoring and consulting activities. The limited resources also prevented CCCC from expanding its public receptions to all regions in the country. This meant that CCCC relied on its hotline and website to reach out to all citizens, and was likely not able to reach those who had no access to the Internet or a telephone.

Replication of Activities by Other Organizations

As previously mentioned, CCCC was not the only organization involved in activities related to the judges' selection process. Other international donor agencies, local NGOs and public associations also took part in these activities.

There is a benefit of having multiple independent organizations working on similar projects and delivering the same message to the government, as it brings more attention to the issue and puts more pressure on government officials to change. However, when the initiatives are practically identical, the replication of activities can become counterproductive, as it makes funding more limited and takes away time and effort from implementing organizations to focus on using their skills and strengths.

IPA was able to build a good reputation among citizens, the government and the judiciary. It also put in place a successful system for collecting complaints and informing citizens of their rights and the selection process, with the hotline, the reception and the website. The results of this case study show that IPA was likely the strongest organization when it came to collecting complaints and engaging the public in the

²⁵ Interview 3.

selection process. On the other hand, other organizations with greater financial, technical, and expert resources were probably better positioned to perform monitoring activities and provide legally based feedback to the Government. Representatives of the juridical community including judges and experts favored the monitoring done by professional lawyers. In their view this might minimize any lack of objectivity, and potential unprofessionalism . . . some NGOs were too radical in their demands, often superficial in their judgments and analysis, and without an adequate understanding of legal nuances . . . [and] let emotions prevail over rationalism, often violating ethical rules themselves.”²⁶

This insufficient coordination with other actors and the replication of similar activities made it a challenge for CCCCS to require the necessary funding and support for initiatives. Additionally, by not focusing on its strengths, IPA and other organizations likely took away available resources from activities where they had a stronger position.

Lack of Day-to-day Involvement of Other CCCCS Members

Although initially CCCCS members worked together in designing and implementing their activities and provided certain support to IPA when needed, due to the lack of time and resources, IPA was selected as the lead organization, and ultimately was responsible for developing and implementing all of civil society’s initiatives on its own. More importantly, all the work fell on the shoulders of one single person, Rita Karasartova, director of IPA.

As shown by the results of this case study and as confirmed by all respondents, the work of IPA was outstanding, and Ms. Karasartova’s job was excellent. However, as described by Dinara Oshurakhunova, Head of CDCS, “Rita cannot be the head of this process forever . . . [and she should not be] doing all the work.”

The lack of human resources available, and the little time that other CCCCS organizations dedicated to the implementation of activities brought major challenges to IPA and its director during the implementation of civil society initiatives. This will likely prevent the sustainable continuation of the activities.

Misinterpretation of Civil Society’s Message

During and after the implementation of CCCCS, there was a trend of constant misinterpretation and misrepresentation of civil society’s intentions and activities. Whether it was due to legitimate misunderstanding, or due to political reasons, CCCCS constantly had to correct government officials on what its intentions were and what civil society activities tried to accomplish. A perfect example is the recent declaration by the President that he rejected the candidates for local judges because this is what civil society requested. As shown in the interviews with respondents, this was never civil society’s intention, but rather a declaration they had made during the suspended Supreme Court selection the previous year.

Another example is the idea that civil society was evaluating decisions, which is something only a higher court can do. According to civil society, its activities focused on collecting quantitative data, such as the number of complaints and whether court

²⁶ See Musaeba. *Principles of Judicial Conduct*.

procedures were followed. Qualitative data, such as deciding whether a decision was right or wrong was never provided, and IPA only limited itself to flag and monitor those cases where an apparent violation of the law had been committed by a judge.

This type of misunderstanding and wrong paraphrasing of CCCCS's message, added a level of difficulty to civil society's credibility, making it more challenging for its activities to be accepted and trusted by citizens, the Government, and the Judiciary.

VI. Lessons Learned and Recommendations for Future Programming

Recommendations for the Donor Community

Given the success and the positive reception of civil society activities, the donor community should continue channeling its resources towards projects that involve civil society, as these initiatives have proved to strengthen democracy, reduce corruption, increase transparency and promote awareness. By supporting CCCCS activities, the donor community allowed society to acquire the proper tools to voice its objections in a civilized, efficient, and more receptive way, providing a stepping-stone during the ongoing judicial reform.

The donor community should also continue supporting projects based on the quality of the activities rather than reputation or capacity of the institution. Supporting a small organization such as IPA, that lacked the capacity but had the ideas and the drive to make a difference, allowed for the implementation of catalytic initiatives that proved to be in great demand, and built momentum for continued long-term reform.

Furthermore, the donor community should continue searching and working with change agents, such as Rita Karasartova and Dinara Oshurakhunova, who proved to be effective leaders, critical to the proper implementation of activities and the realization of results. With such change agents the donor community can get better assurance that pilot projects will be successful and that funds will be allocated to the proper establishment of a more stable and secure democracy.

Recommendations for Civil Society including CCCCS and IPA

Civil society should continue engaging constructively in the judicial reform process. The activities proved to be effective in increasing transparency and promoting citizens' awareness and engagement in the selection process, and the rising demand for the services provided is a clear sign of the success of the activities.

However, although civil society initiatives were successful in promoting transparency and increasing awareness and engagement of citizens in the judicial selection process, the activities were only able to show positive results at the lowest level of selection, the CSJ and the judges. As expressed by the respondents and as illustrated by the results of the selection process in 2012 and the recent selection of local judges in 2013, the same type of monitoring and mass pressure should be applied at the higher levels, so the positive and transparent results achieved at the lower level are not overshadowed.

In Kyrgyzstan the judicial selection process is part political and part technical, with an initial objective test that is followed by subjective votes at the CSJ, the Presidential and the Parliamentary levels. This mixed system of election has worked well in some

countries, but it is mainly because the last approving stage is merely a notarial step.²⁷ In Kyrgyzstan, the latter stage is more than just notarial, and some people believe that it gives too much power to the executive and legislative branches. As this case study does not focus on evaluating what the proper selection system is, these recommendations mainly focus on dealing with the current selection process, whether faulty or not. Therefore, given that the President and Parliament still have a say on what candidates are selected, making them part of the process, civil society should not only focus on the CSJ and the judges.

CCCCS members, other than IPA, should also increase their day-to-day involvement in its initiatives. The goal should be to build a working system, rather than leaving all activities for one organization and one person to coordinate. By increasing their involvement, they are increasing the network of support, the human and technical resources and the funding necessary for the proper implementation of activities.

More involvement in the day-to-day implementation would also help improve coordination among donor agencies, local NGOs and public associations. CCCCCS was not the only organization involved in activities related to the selection process. Many other organizations were also involved, but based on the interviews conducted during this case study, some organizations were either not aware at all of CCCCCS's activities, or had minimal or wrong information. With a broader communications network that is aware of what is being done, the right information could reach more organizations.

Additionally, a lack of close linkages and good coordination among the different organizations and donors was noted during the case study. Although weak coordination is a common problem between programs and donors with similar goals, civil society should make an effort to better coordinate with other organizations and their donors also involved in the judicial reform process, as they might mutually benefit from each organization's strengths and expertise.

Instead of replicating activities, civil society and donors should focus on complementing each other's work. They should each identify its strengths and weaknesses and use them to build a better approach. IPA was able to build a good reputation and gain the trust of citizens, the government and the judiciary. It also put in place a successful system for collecting complaints and informing citizens of their rights and the selection process, with the hotline, the reception and the website. These attributes have created a great foundation to build upon, as there is room for improvement.

Cooperating with other organizations would allow civil society to provide more expert services and legally based arguments, and increase its geographical reach and financial support. At the same time other organizations could use civil society's platforms, to reach out to more people, and to gain more trust and visibility among citizens, and government officials.

Finally, civil society should focus on making its message clear and concise, to prevent misinterpretation by civilians and government. This will increase the trust, will prevent the misuse of information for political purposes, increasing transparency, and will attract other organizations that can cooperate with or complement civil society activities.

²⁷ Interview 5.

Ministry of Internal Affairs Reform

By Andrea Barbosa

I. Executive Summary

Kyrgyzstan's 2010 political crisis highlighted the need for immediate and targeted assistance to address emerging sources of instability and conflict that had the potential to derail the ongoing democratic transition. The absence of police action during these events pointed towards the dysfunction in the MIA as one of the main sources of instability. Multiple attempts to reform the MIA have been initiated since the country's independence over two decades ago. However, these attempts have not shown any positive results; they have not involved civil society, and they have disregarded public opinion.

Significant efforts to achieve a successful reform in the MIA marked the year 2011. Different NGOs around the country began collecting information independently from the MIA on changes that needed to be done in the Ministry and on their vision of the reform. An interdepartmental committee composed of relevant government and civil society representatives was also established to draft the official reform proposal. Nonetheless, the committee's work proved to be no different from prior practices during earlier reforms. Civil society representation in the committee was minimal, and all of civil society's suggestions were ignored. This resulted in civil society's ultimate withdrawal from the committee and the establishment of the Civil Union for Reforms and Results (Civil Union). For the next year and a half, the Civil Union worked on developing an alternative proposal to the reform focused on including the views of the population. The Civil Union also launched a campaign to collect the necessary 10,000 signatures required by the law On Legislative Initiatives by the People that would allow for the submission of civil society's proposal as a draft law in Parliament.

During this period and with the support of KRTI, the Civil Union implemented several initiatives with the goal of persuading the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan to consider civil society's recommended reforms to the MIA, while supporting inclusive decision-making and efforts to hold the MIA more accountable and transparent to citizens. Activities included several public forums, workshops, a website, TV clips, and the collection of citizens' recommendations and signatures. As a result of Civil Union activities, positive changes to law enforcement bodies have been observed, and civil society's ideas on how to reform the MIA were included in the official reform concept.

The results of this case study showed that KRTI's timely and effective support allowed its civil society partners to implement their initiatives successfully and to build the momentum required for long-term support of the ongoing MIA reforms. A strong national network of local NGOs from around the country allowed the Civil Union's message to be widely spread and made the initiatives truly nationwide. Through its advocacy campaign, the Civil Union was able to raise awareness and inform the population about the MIA reform and the alternative concept. Most importantly, the campaign allowed citizens to get involved in the drafting of the proposal through feedback and recommendations. Finally, the initiatives allowed the alternative proposal to gain traction and support in a few months' time, leading to the consideration and inclusion of some of civil society's recommendations into the official reform concept. Currently, some of these recommendations are being implemented, and the Union's advocacy activities are being considered "good practice" by other countries, which have recently started their reform processes.

Although there is still much room for improvement, the country is moving in the right direction. By finally acknowledging the importance of civil society's inclusion in the reform process, these activities have increased transparency in the MIA, and efforts continue in order to make this latest attempt a true and effective reform. Civil society activities also had several secondary unintended outcomes including the positive change in attitude of government officials, Parliament, the police, and the MIA. The peaceful and effective collaboration between diverse groups in the north and the south was also an unforeseen positive outcome of the activities. The results of this case study showed that the Civil Union had the influence, leadership skills, and right ideas to not only have its recommendations considered and incorporated into the official concept, but also to successfully convince decision makers to collaborate with the public and civil society.

II. Background

Kyrgyzstan's 2010 political crisis highlighted the need for immediate and targeted assistance to address emerging sources of instability and conflict that had the potential to derail the ongoing democratic transition. The absence of appropriate police action during these events pointed towards the dysfunction in the MIA as one of the main sources of instability. Multiple attempts to reform the MIA have been initiated since the country's independence over two decades ago. However, these attempts have not shown any positive results; they have not involved civil society, and they have disregarded public opinion.

The year 1991 marked the history of Kyrgyzstan when the country declared its independence from the Soviet Union and elected Askar Akayev as the first democratically elected president in the region. Following the country's independence and the introduction of a new constitution and revisions to the laws, the law On Internal Affairs Bodies of Kyrgyzstan was adopted on 11 January 1994. This law defined the role, rights and responsibilities of internal affairs bodies, in order to ensure the personal security of citizens and the implementation of their legitimate rights and interests.²⁸

Despite the positive revisions to the laws, the military in the country remained relatively weak after the country's independence. In fact, police bodies composed primarily of successors to the Soviet Interior Ministry and the KGB carried out most security functions. The failure to establish a strong military and a police body that was more in line with the new constitution and the new democratic direction of the country resulted in abuse of power and a continuation of corrupt practices that were common during Soviet times. Security bodies often collaborated with a highly politicized legal system that included the Prosecutors²⁹ Office and the courts, allowing political authorities to assert their own control over society and resulting in suppression, arrest, torture, and imprisonment of opponents of the ruling elites.³⁰

Reforming these security systems has been extremely difficult, and Kyrgyzstan's security forces continue to be at the center of political controversy. With reforms threatening the interests of corrupt controlling authorities, the political support for reforms has been insignificant, and prior attempts to reform the internal affairs bodies have not had any positive outcomes. For example, previous programs supported and financed by

²⁸ SIAR Public Opinion Report. (2012). *The Reform of the Internal Affairs Bodies of the Kyrgyz Republic*. Bishkek.

²⁹ Equivalent to Attorney General in common law jurisdictions.

³⁰ Lewis, David. (2011) *Security Sector Reform in Authoritarian Regimes: The OSCE experience of Police Assistance*.

international organizations to reform the MIA have been highly criticized due to the lack of visible results and the lack of involvement of NGOs and civil society. In fact, these programs and organizations have been accused of helping authoritarian regimes build stronger law enforcement agencies to control their opponents³¹ instead of performing their duties and protecting the population.³²

In addition to these ineffective programs and reforms, the Government itself became known for its corrupt practices under the Akayev administration and under his successor, Kurmanbek Bakiyev. This resulted in unmeritorious appointments to the heads of security and military institutions, which distorted the traditional hierarchy of military and police structures³³ and led to more violence against political activists and journalists at the hands of the police. The increased corruption and authoritarianism of these administrations led to 2005's Tulip Revolution³⁴, to overthrow President Akayev, which led to the April 2010 revolution to overthrow his successor.³⁵

The violence in 2005 and 2010, and the political instability that followed resulted in hundreds of victims, illegal arrests, unlawful detentions, and torture. It demonstrated the ineffectiveness and corruption within the MIA and the inability of the police to ensure law and order and provide security to citizens in critical situations. The absence of police action during these events made it clear that despite multiple reform attempts, police reform programs had not been successful, highlighting the need for dramatic reform of law enforcement bodies.

As a result, in 2010, the MIA initiated once again the development of a reform concept. Initial drafts of this concept were distributed among MIA units at the district and rayon levels and the feedback was discussed during trips around the country with MIA staff, civil society representatives and a limited number of civilians. However, similar to prior reform attempts, the MIA did not integrate any comments received from civil society into the concept paper, giving the impression that it was just

including civil society in the discussions to create the appearance of civil society participation and to check that box and say that they worked with NGOs³⁶.

Significant efforts to achieve a successful reform in the MIA marked the year 2011. NGOs such as International Center Interbilim (Interbilim) began collecting information independently from the MIA on changes that needed to be done in the Ministry. In parallel, the NGO Liberal Youth Alliance (LYA), together with former police officers, organized meetings to discuss their vision of the reform and the effective police reforms in Georgia and Northern Ireland.

A preliminary vision of the reform strategy was completed by LYA in June 2011. Around that same time, an opinion poll conducted by the International Republican Institute showed a low level of trust in the MIA among the population. The poll also showed that citizens perceived the Ministry as being corrupt, politicized, repressive, and ineffective. In fact, the survey showed that the population consider[ed] public servants working in

³¹ Boonstra, Jos, Erica Marat and Vera Axyonova. (2013, May). *Security Sector Reform in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan: What Role for Europe?* See also, Lewis, David. (2011, April). *Reassessing the Role of OSCE Police Assistance Programming in Central Asia*. Central Eurasia Project, Open Society Foundations; SIAR Public Opinion Report.

³² See Lewis. *Security Sector Reform in Authoritarian Regimes*.

³³ Boonstra. *Security Sector Reform in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan*.

³⁴ Also known as the First Kyrgyz Revolution.

³⁵ See Lewis. *Security Sector Reform in Authoritarian Regimes*.

³⁶ See Interview 7.

law enforcement bodies as the most corrupted in comparison with all . . . public institutions in Kyrgyzstan.”³⁷

As a response, in September 2011 the interim government headed by President Roza Otunbayeva established an interdepartmental committee composed of relevant government and civil society representatives. The committee was tasked with drafting a proposal for a 2012-2015 reform of the MIA. Otunbayeva’s successor, Almazbek Atambayev, who was elected shortly after, pledged to continue these initiatives and immediately began the drafting of the official reform to the MIA.

Nonetheless, the establishment of this interdepartmental committee was not enough, and the committee’s work proved to be no different from prior practices during earlier reforms. Civil society representation in the committee was minimal, and all of civil society’s suggestions were ignored. This resulted in civil society’s ultimate withdrawal from the committee and the establishment of the Civil Union – an informal association of experts and stakeholders from 24 different NGOs throughout Kyrgyzstan, including Central Asian Free Market Institute (CAFMI), LYA, and Interbilim.

The Civil Union aimed at promoting positive changes to law enforcement and improving security in the country by promoting ideas on how to improve the reform of the MIA, while taking into account the views of the population. As part of the drafting work of the



Collecting signatures for BIS237/OSH116

alternative concept, the Civil Union visited all regions in the country and collected suggestions from police officers, civilians, and interested NGOs. The Civil Union also included inputs from legal, corruption, financial, and human rights experts. The feedback received was discussed during public hearings and workshops that included representatives from the police, former MIA staff, local municipalities, NGOs, grassroots organizations, and the mass media. All inputs were later included in the alternative draft upon consensus.

On 10 January 2012, the Civil Union presented a first draft of the joint alternative proposal. In addition, the Civil Union launched a signature collection campaign in support of their alternative proposal, using, for the first time, the law On Legislative Initiatives by the People, which stipulates that collecting 10,000 signatures from citizens warrants consideration of draft legislation by the Parliament. Consequently, aware of the Civil Union’s progress on their alternative reform proposal, the Government suggested developing a single concept that would combine the existing three proposals by the MIA, civil society, and the interdepartmental committee. However, the Civil Union refused to participate as they were outnumbered once again by government representatives.³⁸

By 2012, popular discontent with the work of the MIA and the lack of consideration of citizens’ views by internal affairs bodies continued. As a result, the Civil Union, with the support of KRTI, implemented several activities nationwide, between June 2012 and

³⁷ SIAR Public Opinion Report; see also, Interview 1.

³⁸ See <http://www.knews.kg/ru/society/13053/>.

April 2013. The Civil Union launched an advocacy and a signature collection campaign in support for their alternative reform proposal. These activities aimed at persuading the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan to consider civil society's recommended reforms to the MIA, while supporting inclusive decision-making in parliament and efforts to hold the Ministry more accountable and transparent to citizens. The initiatives included several public forums, a website, TV clips, and the collection of citizens' recommendations and signatures.

In September 2012, the Civil Union presented the final version of the alternative concept to the MIA, the Government, the President, and Parliament. The concept was not presented as a draft law, but rather as a document with recommendations accompanied by 10,950 signatures. On 13 February 2013, after the alternative proposal was submitted, the Prime Minister, Jantoro Satybaldiev, agreed to meet with Civil Union and MIA representatives to discuss the alternative proposal and the reform to the MIA. During the meeting it was agreed that suggestions described in the alternative concept would be considered by the Government in the MIA official draft. The official concept currently includes a number of key measures proposed by Civil Union, including community policing and civilian oversight of the police. Civil Union continues to promote the reform and is currently working together with the MIA in the implementation of some of the key points included in the official concept.³⁹

III. Activities Implemented by KRTI

Between 25 June 2012 and 15 December 2012 KRTI implemented grant OSH116 in the south of the country, which supported Civil Union's initiatives to launch a nationwide advocacy and signature collection campaign. These activities aimed at persuading the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan to consider civil society's recommended reforms to the MIA, while supporting inclusive decision-making in Parliament and efforts to hold the MIA more accountable and transparent to citizens. In order to complement the OSH116 grant and make the campaign truly nationwide, KRTI supported similar activities in the north through grant BIS237, implemented from 6 July 2012 until 22 April 2013.

With more than ten years of experience in advocating for protection and promotion of civil rights, LYA and Interbilim were KRTI's key partners from Civil Union. Timur Shaihutdinov, Head of LYA, and Asyl Aitbaeva, Director of Interbilim, led and coordinated all activities in the south and north of the country. Civil Union was tasked with promoting positive changes in the legislation in accordance with the Constitution of Kyrgyz Republic and international regulations on protection of human rights. Improvements to the legislation included a better management structure of the MIA, civil oversight of administrative and financial departments, transparent personnel policy through open competition, and improved office automation.⁴⁰

As part of the joint efforts between the Bishkek and Osh teams, the project first aimed at establishing a national initiative group. This group was tasked with raising community

³⁹ Civil Union had complications during registration with the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), a required step according to the law On Legislative Initiatives by the People. The MOJ also explained that the concept could not be written as a law because it would conflict with the law on normative legal acts. See KRTI project document for OSH116; see also Interviews 1, 2, and 4; Minutes of the meeting at the Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic held on 13 February 2013; Civil Union Flier.

⁴⁰ Interbilim covered the northern region (Talas, Naryn, Chui and Issyk-Kul oblasts), and LYA covered the southern region (Osh, Jalal-Abad and Batken oblasts).

awareness about the reform, gathering feedback from stakeholders, and collecting signatures nationwide. These civil society representatives were recruited on a volunteer basis and were trained by experts on how to collect signatures correctly for their proper submission to Parliament. These local partners also assisted in the mobilization of people and the dissemination of information materials.

Once the initiative group was established, the project focused on the design and implementation of the advocacy and signature collection campaigns. Seven public forums and over 20 community meetings were organized in each of the seven oblasts. These events aimed at raising awareness about the existing reform proposal, explaining the main points of the reform, and collecting recommendations on key points to be included in the alternative proposal. In order to compliment these meetings, printouts of the reform proposal, banners, and TV public service announcements (PSA)⁴¹ were also developed.

Additionally, the web-sites www.liberal.kg and www.reforma.kg, as well as social network sites were created. These sites included the full 15-page version of the alternative concept or a link to it as well as all media coverage. An on-line calculator of the number of supporters of Civil Union's proposal was also posted on the websites. The most important ten issues in the alternative proposal were also identified through online voting⁴² and later included into a flier used during the signature campaign.

All the recommendations and signatures collected through the campaign were presented during press conferences throughout the country in support of the alternative proposal for reform. Although not in the form of a draft law, the final draft of the alternative proposal was also presented to the President, the MIA, government officials and the Parliament, along with the signatures collected, in order to promote citizens' demanded reforms and inform the official reform concept.

IV. Observed Outcomes and Achievements

KRTI's Support was Effective and Timely in Catalyzing Civil Union's Initiative to Promote an Alternative Reform Proposal of the MIA

The history of Kyrgyzstan is marked with numerous failed attempts to reform the MIA and its law enforcement agencies. In the eyes of citizens, the police have not been able to guarantee the security of the population, particularly during times of crises. Moreover, law enforcement bodies continue to be deeply corrupt. The police is more like a punitive body, rather than guardian of order and law,"⁴³ which has resulted in low confidence and trust in the MIA.

Following the 2010 revolution, it was clear that a meaningful reform was still not being undertaken in the country, and the MIA structure remained nearly as it was during Soviet times.⁴⁴ Although a new attempt to reform the MIA was launched in 2010, the repeated

⁴¹ Public Service Announcements can be found at <http://reforma.kg/articles/view/23>.

⁴² Online voting form can be found at <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/embeddedform?formkey=dDlqckF5SIRXaXFzOG95ZGRp%20%20NDVGR0E6MQ>.

⁴³ SIAR Public Opinion Report; see also, Boonstra. *Security Sector Reform in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan*.

⁴⁴ Kakachia, Kornely and Liam O'Shea. (2012). *Why Does Police Reform Appear to Have Been More Successful in Georgia than in Kyrgyzstan or Russia?*. The Journal of Power Institutions in Post-Soviet Societies. Issue 13. Available at <http://pipss.revues.org/3964>.

failure of the MIA to include civil society in the reform process led to the formation of the Civil Union for Reforms and Results, and the drafting of an alternative proposal characterized for reflecting the needs and demands of the Kyrgyz population.

“Without KRTI it would have been almost impossible to do all the work, particularly meetings, TV clips, and the collection of signatures. These parts were vital because actually the coalition started working together when there was no money, and we could have continued the same way, but then we would have been limited with just commenting in the media.”

Mirsuljan Namazaliev, Managing Director and Co-Founder of CAFMI

“The moral, technical and financial support of KRTI was very important because we had some difficulties with resources”. We asked KRTI to help get more access to the regions, and with their help we conducted 23 public hearings in 23 villages. With KRTI’s support we were also able to expand our connections network.”

Timur Shaihutdinov, Head of Liberal Youth Alliance

With only months before Parliament’s plenary session in the autumn 2012, the Civil Union found itself in urgent need of donor support, in order to promote its alternative reform as a draft law and collect the required amount of signatures needed for its consideration in Parliament. KRTI’s fast and flexible response model allowed its civil society partners to implement their activities timely and efficiently, promoting the alternative proposal in a few months’ time and leading to the consideration and inclusion of some of civil society’s recommendations into the official reform concept.

In addition to the timeliness of KRTI’s support, the assistance was effective. KRTI first supported the Civil Union in building a strong national network of local NGOs from around the country, which allowed the Civil Union’s message to be widely spread. The network also added an important feature to the initiative by making it truly nationwide. KRTI also supported the Civil Union in raising awareness through an advocacy campaign aimed at informing the population about the MIA reform and the alternative concept. The campaign activities included the use of media sources that provided extensive coverage of the activities and the creation of TV clips, which brought attention to the Civil Union and its initiative.

“The number of signatures collected was a newsbreak. Every time they were printed on the media and discussed on TV, this became a main reason for officials to consider it. If there had been no advertisements on TV, then people would not have signed the document. If you want to collect signatures this should be on TV. People trust TV, so if you are not on TV they do not trust you. You get a good reputation from being on TV.”

Mirsuljan Namazaliev, Managing Director/Co-Founder of CAFMI

The constant coverage of the signature campaign on printed and online media outlets was an essential portion of the initiative, providing enough peer pressure on decision makers, who had no other choice but to listen to civil society’s demands. Additionally, given the limited accessibility to the Internet outside the cities, airing PSAs during peak hours proved to be an effective vehicle and a successful technique for the Civil Union to gain recognition and credibility. In fact, these TV clips made it easier for Civil Union

volunteers to collect signatures and receive more feedback and recommendations from the population because people were either familiar with the concept, or more open to conversation after seeing a familiar face.⁴⁵

Involving citizens in the drafting of the proposal through the collection of feedback and recommendations was also one of the main components of the initiative. In addition to the public hearings and workshops organized across the country, the use of the website www.reforma.kg was also an effective instrument for involving people and collecting their feedback. The website provided an interactive platform for users to comment, ask questions, provide recommendations, and argue in favor or against the different points in the proposal. In fact, the website has become a platform for citizens to discuss not only the MIA reform, but also all ongoing reforms in Kyrgyzstan.

“Clips developed by the Union were launched on TV right before the news. When we were collecting signatures people would say that they had seen us in the video. Most people already knew about the alternative concept because it was in the media, because of press conferences, or because it was on TV, so people already knew who we were and would recognize us.”

Atyr Abdrahmatova, Attorney and Civil Union member

Civil Union’s Initiatives were Successful in Influencing the Reform Concept of the MIA

The activities implemented by the Civil Union aimed at persuading the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan to consider civil society’s recommended reforms to the MIA. The activities also aimed at supporting inclusive decision-making in Parliament, and efforts to hold the MIA more accountable and transparent to citizens. Information collected during this case study showed that although the alternative reform was never considered in Parliament, the activities implemented by the Civil Union were indeed successful at persuading parliamentarians, government officials and the MIA alike. The Civil Union was successful in having its recommendations considered and incorporated into the official concept, and it was also successful at convincing decision makers to collaborate with the public and civil society.

“NGOs must be involved in the reform and continue cooperating with the working group on the final version of the reform concept.”

Jantoro Satybaldiev, Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic

After realizing that the required registration process for submitting a draft law was nearly impossible to follow, the alternative proposal was ultimately submitted as a regular document with civil society’s recommendations. In fact, the Civil Union submitted the document along with the signatures, knowing that without registration neither Parliament nor the Government was obliged to consider it. Ravshan Abdukaimov, an independent security expert for the Civil Union and former MIA employee, recommended the Union use signatures to promote interest in the concept paper and to show Government and Parliament that more than 10,000 people would like to see changes to the MIA. This approach proved to be successful, as it put enough pressure on decision makers to finally involve civil society in the reform process. It persuaded them to incorporate civil society’s recommendations in the official concept and start implementation.

⁴⁵ See Interview 7.

The inclusion of some recommendations from the alternative proposal into the official reform concept is good evidence of the visibility of Civil Union activities and the great influence that civil society's involvement had on decision makers. Furthermore, considering that neither the Government nor the Parliament were obliged by law to consider the alternative proposal, their positive reaction towards the Union's concept confirms the success of the activities in promoting change and in influencing decision makers. Although there is still much room for improvement, the success of these activities shows that the Civil Union and the Government are moving in the right direction.

"The draft law was not accepted in the end, but the goal was not just for them to accept the draft law but to promote changes, and the changes offered in the concept were adopted by the MIA".

Mirsuljan Namazaliev, Managing Director and Co-Founder of CAFMI

The recent implementation of the proposed reforms is also evidence that, unlike prior reform attempts, the Union's activities indeed triggered some positive changes within the MIA. After the official reform was adopted, MIA started incorporating regular civilians with no military background into their staff, through nominations or recruitment from universities other than the military academy. Furthermore, a pilot project to reform the recruitment of traffic police has been launched. This project follows civil society's recommendations to test MIA staff and recruit through open competition. Similarly, draft laws informed by the alternative concept related to crime and the expansion of district inspectors' responsibilities are currently being drafted with the help of Civil Union representatives and experts, continuing the life of the initiatives proposed in the alternative reform.

Finally, advocacy activities are being considered "good practice" and are being presented to other countries that have recently started their reform processes. This is one of the strongest evidence that shows how the implemented activities were a success. Saferworld—a British organization currently working with the Civil Union on community policing and civil society capacity building—is using Civil Union activities as a positive example for Tajikistan NGOs on how to successfully advocate.⁴⁶ According to Samara Papieva, the Civil Society Strengthening Project Coordinator for Saferworld Kyrgyzstan, "Our goal when we invited Timur to the presentations in Tajikistan is to give a sense that it is possible to do something. Tajikistan wanted successful examples on advocacy, and LYA's work is a good example."

Civil Union's Initiatives Inspired the Design and Implementation of Similar, Complementary, and Additional Activities

The Civil Union's approach has been a positive example for other NGOs and is being replicated in different development spheres that are going through a reform process. For example, NGOs working in the area of social protection have also opted for voicing their ideas instead of criticizing the government, and this has allowed them to get the Government's understanding on social reforms. Additional activities have also been launched to complement the work on the alternative concept.

⁴⁶ Tajikistan is in the process of drafting their concept paper on community security and is preparing for their MIA reform. See Interviews 4 and 8.

With the adoption of the law On the Rules and Procedures of the Parliament adopted in December 2011, civil society organizations were enabled to participate in the initiation and deliberation process of draft laws. However, prior to Civil Union activities, civil society had little experience and practical understanding of how to effectively work with Parliament following these new procedures. As a member of the Civil Union working in the promotion of the alternative reform, Interbilim saw the need to create a guide for civil society that would show how to effectively participate in the process. Using the Civil Union as a model, Interbilim, with the support of KRTI, developed a manual meant to help “civil society actors lobby more effectively during the key phases of drafting, deliberating, and voting of laws”.⁴⁷ In fact, the manual describes the approach used by the Civil Union to promote its alternative reform as a successful way to be heard by Parliament. With the publication of this manual, these activities can now be replicated by other NGOs working on any reforms, expanding the effect of Civil Union’s initiatives.⁴⁸

“We are in the process of developing it. The idea is that activists from all over the country can inform about violations of the police, the court, etc. Then we talk to the Government, the MIA, the courts and general prosecutors and give them the information, so all messages in the e-map will have a response by these agencies.”

Timur Shaihutdinov, Liberal Youth Alliance

Additional activities have also been designed following the suggestions from civil society included in the official MIA concept. One of these activities was launched by LYA in 2013 with the support of KRTI and focuses on researching and measuring the public’s perception on the performance of the MIA and the police. The project

allows civil society to advocate for improved security and police responsiveness through a survey and an online social media instrument that serves as a platform for people to leave messages regarding their sense of personal security and experience with the police. The findings of the survey are reflected on an online map (e-map)⁴⁹ posted on the www.reforma.kg website. All information collected on the site is then crosschecked by members of the Civil Union and shared with the MIA.⁵⁰

“The Civil Union was created at a very good time, and it was needed. It has a mandate that nobody is working on. We are supporting the work of the Civil Union. We are holding meetings and activities to increase their capacity, and we are teaching them how to do research. Now we are having training on advocacy and community policing. Even after the project will be completed, we hope that the core group of the Civil Union will continue working together on these issues.”

Samara Papieva, Civil Society Strengthening Project Coordinator, Saferworld Kyrgyzstan

Finally, since its arrival in Kyrgyzstan in 2010, Saferworld has partnered with the Civil Union in order to build more capacity and empower civil society, particularly in the sphere of the security sector reform. Saferworld has also supported the Civil Union in

⁴⁷ KRTI project document for BIS213.

⁴⁸ *Guidelines of Interaction with Parliament of Kyrgyz Republic 2013*. Interbilim. 2013 (In the section titled “Legislation Initiative and How the Population can make Suggestions to Draft Laws” the manual mentions: the collection of at least 10,000 signatures, the registration of the initiative group with the MOJ, the dissemination of the signatures and the process of implementation of the initiative in the mass media, the use of standardize blank forms for the collection of signatures, the planning of public hearings and round tables to discuss the concept and collect recommendations, and the creation of a network including non-profit organizations and volunteers around all regions and oblasts in the country).

⁴⁹ The online map integrates the Ushahidi platform.

⁵⁰ People can leave messages on the security issues they’ve faced, they type of violation or problem experienced while interacting with MIA (e.g. bribe, torture, human rights, etc.), the location of the violation, photos or videos. See KRTI project document OSH214.

their work on community security including research on community-police interaction and the development of policy briefs on this subject. This capacity building will allow for the sustainability of the Civil Union's work and for the Union to gain more credibility and recognition among the Government and the population.

Secondary and Unforeseen Outcomes

During the life of the project several unforeseen outcomes were observed. As the project developed and Civil Union activities gained more traction; the attitudes of enforcement bodies and government officials slowly began to change, and they became more receptive to civil society. Government officials and the police stopped seeing the Union as their biggest opponent. In fact, they understood civil society's position and agreed to work together. Civil Union representatives also became accepted and respected in this area. The police finally understood that civil society's intent was not to fire the entire police department but to help build a better police system for the benefit of the population and the police itself. With a new sense of trust in civil society and its influence on decision makers, police officers began to ask the Civil Union for help when voicing concerns up the chain of command.

"Last year when presenting the ideas of the concept, MIA representatives (colonels and generals) were aggressive, insulting, and saying things like: "what rights do you have; what do you know about the system; do you want the suicide of the police?" Not having an understanding of the Union's ideas made the staff very aggressive. Last year in summer 2012, we finally established dialogue with MIA staff, initiated by both sides, and discussed our ideas and interests. During the last public hearing there were many police officers present expressing their concerns. They saw the Union as their defenders because they could not say anything to their supervisors."

Timur Shaihutdinov, Liberal Youth Alliance

During the implementation of the activities, there was also an unexpected and effective collaboration between the north and the south of the country. Given Kyrgyzstan's history of ethnic violence and major differences between ethnic groups located in the northern and southern regions, the collaboration of diverse groups united to work for a common goal was an important and an unforeseen positive outcome of the activities.

Finally, the activities allowed civil society to test for the first time the law On Legislative Initiatives by the People and identify the existing problems with the law and its procedural requirements. Once put in practice, the required procedures proved to be difficult to follow and had too many limitations. For example, the law stipulates that only a certain group of those registered with the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) are allowed to collect signatures. This restriction imposes an unnecessary burden on groups like the Civil Union,

who use a large amount of volunteers around the country to implement signature collection activities. There is also an excessive and unnecessary amount of deadlines and waiting periods, and the process can also be prolonged if the law is not a priority for the Government. Such lengthy procedures can prevent civil society groups like the Civil Union from proposing draft laws on time for parliamentary sessions.

"The main idea was that everybody wanted to see changes in the reform of MIA. So we used this as a basis and nobody was looking at gender, nationality, race, but rather at the common goal."

Urmat Kazakbaev, Liberal Youth Alliance

V. Challenges Observed during the Implementation of Activities

During the course of the projects' implementation, the Civil Union faced some challenges and programmatic issues that undermined the effectiveness of the activities and prevented civil society from achieving greater results.

Criticism from MIA and Larger NGOs

From the beginning of the reform process the MIA expressed a strong opposition to the Civil Union and the Union's alternative proposal. Accustomed to the way prior reforms had been carried out, the MIA repeatedly attacked the Civil Union in order to stop them from interfering with the Ministry's reform.

Nonetheless, the Civil Union persevered and ultimately gained the trust and acceptance of the MIA. In fact, having a strong and brave leader like Timur Shaihutdinov was key to the Union's success and persistence. The Union continued its activities regardless of the criticism, and it viewed the media as its ally and the best way to refute all accusations. This helped them build a positive image among the population, putting pressure on officials to stop the criticism and listen. The Civil Union also used the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) –one of MIA's main partners— as an entry point and as a mediator. This was crucial in making connections, recruiting supporters from within the MIA, and letting civil society's message reach the table of decision makers.

The Civil Union was also criticized by larger NGOs who were not members of the Union. Some of these organizations gave similar arguments to those of the MIA, particularly regarding the Union's lack of expertise, even though there is no other NGO who is an expert in this area. These NGOs referred to the Union as the “youth” and to the alternative proposal as “naïve and very general”.⁵¹ They constantly brought up the Union's lack of prior involvement in security issues as a weakness and as proof of the Union's limited capacity. According to Galina Davletbaeva, Head of Committee of Students' Parents and Member of Civil Union, “the well-known NGOs did not work with us, but we reached out to them. Because they saw us very young, they did not want to work with us; but they were in the distribution list, so they received regular updates and were always invited to the events we organized.”

Although this negative criticism is not justified, some organizations had legitimate reasons for not supporting the Civil Union. For example, some NGOs were demotivated by prior failed reforms and doubted the success of any reform attempts; other organizations were working on separate projects with the MIA at the time and were likely just preventing any damage to their relations with the Government; and a few of them had a conflict of interest as they were members of the coordinating commission in the MIA and the interdepartmental committee drafting the official reform. However, some NGOs criticized the Civil Union and its initiatives for no legitimate reason. They were purely motivated by resentment, feelings of superiority, and unfamiliarity with the subject.

Lack of Initiative and Poor Communication Within the NGO Community

⁵¹ Interview 3.

During the interviews performed in this case study there was a trend among NGOs that criticized the Civil Union, showing a lack of initiative to be properly informed about civil society's intentions and activities. This lack of awareness of the campaign's critics added a level of difficulty to civil society's work that continues to be present to this day, making it more challenging for the Civil Union to be trusted by both citizens and government officials, and for its activities to be sustained.

"Nothing was printed in mass media. I usually read sites like Akipress and Voice of freedom. I read about the meeting with the Prime Minister and that the Prime Minister would use the alternative concept for the official concept, but nothing was on the news sites".

Alnas Esengeldiev, Special Advisor and Lawyer, Freedom House

Reputable, well-established, and recognized NGOs play an important role in the success of emerging initiatives, as they are trusted by civilians, the government, and stakeholders. In fact, their opinion can greatly influence the way people react to a certain idea. Therefore, it is logical to assume that these so-called "expert" organizations are properly informed before they provide any criticism or feedback. However, the results of this case study

showed how some of these organizations were in fact quite uninformed about the reform process. They were not familiar with the official concept, the alternative proposals, or the activities implemented by the Civil Union; yet they continued to criticize the Union's work and accused them of being unfit for this work. More importantly, these organizations did not even show interest in trying to find more information. They did not take responsibility for not being informed and blamed the Civil Union for their lack of knowledge. According to these organizations, there was minimal coverage of the Civil Union activities on the media, and they were never informed or invited to join activities.

However, there are hundreds of media articles on the Internet covering the alternative proposal and the signature campaign. In fact, the great coverage and involvement of the media was one of the key factors that allowed the activities to be a success. The Civil Union also used a mailing list of existing NGOs working in the security sector or related areas, and these organizations were part of that list.⁵²

Lack of coordination among donors and implementing partners is common in the development world, and lack of clear communication is frequently a major obstacle that prevents strong initiatives from reaching their true potential. Poor communication between the Civil Union and some of these larger organizations was a challenge that, if addressed, could have benefitted the initiative, as some of these NGOs were not totally opposed to working together with the Civil Union.

Some of these NGOs proposed, without knowing, the same approaches used by the Civil Union when trying to influence government officials, such as conducting public hearings, round tables, and a nation-wide campaign; involving experts during the development of the proposal; and using the mass media to inform the population. These established and larger NGOs with their greater financial, technical and expert resources could have complemented and strengthened the initiatives implemented by civil society, had they only been properly informed and had communicated better. However, the lack of initiative and information of larger NGOs and the inability to cooperate with each other

⁵² See Interviews 1, 3 and 7; see also, Media Sources at the end of this document.

and communicate better prevented the Civil Union from building a stronger civil society network with better resources and expertise.

Difficult and Lengthy Procedures for Registration with the MOJ

The difficult and lengthy procedural requirements of the Law on Legislative Initiatives by the People posed a significant obstacle for the Civil Union, as they prevented the alternative concept from ultimately being submitted to Parliament as a draft law. Once put in practice, the required procedures proved to be difficult to follow because they were lengthy and had too many limitations. Although the MOJ explained the possibility of the proposal being rejected in Parliament due to conflicts with the law on Normative Legal Act, the concept did not even make it to that point because it was not able to get beyond the initial registration stage.

Initial Skepticism, High Turnover in MIA Staff, and KRTI's Internal Approval Procedures

The initial skepticism towards the new MIA reform and the alternative concept were a big challenge for the Civil Union. With the fresh memory of prior failed reform attempts and the repercussions that it had on the population during the 2005 and 2010 events, it was no surprise that a new reform would be received with disbelief. As a result, the Civil Union had to dedicate a large portion of its activities only to get support for having another reform, before it could actually focus on promoting the alternative concept.⁵³ The high turnover in the staff of the MIA also made it difficult for Civil Union's message to have continuous support, causing them to waste time, energy and resources trying to persuade new officials. Finally, despite KRTI's support being timely and effective, there is still some room for improvement. KRTI's internal approval procedures made it difficult for the grantees to follow their original timeline, sometimes postponing activities or being forced to find other ways to finance them until the funds were disbursed.

VI. Lessons Learned and Recommendations for Future Programming

Recommendations for the Government, the Parliament and the MIA

The effectiveness of a reform depends not only on the state's capacity to involve civil society in the process, but also on the quality with which the state serves the interests of the population. When implementing awareness-raising programs in the security sector it is essential to include government representatives and civil society actors alike in order to demonstrate the legitimacy of the intervention and increase public support. Therefore, by including the Civil Union's recommendations and working together with civil society in the implementation of the reforms, the Government and the MIA have begun to head in the right direction.⁵⁴

The Government and the MIA should continue nourishing their relationship with civil society in the security sphere, as cooperation with civil society can help gain support from the population and increase the chances of implementing effective interventions. Additionally, given the positive results that have come out of this partnership, similar

⁵³ Two petitions were distributed through the Internet, one of which was to request an immediate MIA reform and another. This petition received about 191 signatures. See Interview 7.

⁵⁴ Kakachia. *Why Does Police Reform Appear to Have Been More Successful in Georgia than in Kyrgyzstan or Russia?*; see also, Boonstra. *Security Sector Reform in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan*.

relations should be built in other areas where there is the need for immediate reform. The Government should also continue involving younger NGOs in addition to more recognized and established ones because newcomers can propose different approaches and proposed innovative ideas that can give a long stale reform process a fresh start.

Furthermore, the Government and Parliament should also focus on assuring the effectiveness of new laws. Particularly, they should revise and improve the flaws in the law On Legislative Initiatives by the People. Following the requirements stipulated by this law made it impossible for the Civil Union to register with the MOJ because these requirements were difficult to follow and had too many limitations. These complicated procedures prevented civil society from reaching Parliament, which is the main purpose of this law.

Finally, the high turnover in the staff of the MIA made it difficult for Civil Union's message to have continuous support. It caused the Union to waste time, energy and resources persuading new officials. The MIA should invest more time in selecting their personnel, particularly those in decision-making positions, to ensure that their services are long-term oriented and the turnover rate is less frequent. This will allow any efforts of civil society and the MIA to be more effective and sustainable.

Recommendations for the Donor Community

Given the success and the positive reception of Civil Union activities, the donor community should continue channeling its resources towards projects that involve civil society, as these initiatives have proved to strengthen democracy, reduce corruption, increase transparency and promote awareness. By supporting the Civil Union and its activities, the donor community allowed society to acquire the proper tools to voice its opinions and suggestions in a civilized, efficient, and more receptive way, providing a stepping-stone for achieving a true reform.

The donor community should also continue supporting projects based on the quality of the activities rather than the reputation or capacity of the institution. Supporting small, younger organizations such as LYA and Interbilim, which lacked enough capacity or expertise but had the ideas and the drive to make a difference, allowed catalytic initiatives that proved to be in great demand to be implemented, and it built momentum for continued long-term reform.

Furthermore, the donor community should continue searching and working with change agents, such as Timur Shaihutdinov and Asyl Aitbaeva, who proved to be effective leaders, critical to the proper implementation of activities and the realization of results. With such change agents donors can get better assurance that pilot projects will be successful and that funds will be allocated to the proper establishment of a more stable and secure democracy.

Finally, the donor community should continue being flexible and responsive. Thanks to this model, the initiatives were modified when feedback was received and the need for additional activities emerged. Nonetheless, as part of this flexible and responsive model, the donor community should work on improving its internal approval procedures, as these can take between three weeks to two months and can prevent grantees from having speedier interventions.

Recommendations for Civil Society including the Civil Union

Civil society should continue engaging constructively in the MIA and any other reform processes. The Civil Union activities proved to be effective in promoting citizens' awareness and engagement in the drafting process for the alternative reform. In fact, the inclusion of some of the population's recommendations in to the official MIA reform concept is a clear sign of the success of the activities.

The Civil Union should continue involving the media in the coverage of all its activities because this proved to be an effective method of informing the population that also improved their reputation and credibility. The Civil Union should also continue promoting its website, as it has become an effective platform for civilians to discuss any ongoing reforms. Additionally, although social networks were used to a certain extent, they were not used to its maximum potential. Therefore, the Civil Union should invest in using this type of vehicle, especially if it intends to involve the younger population in its future activities. The use of TV clips should continue and should also be expanded. According to respondents, PSA were key in informing the population of the alternative reform and the Civil Union. Moreover, civil society should also continue reaching out to others who might have better relationships with the government, as a way to convey its message to skeptics or opponents. This approach could also be used to reach out to larger NGOs, who might be skeptic in working together with the Civil Union.

"I learned that if you want to change something you have to change yourself. I changed my attitude towards youth because the older generation criticizes the youth, but youth can come with fresh ideas. When changing laws, I thought that only lawyers could draft laws, but now I believe anybody can participate."

*Ravshan Abdukaimov,
Independent Security Expert
for the Civil Union, Lawyer
and Former MIA employee*

Larger NGOs should work to inform themselves better and prevent their status or personal interests from interfering with possible collaborations, particularly smaller organizations. This divide between NGOs reduces the potential effect of all civil society activities. Larger organizations should also work on being more open to change and to newer organizations. Instead of immediately labeling younger NGOs as inexperienced or as the competition, larger NGOs need to welcome change and innovative ideas. Civil society organizations should also make an effort to better coordinate with each other, as they can mutually benefit from each other's strengths and expertise. By combining new ideas with greater financial, technical and expert resources, civil society can provide better services and increase its geographical reach and financial support, while gaining trust and visibility among citizens and government officials.

Finally, Civil Union should continue building its capacity because it has a great potential for growth. Given its minimal expertise in the security sector when the initiatives were launched, and the success of the Union's interventions; with the proper training and expertise, the Civil Union can accomplish much more than it did and can easily become a major change agent in the reform arena.

Developing a Professional, Objective Media

By Farrell Styers

I. Executive Summary

Following the 2010 political upheaval in Kyrgyzstan, there was a clear need for improvements in the professionalism, independence, and reliability of the country's media. A free and engaged press is a cornerstone to a successful democracy and as such, Kyrgyzstan's government, civil society organizations, and international donor organizations all pushed media reform efforts in the years after the 2010 revolution.

KRTI supported four rounds of nationwide media consumption research and associated activities from early 2011 to September 2013. The research was intended to allow key stakeholders such as domestic media content producers and managers and government messengers to more effectively respond to their audiences, and grow their market share. By focusing outlets on actual audience behaviors, KRTI also sought to increase advertising revenues, allowing media managers more independence from the influence of financial backers with politicized agendas.

Research for this case study found that the first wave of research was met with equal parts interest and suspicion. Interlocutors described reserved interest amongst nearly everyone in the media industry following the first survey. These reservations were driven by the general prevalence of corruption and political / commercial interference with prior attempts to generate significant media consumption data, and a general lack of familiarity with how to strategically maximize the use of research to build audience flow and expand market share. Nonetheless, there was enough interest to spur a second round of research.

The second round of surveying proved to be the most pivotal in the project. It gave the first glimpse into changes over time, allowing outlets to see how their programming decisions affected their ratings. It was also at this point that the Joint Media Industry Committed (JMIC), a consortium of more than 20 public media outlets, private media outlets and advertising agencies was created. While many of these organizations are direct competitors, they also realized the interest the entire industry had in participating in this research and hence the need to cooperate. The subsequent two rounds of audience research were overseen and partially funded by JMIC, with continued support from KRTI.



Media Managers attend research presentation

JMIC's "ownership" of the research went some way in allaying the early suspicions among stakeholders, generating greater trust in later waves of research. Suspicions were also overcome by the immediate interest in the data by new advertisers. As the advertisers began insisting that the data be used for ad placement and pricing, advertising agencies and outlets responded.

One of KRTI's final efforts with the media consumption research was to provide JMIC with the potential to become a stable and sustainable organization, operating without USAID funding. Many interviewees were skeptical about the success of JMIC, or the continuation of media consumption research, without USAID support, but there are indicators that the organization may succeed. There was unequivocal support for continued consumption research, regardless of who conducted it, among those

interviewed for this report. Waves three and four also resulted in direct financial support from JMIC members, a sign of commitment to the project by JMIC members.

In addition to political interference, Kyrgyzstan's media is also young and inexperienced. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, most practitioners were unfamiliar with the editorial practices of free media. This problem was compounded by a "brain drain" as the Russian literati returned home. The media here has often been limited more by shortcomings among the media themselves than government or political pressure.

The significant programming changes made by several outlets in response to the research are among the most tangible impacts of KRTI's work. The country's largest and fastest growing outlets all made substantial programming changes in efforts to win and retain audiences – achieving one of the explicitly stated goals of the grants.

The local contractor selected for the work has made real improvements through the various waves - something noted even by independent observers. However, many of the project challenges and shortcomings can be traced back to the steep learning curve and limitations faced by the contractor. There is still a need for improved research methods, tools, and analysis.

While it is not possible to say with certainty whether this new focus on audience dynamics has systematically reduced political manipulation in the media, there were two conspicuous examples of successful resistance to political pressures that were directly attributable to KRTI's work. In one, the director of the public broadcaster was able to successfully resist political pressure by using the data to support his position. In the other, an outlet in southern Kyrgyzstan has started work on Uzbek-language programming, in response to audience research that showed a large potential market. In addition, interviewees described a notable improvement in local media programming as a result of KRTI's work, creating a fairer and more responsive media sector, enhancing the sovereignty of Kyrgyzstan's media and instilling a greater sense of national pride among viewers and practitioners alike.

II. Background

The Kyrgyz media environment has been hampered by political interference and corruption since independence in 1991. Throughout its history, significant pressures had been placed on the media both through formal measures such as policy controls and libel suits, and informal means such as violent intimidation and political favoritism.⁵⁵ Pro-government bias in state outlets, which maintain the greatest national reach of all media, has been a top complaint of watchdog organizations. Private outlets are either openly or rumored to be supported by politicians or business leaders. Kyrgyz media ranks higher than many regional peers both in terms of freedom and professionalism, but it is far behind much of the rest of the world. As one expert put it, they are "the best of a bad lot."⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Freedom House. (2003). *Freedom House*. Retrieved from Press Freedom Report: <http://freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=251&year=2003>

⁵⁶ IRIN. (2001). *IRIN*. Retrieved from Kyrgyzstan: Focus on Press Freedoms: <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportID=14944>

Following the 2010 collapse of the Bakiyev government, new attempts were made by the government, civil society and international organizations to create a professional, free and independent media environment in Kyrgyzstan. The state television broadcaster was converted to a public outlet, many of the draconian practices of intimidation used by the Bakiyev government were rolled back and efforts to train practitioners were initiated.⁵⁷

III. Activities Implemented by KRTI

KRTI made several grants from 2010-2013 supporting the development and professionalization of Kyrgyzstan's press. The central focus of this support was media consumption research. The aim of this research and associated support was for the first time to give outlets reliable information about audience reach and listening and viewing habits. This, KRTI felt, would enable outlets to make data-driven decisions on programming and content, rather than politically-influenced decisions. This would reduce political interference in the press and make the media and government more effectively respond to the public. It would also allow the government, advertisers and other organizations to make better use of resources in targeting media consumers. A third anticipated benefit was to attract a larger share of the domestic audience away from foreign produced news and information that is less relevant to their daily lives. KRTI's hypothesis was that to help citizens make more informed and democratic decisions during and after the transition, they would need to rely more heavily on reliable, balanced, and locally-produced content. More broadly, a professional and developed media industry requires information on audience preferences, and KRTI's work would help work towards that end. Below is a list of grants examined for this report:

BIS108	First wave media consumption research
BIS290	Increasing Access to Information about Reconstruction Services in the South
OSH149	Strengthening Independent Uzbek-Language Media Outlets
OSH168	Increasing Balanced and Reliable News Programming on Yntymak Radio
OSH176	Creating Uzbek-Language Television Programming in Jalalabad

Each grant provided objectives for the grant activities based on programmatic assumptions. Below is a compilation of those objectives, which were used to determine the assumptions behind them:

- Provide key stakeholders with data on audience reach and share for radio and television stations.
- Improve evidence-based decision-making practices among media outlet managers, media buyers operating in Kyrgyzstan and government public outreach services.
- Improve the performance of media outlets, and Government press relations departments, that provide information to citizens.
- Develop the tools necessary for media managers and government outreach specialists to become sources of more reliable and balanced information for audiences and constituents.

⁵⁷ Rickleton, C. (2011, September 29). *Eurasianet*. Retrieved from Kyrgyzstan: Public Television in Bishkek Facing Independence Test: <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/64242>

- Improve the ability of an indigenous research firm to deliver consultations to media and government managers that seek to utilize analysis of quantitative media audience and citizen perception research to create more effective programming and marketing strategies.

These were used to derive three key assumptions driving KRTI's media support programming activities. These were:

- Media outlets do not often use evidence-based decision making practices, which makes them less responsive to the public.
- Media outlets do not always provide reliable and balanced information – often because of political influence.
- Media outlet managers lack the skills and knowledge needed to apply media consumption data to their immediate jobs and business decisions.

The research revealed relatively strong evidence to support these claims. In interviews with media experts and advertising agency representatives, all of them felt that programming decisions at media outlets were based more on convenience, intuition or political motivations than on audience desires. In some cases, outlets claimed to use input such as telephone calls and letters sent by readers as gauges for audience response, but these methods fall far short of international standards and leave significant room for capricious managers to make decisions based on factors other than the audience.

The director of Vega Plus advertising agency explained that “when we would discuss future advertising with outlets, they would give us a single, outlet-wide price” rather than prices based on when the ad ran, which order it came in the show or any number of other common variables for such a service. This makes plain the case that decisions were not evidence-based. Exacerbating this situation, two interviewees explained that programming decisions were made by simply selling time blocks to show producers, almost as though it were advertising, leading to constant changes in schedules and essentially no input from consumers. Among the only information that indicated attempts to program based on audience preferences, Media Management Advisor Graeme Moreland explained that public broadcaster OTRK used metrics such as the number of viewers who called in after a show as indicators of popularity.

Regarding balance and reliability, political interference in the Kyrgyz media has been well charted by local and international watchdog organizations. Kyrgyzstan's media routinely ranks as “not free” in Freedom House's annual index, and other organizations such as Journalists [a local media NGO], Cimera, and Internews have noted consistent problems with corruption, lack of professionalism and political interference in the press.⁵⁸

Advertising executives and outlet managers themselves admitted to not initially knowing what to do with audience consumption data. Because Kyrgyzstan had no history of such research, the skills needed to apply it were also not present. The director of the Dailer

⁵⁸ Freedom House. (2013). *Freedom House*. Retrieved from Nations in Transit 2013 - Ratings Table: http://www.freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/NIT2013_Tables_FINAL.pdf; Also Kulikova, I. &. (2001, October). *Cimera*. Retrieved from The Historical Development and Current Situation of Mass Media in Kyrgyzstan: <http://cimera.org/en/publications/>

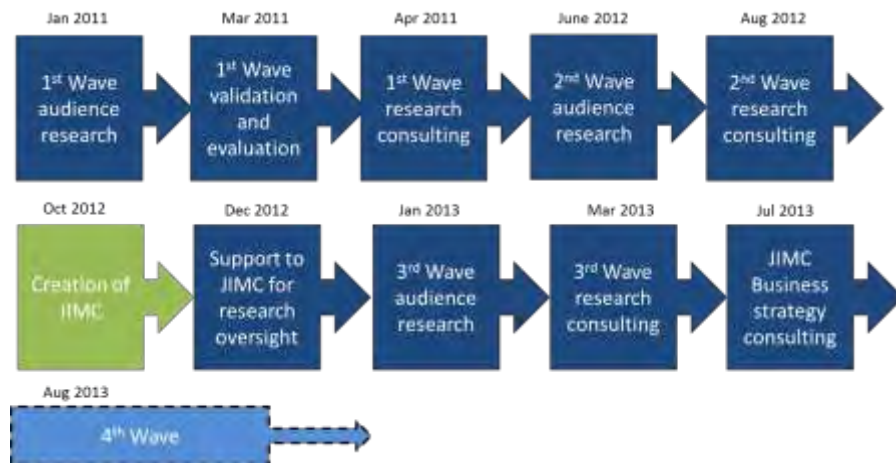
Group, an advertising agency, explained, “media managers are not used to this data...they don’t trust it since it has never been a part of their work before.”

The ignorance about the consumption data was exemplified in the work by Helen Harrison, a KRTI STTA, who found that the research company gathering the data had a lack of knowledge regarding the internationally accepted calculation procedure required to process and report audience data. The terminology utilized within media audience measurement currencies is misunderstood and was being incorrectly applied to the data.” There was a significant lack of knowledge to overcome for this.

Timeline of KRTI Activities

While this report examines 12 different grants, these all focused on one core activity, audience consumption research. There were three waves of audience research [with a fourth underway as this report was being written]. The first began in January 2011. This was followed by the second wave in June through August of 2012, and a third wave conducted in January through March of 2013.

As a supplement to the audience research, several grants were made to help support the management of the research and application of the findings. Below is a timeline of major activities. The box shown in green was not a KTRI initiative, but played a key role in grant activities.



KTRI contracted local research consulting firm M-Vector to conduct each wave of the audience research. The final two waves of research were done with the oversight of JMIC. M-Vector also received assistance from STTAs who helped refine the research and analysis process.

Each wave of research included an associated analytical report and slides. These were then presented to media stakeholders, including outlet managers, advertisers and advertising agencies, government, and international institutions such as the U.S. Embassy in Kyrgyzstan.

Key stakeholders such as outlet managers were given training to ensure that research results were used effectively.

IV. Observed Outcomes and Achievements

KRTI sponsored one 3,500 person and three 2,500 person surveys of media consumers in Kyrgyzstan over the course of three years. The initial foray into media audience research was viewed skeptically by many stakeholders. In nearly every interview conducted for this report, interviewees described the incredulous attitudes of outlet managers, journalists and media experts following the first wave [or even two] of the research. Managers at both advertising agencies interviewed for this report explained that while advertisers and ad agencies were incredibly excited to start using the data, the outlets were less enthusiastic.

Media content, programming schedules and advertising rates had previously been the sole purview of outlet managers. This left substantial room for decisions to be made that were not particularly responsive to the audience, at best, and were actually detrimental to consumers at worst. It also left outlet managers as the key authority for such decisions. It stands to reason that managers would be reluctant to give this up.

The first wave of surveying collected both perceptions of governance and media consumption data. After a series of exchanges between KRTI and the survey contractor, a survey instrument was agreed upon and fielded. Following data collection and analysis, the results were presented to an extensive group of stakeholders including outlet managers, advertisers, government communications managers and media NGOs. Feedback was gathered from stakeholders and used to validate results and adjust future waves of surveys.

Media Management Expert Graeme Moreland assisted M-Vector in analyzing and presenting the data to the various stakeholders. Evaluations done after presenting the results demonstrated that most stakeholders viewed the research as novel. The evaluation also showed how rudimentary some stakeholders' perceptions of media consumption were, with participants explaining that they had not previously considered concepts like audience loyalty or the different peak hours for different days. A group of advertisers and media experts in a more developed media market would likely have already been keenly aware of these things – demonstrating the conspicuous absence of experience applying audience research to management decisions in Kyrgyzstan's media market.

"When you advertise on the radio you should be aware that during the week and weekend audience of radio listening and peak hours are different."

Anonymous 1st wave evaluation participant

The list of participants in the presentation and evaluation of the baseline data was substantial. Most major outlets, advertising agencies, media NGOs, advertisers and government press service personnel were in attendance. Regardless of perceptions, knowledge of the research was certainly extensive.

"The first wave was not so impressive, but by the second wave, the market woke up."

Roman Pogojev, Director of M-Vector Research

The second wave of audience research incorporated some of the lessons learned during the first wave, such as more extensive support from Mr. Moreland, more targeted

analysis for each of the many stakeholders and a stronger focus on media consumption rather than governance perceptions in the survey instrument.

The results from the second wave drew less substantial attention than the baseline study among government press agencies, but from the perspective of Mr. Moreland, the advertising agencies, and the outlets, the second wave of research was among the most interesting because it offered the first insight into changes over time. This was the first time programming changes could be associated with changes in viewership.

In his interview, Mr. Moreland explained that this was the most difficult shift for outlet managers – especially those who saw their programming decisions resulting in poor outcomes. It was also here that Mr. Moreland’s consulting appeared to have the most substantial impact. When discussing Mr. Moreland’s work, JMIC described it as “magic” the way he could correlate changes in audience viewing patterns and programming decisions by outlets. This was also referenced by KRTI staff and the management of NTS, a local TV station.

The second wave of research generated enough interest and discussion that an industry-wide representative organization was created: JMIC. This played a pivotal role in the successive waves of research.

“If the research had not gone beyond the first wave, KRTI never would have known about JMIC. And without JMIC, the 3rd and 4th waves of research never would have happened.”

Jyldyz Sattarova, KRTI Grants Manager

The third wave of research was managed by JMIC with considerable support from M-Vector and KRTI, and the final wave was entirely managed by JMIC. In addition, JMIC partners agreed to pay for a portion of the research – something that had never before been seen in the Kyrgyz media industry. JMIC’s oversight went a large way in allaying suspicions about the professionalism and accuracy of the research. This advantage was noted by nearly all of the stakeholders

interviewed for this report. JMIC’s oversight also allowed all stakeholders to have a say over how subsequent research was conducted.

Each wave of research also included follow-up assistance to key outlets to help them apply the results in a meaningful way. OTRK, the largest public broadcaster, NTS, a private TV station in Bishkek, and Channel 7, a private broadcaster in Jalalabad all received advisory services. Each of the outlets made programming changes as a result of the STTA’s work.

The director of OTRK, Kubat Otorbaev, was so impressed with the work of Mr. Moreland, the STTA, that he asked Internews to fund more extensive advisory services from him. The JMIC chairman said the STTA’s assistance was crucial in making changes that Mr. Otorbaev had been seeking for years. Kubat Otorbaev’s programming successes came as a result of Mr. Moreland’s assistance.

“Graeme [Moreland] did in two months what Kubat [Otorbaev] had been trying to do for two years! OTRK saw an 8 point gain from his work.”

Marina Kvdvalieva, JMIC Chairman

V. Challenges Observed during the Implementation of Activities

Helen Harrison’s consulting work for KTRI offers some of the best explanations on how the media consumption research could be improved. She was the most pointedly critical of M-Vector, explaining that “the company seems to have limited knowledge of media research, audience measurement, and data terminology and data calculations.” And while this was addressed in-part by her consultation with them, her explanations gave insight into how the research could be further improved, particularly given the absence of research organizations in Kyrgyzstan with experience conducting media audience research and producing data and analysis.

Ms. Harrison described the current methodology as the “bronze standard” with seven-day diaries and People Meters standing as the silver and gold standards, respectively. Nearly every individual interviewed for this report pointed to the People Meter or similar technology as the ideal for future research. However, most people recognized that this was a lofty goal and not financially feasible in the near future. The seven-day diary would be a realistic next step.

Another issue faced by the research is the wide mistrust of the research contractor. In some ways, Ms. Harrison’s critiques substantiate this; however, it appears much of the suspicion is based on unfamiliarity with research methods by the media industry and a further cultural bias against local firms. Media expert Gulnura Toralieva explained that people in Kyrgyzstan tend to be highly suspicious of any claims of political or commercial consequence because of widespread corruption, which drives the skepticism of M-Vector’s research.

The director of Vega Plus advertising also said competing research firms tried to discredit the work as methodologically unsound, but JMIC’s management has helped discredit such claims. The best way to address such fears is ensuring JMIC remains directly involved, but still impartial and offers the opportunity to include other researchers and methods as needed.

M-Vector is aware of these challenges and has made significant improvements with each wave of research. There are several other research-consulting firms in Kyrgyzstan, but none of them is currently capable of such an extensive project – and they certainly do not have experience with this type of media research – making M-Vector the best current option. If M-Vector stays on its current trajectory, it will undoubtedly remain the best option for audience research in the country.

VI. Lessons Learned and Recommendations for Future Programming

The interest in continuing this type of research was quite clear in all of the interviews. However, when questioned about the sustainability without USAID support, many interviewees were highly skeptical. Promisingly, the director of M-Vector was one of the most optimistic. He admitted that in its current form, it was not likely sustainable, but he had several ideas for how it could be continued in some form.

First, he said incorporating telephone interviews rather than face-to-face field interviews

“Even if we make zero margin, and work only at cost, the research must be continued at least for the sake of continuity. It’s too important to stop now.”

*Roman Pogojev, Director of M-Vector
Research & Consulting*

“If [media consumers] see these dramatic improvements in the quality of their TV programming, I think that’s a real improvement in their quality of life... and it gives them something to be proud of.”

Graeme Moreland, Media Management Advisor

could drastically reduce costs. Furthermore, the research could be focused on the two major markets of Bishkek and Osh, rather than the entire country.

The director of JMIC explained that the greatest limitation for private funding was the small, underdeveloped advertising market in Kyrgyzstan. But, she said, as the research helps the market grow, the more viable independent funding becomes. In the last two waves of surveying, industry stakeholders paid a portion of the research costs through JMIC. This is a promising sign for a future method of sustainability.

Mr. Moreland, who conducts similar media consulting across the globe, claimed that Kyrgyzstan's outlets have made among the fastest and most drastic changes he has ever witnessed in response to the new data. His description is corroborated by advertising executives who claimed that they have seen substantial shifts in how outlets program and charge for advertising.

Both of the advertising executives interviewed for this report independently volunteered that "foreign advertisers" demanded consumption data before committing substantial money to advertising. Before this research was conducted, international clients would not commit budgets to advertising in Kyrgyzstan. Instead, surpluses not spent elsewhere were used in Kyrgyzstan – if anything was spent there at all. With several waves of data now available, the advertising executives said these advertisers are now including Kyrgyzstan's market in their budgets – new, often larger, advertisers are now entering the market. According to the ad executives, these advertisers insist that they continue to provide such data for continued spending.

"I am so proud to show our clients this data. It shows a new level of professionalism in our media market."

Vasily Usenko, Director of Dailer Group

Regardless of how media managers felt about the research, demand from advertisers has left them with no choice. With four waves of surveying now nearly complete, they have had the opportunity to see the real shifts in their audience caused by programming decisions. Furthermore, now that outlets have seen these impacts they will be more likely to ensure this research continues than if these benefits were less tangible and only potential.

KRTI's work has had positive secondary impacts on other USAID programming efforts in Kyrgyzstan. The Associate Director of Channel 7, a private outlet based in Jalalabad, said that the audience research was a key catalyst of their initiative to bring Uzbek-language programming to their station. Uzbek-language media was a target area for KRTI's programming work and this Channel 7 initiative became one of the most ambitious minority-language media initiatives undertaken by KRTI.

KRTI's consumption data gave Channel 7 the evidence they needed to expand into Uzbek-language broadcasting, a politically risky endeavor. In another example shared by the Chairman of JMIC, the director of OTRK, Kyrgyzstan's top public broadcaster, was able to use the data to defend programming decisions that were being questioned by members of parliament.

In addition, other USAID and U.S. government-funded initiatives have used the media consumption data to inform public outreach campaigns. With the enhanced knowledge of their target audience information

"Everyone used to think the only media market was in Bishkek. The research showed there is a big market in the south. People in Bishkek had never even heard of Channel 7 until the research showed how strong we were."

Zalkar Anarbaev, Associate Director of Channel 7

consumption habits, their PR efforts are undoubtedly more effective.

KRTI's work has also given a *raison d'être* for JMIC. The chairman of JMIC said the concept of a committee that brought together the most important media and advertising organizations in Kyrgyzstan had been discussed for years, but never coalesced. KRTI's work was one of the first "causes" that created enough incentive for such cooperation. The perennial discussions of an industry organization took on new urgency with KRTI's audience research, and JMIC was created.

A consistent point brought up by interviewees was the impact the research was having on perceptions of foreign media. KRTI's research demonstrated the popularity of both Russian-based and Uzbekistan-based media in Kyrgyzstan. The media in both countries has been accused of working as the mouthpieces of their respective governments. During the 2010 political upheaval, many people claimed that the Russian media played a role in the collapse of the Bakiyev government and Uzbekistani media exacerbated the ethnic conflict in the south. While it is far beyond the scope of this paper to examine the veracity of these claims, they have gone a long way in informing the discussion of KRTI's media consumption initiative.

Many interviewees felt that the Russian (and to a lesser extent the Uzbekistani) press was a potential threat to sovereignty and stability. KRTI's media research offered an opportunity to see in real numbers how popular foreign outlets were in Kyrgyzstan, and to give an opportunity to local outlets to make improvements and stay competitive, as seen in Channel 7's Uzbek-language initiative.

Beyond the political aspect of the foreign media presence in Kyrgyzstan, was the perceived financial impact these outlets had. Interviewees feared that foreign outlets with substantially larger production budgets could lure away viewers and their associated advertising revenues, taking potential ad revenues from local outlets. KRTI's media support gives local outlets a strong tool to remain competitive and develop their nascent local market. While this was not an objective of KRTI's work, it was viewed as a positive secondary outcome by many stakeholders.

Increasing Access to Multi-Language Media

By Farrell Styers

I. Executive Summary

After ethnic violence swept across southern Kyrgyzstan in 2010, nearly all Uzbek-language media outlets were shuttered or their Uzbek-language programming eliminated. KRTI responded with a series of grants aimed at bringing minority language media back to southern Kyrgyzstan. These efforts included five grants, shown here in order of implementation:

OSH020	Increasing Public Access to Post-Conflict Progress Reports: Osh & Jalalabad
OSH058	Increasing Access to Information about Reconstruction Services in the South
OSH149	Strengthening Independent Uzbek-Language Media Outlets
OSH168	Increasing Balanced and Reliable News Programming on Yntymak Radio
OSH176	Creating Uzbek-Language Television Programming in Jalalabad

Viewed together, there was a notable shift from providing emergency, post-conflict information to general minority-language media assistance. There was also a shift from print to electronic and broadcast formats. These shifts are emblematic of the international donor community's recognition of both the changing community needs across their three years of programming, and the lessons learned through the programming process.

As the communities affected by the 2010 conflict began to recover and response efforts were formalized, the information needs, especially among the Uzbek community, shifted from reconstruction and recovery to general news and information. As KRTI implemented several waves of media consumption research, there was also recognition of formats and outlets that offered the greatest audience reach and potential for programming efforts.

KRTI's efforts were generally successful in bringing news and information to the minority Uzbek community in southern Kyrgyzstan – the target audience for most multi-language media programming efforts. Projects were implemented across a range of formats and geographic areas.

Interviews with independent sources and project stakeholders revealed positive impacts from all of the multi-language media grants. Without KRTI's efforts and the few other efforts of international aid organizations, there would have been essentially no Kyrgyzstan-based, Uzbek-language news and information available for Kyrgyzstan's large Uzbek minority, after 2010.

There were two central challenges faced during programming. The first was political opposition. Uzbek-language media is a highly sensitive political topic in Kyrgyzstan, and efforts to promote it were met with a range of opposition efforts. The most salient of these was during the planned broadcast of an Uzbek language television program, which elicited strong public and private responses from the Interior Ministry, local government officials, and citizen groups.

The second problem was the overall weakness of the Kyrgyz media market. Outlets are hampered by a limited pool of advertisers, poor target audience information, and constant political interference (often taking the form of a quid pro-quo of media support in exchange for financing). This has created a situation where most outlets must rely on

outside funding, either from international donors or political patrons, which limits the long-term sustainability of program objectives.

Grantees and media experts agreed that KRTI's support has been crucial for the survival of multi-language media. If possible, support should continue in the future with a focus on long-term, market-supported viability.

II. Background

Kyrgyzstan includes a mix of ethnicities, including Kyrgyz, Russians, Uzbeks, and many others. Southern Kyrgyzstan boasts the largest concentration of Uzbeks, who make up approximately 14% of all citizens of Kyrgyzstan, but are a majority in some regions of the south.⁵⁹ June 2010, a wave of ethnic violence spread across southern Kyrgyzstan. In addition to hundreds of deaths and extensive destruction of property, nearly all Uzbek-language media outlets were shut down or stopped broadcasting in Uzbek.⁶⁰ In response, international organizations, including KRTI, supported initiatives to bring news and information to the Uzbek-speaking community in their native language.

There are legal precedents for Uzbek-language media in Kyrgyzstan. Both the constitution and the President's "National Sustainable Development Strategy" outline principals for multi-language media in the country. The Constitution states that "No one shall be discriminated against on grounds of sex, race, language, disability, ethnicity, religion, age, political or other opinion, education, origin, property or other status, or other factors." It also "guarantees the members of all ethnic groups that comprise the people of Kyrgyzstan have the right to preserve their native language and to create conditions for its study and development."

From the National Sustainable Development Strategy:

State policy towards achievement of this goal will be based on the following principles:

Further development of multi-lingual environment as an achievement of the society and an important competitive advantage of Kyrgyzstanis. Formation of a new generation of "tri-lingual" Kyrgyzstanis, that can speak the state, official and one of the global languages, while guaranteeing preservation of mother tongues of ethnic minorities.

In addition:

*Achieving this goal involves development of a set of measures aimed at strengthening the statehood and the rule of law...such measures will address the following tasks:
...establishing a common civic identity, adoption by the society members of a concept of Kyrgyz Jarany (citizen of Kyrgyzstan), of ideals of patriotism, inter-ethnic accord and tolerance; fostering the culture of peace and zero tolerance towards any violence and discrimination.*

⁵⁹ National Statistics Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic. (2012). *Social Trends in the Kyrgyz Republic 2006-2010*. Bishkek. Pg. 22.

⁶⁰ Eurasianet. (2012, October 18). *Eurasianet*. Retrieved from <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/66068>; See also International Crisis Group. (2012). *KYRGYZSTAN: WIDENING ETHNIC DIVISIONS IN THE SOUTH*. ICG Asia Report Nov222, Pg. 1.

There was a feeling among most interviewees that Uzbekistan-based media posed a strategic threat to the national security of Kyrgyzstan. They felt the high penetration of these media outlets in Uzbek communities in Kyrgyzstan was further dividing the Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities. As one Uzbek journalist explained, “there are parts of southern Kyrgyzstan that have practically become Uzbekistan” (because the community is so socially isolated). Several interviewees independently offered the same anecdote of children in Uzbek communities in Kyrgyzstan, believing their president to be Islam Karimov (the leader of Uzbekistan) because they only see Uzbekistan’s state media. The Uzbek government keeps close control of the press and is one of the least free countries in the world by all measures, including media freedom.⁶¹

Each grant provided objectives for the grant activities based on programmatic assumptions. Below is a compilation of those objectives, which were used to determine the assumptions behind them:

- Deliver balanced and reliable information to the Uzbek community in southern Kyrgyzstan that improves Uzbek participation in government decision-making” (OSH176)
- Increase the amount of balanced and reliable information available to marginalized minority groups in southern Kyrgyzstan.” (OSH168)
- Ensure that Uzbek speaking communities will have greater access to quality news and information about political, social, and cultural developments throughout the country.” (OSH149)
- Increase citizen access to multi-lingual information about reconstruction and recovery activities” (OSH058)
- Improve governance by enhancing the ability of ethnic communities to engage in public discussion of government reconstruction and recovery programming in the South.” (OSH020)

These were used to derive two key assumptions driving KRTI’s multi-language media programming activities. These were:

- There is a real demand for multi-language media in the country
- Access to minority language media is critical to helping minorities better integrate into civic life in Kyrgyzstan

The research revealed relatively strong evidence to support both of these assumptions. Beginning with demand for multi-language media, every interviewee who participated in the research emphasized the desire by Uzbek speakers to receive news in their native language. These assertions came not only from grantees and grant managers, but also “ordinary” ethnic Uzbeks interviewed for this research.⁶²

“Uzbek people cannot get accurate information. They have no mass media resources. Every nation and ethnicity has the right to information in their own language.”

Anonymous member of the Uzbek community in Osh

⁶¹ Freedom House. (2013). *Freedom House*. Retrieved from Nations in Transit 2013 - Ratings Table: http://www.freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/NIT2013_Tables_FINAL.pdf

⁶² Convenience-sample. (2013, July 21-23). (H. Ashuroba, Interviewer)

While there have been assertions by opponents to Uzbek-language media that most Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan understand Kyrgyz and thus do not need Uzbek-language media, the reality is much more complex.

The southern dialect of Kyrgyz and Uzbek are largely mutually intelligible. Most ethnic Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan can understand and communicate in southern-dialect Kyrgyz. Those who do not know Kyrgyz often know Russian.

Formal, written Kyrgyz and Uzbek are not mutually intelligible. This automatically excludes Uzbek speakers from Kyrgyz language print media. However, television is the preferred source of information for people of all demographics across Kyrgyzstan.⁶³ It is possible for Uzbek speakers to receive information from Kyrgyz-language broadcast media. There will be some limits to this depending on the dialect of Kyrgyz being spoken and the language skills of the viewer. One interviewee noted that there exists the potential for “misunderstandings” brought on by poor comprehension of Kyrgyz by Uzbeks, but generally functional access is not an issue.

The greater issues for Uzbek-speakers are relevance and comfort. Currently, many Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan rely on media from Uzbekistan.⁶⁴ This media is inherently less relevant than locally-produced media and has essentially no information about local issues. Additionally, local content produced without Uzbek involvement is unlikely to be entirely relevant to Uzbeks in Kyrgyzstan who often live in mono-ethnic communities. Kyrgyz and Russian language media are unlikely to overcome this.

If Uzbeks are currently consuming much of their media from sources outside Kyrgyzstan (or not relying at all on official media), this prevents them from knowing about and participating in government decision-making and other civic activities.

Uzbeks still recall the information environment before 2010 when several outlets broadcast in their native language. There is now an issue of mutual mistrust between ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities in southern Kyrgyzstan. A sudden shift to media consumption in Kyrgyz or Russian for Uzbek speakers in such an atmosphere only breeds greater animosity. One interviewee noted that Uzbeks do not want to watch Kyrgyz-language media because it is one more reminder of the poor socio-political situation they find themselves in following the violence of 2010.

“The Uzbeks were living under a ‘bunker mentality.’ We needed to find some way to bring them in socially and politically... the media is one way [to do that].”

Lucien Lefcourt, KRTI Regional Program Manager

The best data available indicates that Uzbeks will watch Uzbek-language media over other languages, regardless of the source. This creates a compelling need for Kyrgyzstan-based, Uzbek-language media.

III. Activities Implemented by KRTI

The term “multi-language media” is somewhat vague considering the focus of the projects researched for this report. While many of these projects did include multiple

⁶³ M-Vector. (2011). *Media Consumption & Consumer Perception Baseline Survey*. Bishkek.

⁶⁴ M-Vector. (2012). *Media Consumption and Consumer Perception*. Bishkek: M-Vector.

languages, the most important element for nearly all of them was the Uzbek-speaking minority of southern Kyrgyzstan. Thus, references to Uzbek-language media are found throughout this report. The resulting products and activity outputs included:

- 100 public bulletin boards with information on reconstruction and current events installed across Osh and Jalalabad (OSH020)
- 107,000 newsletters with information on reconstruction efforts and current events in Kyrgyz, Russian and Uzbek languages distributed across Osh, Jalalabad and Batken (OSH020 / OSH058)
- 5 staff members of Information and Security Media Center trained on journalistic principals, editorial policy developed, sales and marketing plan developed (OSH149)
- 5 staff members of Public Association of Journalists trained on journalistic principals, editorial policy developed and sales and marketing strategy developed (OSH149)
- Backup power generator installed at Uzbek-language radio station in southern Kyrgyzstan (OSH168)
- 10 Uzbek-language “magazines” broadcast on Channel 7, a popular, private TV station in southern Kyrgyzstan (OSH176)
- Four multi-ethnic team members hired including an Uzbek journalist and camera person at Channel 7 (OSH176)
- Technical equipment purchased and being used at Channel 7 (OSH176)

Multi-language media programming did successfully bring news and information to Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan. However, several factors limited some of the potential for these projects.

Uzbek language media is still a highly charged political issue in Kyrgyzstan. There is little support among local or national government leaders for the re-introduction of Uzbek-language press. This was reflected in the grant activities. Opposition to Uzbek-language media is also strong among many ethnic Kyrgyz in the south; this rise has tracked the broader rise in nationalist sentiment in Kyrgyzstan. Few other topics are as controversial in the country. Because of the political sensitivities of this work, the fact that any progress was made is notable.

IV. Observed Outcomes and Achievements

Increasing Access to Information on Reconstruction Services (OSH020 / OSH058)

The first multi-language media project implemented by KRTI was the “Mir Vashemu Domu” (Peace to Your House) newsletter. Under grants OSH020 and OSH058, thousands of newsletters in Kyrgyz, Russian and Uzbek were distributed weekly. In addition, 50 enclosed bulletin boards were installed in public spaces across Osh and Jalalabad, where the newsletters were posted. The KRTI grant was used as a supplement to an existing project funded by the OSCE.

Throughout the 11 months of programming activities between the two grants, over 100,000 newsletters were distributed. The original intent of the newsletters was providing information about emergency aid and reconstruction to affected communities. The newsletter provided an accessible means of gathering information in the aftermath

of the violence, which was most acutely needed in Uzbek communities which no longer had access to media in their native language.



The newsletter shifted from reporting aid and reconstruction information in the early months of the project to reporting reconciliation and “positive” socially-motivated stories. Some news events were also reported, but because the newspaper was weekly, such news was of limited utility and thus played a minor part.

This was the sole project researched for this report which faced no popular or political resistance. One distributor was temporarily detained by police, for being suspected of distributing extremist literature associated with

Hizb ut-Tahrir, but after demonstrating that the newsletter was benign, he was released.

The most immediate goal of the program activities was met: increasing citizen access to multi-lingual information about reconstruction and recovery activities across the south. Verifications by KRTI and the grantee demonstrated that the newsletters were indeed being distributed. Separately, in an independent interview conducted in February 2011, a journalist in Osh noted that for several months he saw “a multi-language newsletter published by the OSCE in Osh.” This independent validation indicates knowledge of the newsletter even in the early months of the project. All interviewees said that it was important for this information to be available in their native language.

“The Uzbeks felt, well they still feel, insecure. Without information in the Uzbek language, the community would have been mostly cut out.”
Asel Ikramova. KRTI Grants Manager

The broader objective of “filling the void of credible news accessible by communities affected by the violence” was also met – inasmuch as a short-term grant for a single newsletter realistically could. People interviewed for the evaluation noted that the information provided in the newsletter was one of the only sources of news available in the Uzbek language.

Secondary impacts included keeping Uzbek journalists, editors and distributors employed during a period when many faced significant hardships. The grantee, the Public Association “Journalists” (PAJ), is still functioning three years later and this grant likely helped them sustain their presence, especially in the south. The project also demonstrated the demand for minority-language media – a precursor to independent multi-language press.

Strengthening Independent Uzbek-Language Media (OSH149)

This grant supported the “Information and Security Media Center” (ISMC), which publishes the Uzbek-language “Digest” newspaper and “Uzpress.kg” website, and the PAJ, which published the multi-language “Danek” youth newspaper. Both organizations were provided with training and consulting to help improve professional journalistic standards, develop editorial policies, and develop initial sales and marketing plans.

Media consultant William Cleary spent ten days assisting the two organizations. This time was also used to help assess the potential futures of the two organizations – including the potential for future grant assistance and the likelihood of commercial success for the associated outlets. The organizations and their current outlets were assessed for commercial viability through an examination of work practices, political support and market dynamics. Both outlets have received financing from other international donors.

Shakhroukh Saipov, the director of the ISMC, stated unequivocally that Mr. Cleary’s help was invaluable and would play a part in his media organization for years to come. Since KRTI’s grant concluded, Mr. Cleary and Mr. Saipov have continued to communicate with each other about the potential for Mr. Saipov’s outlets. An Uzbek journalist at the Azattyk outlet in Bishkek said in an interview, “If anyone is capable of bringing Uzbek-language media back to Kyrgyzstan, it is Shakhrukh.” And in his final report for the project, Mr. Cleary described Mr. Saipov as a “once in a generation” caliber of journalist, committed to his profession, receptive to counsel, and based on observation, skilled in the day-to-day management of his organization...” Such descriptions from entirely independent sources demonstrate that support for ISMC is indeed worthwhile.

“I learned a huge amount from William [Cleary]’s visit.”
Shakhroukh Saipov, Director of ISMC

“If anyone is capable of bringing Uzbek-language media back to Kyrgyzstan, it is Shakhrukh.”
Tolkun Umarliev, Uzbek-language editor for Azattyk [RFE/RL]

The ISMC’s website, Uzpress.kg, is still functioning, though it is now available only in Russian. The PAJ is still publishing Danek, and they are continuing to train aspiring journalists in Kyrgyzstan. The project now receives support from the Soros Foundation and the National Endowment for Democracy. The website is one of the only resources for Uzbek youth in Kyrgyzstan available in their native language.

Both organizations now have a cohesive editorial policy – something that neither possessed before KRTI’s assistance. Adherence to the editorial policy is difficult to assess, but the mere existence of the policy provides outlets with a reference when editorial questions arise.

Supporting Balanced Multi-Lingual News (OSH168)

In November 2011 the Kyrgyz government issued a decree creating Yntymak Radio in Osh. In August of 2012 it began broadcasting in both Kyrgyz and Uzbek. It is a government station established with the help of Internews, and with funding from U.S. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor. Yntymak is among the only radio stations broadcasting in the Uzbek-language in Kyrgyzstan. It is part of the public broadcasting company OTRK and provides a mix of news and entertainment in the Uzbek language. Consistent electricity blackouts in Osh caused the station to go off the air regularly. In 2012 KRTI provided and installed an electric generator for Yntymak.

“The disappearance of Uzbek-language media was seen by some as a ‘success.’ We had a lot to work against to make the station happen.”
Kaarmambek Kuluev, Director of Yntymak

A public tender was held and a contract awarded for provision of equipment and installation. The equipment was installed in March of 2013, and upgrades were done through July 2013.

The former station director said KRTI's project was "crucial" for the station. The electrical supply was so unreliable in the winters that the station was unable to consider itself fully operational. The potential for growth was hampered by such a basic issue and would have been severely limited.

Because this grant was limited to an equipment installation, there are limited means for measuring the impact. Poor electrical supply in Osh is usually a problem only in the winter. Until the station experiences a full winter, and the associated electrical outages, it will not be possible to measure how the new generator improves broadcast services. However, assuming the generator works properly (the equipment was tested to ensure it was), KRTI can look at the successes of the station as a whole, as a secondary means of establishing the impact of grant support.

As has been discussed elsewhere in this report, media consumption data indicates that broadcast media is more popular than print across all audiences in Kyrgyzstan. While television is the most frequently consumed format, radio is second – ahead of print and electronic media. This places Yntymak in a strong position to increase the amount of reliable information available to Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan.

"After the 2010 events I started to listen to Yntymak radio station. We need to have radio stations in the Uzbek language in Kyrgyzstan... it will be useful to know about all the happenings in our native language – it will be comprehensible."

Anonymous member of the Uzbek community in Osh

That the station is still operating at all, much less improving its availability with the installation of the generator, is a testament of success. As the director explained, "when we started, we just hoped we wouldn't be burned down." Among some groups, the disappearance of Uzbek-language media, following 2010's violence, was one of the most salient "successes." The challenges of operating a multi-language outlet in such an environment are immense.

In interviews with members of the Uzbek community in Osh, all of them mentioned Yntymak as one of their only sources of local news in the Uzbek language. Many of them also mentioned Yntymak's recent, though limited, expansion into TV. The outlet has received support from the local and national government – a unique achievement among multi-language media endeavors. While KRTI's grant is only a small portion of the full project, grant support has only enhanced these achievements.

Launching Uzbek-Language Television Programming in Jalalabad (OSH176)

This grant supported the creation of weekly Uzbek-language programming on Channel 7, a private TV station based in Jalalabad, Kyrgyzstan. Apart from Yntymak's recent foray into TV, this was the only Uzbek-language programming on TV in Kyrgyzstan identified by research participants.

The grant was used specifically to buy technical equipment for the new show, cover operating expenses for four months and training from an international consultant. As part of the project, Uzbek staff were hired and trained.

Consultant training included preparing new journalists for broadcast, organizing field and studio reporting, training technical staff on the use of new equipment, developing an editorial policy and generally ensuring best practices in reporting and production.

This was, by almost any measure, the most ambitious multi-language media project KRTI supported. TV is the most popular format in Kyrgyzstan by a large margin. Channel 7 has the fastest audience growth in the country, and is among the most popular outlets in the south. This puts it in a very strong position to attract a large Uzbek audience in Kyrgyzstan.

In interviews with Channel 7 staff and meetings between the outlet and KRTI, it was clear that Channel 7 views the introduction of Uzbek-language programming as a strategic business decision, not just a public good. While outlet managers spoke eloquently about the social need for Uzbek-language media; when questioned more closely, it was clear they also saw it as a solid business decision.

“Eventually the Uzbek community will need media in their native language, and we want to be the leader in this.”

*Zalkar Anarbaev,
Associate Director of
Channel 7*

Channel 7 sees a large population of Uzbeks in southern Kyrgyzstan currently being served only by Uzbekistan-based outlets, as an immense, untapped market. Furthermore, they claimed to have information indicating that the Uzbek audience is especially lucrative for some advertisers. For example, they said one bank claimed in a meeting with the outlet that 75% of their loan recipients are Uzbek. This was an audience they wanted to specifically target with their advertising.

The business aspect of the project indicates a strong likelihood that KRTI’s support will have a lasting impact, acting as a seed for multi-language programming far beyond the direct grant activity.

The associate director of the outlet stated that despite the opposition they had faced, they are still planning a prime-time Uzbek-language news block. He explained that it is difficult to say yet how successful they will be in overcoming the current political opposition but they will continue to push.

Expanding on the business angle of this project, Channel 7 managers explained that while they felt it would eventually prove to be a profitable decision, it would never have been possible without international assistance. Both the director and associate director of the outlet pointed out that they were unable to convince a single politician, much less a party, to publicly support the reintroduction of Uzbek-language media. International organizations such as KRTI were the only ones to offer support. Additionally, as a small outlet in an underdeveloped market, resources are tight and without external financial backing. Undertaking any type of expansion – much less one that involved considerable political risk – was essentially impossible.

As the magazine episodes aired, the outlet reported several calls and SMS messages from Uzbek viewers suggesting topics for future shows and clarifying issues from shows that aired. While not yet quantifiable, this type of feedback is an indication of awareness and engagement in the Uzbek community.

V. Challenges Observed during the Implementation of Activities

Increasing Access to Information on Reconstruction Services (OSH020 / OSH058)

The project was likely most useful for the Uzbek community, which had few other sources of information. However, equal numbers of Kyrgyz and Uzbek language materials were printed. This may have been the only politically feasible method, but the clearest need was for Uzbeks, and resources may have been better used by focusing on that audience.

Print media has been shown to be among the least popular formats in Kyrgyzstan (M-Vector, 2011). While less expensive and less technical than broadcast media, print media suffers from a smaller audience, a lack of timeliness and weak distribution. This was evident in this project, where a distribution of 14,000 - certainly a substantial number - is still a fraction of the audience TV stations in the same markets receive. Furthermore, complaints of slow and poorly-planned distribution in some areas were reported.

As a free newsletter fully financed by donor organizations, there was no realistic expectation for this project to continue after the conclusion of KRTI and OSCE's funding. There was some discussion of partnering with private outlets to include a portion of the newsletter as a block in the paper, but this never happened. As an initial foray into multi-language media, the project demonstrated viable means for future projects but was not sustainable beyond the timeframe of the grant.

Strengthening Independent Uzbek-Language Media (OSH149)

Despite the director's reputation as one of the most capable Uzbek journalists in Kyrgyzstan, the ISMC and the associated for-profit "Valley Media Group" have almost entirely ceased publishing in Uzbek. When queried about KRTI's support - part of which included a sales and marketing plan for commercial viability in the future - the director stated that while it was helpful, he was not in a position to implement any of the advice yet. He explained that operating with essentially no capital in an underdeveloped media market, sustainable sales and marketing were unrealistic.

Both organizations have faced political resistance because of their use of the Uzbek language. Though it was not entirely clear if it was related to his work, Mr. Saipov was physically attacked for speaking Uzbek in Bishkek shortly after the KRTI grant was approved. The PUJ was also informed by an outlet director that their plans for a televised youth journalist roundtable could only be done in Russian and Kyrgyz, but not Uzbek.

He claimed that in the future, the plans that KRTI's consultant helped them develop would no doubt be useful, but that currently it was only an aspiration. He said that the newspaper had ceased printing and Uzbek translations for the website had stopped because of lack of financing. Despite these setbacks, he felt there was still a strong future for the outlets.

The PAJ appears not to have implemented much of the advice offered by Mr. Cleary. His suggestion to limit downtime during the summer and increase the perceived need for the outlet by creating an investigative team to work during the summer months is not being done.

Supporting Balanced Multi-Lingual News

There were several challenges with the installation of the new generator. Some of the equipment did not meet standards in the tender. Some equipment appeared to be broken upon installation and issues such as oil leaks and burning smells began shortly after installation. Equipment labeling and warranty cards were also incorrect.

While these issues may appear on the surface to be significant setbacks, other engineering firms in the country confirmed that the spectrum of complaints and issues faced on this project are normal for such an undertaking in Kyrgyzstan.⁶⁵

The greater limitations faced with this grant are those associated with the station as a whole. In several waves of KRTI's media consumption research, Yntymak was not ranked at all by radio listeners in southern Kyrgyzstan.⁶⁶ As a format, radio may generally have a larger audience than print media, but it is least popular in Osh as compared to the rest of the country. Such numbers do not indicate that Yntymak will ever reach a critical mass in southern Kyrgyzstan.

Other shortcomings with programming and operations were also noted by interviewees. Programming does not appear to follow standard structures – with news airing late in the morning, long after the “drive time” news that attracts the largest audiences at other stations. Though it could not be fully confirmed, some people felt this was more a function of poorly planned staff schedules than a programming decision.

While the decision to expand to TV may make sense from the perspective of audience reach, it is unclear that Yntymak is well-enough organized for such a move.

Launching Uzbek-Language Television Programming in Jalalabad (OSH176)

Channel 7 aired a promotion of the Uzbek-language news block, supported by KRTI's grant. However, before the first show could air, the outlet faced popular and political resistance. A petition was distributed that supposedly collected 12,000 signatures opposing the creation of the show. A small protest was also held outside the outlet headquarters in Jalalabad. Politicians and local government members, including the provincial governor, made public statements opposing the program.

In response to this opposition, the outlet held a televised debate between the “Specialist of the State Language” for Jalalabad province – who opposed the creation of the program – and the general director of Channel 7, who supported the program.

Eventually, the scope of the project was changed to a weekly Uzbek-language “magazine” program focusing on cultural and social issues, rather than the news block that had been originally planned. Ten shows were aired.

While the programs were broadcast in Uzbek, the content was sometimes Kyrgyz-centric. In one episode, the program covered the aftermath of a landslide in Arslanbob. Arslanbob is an overwhelmingly Uzbek area, but the landslide was in one of the few

⁶⁵ Uytterhaegen, C. (2013, August 2). Director, Greenbridge Consulting. (F. Styers, Interviewer)

⁶⁶ M-Vector (2011); See also M-Vector (2012).

Kyrgyz communities there. In another episode, the journalists visited a Kyrgyz-language class for Uzbek children. The children were shown exclaiming their enthusiasm for learning the Kyrgyz language and begging for updated Kyrgyz textbooks.

VI. Lessons Learned and Recommendations for Future Programming

There were few Uzbek-language media initiatives in southern Kyrgyzstan, outside of those described in this document. Without the support from KRTI and the other aid programs cited earlier, access to local news and information in the Uzbek-language in Kyrgyzstan would have been non-existent. Future support can learn from the experience of KRTI's three years of programming efforts.

Print media is the least technically complex and least expensive to distribute of the major formats, making it an easy choice for quick and inexpensive projects. However, looking more strategically, the audience is smaller and it is less trusted. If Uzbek-language media is going to reach the mass of the Uzbek-speaking population in Kyrgyzstan, it will be through television and radio. This should inform future programming. If there is a need for inexpensive and fast media programming – as in the aftermath of the ethnic violence of 2010 – print may be the most viable option. But if long-term growth and audience penetration are sought, broadcast media, especially TV, should be the focus.

The arc of KRTI programming across three years demonstrates a model for this. Initially, a newsletter was distributed, with the intent of filling an urgent information need rather than a focus on long-term sustainability. Next, existing print and web outlets were given support that aimed at longer-term sustainability. Programming then expanded to minority-language radio and finally, private TV. This final project, while hampered by some political opposition, represented the most promising step to sustainable, long-term, positive impacts in minority language media.

The political opposition to nearly all Uzbek-language media was well demonstrated by the experience with Channel 7. It is likely that any other programming support for Uzbek-language media will continue to face such opposition for years to come. Project stakeholders should be prepared for this. Related to this, nearly all media outlets in Kyrgyzstan are in some way affected by political interference. Programming efforts will need to carefully consider how their projects are potentially impacting the political dynamics of a given outlet or outlets.

It is no secret that international aid organizations can create their own micro economies and risk creating organizations and systems reliant on their money. This was apparent in interviews with KRTI grantees, who claimed they needed further funding from international aid organizations for minority-language media. It is possible that they are correct and minority-language media is unlikely to progress without international aid, but it is also possible that the incentive to seek further funding is clouding their judgment of the potential for market-based growth of minority-language media.

There was a feeling among most interviewees that Uzbekistan-based media posed a strategic threat to the national security of Kyrgyzstan. They felt the high penetration of these media outlets in Uzbek communities in Kyrgyzstan was further dividing the Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities. As one Uzbek journalist explained, “there are parts of southern Kyrgyzstan that have practically become Uzbekistan” (because the community is so socially isolated). Several interviewees independently offered the same anecdote of

children in Uzbek communities in Kyrgyzstan believing their president to be Islam Karimov (the leader of Uzbekistan) because they only see Uzbekistan's state media. The Uzbek government keeps close control of the press and is one of the least free countries in the world by all measures, including media freedom.⁶⁷

"There are parts of southern Kyrgyzstan that have practically become Uzbekistan."

Tolkun Umarliev, Uzbek-language editor for Azattyk [RFE/RL]

Supporting Kyrgyzstan-based, Uzbek-language media would help create a viable alternative to Uzbekistan-based media. While it is generally not the aim of donor organizations to counter the influence of other countries, and this is not likely to be the objective of any programming efforts, this line of reasoning may prove effective in garnering political support for programming efforts in Kyrgyzstan.

Among specific recommendations offered by interviewees were:

- Decreasing the mandate for social unity or "positivity" in media programming, which limits popular potential
- Examining the potential for supporting minority-language web-based media which, while currently small, is growing far faster than other formats and may have potential for minority-language audience penetration
- Helping shift ISMC / Valley Media to becoming market-driven organizations, allowing Mr. Saipov to exhibit his exceptional talents and expand to something more than a "one man" operation
- Supporting the nationwide digital media conversion⁶⁸
- Shifting the focus of seminars and training to young journalists, as the current ones are highly cynical and unlikely to make substantial changes in their work

⁶⁷ Freedom House. (2013). *Freedom House*. Retrieved from Nations in Transit 2013 - Ratings Table: http://www.freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/NIT2013_Tables_FINAL.pdf

⁶⁸ Channel 7 claimed most outlets are not prepared for the 2015 conversion and risk collapse, which would allow international outlets to fill the void – something that risks national security

Support & Tools for Inclusive and Transparent Local Governance

By Kimairis Toogood

I. Executive Summary

The case study on local governance confirmed KRTI's assumptions regarding the current situation with decentralization and necessary programming to address this issue. Strategic change agents' at all levels of government as well as highly motivated and innovative partners have enabled this work to produce significant attitudinal and behavioral change in piloted areas. Sadly, the lack of political will and financial backing for decentralization from the national government (mostly due to inconsistent policies), as well as lack of capacity among several key actors, pose a threat to the long-term impact potential to the tools and processes enacted under these and follow on activities.

Several activities were considered illustrative of the support KRTI was providing to the issue of local governance reform. These activities were nation-wide. Therefore, several northern activities were observed, including BIS225: "Strengthening Local Government Service Delivery through Practical Guide"; BIS247: "Enhancing accountability and transparency in government spending"; BIS275/285: "Increasing Dialogue between Talas City Council and Citizens"; and BIS303: "Bolstering effectiveness of City Kenesh citizen engagement through trainings". Southern activities include OSH141: "Increasing Citizen Engagement in the Public Budgeting Process"; OSH206: "Building Responsive Local Councils in Southern Kyrgyzstan"; OSH074: "Increasing access to information about local government fiscal status"; and OSH120: "Increasing Access to Information about aiyl okmotus (AO) Services." Through these activities, a number of KRTI tools and processes were initiated and implemented; including a management guidebook as well as other management manuals for local councilmembers on a legal framework, a land code framework, and designing and reading local budgets (to improve the performance and basic capacity of local officials). They also included training on and support for okmot.kg (a government initiative for online budget oversight and procurement); open budget and equipment provision hearing training (to improve community oversight and feedback of the budget provision of local services), a community-based performance monitoring tool (a survey that allows citizens to evaluate the performance of their community services), as well as several media-based support tools such as newspaper and newsletter publications and informational brochures.

Overall, the outputs and outcomes were achieved, and several unintended consequences (i.e. broader depth and breadth of processes than intended) were noted in spite of those issues mentioned above. While the footprint of activity implementation was small relative to the identified need, the communities selected were actively engaged and the stakeholders were not only thankful for the assistance, but also ready to initiate future activities independently.

As the March 2013 USAID Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG) Assessment indicates, where there is potentially high impact in the local governance sector, but marginal political will, there is a need to combine diplomatic engagement with community-based approaches that are flexible. Recommendations to continue the success of processes initiated under KRTI's local governance program component include coordinated and increased pressure on national government actors by international partners and donors to encourage decisive and consistent decision-making on issues related to decentralization, as well as support to the highly-capable civil society actors which have been delivering a number of public services in the absence of delivery by state actors such as the State Agency for Local Self-Government and Inter-Ethnic Affairs.

Highlighted Key Findings for this study include:

- *The appropriate identification of project needs:* The focus on building the capacity of new AO Kenesh members who were elected to their new positions in 2012 was strategic and important to the broader political transition, considering their awareness that over 80% of the Kenesh members were new to their job and that they would be in their newly elected positions for a full four year term (through 2016).
- *Lack of Vision and Consistency for the Process of Government Decentralization by the National Kyrgyz Government Inhibits Long-term Impact Potential of KRTI Processes:* KRTI tools met the needs of civil servants, but tend to be a stopgap measure in the absence of the state having a coherent and consistent strategy to implement decentralization. However, the project was able to facilitate significant *buy-in* for concepts of good and effective governance among the Ministerial/National and Local Level Representatives as well as Direct and Indirect Project Partners through KRTI tools.
- *Strategy of Working with Knowledgeable and Well-Respected Project Partners as well as Strategic “Change Agents” was Beneficial:* The KRTI strategy of selecting partners based on interest and ability to deliver activities was very sound and logical. Their performance throughout these projects is commendable and even though the project period has ended, almost all respondents discussed possibilities for future projects.
- *Unexpected Trickle Down Effect of KRTI Programming at the Community Level:* KRTI tools were noted as having a wider reach than just directly targeted project communities. Also, processes such as open budget hearings that include democratic decision-making on budget, priority-setting, and citizen-state engagement around public hearings have changed not just the attitudes of participating community members, but also the behavior of both citizens and local authorities responsible to their communities. This unintended scope and reach of the project indicates it's highly effective.

II. Background

Local Government reform in Kyrgyzstan was initiated almost immediately after independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The reform created and designated certain responsibilities to local government entities, particularly the local administration or *aiyl okmotu* (AO) and attempted to equitably allocate financial resources among members of the AO, nationwide. In 2007, the government launched decentralization reforms that increased the administrative, political, and financial authorities of local government AO district offices that were then reformed in 2011. Unfortunately, at the AO level, officials and their constituents continue to lack sufficient information about local government legal frameworks, processes, and systems to effectively manage affairs within their districts.

A 2009 EFCA baseline survey revealed that more than 90% of citizens know little or nothing about local government budgeting processes and how they can be involved and 44% of citizens know nothing about the role and responsibilities of the aiyl okrug (the village cluster administration).

When considering local government effectiveness, one of the major issues is inadequate knowledge and ineffective implementation of the 2006 law titled –Law on Access to Information obtained by State

Organs and Local Self-government Bodies in the Kyrgyz Republic.” The purpose of the law is to increase national and local governmental transparency, by ensuring the right of citizens open access to information about state organs and local self-government bodies. Sadly, citizens and even some representatives of local government officials do not fully understand one another’s rights and responsibilities under this law.

According to the USAID DRG Assessment There have been various attempts at government restructuring over the years that have largely stalled or have been reversed when regimes collapse or governments fall. President Bakiyev had initiated a decentralization strategy and a consolidation of ministries and functions in late 2009 that were reversed after the Revolution in April 2010. Prime Minister Jantoro Satybaldiev has initiated yet another set of revisions, which would reorganize the civil service system, to bring back in the Rayon level of administration that had only recently been decentralized.⁶⁹ According to the USAID DRG Assessment, “the rationalization of the relationship between the central Government and sub-national government is also critical in “delivering the goods” in an accountable way.” Since independence, the Republic has delineated various functions and responsibilities to all three levels of government. While they attempted decentralization for years, the functions and responsibilities of government structures has not been updated at the same frequency, leading to a number of confused civil servants about some issues as simple as “what is a public service?” According to the USAID DRG Assessment, “many services of critical importance to the population (police, schools, health care, documents) are technically beyond the jurisdiction of now democratically-elected local officials and are managed by appointed (and largely unaccountable) representatives of central ministries and agencies. There is a potential collision now between the accountability of elected local leaders and the unaccountability of the representatives of central ministries who are technically responsible for service delivery.”

III. Activities Implemented by KRTI

Several KRTI initiatives were reviewed for this case study and can be grouped into three main subheadings based on outputs: *the production and distribution of management books and guidebooks; training to public servants on okmot.kg as well as training on conducting open budget hearings as well as equipment provision; and support to the design and implementation of performance-monitoring tools to local communities.*

Production and Distribution of Management Guidebooks

Under several KRTI projects (BIS225, BIS247), management guidebooks were produced and distributed to local community leaders. The objective of these projects was to develop and distribute copies of a Practical Management Guide, in Kyrgyz and Russian, for the heads of local government and deputies of local Kenesh throughout Kyrgyzstan, as well as training on the interpretation of the materials in the manuals. This was intended to improve and expand delivery of key government services among local government offices. By providing the Practical Management Guides, the knowledge would strengthen their effective management skills in the delivery of public services. The

⁶⁹ According to the USAID DRG Assessment in March 2013 “This assessment concludes that the primary problem of democracy, human rights and governance in Kyrgyzstan today is that the impressive democratic breakthroughs of the last three years are threatened by ineffective, unaccountable and often predatory government.”

guidebooks were divided into three “most-important” topics: legal code, land code, and budget design and oversight. KRTI launched these initiatives with two local partners, The Public Foundation (PF) 'Center for Public Policy,' and Union of Local Self-Governments of the Kyrgyz Republic.

This project was identified as essential for two main issues identified during a needs assessment among local officials. As aforementioned, there has been significant turnover at the local government level, and many of the new officials at the local administration level lack the management and legislative expertise as well as the knowledge, and skills, necessary for working for and with different groups of citizens of their territory, especially those representing multi-ethnic, multicultural communities with high potential for conflict. Also, while the national government had provided similar manuals in the past, they were outdated. It was noted that the absence of an updated manual for heads of village districts would be a hindrance to their ability to perform their job duties.

Training Provision

Intended to encourage the advancement of public awareness and local officials' capacity, training was provided on both okmot.kg and on conducting open budget hearings (for example, BIS141, BIS247, BIS275, BIS285, BIS303, OSH141, OSH206, and OSH 074). In an effort to increase the use of the Kyrgyz national government web portal (www.okmot.kg) that was designed to increase accountability and transparency around budget preparation, budget implementation and monitoring and e-procurement. Since, local government, civil society, businesses and the general public's unfamiliarity with the budget portal, KRTI supported a local organization, Infosystema, to conduct training for key beneficiaries, mentoring in selected AOs, and distribute brochures and video manuals on DVD to promote the use of okmot.kg.

The purpose of these activities is to provide tools and processes to bolster the effectiveness of local officials and local councils. In addition to training on the online budgeting system, KRTI supported training in holding open sessions with wider citizen engagement and information dissemination. Most of the projects supported the hiring of local professionals to assist in the project roll-out and assure that it was launched in a professional



Budget Training Participants

manner, while building the capacity for implementation among local officials and local organizations supporting these efforts. Regarding open budget sessions, in addition to often providing equipment to restore buildings in order to hold the actual sessions, KRTI projects also attempted to establish a standard practice of publicizing session resolutions and agendas for the local community. This was to encourage continued citizen engagement and transparency in the process of local budget review, implementation and evaluation. In one case, a working group consisting of local organizations was composed to support the monitoring of the training and implementation of open budget hearings as well.

Design and Support to Implementation of Performance Management Tools

In an effort to encourage community leaders to work closely with community members on addressing public service delivery, community-based performance-monitoring tools were designed and implemented in pilot communities (OSH120). Using a methodology developed by the NGO Abad, a member of the Coalition for Civil Society and Democracy, a survey was designed to understand citizen satisfaction with the delivery of public services, particularly those that are paid services through local budgets. Implemented in several pilot communities, the community-based performance monitoring tool was able to identify community needs and lead to NGO partners organizing meetings to help address discrepancies at the community level between local leaders and citizens.

Also, KRTI printed and distributed phonebooks with important and up-to-date numbers of local officials designated to help citizens of Osh City more easily and directly contact key municipal services. Citizens noted that they did not have the appropriate contact information for the various agencies, government departments and their representatives, and other community support organizations in order to inquire about services and report outages or other problems and the phone book printing and distribution directly addressed this gap.

IV. Observed Outcomes and Achievements

Project Need Appropriately Identified

“Project was vivid and needed” was the comment from representatives from the Center for Public Policy and Union of Local Self Government. The necessity for the projects supporting the improved functionality of local governance has been apparent for several years. Several reports have been written on the need to support the decentralization and establishment of local governance structures for years, and donors have been working on improved professionalism of the public administration sector for years. The USAID DRG Assessment illustrates the need for continued work to support these efforts.

As of 2011, the KRTI program launched several tools in order to encourage various processes and mechanisms that would build and strengthen work in support of local governance structures. Their programming to build the capacity of new AO Kenesh members who were elected to their new positions in 2012 was exceptionally strategic considering their awareness that over 80% of the Kenesh members were new to their job and that they would be in their newly elected positions for a full four year term (through 2016). This indicates that targeting said Kenesh members early in their term would produce significant dividends for long-term democratic processes in the piloted villages.

The KRTI programmatic initiatives took this reality into account and manifested tools such as the training manuals, training courses taught by NGO representatives, and a community service evaluation tool to encourage elected officials, their AO counterparts, budget officials, and citizens to take responsibility for working in accordance with legal frameworks in the country.

Also, illustrated in the USAID DG Assessment and understood by even the elected officials themselves, career civil servants in Kyrgyzstan lack basic knowledge about the laws they are responsible for enforcing, and know the lack of structure for

decentralization often does not provide for the appropriate training. For example, the State Agency for Local Self-Government and Inter-Ethnic Affairs, while new, has struggled since the Bakiyev era and as such, is not expected to even develop deliverables to support the functions at AO level of government. Due to the issues of inconsistent policies for decentralization, some of the policies regulating local governance actually contradict laws in the Constitution.

Instability and Capacity Remain a Challenge

Issues plaguing the national government around the issue of political instability were mentioned in the background section of this case study, but how the issues manifest and negatively affect local self-government, as illustrated through narratives of the partners and beneficiaries. For example, the World Bank has provided additional financing for an automation system for the last ten years, but due to the inability of the national government to consistently have deputies at the national level the system has struggled. This system directly compliments the efforts of KRTI, such as the training on open budget hearings and okmot.kg, in that it provides transparency and accountability for local, Rayon and national-level officials responsible for overseeing and implementing budget documents. For example, in an interview with a World Bank representative, it was cited that there have been three government liaisons and two Ministers of Finance in the time that he has been managing the project. There is rarely, if ever, hand over between the out-going and in-coming representative; and therefore, with every new representative, the World Bank initiative starts over again. It is currently on its last additional financing, and if it is not successfully implemented before the end of 2013, the process of automating financing from the AO level to the national level will cease. It is understood that this is a systemic issue and there is a likelihood that this dynamic could occur with any and all processes implemented through KRTI programming as well.

Like the issue of national level political representative turnover, the inconsistent support for the State Agency on Local Self-Government and Inter-ethnic Affairs has left the Agency under-funded and incapable of supporting local officials in a sustainable manner. This is a notable finding, as this State Agency, recently stood up as a national agency in Kyrgyzstan through the National Strategy on Development 2013-2017. It had already existed under its predecessor, the National Agency on Local Self-Government, yet was previously considered highly ineffective in its operations. Beneficiaries highlighted that this Agency does not have a mandate nor clear objectives about benchmarks and deliverables. When asked for concrete examples of the performance of the predecessor organization, the State Agency representative was unable to give evidence outside of the following statement: “Coordinate local self-governments, certify local self-governments and approve appointments to local self-governments.” The representative indicated that they are aware they get no budget allocated from the Ministry of Finance without a work plan; therefore, they propose the following work plan: The State Agency will spend 2014-2015 working on the following three deliverables: 1. Training staff members of local administration and local Keneshes; 2. Monitoring and research how local Keneshes resolve conflicts at the AO level; and 3. Reviewing amendments to the law on local self-government in accordance with the new Constitution. Almost every interviewee noted that the State Agency, like its predecessor, continues to face challenges. They have limited capacity in-house to conduct training, presence geographically and qualified staff.

It also has too small of a professional staff and generally small workload compared to the need that is pressing at the local level. This is as an example of the lack of full national level support for sustainable change in the way governance structures operate in the country. For example, its staff of 43 people (6 of which are in the south) are required to oversee services delivered to and from local self-government in 457 AO's in the country. KRTI project partners noted that the State Agency was invited to activities such as open budget hearing training and events at the local level, such as the roll-out of the management guidebooks, but rarely attended. When events were held in Bishkek, such as a training organized by the NGO ABAD, the representatives were asked to attend but were seen to provide limited guidance and support.

According to the USAID DRG Assessment, “periodic attempts to right-size the scale and functions of the executive branch over the years have been largely episodic, rather than systematic, and have failed to address key structural obstacles to a more efficient state bureaucracy.” The Ministry of Finance does not provide funding for institutions which under-perform or lack performance markers—one explanation for why they never allocated funding for the State Agency for Local Self-Government and Inter-Ethnic Affairs in the 2013 budget. The representative cited their lack of “vision and strategic direction” as the reason for not budgeting their agency. This lack of capacity indicates that regardless of the programming implemented at the community level to strengthen local self-governance (LSG), it will have a limited effect, given the lack of national level commitment to support such efforts.

Knowledgeable, Well-Respected Project Partners and Strategic “Change Agents” Vital to Success

The KRTI program supporting local governance produced a number of significant project partners and “change agents” which should be commended. Granted, the KRTI model was to focus their efforts on engaged and active AO's, indicating that an evaluation would also find engaged and active participants; however, while this may be true of the direct beneficiaries in piloted AO's and project partners, it was unexpected to find “change agents” within government institutions such as the Ministry of Finance.

Project partners such as Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society, an alliance that includes NGOs such as NGO ABAD (who have worked on issues of governance since 2002), the Union of Local Self Government, and the Center for Public Policy were very active and knowledgeable project partners.

The KRTI model of using knowledgeable NGO partners to design and implement the projects is very sound and logical. Their performance throughout these projects is commendable and even though the project period has ended, during the interviews and focus groups, almost all of them were discussing ideas for future projects (with or without funding from OTI).

It was significant that one of the largest proponents of the KRTI tools and processes was one of the representatives at the Ministry of Finance, Zootbek Kadyralievich. “In 2008 Ministry of Finance Representatives visited eight US states on an exchange visit funded by USAID. This helped the members tremendously to see how local budgets are formed.” This experiential learning trip in 2008 enabled this particular (as well as others) representative to see the value of integrating civil society into local governance structures as well as the benefit to having greater citizen-state engagement. Therefore, this particular representative (who bashfully said he is “just a normal guy doing his job”)

has personally engaged with NGO ABAD trainings nation-wide, traveling to participate in the open budget hearings and giving tutorials on budget expenditures and income data sheets, using okmot.kg. He challenged an angry AO head that objected to the review of the budget during an open budget session by asking him where he was from, then selecting that AO's budget to project on the screen using okmot.kg. He then dissected that particular AO budget in front of the entire training group to show the AO and its citizens what services were being budgeted, for how much, and where there were budget items listed as "other," highlighted the illegality of this action, encouraging the AO head to review the budget immediately or be under threat of review by the prosecutor's office. This example highlights the ways in which projects and tools can provide windows of opportunity for supports of reform to be cultivated at any and all levels of government. It is likely that the continuation of such programs would duplicate the level of support at the national government level.

The representative also knows the capacity of local officials throughout the country remains very low and therefore, is adamant about supporting a training center that services civil servants nation-wide. He has spearheaded the review of the current training center's entire curriculum, is leading an internal reorganization, and he is even soliciting assistance from the Academy of Management.

In Talas, a member of the Talas City Council very actively engaged with the Talas Working Group on outreach for the budget hearings. Thanks to his support, the open budget hearings actually had not just participants from Talas city, but also several heads of AOs in the Talas area who participated.

Also, like that of the Ministry of Finance Representative, representatives from the Talas Working Group mentioned what a great advocate that the Talas City Council speaker has been for the entire process of open budgeting. The speaker set the tone for the entire process and, although the Working Group only has three people, he encouraged their outreach to go beyond the city limits. Therefore, thanks to his support, the open budget hearings actually had not just participants from Talas city, but also several heads of aiyl okmotus (AOs) in the Talas area that came to participate.

Piloted AOs Shared Gained Knowledge to Neighboring AOs

It was an unintended consequence of KRTI activities, but respondents mentioned the trickle-down effect of several of the tools and processes to communities that were not directly targeted for participation. This indicates that the activities were deemed interesting, timely and useful by not just those communities that piloted the tools, but those that heard positive statements about the tools and sought opportunities to learn more about them.

Respondents from the Uzgen focus group said "it is better to see it once than to hear it 100 times." The Miurkaze AO in Uzgen Rayon managed to elect young new deputies that had great experience in financial planning and budget preparation. As a result of their hard work in budget review after the training, they managed to double the budget of their AO in one year –completed after a review of the tax regime in their AO. This experience was celebrated by the Chair of the AO heads at the Rayon level in Uzgen and other AO's who had not participated in the training or the KRTI program but were able to participate and learn about managing and shaping local budgets.

Another example was in Talas where activities were implemented to support the city council development of open budget hearings. While the Talas project was focused on city council, the proactive position of Talas city administration, several AO heads and Kenesh members participated in both open sessions. This was not a KRTI initiative but was promoted from the project participants. Currently, Talas City Council and the BIS285 participating working group members are strategizing their support for open budget processes in the AO's in Talas.

Lastly, during interviews with staff of *Infosystema*, the respondents mentioned that the production of DVD's promoting okmot.kg was targeted for only 15 AOs, but managed to migrate to AO's that did not participate in the original project. This encouraged attention to the okmot.kg system in more AO's than those included in the KRTI pilot areas.

Tools Built Capacity and Trust and Encouraged Stronger Citizen-State Engagement

There is significant evidence that the new KRTI tools and process contributed to building both trust and capacity among local government officials, civil society, businesses and community members. Specific examples from respondents are included below:

Online Budget and Procurement Portal

The Okmot.kg Portal Training by Infosystema was considered a highly effective activity by participants, and was viewed by government officials, such as the representative from the Ministry of Finance, as a positive contribution to increasing the popular usage of the online budget and e-procurement portal. In the 15 piloted AO's, it is clear that local Kenesh representatives who approved the budget monitored the implementation of the budget in an open and transparent fashion," according to an Infosystema staff member. The training came at an important time as ~~by~~ law, all must use e-procurement by Fall 2013. If they don't they will just quit working. Training was needed to state procurement offices to assure that e-procurement was completely understood."⁷⁰

Several examples of the successful processes that came from KRTI support:

- In Issyk-Kul, teachers had asked the AO head about their payments that had been delayed. They were told about okmot.kg and trained on how to use it. The teachers went to their Rayon Treasurer who told them the money had already been released to their AO head. They went back to the AO treasurer and discovered the AO treasurer had taken the money for himself instead of issuing teacher salaries. This caused great commotion in the community, but the Rayon and AO heads addressed the issue and the process of okmot.kg proved to be invaluable.
- Individual entrepreneurs and business owners are using the tax data collected on okmot.kg under the TIN, or Tax Identification Numbers, to prove to the

The beneficiaries also cited that the provision of manuals on legal code and land code also mitigated community conflict due to the excellent timing of the KRTI activity. "The manual was very timely and useful and it came in time to mitigate conflict. Why? Because the chairman and the chairpeople were new to the job and the job is very hard so the population might have gotten frustrated with them very quickly."

⁷⁰ Interview with Infosystema staff

prosecutor's office that they have paid their taxes in accordance with the law. This has prevented unlawful audit and extortion.

Sadly, there are still individuals not using the online system, and respondents mentioned the negative effect of local officials not being trained on the okmot.kg system:

- In Talas, an AO head wanted to buy a combine for the AO, but he didn't know procurement procedures. Instead of learning the e-procurement system, he went to the Rayon official who also didn't know how to use the e-procurement system. The AO head had to go to the Ministry of Finance representative to conduct the e-procurement for him. This illustrates the continued need for training on e-procurement processes that are required by law as of Fall 2013. All state procurement offices need training in the e-procurement portal.

Trainings on Open Budget Hearings

As mentioned in the project background section, trainings on open budget hearings were provided to address issues regarding the low capacity of local officials, and increase their knowledge, skills and abilities to perform their job duties. As a result of this KRTI process, there are several examples of beneficiaries using the knowledge gained in training to implement budget hearings during and after the duration of the project. Also, respondents noted notable changes in the mindset of government officials.

- Public Advisory Boards (PABs), composed of local authorities, NGOs and citizens, formalized the interaction between citizens and local authorities including Kenesh members. They were instrumental in pilot AO's to assure that both citizens and local officials understood the procedures, process of open budget hearings, and were supported under KRTI programming. The PABs supported the work of NGO ABAD on the community performance evaluation tool training and implementation, as well as the processes of open budget hearings. There was not only an increase in the direct engagement between citizens and decision makers, but also the increased transparency on public services increased trust among citizens in their local governance structure.
- One AO head in Aravan and Uzgen said that previously the budget planning process was very "primitive," but now a budget commission discusses the budget for three days, then public hearings are held to tell people and the new budget is set."
- The PAB chair from Masy AO in Jalal-Abad Oblast said: "After training, citizens are more active, paying attention, knowing how to make requests, and knowing that the AO is willing and able to be a transparent form of governance. Before, they used to just write a bunch of random requests and send it to a bunch of random people and get frustrated when nothing was addressed and nothing changed." As a result of the tool, a process has now been established to produce a list of people to address complaints to and post this information on the bulletin board in each AO, and a meeting held every Tuesday for any active citizen to discuss the requests. The focus group respondents claim that citizens use the information bulletin board regularly and find it a valuable addition to their AO.

"Some government officials wouldn't let people participate in budget sessions, but now, they know the law allows them to attend and to be heard"

Representatives from the Center for Public Policy and Union of Local Self-Government

- Lastly, in Uzgen, as a result of the open budget hearing training and the support from KRTI, the AO's decided to adopt their own procedures for how budget hearings should be conducted using their own funding.

Printed and Distributed Manuals

"Most of the focus group participants and interviewees that had received the manuals and training were exceptionally proud of their usage of the manuals—they wanted to discuss it, show the notes they had taken in the margins, illustrate the additional "homework" they had done online looking for additional information to supplement their knowledge, etc. And this did not only apply to the manual on legal codes, but also to the manual on land code and the one on budget processes.

The printed and distributed manuals on legal and land code as well as budget design and monitoring were mentioned by respondents as an excellent way to assist capacity development for LSG. As aforementioned, there were books on local governance previously printed, then reprinted in 2010; however, they were out of date and with incorrect information for the job that was required of current local officials, such as the numerous amendments to the laws that now contradict the Constitution. Under the KRTI activities, the manuals and accompanied

training on the manuals and laws were considered a highly effective way to increase the capacity of local officials. *Project partners mentioned that "it would be good to have the book every year (because it needs to be updated every year)" and that the CPP would like to also deliver it to very remote AO's throughout the country" but need more copies in order to make this a reality.*⁷¹

- The manual printing and distribution (at least 5 copies to 75% of the AO's in the country) was necessary and highly appreciated at all levels of government. The manuals were interactive, excellently laid out, available in two languages, printed with a high quality that speaks to their durability over time, etc.

Community-Based Performance Monitoring (CBPM) Tool

As mentioned in the project background section, the performance evaluation tool was designed by NGO ABAD and implemented in piloted communities in order to measure citizen satisfaction with public service provision. Overall, the evaluation survey tool was highly valued by the beneficiaries.

- Respondents mentioned that there was an obvious linkage between the organizing of open budget hearings and the community performance tool, which tracks citizen satisfaction with how public services are being provided. For example, through open budget hearings they know how the money is allocated and that they have the ability to vote on what should be prioritized, but only after a systematic collection of data on what the entire community views are the most pressing needs at the time. *"The tool helped us know what problem people wanted to address"* was the comment from a local official in Uzgen.
- Citizens claim they understand where their money goes, in regards to public services. Specific examples include:

⁷¹ Interview with CPP and Union of Local Self-Government

- Beneficiaries in Aravan thought the social issues in their community were the most important (i.e. support to low income families), but after the implementation of the tool they learned that they had fewer low income families than they originally thought and that the services provided were sufficient. Therefore it did not need to be prioritized in the budget any longer.
- Local authorities in Aravan would like to use the tool to help them write the AO strategy every three years after the successful implementation of the evaluation tool.
- In Jalal-Abad, the village members knew the fountain was financed from the local budget but it was not working. They also wanted trash collection boxes. They managed to rearrange the budget lines to assure that the fountain was repaired and trash collection boxes were purchased and distributed. In AOs in Jalalabad, they decided that the process was so helpful that they will use this evaluation tool once a year.

In Jalalabad, the tool revealed that three services were of interest to the public: veterinarian services, in-road repairs and cultural center operations. It was revealed that veterinarian services needed to be improved and in order to do so, the budget needs to be increased. The in-road repairs had been financed for years, but the roads themselves had never been repaired. The cultural center was also financed from the budget, but no one knew that the village had a cultural center. All of the issues were addressed, the results were published in the local newspaper, and the citizens were directly engaged in the process.

V. Challenges Observed & Lessons Learned

- *Leverage with national government is imperative to focus the decentralization process;* Given the negative effect the ineffective and inconsistent process of decentralization has on local self-government, it would be beneficial to leverage KRTI support to the national government to push for a more focused decentralization process.
- *Building new projects off current projects is a good model for KRTI;* Participants viewed the linkages between KRTI tools and processes (such as open budget hearings which led to greater appreciation for the community performance evaluation tool), as an exceptionally good model.
- *Selection of pilot communities is essential, but not predictive of the potential for wider success;* KRTI programs were implemented in active and interested AOs; therefore, it is still unknown is problematic AO's (i.e. those with corrupt leadership or a highly disinterested or untrusting citizenry) would have the same positive results.
- *Change Agents' should be Celebrated;* Highlighting best practices and positive work of Change Agents' is an incentive for continued success of processes. If KRTI showcased the collaboration between National authorities, local authorities, businesses, civil society representatives and active citizens, it would build support for on-going collaborative efforts in support of transparent and accountable governance.

VI. Recommendations for Future Programming

Several recommendations emerged from this case study and they have been grouped into three sections; those for US government partners, Representatives from the Government of Kyrgyzstan, and civil society leaders—all of which are working on the issue of local governance.

Recommendations for the Donor Community

- Increased support for consistent LSG policies, including a decision on a two-tiered or three-tiered governance system. It was clear that respondents working at the level of local self-government do not want the return of the rayon level. This was not for the same reason it was abolished (i.e. to improve oversight and avoid corruption), but simply because they acknowledge that they just switched to this system and just need a bit of stability. However, they also acknowledge that the rayon level still has legal obligations and without its existence, and no revisions of the law to get rid of what they are obligated to do, it will be very difficult for LSG to function properly. It would be in the interest of the international community generally and KRTI specifically, to advocate for revising the laws of responsibilities to assure that the rayon level responsibilities don't remain inscribed in law while it does not function in reality.
- The printing of manuals should be conducted annually, as amendments and constitutional changes also occur annually. Until the national government budgets money for the State Agency through the Ministry of Finance to oversee this sort of deliverable, it will remain the responsibility of the international community to fill the gap.
- Using the excellent project partners from KRTI programming, the Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society, Union of LSG, CPP, or even the Academy of Management could be contracted to do annual curriculum development and best practices reviews for the process of local self-government. They could also support and link these KRTI initiatives to the manual development that the Ministry of Finance Training Center in Bishkek, and the upcoming Ministry of Finance Training Centers around the country.
- The continuation of support to the national government's okmot.kg initiatives should be coordinated with the World Bank automated budgeting project, as they are both mechanisms to improve the transparency and accountability of budget processes. This could be done by promoting okmot.kg outreach through special free airings on local TV and radio stations as well as in newspapers. This becomes particularly pressing, as the legislation requires all local government officials to use e-procurement before the end of 2013, and the case study research indicated that many local officials still lack basic computer literacy.

Recommendations for the Government of Kyrgyzstan and Civil Society/Local Leaders

- In order to support okmot.kg, it is recommended to continue the provision of training such as that provided by Infosystema on the online portal system to assure that all relevant parties have training on computer literacy as well as the

online system, but in the future, assure that trainings are conducted in a Training of Trainers (ToT) structure to build off those that participated in the project;

- The Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society should be encouraged to corroborate their community-based performance monitoring tool with UNDPs current efforts to produce, publish and distribute the LSG service directory in Fall 2013. This initiative would enable the tool to directly influence policy making at the local level in a structured and consistent way;
- Re-allocate funds for the State Agency to be used for the hiring of a consultant to help them design a strategic plan, hiring more staff to cover local government nation-wide, and public relations to repair and restore their status and reputation among local government;
- As the Ministry of Finance completes its proposals for additional training centers around the country, support from the National Government to establish the center locations and civil society to assist in designing the curriculum based on experiences through the Academy of Management or at the level of experiential learning with local leaders, would be important.
- NGO ABAD signed several Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with local government to assure that they were able to deliver their trainings and implement their tools with partners that would constantly collaborate on the effort. This produced a very good working relationship between civil society and PABs in general and local government specifically. It is recommended that MoUs are signed between national and local government and civil society in the future to assure that there is adequate cooperation and standards of procedures for supporting one another on all aspects of the decentralization process.

Increasing the Legitimacy, Transparency, & Accountability of Urban Development

By Kimairis Toogood

I. Executive Summary

The process of urban development planning has been a highly contentious aspect of nation building both during the Soviet era and after independence in 1991, for its break-away countries.

The United Nations Human Settlements Program, UN-HABITAT, has supported global efforts to promote socially and environmentally sustainable growth in towns and cities, both of which have grown at unprecedented rates. In 1950, one-third of the world's people lived in cities. Just 50 years later, this rose to one-half and will continue to grow to two-thirds, or 6 billion people, by 2050. *Cities are now home to half of humankind.*⁷² In its 2009 Human Settlements Global Dialogue Series, No 5 titled "Twenty Years of Transition: The Evolution of Urban Planning in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, 1989-2009," UN Habitat evaluates how the breathtaking post-communist transformation affected urban areas in the region. It also outlines how urban planning—the indispensable public function that aims to guide urban growth—evolved to respond to new urban challenges.⁷³

The quality of public service delivery and maintenance of public infrastructure in the urban areas sharply deteriorated after independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, and this was further complicated by the emergence of new and the growth of existing squatter communities in some Southeast European and Central Asian cities is fuelled by the inability of governments to address the needs of a growing population of urban poor.⁷⁴ While Central Asian republics experienced a low rate of rural-to-urban movement in the years immediately following Independence and generally low numbers of population in urban centers during the Soviet era, the region did experience a continuously high birth rate unlike other former Soviet countries, and this challenged the previous planning for urbanization in a way that the central government was not prepared to handle.⁷⁵ The newly independent governments approached urban development and city planning as an opportunity to centralize decision-making; however, in almost all post-Soviet countries, this strategy has been found to be ineffective, as citizen inclusion is a necessity for more sustainable urbanization processes. The case study on KRTI's support to the urban development and planning process in Kyrgyzstan has addressed the needs identified by civil society, and has worked to institutionalize processes to ensure community engagement in the decision-making process as well as citizen empowerment.

Several activities were considered illustrative of the support KRTI provided to urban planning and development. These activities were nation-wide, using a KRTI methodology of follow-on projects based on previously implemented tools in both the north and south. Specifically, BIS269: "Investigating Citizen Access to Urban Development Plans;" BIS291: "Providing STTA support to develop consultative and participatory Bishkek Urban Development;" OSH123: "Providing legal support for

⁷² UN Habitat, "Organizational Mandate"

<http://www.unhabitat.org/content.asp?cid=2467&catid=1&typeid=24&subMenuId=0>

⁷³ Human Settlements Global Dialogue Series, No 5 titled "Twenty Years of Transition: The Evolution of Urban Planning in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, 1989-2009, p 1

⁷⁴ Human Settlements Global Dialogue Series, No 5 titled "Twenty Years of Transition: The Evolution of Urban Planning in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, 1989-2009, p 12

⁷⁵ Human Settlements Global Dialogue Series, No 5 titled "Twenty Years of Transition: The Evolution of Urban Planning in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union, 1989-2009, p 21

Monueva street residents;” and OSH209: “Providing Independent Appraisals of Homes to be Demolished by Osh Master Plan” were reviewed for this case study. The purpose of these activities was to explore opportunities to establish or improve the mechanisms for civil society and government to partner in ways that facilitate the inclusion of citizens in the decision-making process regarding urban development in Bishkek and Osh, two of Kyrgyzstan’s largest cities. In both cases, the cities were recovering from destabilizing conflict: Bishkek’s April 2010 revolution and Osh’s June 2010 violence.

Several KRTI tools and processes managed to successfully achieve the output (i.e. the production of an informative documentary, and the provision of legal counseling and independent, third party assessments of property values in affected area), outcome (i.e. better enabling residents in affected areas to negotiate with local government officials during urban development to increase transparency and accountability in local government decision making), and an impact objective (i.e. KRTI activities sought to model open and transparent urban planning techniques including participatory urban strategy development process).

Highlighted Key Findings for this study include:

Timing & Identification of Project Needs Appropriate: While timing for the activities conducted in Osh is complex and difficult to assess, overall, KRTI activities were found to be successfully designed to meet the needs of the target communities and were delivered within a period of time when the issues were still pressing to the aforementioned target communities. Therefore, the activities enabled citizen empowerment with knowledge of what they are afforded to within the law, and the project partners and their hired lawyers successfully instilled that empowerment in highly vulnerable communities selected for the activity implementation.

Informative Tools Beneficial to Direct and Indirect Beneficiaries: Considered an unintended consequence of the project, the information produced for the KRTI activities were able to reach a wider audience than those directly targeted, indicating that the information-sharing techniques were deemed useful to the wider public. Also, evidence indicates that there were also attitudinal changes among project partners around the issue of urban planning due to the implementation of the KRTI activities.

New Procedures for Citizen-State Engagement Established: Perhaps the most outstanding example of a change that occurred as a result of the KRTI activities in Osh City was the drafting of standards of operations (SOP) between civil society and the commission that reviews applications for the use of urban spaces. The procedures were drafted by the commission that is composed of civil society and local officials; however, due to the lack of political will and highly bureaucratic structure of the government, the SOP still needs to be approved by the Ministry of Justice, and project partners are unsure of the likelihood of this final step being accomplished

Activities Considered Contentious to Municipal Authorities; and trust was Increased between at-risk communities and Osh City Administration: KRTI tools designed to increase citizen-state engagement, facilitated by NGO Interbilim, were successfully implemented due to the good relationship the NGO has with the Municipal government. This means their selection as a project implementing organization was excellent on the part of KRTI. Therefore, while municipal officials remain skeptical of the intention of KRTI in enabling tools designed to shift the status quo, and therefore,

challenge the power and authority of municipal government, the leverage provided by NGO Interbilim created space for a moderate level of civil society/citizen and local authority trust-building.

Community engagement was understandably high throughout the activities even though stakeholder participation (i.e. Osh City officials) was challenging throughout the interventions in the south. And while the majority of the substantive work was done in the south, progress towards specific project outputs and outcomes as well as impact objectives was also observed in the north. Overall, the processes laid significant groundwork for future follow-on work and will be recommended for future engagements with municipal and national governments to assure there is continued success.

The result of the case study was a series of recommendations for continuing assistance to urban development and planning in Kyrgyzstan including the importance of timing and the use of leverage to the successful implementation of activities in contentious contexts that lack full political will. Also, beneficiaries and partners noted the highly successful nature of printed and multi-media materials for both directly and indirectly affected communities and reaching wider audiences than those intended under the project scope.

II. Background

During the Interim Government period that began April 2010, the power of the national government was challenged by local authorities in Osh, the country's second-largest city that has special municipal administrative status and had been given greater autonomy under the years of Bakiyev rule. The months-long power struggle erupted into widespread interethnic violence in June 2010, when in a little over five days, hundreds of people were killed, more than 2,000 houses destroyed and more than 400,000 individuals displaced.⁷⁶ It is understood that the violent events were linked to the negative political backlash of the political representation shifting from the south where it was prioritized under Bakiyev, back to the north that is where Akayev and current Interim Government leadership favored.⁷⁷ More importantly, this tension between the north and south regarding political favoritism also worked to promote Osh City Mayor, Melisbek Myrzakmatov, as an advocate for the southern 'capital' of Osh. Myrzakmatov's support that derived from the outcome of the June 2010 violence empowered his administration in the south to actively pursue the implementation of economic strategy known as the Master Plan⁷⁸-- a strategy that affects both the rural and urban communities, those that were conflict and non-conflict affected.

The Master Plan, a document designed in the 1970s by Soviet city planners to address potential urban swell, was considered to be one way to address urban development according to Kyrgyz authorities. However, due to the issue mentioned above, it is understood that the Master Plan is out of date. Therefore, a new version of the plan was drafted in late 2009. In the new version, the allocation of agricultural land to migrants for

⁷⁶ The in-fighting between ethnic Kyrgyz and ethnic Uzbeks in June 2010 was not the first of its kind, as exactly 20 years before this incident, a very similar conflict erupted between the same groups in the same geographic area. Violent inter-ethnic clashes between ethnic Kyrgyz and ethnic Uzbeks had occurred in the southern oblasts of Osh and Jalalabad in 1990, claiming over 300 deaths between a four day period of 4 through 8 June 1990.

⁷⁷ Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry into the Events in Southern Kyrgyzstan in June 2010. http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Full_Report_490.pdf

⁷⁸ For more on Master Plan, July 26, 2011: Kyrgyzstan: Reconstruction Competes against Redevelopment in Osh <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/63951>

housing construction in areas became known as “novostroiki” (i.e. “areas containing new constructions”). The creation of settlements escalated significantly after 2005, and while this enabled shelter for individuals, it also was only able to provide “minimally acceptable living conditions for the migrants.”⁷⁹ As a result, both Bishkek and Osh are surrounded by a ring of settlements composed of inhabitants who are impoverished and lack basic water supply and sanitation as well as poor access to roads and public transportation. Lastly, they also receive little benefit from social and educational services. The Government of Kyrgyzstan as well as Bishkek and Osh municipality administrations recognized the potential political risks which are associated with the diminished conditions in the “novostroiki” areas, and had tried to provide a minimum of infrastructure and services to these communities. However, only the very basic services remained due to their limited funds to address the overwhelming costs of building, estimated at over 150million USD⁸⁰.

The Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) for Kyrgyzstan addresses this issue, and asks for financial assistance from donors to address this: “There is an urgent need to stem the deterioration in key infrastructure and social services that will reduce non-income dimensions of poverty” and that there is a clear “need to support the government’s efforts to ensure and enhance the provision of, and access to, essential public services.”⁸¹ While international development banks such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank have provided assistance to physical infrastructure to address urban development, they also assisted post-conflict urban re-development alongside initiatives of other donors and implementers.

The *South Kyrgyzstan Rapid Joint Shelter Assessment* conducted by the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development’s (ACTED) Osh field office, on behalf of the UN-led Shelter Cluster in July 2010, found that 96% of the affected population wanted to rebuild their houses in the same location as prior to the conflict. Of note, a total of 1,892 houses were damaged or destroyed during the events. Of these, 1,446 houses were in or around Osh City, while 446 were in Jalalabad oblast. The Shelter Cluster coordinated with 60 participating

By early 2011, this relationship between civil society, international organizations and targeted communities and municipal administration officials had diminished. Osh City officials, particularly the Office of the Architect, began implementing the Master Plan in the city, including communities that had been affected by the June events, re-enforcing insecurities that had not been diminished since the June 2010 violence. This process lacked a communicative structure that was deemed appropriate by affected community members and civil society leaders, and civil society identified a pressing need to address the issue of community disengagement from the decision making process as well as general disempowerment of local communities that were targeted under the Master Plan implementation

⁷⁹ “World Bank BOUIP Project Information Document (PID) Concept Stage” pg. 2

⁸⁰ An operation dealing specifically with the *novostroiki* issue was first requested by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic in a letter of October 10, 2005 and followed by a letter from the Government dated December 15, 2006. Recognizing the importance of the issue and in anticipation of the Kyrgyz Republic President’s request, the Bank started in early 2005 an ESW study “Urban ‘Novostroiki’ Settlements in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic” which was completed in April 2007 and provided the necessary background material for, and basis for discussions with Kyrgyz authorities on, the proposed Bishkek and Osh Urban Infrastructure Project.

⁸¹ Project Appraisal Document, World Bank. February 25, 2008. http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2008/02/29/000333038_20080229002223/Rendered/PDF/421080PAD0P1041y10IDA1R20081003511.pdf

agencies, including INGOs, and coordinated closely with the Government of Kyrgyzstan and the implementing partner known as the State Directorate for Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (SDRR) and the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MoES), to address the estimated 300,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDP), 75,000 refugees at the height of the crisis. The Government of Kyrgyzstan by order of No58 on June 24th, 2010 established the State Commission for the Assessment of Damages in Osh City, Osh and Jalalabad region (SCAD) conducted damage assessments of damaged houses, businesses and public spaces.

The Emergency Transitional Shelter Strategy was designed to be completed before the onset of winter in October/November 2010, and the shelters were agreed to be completed with solid brick structures, as opposed to temporary wooden houses of box tents, to reinforce the affected population's long-term claims to the property. This permanent housing design issue was contentious with the Osh City Council particularly, as they had plans for city development that included the construction of micro-regions with high-rise, multi-story buildings that would include those who had lost their homes, as part of the Master Plan that was mentioned in the context section. It was perceived by municipal administration that international organizations disregarded their Master Plan document (a document that had never been seen by international organization representatives) and therefore, the stance of city administration became adversarial with both international organizations and community members living in areas that were already slated to be re-developed under the Master Plan.

III. Activities Implemented by KRTI

Four KRTI initiatives were reviewed for this case study and they can be grouped into two main processes: *increasing community/government cooperative decision-making*, and *information dissemination*.

Increasing Community/Government Cooperative Decision-Making (OSH123, OSH209)

Given the time-sensitive nature of the 2011 implementation of the Osh City Master Plan, the necessity to engage communities and government representatives in dialogue to facilitate opportunities for joint decision-making and re-establish trust between at risk communities and government offices was essential in Osh City, and was done through the implementation of both projects in Osh City.

Information Dissemination (BIS269, BIS291, OSH123, and OSH209)

Under all of KRTI's projects, materials were produced and distributed among target communities in the form of legal assistance and legal advocacy through legal expertise that was provided to the community members, such as those living in communities targeted by the Master Plan in Osh City. A local NGO that had been working on the issue of urban development before the June 2010, NGO Interbilim, was partnered with KRTI to assure that the legal expertise that was planned reached the targeted communities. For communities that are indirectly affected by aspects of urban development, information was disseminated on an informational DVD that was produced by KRTI's Bishkek-based partner, Impresso.

IV. Observed Outcomes and Achievements

Project Timing and Knowledgeable Project Partners are Important

The necessity for the four projects implemented around the issue of urban development and planning was clear in Fall 2011, as Master Plan implementation began, and several affected communities in Osh City and in novostroiki communities around Bishkek found themselves “in the way” of aforementioned implementation. International organizations such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had been working on Housing, Land and Property (HLP) issues since the end of the April 2005, April 2010 and June 2010 events, but still required additional legal assistance to beneficiary communities.

“Without the intervention of [Interbilim], they (city administration) would not have raised the amount of compensation.”

*Gulgaky Mamasalieva,
Director of NGO Interbilim*

–As of June 2012, Interbilim was working with other NGOs (HLP under UNHCR) to advocate for people’s rights and to suggest that the land the city was proposing as compensation for the land seized was in Amir Temur and was not inhabitable land.”⁸² NGO Interbilim noted this need and launched OSH123 with KRTI funding in fall 2012. According to Gulgaky Mamasalieva, Director of NGO Interbilim, an NGO already on the housing commission for Osh City, “the Mayor’s office asked Interbilim to get people to sign documents,” and Interbilim agreed to help city administration, but mostly to assure the entire process was occurring within the parameters of the law. The result of the project was the provision of legal assistance to the directly affected community members as well as the establishment of procedures with the Osh City commission responsible for implementing municipal development and planning.⁸³

According to Ormonova, Director of NGO Home Resources Partners (DIA), “after June 2010, due to the increased attention on government authorities, the attitude of government changed and they started to support NGOs and see them more as partners than enemies.” The access that NGO Interbilim had to city administration enabled them to leverage a level of engagement with core staff members on the commission (i.e. representatives of the Architect’s Department, SRS, Municipal Property Department, General Construction Department and Financial Office) to move towards the adoption of an SOP (standard operating procedure) for all future actions involving the necessary relocation and compensation of citizens.

KRTI activities have enabled citizen empowerment with knowledge of what they are afforded to within the law, and the project partners and their hired lawyers instilled that empowerment in highly vulnerable communities. If the Osh City Master Plan implementation re-starts again in Fall 2013, citizens will already be informed and prepared to balance the extreme power asymmetry in a meaningful way.

There is evidence that there were successful outputs and outcomes of the activities promoting community engagement with the decision-making processes in Osh City in communities targeted by the implementation of the Master Plan due to issues of timing. These communities were fortunate that Osh City ceased its implementation plans in fall

⁸² Interview with KRTI PDO Babur Bolshov and Osh 123/209 Lawyer, Akhmedov Nusratillo

⁸³ Statement by Interbilim substantiated in an interview with KRTI project manager and participating lawyer.

2012 due to a lack of funding (according to the Vice Mayor), but the action will resume in fall 2013 once Parliament votes whether to accept the “new” Osh City Master Plan (i.e. the updated version of the 1967 plan). However, there is also evidence that there were successful outputs and outcomes of the activities, although the timing was not perfect.

For example, under one of the Osh City projects designed to inform citizens, in an at-risk area of Osh City, of their rights and the city commissions obligation to them, in order to implement the Master Plan which occurred “too early” (OSH209 that was launched in an at-risk community, but after the Master Plan had ceased operations due to the lack of funding), versus another activity that could be considered initiated “too late” (OSH123 that was launched in an at-risk community that had already had a series of negative interactions with Osh City officials as well as physical demolitions already underway when the project was launched by the implementing partner). Regardless of whether the timing was “too early” or “too late,” the issue of urban development and planning is significantly different in Bishkek than Osh. “While there are different processes overall, with very different motivations, the processes and outcomes will be the same for both city administrations and citizens.”⁸⁴

For example, instead of being motivated by political interests, as with the case of Osh urban planning, the public lands designated for urban usage were sold under the Bakiyev era and now they will need to re-design what to do with lands that are now being used for private usage, although they were designated as public lands. Therefore, the projects in Bishkek that focus on work with city council and information campaigns such as the documentary viewing have been sufficient without the active legal activism launched in Osh. In the case of Bishkek, the City Council requested KRTI support for drafting their strategy on development. This is because the Bishkek Master Plans from 1993 and 1995 reflected a time before both revolutions sparked a level of urban encroachment that created several new settlements known as novostroiki.

Informative Tools Beneficial to Direct and Indirect Beneficiaries

“The video became a part of an on-going movement at the time (which meant that it was really well-timed). Several activists were already trying to move Parliament to act on the city master plans such as Lavlan Askarbekov, Parliamentarian Terbershaliev and Political Party Life without Barriers/Reforma, who feel that they started the attention on the issue. For example, prior to the video being developed Life without Barriers took Bishkek Mayor’s administration to court over the Master Plan implementation.”

Azim Azimov, Open Media/JSC Impresso Director

As mentioned in the previous section, the usage of information bulletins, media pieces, and legal activism and training, was used in this component. The documentary on urban development processes under KRTI programming was an excellent tool to increase the knowledge among direct project beneficiaries, but to also raise awareness among the wider public. In the interview with the documentary makers, Impresso, the NGO director mentioned that through the making of

the movie, they were able to teach information directly to the beneficiaries and this encouraged them to follow-up on the issue outside the scope of the KRTI project. The result of this was an additional follow-on project that is currently being implemented with

⁸⁴ Interview with Open Media/JSC Impresso Director, Azim Azimov

KRTI. This can be considered an unintended consequence of the project, but an excellent example of the attitudinal change that can occur even among project partners.

Additionally, the documentary and information bulletins that were produced on the issue of urban development and planning managed to recruit a new set of activists which had not previously engaged with the issue in an active manner. While not all of their intentions were very apparent (i.e. Babanov offering the use of his TV channel (NTS) to air the documentary⁸⁵), this increase in activists following the issue should produce positive outcomes over time as the dialogue continues around how to assure urban development is done in a free and fair manner.

Several KRTI projects have built from the successful implementation of projects that were launched before it. For example, the provision of legal assistance in Osh City led to the concept of providing mobile legal clinics to at-risk communities in Osh City. This project mimics the work of Danish Refugee Council (DRC) who operated a similar mobile legal clinic for over one year using UNHCR funding immediately following the June 2010 events. This activity as well as the others mentioned above were extremely beneficial to beneficiaries, but perceived as threatening to Osh City Administration particularly (see next point).

Advocacy of Legal Rights: Timely and Essential, but Contentious Due to Osh Politics

While the project timing and partners section indicates the importance of the issue of legal advocacy in Osh City, the politics within Osh City were and continue to be so dynamic that any intersection of project implementation has been interpreted as threatening to the interest of officials within Osh City administration. Mamasalieva claimed that under the previous Housing Commission process, “people complained, the Mayor’s office would just go around and threaten them.”⁸⁶

However, this was not the same perception of the operating procedures held by city administration. As perceived by Osh City administration’s Vice Mayor of Economic Affairs, INGOs and NGOs encouraged citizens to be angry at city administration for simply doing what was best for the city, by implementing the Master Plan. During the interview, the Vice Mayor was very clear to describe his dismay with the INGO community that disregarded the Master Plan during reconstruction efforts immediately following the June 2010 events. The Vice Mayor noted that INGOs didn’t coordinate with city administration “because they think the city is doing things to purposefully hurt citizens.”⁸⁷

“Some INGOs and NGOs started to make the issue into an ethnically-charged issue, which made citizens mistrust city administration.”
Vice Mayor of Osh

It was clear in this interview that it was an opportunity for the Vice Mayor to explain the position of city administration (i.e. “We are here to serve all people in the city,” “The Master Plan was democratically designed,” “Citizens helped design the Master Plan,” “We helped them demolish their land and remove the debris and paid for it”), but also to use it as an opportunity to discuss the ways in which INGO and Donors have created a very tense environment between city administration and NGOs based on the following

⁸⁵ Reported during interview

⁸⁶ Interview with NGO Interbilim Director, Gulgaky Mamasalieva

⁸⁷ Interview with Osh City Vice Mayor for Economic Affairs, R. M **Mirzamatov**

statement: –City administration would have been willing to coordinate on the appraisals, but the NGO wanted to do it without them, and then critique them once the results were in.” A statement that seems to run contrary to the position posited by NGO Interbilim that indicated that Osh City officials invited NGOs to assist them on this issue. Also, according to the Vice Mayor, INGOs and Donors have raised tension between city administration and citizens: –There were definitely some misunderstandings at the beginning of the implementation in fall 2011”⁸⁸

Regardless, the activities achieved their outcome by better enabling residents in affected areas to negotiate with local government officials, during urban development, to increase transparency and accountability in local government decision making, but the power asymmetry continues to require intervention by third parties.

Procedures for Citizen-State Engagement around Urban Planning Established in Osh City, yet Not Approved by National Authorities

While the output of the activities was quite reasonable, the lack of political will for anything that challenges the status quo in Osh City remains a challenge. One significant outcome of the project activities was the establishment of a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the Osh City Commission that receives, reviews and decides on compensation cases of affected residents. One of lawyers supported through Interbilim, Akhmedov Nusratillo, said –the procedures that Interbilim helped establish did help city administration commission members change their mindsets about what is needed.”⁸⁹

Sadly, the procedures were drafted together with the commission, but due to the bureaucratic structure, it still needs to be approved by the Ministry of Justice which is deemed unlikely to occur because –land law should be designed by the government, so the government said they don’t need NGOs to help them draft procedures.” This illustrates the on-going power struggle between national government and the civil society sector. Although at the local and municipal levels, initiatives were collaboratively designed to meet the needs of the community, blockage is likely to occur at the national level due to the lack of political will for reform/change.

This is troubling for a number of reasons, but mainly because at the national level there are laws regarding land code and yet, to date, there are no rules and regulations or procedures for the implementation of those laws. Therefore, the result of this KRTI initiative would have directly addressed a need at the national and municipal levels. Without these, it is likely that the same dialogue will continue between citizens and local officials in Osh City (particularly) around the issues of urbanization, land usage, reconstruction and Master Plan implementation in the near and distant future.

Increased Trust in the Osh City Administration Commission Process

The KRTI tools designed to increase citizen-state engagement, facilitated by NGO Interbilim, were successfully implemented due to the good relationship the NGO has with Municipal government. Beneficiary appreciation for projects that provide legal assistance and informational campaigns can be documented from Fall 2010 to the present. For

⁸⁸ Interview with Osh City Vice Mayor for Economic Affairs, R. M Mirzamatov

⁸⁹ Interview with Osh City Vice Mayor for Economic Affairs, R. M Mirzamatov

KRTI, this was not just an issue of the implementation of the project, but the design and launching of the project that came from a trusted and well-respected NGO that increased the rate of success for the projects.

As a result of KRTI information sharing campaigns via brochures and advocacy by local legal experts, people now know how the commission is designed to function in accordance with the law. However, it is important to not confuse trust built in the commission as support for Osh City administration officials.

The commission in Osh City that reviews applications from the community has existed for years, but it was deemed dysfunctional due to the commission's lack of transparent activities and processes. As noted in the previous section, the national government has not approved the new SOP for the commission. The lack of political will at the national level to support municipal efforts in Osh City may hinder the potential successful implementation of one of the major successes from KRTI activities in Osh City.

V. Challenges Observed and Lessons Learned

Printed materials ighly effective for a citizenry that thrives on face-to-face contact for trust and is not engaged in the digital age

Supplementary aids such as manuals, information bulletins and documentaries are beneficial and have wide in-person distribution that facilitates trust building among at-risk community members and local organizations. This was considered a highly effective strategy, nation-wide.

Local organizations can initiate progress on contentious issues; however, donor leverage may be needed to ensure compliance

In the case of both municipal and national officials that lack political will to support initiatives designed to increase citizen-state engagement, the final hurdle to ensure that the progress is not undone may require significant diplomatic negotiations from the donor, such as OTI to persuade municipal and national level to comply with the initiatives.

VI. Recommendations for Future Programming

Several recommendations emerged from this case study and they have been grouped into three sections; those for US government partners, Representatives from the Government of Kyrgyzstan, and civil society leaders—all of which are working on the issue of local governance.

Recommendations for the Donor Community

- Change Agents' within city administration should be fostered such as Osh City Housing Commission members that drafted the SOP on civil society-municipal cooperation that has yet to be approved by the Ministry of Justice.
- International Community (United Nations, OTI, International Development Banks, etc) should encourage Ministry of Justice representatives to approve the SOP drafted by the Osh City Housing Committee, as it is in the interest of all international actors to support the KRTI process that holds Osh City accountable

- to civil society and vice versa on all issues related to construction, reconstruction and urban development.
- Considering the upcoming Fall 2013 Osh City Master Plan vote in Parliament, it would be strategic to lobby national level counterparts to assure that the adopting of the Master Plan does not infringe on the human rights or civil liberties of the citizens of Osh City.
 - Continue assistance to Bishkek city Council, including coordinated work with World Bank Bishkek-Osh Urban Infrastructure Project in Osh and Bishkek, as well as Asian Development Bank Emergency Assistance project in Osh to assure novostroikis are included in Master Plan development and implementation.

Recommendations for the Government of Kyrgyzstan and Civil Society

- Link the KRTI-funded community-based performance monitoring survey tool to urban development and planning process, to help “watchdog” NGOs understand community needs and desires for the city. This tool allows local officials to assess community needs, and allows communities to monitor the performance of government on the provision of basic services.
- Given the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that was signed between NGO Interbilim and local government facilitated continued cooperation throughout the duration of the activity implementation, it should be encouraged for civil society and local/national government to establish MoUs to hold one another accountable throughout the implementation of activities in the future.
- Considering the claim by Osh City officials that the Master Plan is not a classified document, it would be encouraged to public aspects of the plan to at-risk communities and civil society representatives working in at-risk communities to increase trust and transparency, and allow for community members to engage in dialogue prior to the inception of construction and demolition.
- Civil society is a sufficient “watchdog” on urban development and planning issues. Building on NGO Interbilim’s experience, an alliance of NGOs working on this issue could maximize the efforts and continue to level the playing field with Osh City Administration.

Socioeconomic Mapping & Conflict Analysis in Kyrgyzstan

By Amy Noreuil

I. Executive Summary

This case study provides an overview of the KRTI rich experience in socioeconomic mapping and conflict analysis. The goal is to take the lessons learned and best practices from those experiences, and share them with organizations and donors who can use them to guide future programming. Efforts were made to include practical insights for both program and technical officers as they contemplate similar inventions in Kyrgyzstan or other environments.

KRTI funded several innovative activities to support access to objective, reliable information and inform local discussions between communities, civil society, and the Government of Kyrgyzstan. The April 2010 political revolution and the June 2010 ethnic violence demonstrated the importance of ensuring that both donors and government understand the underlying sources of conflict and tension, and channel resources and attention into the most critical areas. To bolster the availability of credible information and data on the south following the ethnic violence in June 2010, KRTI partnered with ACTED to conduct research on root causes of conflict and support access to relevant data sets to inform the design of recovery and conflict mitigation activities in southern, rural Kyrgyzstan. KRTI went on to fund the collection and mapping of infrastructure activities that attempted to mitigate conflict through targeted interventions and the dissemination of perception survey data and crowd-sourced information on security and the MIA.

These activities ultimately captured significant lessons learned and best practices. KRTI's experiences offer important insight for those hoping to:

- Design effective data collection and mapping activities that attempt to pull unstructured data into a public portal and share that information with partners;
- Create trainings for local government and community leaders on how to use socioeconomic data to drive budgeting processes;
- Use participatory mapping and early warning networks to better understand under conflict dynamics;
- Crowd-source information as part of a larger advocacy or transparency campaign.

II. Background

Kyrgyzstan's unexpected independence in 1991, alongside the subsequent economic collapse and deterioration of social services, intensified competition for scarce resources among citizens, particularly in the south. During this time, the ethnic, economic, and social characteristics of communities and towns changed significantly, but little data was captured and shared in a consistent way among government or donors. Reliable, objective information about resources and services was difficult to access in many parts of the country, with political entrepreneurs fueling rumors and spreading misinformation widely, in an effort to fuel tensions between government and citizens. When a political revolution erupted in April 2010, the need for accurate data on populations and resources was essential but non-existent for donors and government offices looking to understand the systemic sources of conflict and factors affecting the nation's stability and growth. The ethnic violence in Osh and Jalalabad, which broke out in June 2010, further underscored the importance of understanding points of contention between ethnic groups and the factors most likely to contribute to future outbreaks of violence.

The fallout from the violence, including severe inflation and the loss of trading and investment opportunities, extended well beyond destroyed neighborhoods in Osh and Jalalabad.

Given these challenges, increasing access to reliable qualitative and quantitative data on the economic, political, and social characteristics of communities across Kyrgyzstan is of significant importance to both government officials developing new policies and to international donors channeling funds into new conflict or development programs. Moreover, understanding how citizens perceive services provided by government, most especially security, is nearly as important as the service itself. Data alone is not sufficient to ensure usage. However, training government and civil society on the use of this data – what it means and how to use it - is essential to ensuring the sustainability and effective use of the information.

III. Activities Implemented by KRTI

Since 2010, KRTI conducted four activities with three partners supporting the collection, analysis, and dissemination of socioeconomic and perception data in Kyrgyzstan. These activities are part of KRTI's broader approach to increasing access to reliable information and data for citizens and government officials, to inform decision-making and participation in the political process, and to address sources of tension between ethnic groups over access to resources.

Socio-Economic Mapping and Conflict Analysis of Southern Kyrgyzstan (BIS111)

To fill a much-needed gap in data on the sources of conflict in southern Kyrgyzstan, KRTI partnered with ACTED in 2011 to compile socioeconomic indicators held by various levels of the Government of Kyrgyzstan, conduct in-depth conflict assessments in 65 communities, and roll-out an interactive web map platform (known as the "REACH platform") for rural, southern Kyrgyzstan that could be used by government and donors alike to inform programming.

ACTED, in partnership with IMPACT think tank and UNOSAT⁹⁰ originally launched the REACH Initiative in 2010 with the aim to create tools for humanitarian actors to inform the recovery of Southern Kyrgyzstan and support conflict mitigation projects. More specifically, REACH proposed a series of data management and mapping tools to facilitate the identification of socio-economic clusters which could be used as 'basic service units' by the aid community. In Kyrgyzstan, ACTED was already credited with developing a series of databases to assist the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UNHCR, USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), and the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) in managing critical information. In the weeks following the ethnic violence in Osh, ACTED and UNOSAT provided comprehensive mapping of the damage in the areas affected by the ethnic violence in June 2010 and worked with the shelter, protection, WASH, and community restoration clusters to provide products to inform the delivery of assistance for early recovery and conflict mitigation activities. A number of assessments have been conducted with these clusters, creating several databases to ensure that information can easily be shared among relevant partners and with key government offices.

⁹⁰ United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Operational Satellite Applications Programme

KRTI sought to support ACTED's initial efforts to streamline the collection of socio-economic indicators for public use and to increase understanding, knowledge-sharing, and discussion around the drivers of conflict, flashpoints, and potential triggers of conflict in southern Kyrgyzstan. These investments were made based on the assumption that promoting access to this information would magnify the impact of assistance and help reduce sources of tension in key communities, by assisting donors and government offices to direct funds toward the most critical issues and communities most vulnerable to outbreaks of violence. Through participatory processes, the information was vetted by communities and the Government of Kyrgyzstan to inform decisions around assistance and policies. The information generated from this activity is available to the public on the REACH platform: <http://www.reach-initiative.kg/>.

Breakdown of activity components:

- **Conduct a preliminary desk review of existing socio-economic and conflict-related literature and publications on the area.** This effort included a rapid stakeholder analysis to ensure that the outputs of this project were in line with the programming needs of partners and other stakeholders, increasing the chances that the final product would be utilized to inform programming.
- **Compile over 100 macro-level socio-economic and conflict-related data allowing REACH to populate macro-level fields of the interactive maps.** Information was collected on the following variables: demographics, administrative divisions and boundaries, socio-economic indicators, infrastructure, and basic services, history of conflict and tensions, access to natural resources, and history of aid intervention.
- **Identify 65 target, conflict-prone communities and conduct on-site micro-level assessments, in order to gather detailed information and enable a thorough analysis of local sources of tension.** This effort involved a combination of tools and approaches, including surveys of community members, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions using Most Significant Change theory, and Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRA) techniques. Common drivers were identified and communities were ranked low to high in terms of conflict potential and supported with qualitative evidence.
- **Populate the REACH platform with information collected to inform programming by the international community and local development.** The goal of the multi-layered map was to allow stakeholders to analyze key conflict-prone communities through the use of available satellite imagery, socioeconomic data and detailed conflict analysis for each target community.
- **Report on the main sources of tension in the target communities.** A report was drafted on the main findings of the research and to provide a series of recommendations for aid agencies operating in the field of conflict resolution in the Kyrgyzstan.
- **Hold presentations to communicate findings from research, facilitate conversation and encourage use of the REACH platform.** Twelve presentations took place between August and September 2011. Attendees included: Peace-Building Implementer's Group, TASK Alliance (Helvetas,

Danish Church Aid, Save the Children, Inter-Church Organization for Development Cooperation, International Alert, Danish Refugee Council and a member of the EU Delegation), International Labor Organization, GIZ (Labor Market and Employment Programme), World Bank, Development Policy Institute, Door Media, and RECAP.

Extending Socio-Economic Mapping into Local Governance (OSH071)

In late 2011, KRTI initiated a second project with ACTED building upon BIS111. Earlier that year, in March 2011, President Otunbayeva issued a decree to establish Public Advisory Boards (PAB) as long-term sustainable mechanisms to facilitate interaction between government and civil society, encourage inclusivity and transparency in decision-making and policy implementation, and ensure the public's priorities and interests were best served by national and local self-government. To build upon this new mechanism for citizen-government interaction, KRTI funded OSH071 with ACTED and Public Fund ABAD to build the capacity of PAB members to use the REACH platform and participate in a collaborative planning process with AOs in four pilot locations in the south: Tash-Bulak, Masy, Nooken, and Chek-Abad. Local authorities from the AOs and PABs were trained side-by-side on how to analyze available data and maps, prioritize needs, and engage in collaborative budget and planning processes to address the most pressing needs of constituents.

Breakdown of activity components:

- **Expand access to the REACH platform by translating the map to Kyrgyz and Russian and creating an offline version.** The REACH platform was translated from English into Russian and Kyrgyz languages and an offline version of the platform was created to use in environments with limited access to technology.
- **Develop trainings for AO officials and PAB members to utilize information collected through BIS111.** KRTI partnered with DPI and Public Fund ABAD to develop a four-day training module to teach local AO officials and PAB members how to use the socio-economic and conflict analysis data to inform budgeting and policy development. The trainings were designed and delivered around a collaborative process that required AO officials and PAB members to use the REACH information together to develop and fund at least one proposal.
- **Build the capacity of Public Fund ABAD to replicate the training for other local offices.** ACTED worked closely with Public Fund ABAD to build their organizational capacity to adopt similar training methodologies and extend the utility of the REACH tool to other AO offices and PAB meetings in southern Kyrgyzstan.
- **Report on the lessons learned and best practices to strengthen the participatory processes between AOs and PABs.** ACTED documented suggestions for how to improve the process by which AO and PABs collaboratively prioritize community needs and design local government interventions.

Measuring Community Perception of their Safety (OSH214)

An opinion poll conducted by the International Republican Institute in mid-2011 reported that 63% of respondents expressed a low level of trust in the MIA and reinforced the general perception of the MIA as being corrupt, politicized, repressive, and ineffective at ensuring public security. The high level of dissatisfaction among citizens has led to a vibrant discussion among civil society and government actors on a better model for law enforcement in Kyrgyzstan. Following the KRTI-supported advocacy campaign on MIA reform by an alliance of civil society actors (OSH116, BIS237), which garnered significant media and governmental attention, the MIA included many of suggestions in the official concept of MIA reform. One of the recommendations made by civil society was to revise the criteria used to determine the effectiveness of the MIA's work by including a citizen feedback mechanism on police performance. At present, the MIA formally reports on their work at the end of the year in front of the Parliament by citing the statistics of crimes reported in comparison to the numbers reported during the past year. There is a risk that the inclusion of a citizen feedback mechanism may remain unimplemented due to MIA's inability to collect objective and relevant information on the wider public's perception of their work.

In early 2013, Liberal Youth Alliance, one of KRTI's grantees for the MIA civil society reform process, proposed an activity to conduct a public poll on public perception of security in Osh and Bishkek cities. The report, printed in Russian and Kyrgyz languages, would be presented publically and posted on www.reforma.kg, creating an online instrument for informing the government and general public about citizens' concerns about security and violations by law enforcement body. By supporting the grant activity, KRTI aimed to increase civil society engagement in monitoring of the government services and encourage the government for transparency and accountability to their constituents. The project also improved civil society's capacity to advocate for improved security and police responsiveness and presence, through a public perception survey and online social media instrument.

Breakdown of activity components:

- **Conduct a public perception survey of confidence in the police among residents of Bishkek and Osh and publicize the results.** The survey was conducted with 2,125 respondents who evaluated the MIA using a scoring system.
- **Report findings publically in Osh and Bishkek.** The survey results and recommendations were distributed in Russian and Kyrgyz during presentations in Bishkek and Osh to law enforcement representatives, media organizations, civil society, and other government offices.
- **Utilize online component to share results.** Survey findings were reflected in an online map using diagrams and tables posted on website www.reforma.kg. The website will encourage visitors to leave messages on the security issues they faced, human rights violations allegedly committed by law enforcement, and problems they have experienced with interacting with MIA. All information will be analyzed and reported on the online map, labeled as "confirmed" and "non-confirmed." Media organizations will be given special access to the site.

Mapping KRTI-Funded Infrastructure Projects (OSH166)

In addition to working with organizations to collect and analyze socioeconomic data, KRTI also supported the data collection of its own projects to inform planning and future engagements by local and national government, as well as donors. Since 2010, KRTI has undertaken more than 110 infrastructure rehabilitation activities – including irrigation canals, government offices, streetlights, parks, and schools – as a way to support the democratic transition by improving interaction and service delivery between government and citizens. These rehabilitations were implemented in partnership with government authorities, who use and maintain the buildings after KRTI completes its activities, and often incorporate outreach activities aimed at improving government service delivery and strengthening ties with citizens.

In addition to the technical schematics and bills of quantity for the work done, KRTI is providing its governmental counterparts with clear geographic information on the location and extent of the work completed by KRTI to help government keep track of rehabilitations and ensure that the project sites are utilized and maintained in the years to come. In early 2013, KRTI partnered with the Austria – Central Asia Centre for GIS Science in Bishkek to collect GPS data on all of KRTI's infrastructure activities, design maps of each infrastructure activity that clearly shows the elements rehabilitated by KRTI, and conduct special analysis of the impact and efficiency of KRTI's infrastructure activities. The activity will ensure the effective handover and longer-term maintenance and use of KRTI infrastructure rehabilitation activities to the respective government counterparts.

Breakdown of activity components:

- **Collect GPS data on all of KRTI's infrastructure activities in the south of Kyrgyzstan.** Maps were designed for each infrastructure activity that clearly shows the elements rehabilitated by KRT, and includes special analysis of the impact and efficiency of KRTI's infrastructure activities.
- **Provide government counterparts and other stakeholders, clear geo-referenced mapping information** on the exact location and extent of KRTI infrastructure rehabilitations.

At the advice of OTI's Geographic Information Unit, the Austria-Central Asia Centre for GIS Science also uploaded the information to OpenStreetMaps and Google Earth to ensure the data was publically accessible.

IV. Observed Outcomes and Achievements

Socio-Economic Mapping and Conflict Analysis of Southern Kyrgyzstan (BIS111)

Technical assistance was provided by OTI's Geographic Information Unit on data management throughout the development of BIS111. The findings listed below were compiled from internal reporting by monitoring and evaluation teams at KRTI and ACTED based on anecdotal information collected in the field, as well as interviews with KRTI, ACTED, and USAID staff.

Informing Early Recovery and Conflict Mitigation Programs

In September 2011, the European Community funded TASK, a coalition led by ACTED along with 14 other international and local NGOs, to implement “Peace Building and Conflict Mitigation in Kyrgyzstan” for 5 million Euros over 18 months. The project aimed to mitigate sources of conflict and promote durable peace and stability in Kyrgyzstan, and worked directly with the communities at high risk for conflict based on findings from BIS111, to implement local interventions such as community mobilization, infrastructure, and socio-economic development. The project also expanded the micro-level assessments to research sources of conflict in 60 additional communities across southern Kyrgyzstan.

Several organizations, including the World Bank and Swiss Development Corporation, have expressed appreciation for BIS111 because the REACH platform is the only public source of information in Kyrgyzstan to help them in the design of early recovery and conflict mitigation programs. Participants from the roll-out presentations said that the REACH platform provided useful information to support the conclusion that conflict is largely due to access to natural resources, not ethnic-based grievances, in southern, rural Kyrgyzstan. The REACH model is now guiding ACTED’s work in Tajikistan, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, South Sudan, and Burma.

KRTI used the data collected and analyzed in BIS111 to identify areas where small-scale interventions could meaningfully reduce tensions between communities. As a result of this mapping project, KRTI funded six infrastructure and canal rehabilitation activities in Kurmanjan Datka, Dzharkyshtak, Kurmanzhan-Datka, Dzhany-Turmush, Pervoe Maya, and Byurgenduy, addressing sources of tension identified as critical through BIS111. ACTED also identified new areas of conflict like winter pasture disputes and information, which KRTI used to pilot a methodology for localized community negotiation.

Based on recommendations collected following OSH071, the U.S. Institute for Peace (USIP) eventually funded ACTED and Public Fund ABAD to expand the REACH platform to additional AO and PABs. UNHCR also used the REACH platform to inform the design of quick impact activities meant to reduce or respond to pressure points in the south.

ACTED continues to provide numerous maps in response to requests for information for use in donor coordination meetings. The German Development Company (GIZ) reportedly used the crop yield and land use data to inform the design of agriculture activities. The UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights also uses the information to inform their approach to ethnic-sensitive programming to promote electoral turnout and mitigate post-election violence. However, concrete evidence for how the data informed specific interventions from the organizations listed above was not immediately available upon request.

Expanding Data Collection Efforts and Early Warning Networks

KRTI’s initial investment in ACTED attracted interest from USAID/Kyrgyz Republic, which funded the expansion of data collection to the North and developed an early warning network to facilitate the exchange of information between communities and decision-makers. In January 2012, USAID/Kyrgyz Republic awarded \$2 million (USD) to

ACTED to implement a two-year program, “Conflict Mitigation through Targeted Analysis and Community Action in Kyrgyzstan” (COMTACA). ACTED was tasked with supporting democracy and minimizing the risk of instability through:

- facilitating informed public policy and early warning analysis; and
- fully integrating analysis into local leadership’s capacities for citizen protection.

ACTED also increased support for an existing early warning network established by the Oblast Advisory Committees, and developed new processes for soliciting, managing, and acting on information to mitigate conflict and encourage conflict sensitivity in programs and policies. The program also involved the integration of mobile technology to allow for messaging within the early warning network and solicit information from the public related to sources of conflict.

Encouraging Data Sharing and Public Access to Information with Government Offices

ACTED cites the standardization of data management practices as one of the activity’s key accomplishments. Before the activity, socio-economic indicators were collected by the Government of Kyrgyzstan using different methodologies and standards for quality assurance and control. ACTED worked closely with AO staff to streamline the collection of socio-economic indicators, so meaningful comparisons could be made across administrative units and inform budgeting and policy decisions. By working together with the local government offices responsible for the data and going through their records and archives, ACTED was able to update and standardize a great deal of their information, providing technical assistance in data management that was not explicitly built into the activity. For example, in July 2012, ACTED signed an MOU with the Ministry of Finance, agreeing to provide budget and financial data for each administrative unit, including territorial expenses and expenses by organizations. The government expected savings of 94 million soms through the partnership and considered it a vital step in terms of expanding their existing transparency and anti-corruption efforts. Reportedly, the Minister of Finance also presented the REACH platform to Parliament and explained the potential of using the information for policy-making and providing information to the public.

Extending Socio-Economic Mapping into Local Governance (OSH071)

Supporting Collaborative Budgeting Processes and Community-Driven Development

In many communities, trainings conducted on the REACH platform identified issues that were then taken up by local government officials. In Chek-Abad, Kockor-Ata, Tash-Bulak and Masy AOs, 13 issues were identified by community representatives to be addressed during the budgeting process. Nine projects ultimately received final approval from the local Kenesh, and seven were implemented, resulting in \$89,465 allocated from the municipal budget to address the issues which constituents felt were of highest priority. These projects included construction of a new kindergarten, road rehabilitation, water, electricity, and solid waste projects, and the installation of a radio center to promote access to information about public services.

AO officials and PAB members were very receptive of the training, because it provided access to socio-economic data about the residents in their communities that helped inform decisions about local development. Overall, participants showed excitement and interest in this innovative tool and emphasized its usefulness not only for internal

budgeting and policy-making purposes, but also for planning between different AOs. According to the Head of PAB in Tash-Bulak, “the prioritization of problems in budget making will be helpful to evaluate the current quality of public services.” In general, PAB members said they saw the most value in the socioeconomic mapping component of the project, which provided information to make decisions about resources and helped them become more confident in their ability to observe, monitor, control and push the mayor's office to solve existing problems. The trainings sometimes provided the first positive interaction between local officials and the mayor's office, and presented a new opportunity to ask questions and discuss how to improve communication to the public about available services. The Vice Mayor of Kochkor-Ata cited the methodology used for OSH071 as a great example of how to do collaborative, participatory development. The vice-mayor of the city suggested organizing exchange trips between government officials in the North and South to build strategic partnerships and share lessons. Following the trainings, efforts were made by PABs to recruit younger members who had more experience using technology.

ACTED worked closely with Public Fund ABAD to build their capacity to conduct trainings on integrating the REACH platform into the participatory budgetary process. Capacity building, training, data collection, and map production will continue through December 2013 thanks to funding from the Mission through COMTACA. As of June 2013, ACTED was receiving requests for 4-6 maps per week from external stakeholders to use as tools to inform discussions on development assistance and the allocation of public resources.

Mapping KRTI-Funded Infrastructure Projects in the South and North (OSH166)

During the development and implementation of OSH166, OTI's Geographic Information Unit provided technical assistance to the Austria – Central Asia (ACA) Centre for GIS Science on how to collect the footprints of rehabilitated infrastructure and share this information with the public through OpenStreetMap.org and Google Maps, as well as partners in the development community and other USAID offices, to inform future programming. While Google Maps is believed to have a broader audience in Kyrgyzstan, OpenStreetMap.org is a web map created by community mappers and is open-source (think Wikipedia for maps) and can be easily used by community members with access to a computer and the internet.

In total, ACA collected data to catalog 168 activities for over \$11 million USD in KRTI-funded infrastructure projects and shared this information with the public. High-resolution commercial satellite imagery was also provided by the U.S. Government to assist in the process of collecting this information and ensuring its accuracy. This type of assistance is available to other USAID-funded programs.

This project finished in September 2013. Outcomes were not yet available in time for inclusion in this case study.

Measuring Community Perception of their Safety (OSH214)

As with OSH166, OTI's Geographic Information Unit also provided technical assistance to the Liberal Youth Alliance on how to transfer results from the perception survey to a public platform that would allow for the ongoing collection of reports from the public. “Crowdsourcing” information from the public can be an excellent way to get a snapshot

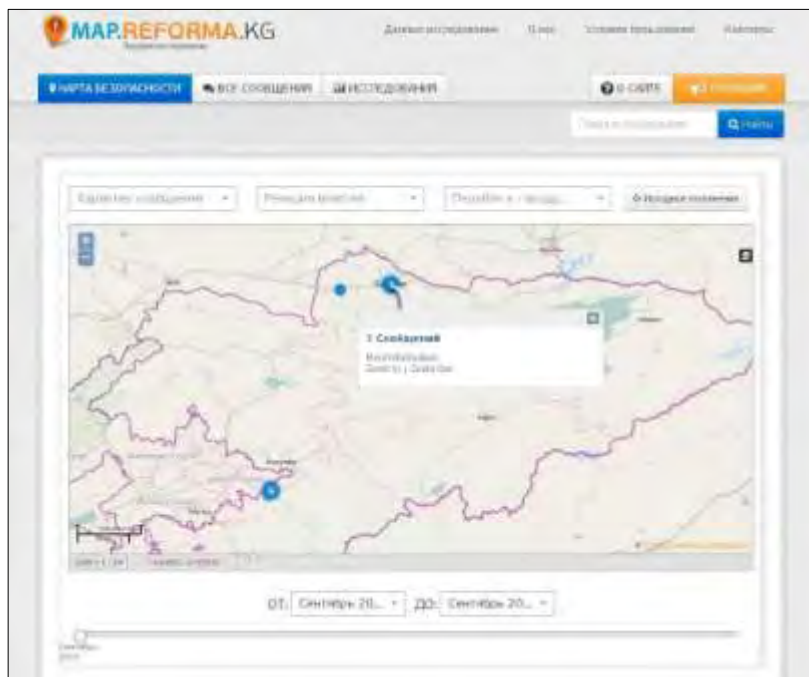
(albeit not representative) of what the public thinks, feels, or sees on a topic. However, crowdsourcing cannot take the place of scientific surveys which are structured in such a way to be able to extrapolate the results to an entire population of interest.

While there are a variety of technical solutions available to create web maps today, only a few allow for the crowdsourcing of information. A proof of concept was developed using [Ushahidi](#), a platform that allows for the crowdsourcing of reports and was originally established for citizens to report incidents of violence following elections in Kenya in early 2008. There are a vast amount of resources available online to help donors and organizations establish a platform, such as this [Ushahidi manual](#). Depending on how the platform is configured, the public can submit reports through the website, e-mail, and SMS.

Ushahidi was used in another KRTI-funded activity, *Promoting SMS hotline on election violations (BIS172)*, by the Civil Initiative for Internet Policy (CIIP), to solicit reports on election violations from over 2,000 long term observers deployed throughout the country. The reports received from the observers through SMS messages become available to the public on a [CIIP-managed website](#).

Based on the proof of concept developed through the activity, the Liberal Youth Alliance integrated a series of pages into the [Reforma.kg website](#) to display the results of the perception survey and crowd-source reports from the public about positive and negative interactions with staff from the MIA. The Liberal Youth Alliance received letters of support and identified focal points for collaboration at the MIA, General Prosecutors Office, Presidential Apparatus and Osh and Bishkek mayor's offices. The MIA agreed to include the results of the perception survey and information collected through the site in their annual performance evaluation.

Presentations on the results of the security perceptions survey were held in Bishkek and Osh in late September. Bishkek participants included civil society partners, journalists, representatives from the OSCE, and former and current representatives of the MIA. All participants were complimentary of the research. The MIA representative stated that as a citizen, he was very supportive of the initiative because



official data is not always reliable. He noted that it was important not only for civil society, but also for political leaders to get involved. According to a former MIA press officer, the MIA established a commission with civil society and government

representatives to monitor reform progress. She noted that the commission did not have this data when setting the strategy, but that it would have been useful, and hoped that public opinion data could be incorporated into future reform efforts. She also emphasized the importance of ensuring data is collected independently from the MIA. Liberal Youth Alliance intends to continue collecting data with SIAR every few months.

This project completed at the end of September, so additional outcomes were not available in time for inclusion in this case study.

V. Challenges Observed during the Implementation of Activities

Socio-Economic Mapping and Conflict Analysis of Southern Kyrgyzstan (BIS111)

ACTED staff identified several challenges and lessons learned from the socio-economic partnership with KRTI. While some of the information is fairly stable, such as available land and number of schools/hospitals, the utility of the REACH platform will ultimately be comprised if local partners are not able to access and update the information without continued support from ACTED. Funding from provided resources was used to train Development and Cooperation in Central Asia (DCCA) staff to continue data collection, maintain the platform, and provide trainings to local users. According to ACTED staff, those capacity building efforts were not sufficient. Users of the REACH platform have also noted that the user interface is difficult to browse and understand, making it challenging to conduct substantive analysis and understand relationships between data layers.

In addition, ACTED identified possible areas for new partnerships with the government, highlighting the value in extending the rollout of the REACH platform to the oblast and Rayon-levels of government where information could direct a greater share of resource allocation and budget management. Technical capabilities would also be higher at those levels of government, which proved a barrier for use at the local level where capabilities are lower.

Challenges were also identified by local government officials with access to the data. AO officials and PAB members stressed the challenge of accessing REACH, given limited internet penetration and use of technology in rural areas. Participants also noted the need to provide the information in Russian, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, and English, to accommodate the fact that Kyrgyzstan is a diverse, multi-ethnic nation. It is recommended that laws and regulations around intellectual property rights of the platform be addressed, to determine which components of the platform can be used and built on by other partners.

Extending Socio-Economic Mapping into Local Governance (OSH071)

AO officials and members of the PABs provided feedback on how to improve the utility of the REACH platform and relevance to their work through the trainings provided under OSH071. ACTED discovered that initial trainings covered too much information in one sitting and decided to prioritize specific components of the training based on feedback from participants. Participants also requested that the content for the trainings focus more on concrete examples showing how the data could be used. Several participants requested the ability to update the platform with new information on a regular basis; they currently lack the technical and financial capabilities to do so on their own.

ACTED encountered numerous challenges in terms of the quality and consistency of data supplied by AO officials. Some participants expressed concern that the data presented on several socio-economic indicators for their AOs, such as unemployment rates, were not accurate. In response to this comment, ACTED explained that all macro-level data was collected directly from the authorities and that any concern over the accuracy of the data should be raised to their AO administration. However, AO officials do not have the ability to update the information on their own. It was recognized early in the process that ACTED's lack of a local partner would prove a challenge in terms of the sustainability and utility of the platform.

Mapping KRTI-Funded Infrastructure Projects in the South and North (OSH166)

The most important lesson learned from OSH166 was to start the data collection process earlier in the program and integrate that collection into the process of managing grants. In the case of KRTI, precise locations of rehabilitated infrastructure were captured at the end of the program. With the tools available now, KRTI engineers could easily collect and share this information with the public on a rolling basis as infrastructure activities are implemented. This type of near real-time data capture would allow for the more effective coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of infrastructure projects within USAID and across donors.

There are also numerous technical challenges to collecting building footprints in urban environments resulting in various amount of measurement error, including signal reflection and atmospheric interference. Efforts were made to reduce these errors as much as possible by utilizing properly maintained equipment, using staff trained in surveying, and taking multiple measurements in the field. In addition, the grantee faced challenges when trying to upload the data to a public platform due to lack of internet access or slow bandwidth. Challenges remain about how best to share the infrastructure data with community members who do not have access to the internet where the data now lives. Offering a variety of products in public spaces can help overcome that challenge as mentioned below.

Measuring Community Perceptions of Safety (OSH214)

As learned during the implementation of BIS172, the main challenge in using crowdsourcing platforms is communicating the intent of the platform to the public and making sure the public understands how the data will and will not be used. This is commonly referred to as “closing the feedback loop.” Soliciting information from the public raises expectations, so those expectations should be managed from the start. The technical aspects of standing up a platform require the expertise of someone with programming experience. However, the actual stand-up is relatively light in terms of level of effort. A vast amount of resources will be required to message the platform to the public and manage data as it is received into the platform, depending on the volume of reports.

VI. Recommendations for Future Programming

Below is a list of recommendations for future socioeconomic mapping or conflict analysis

activities based on lessons learned and best practices identified through KRTI activities and staff involved in other USAID mapping projects (COMTACA). The recommendations are based on feedback, independent observations, and the technical expertise of the author of this report, and directly address the design and implementation of future projects.

Recommendations the Donor Community and Civil Society

- **Streamline the collection of data early in the process:** Develop a simple, tabular template to simplify the collection of information and ensure the use of consistent terms of reference (e.g. administrative areas and codes for populated places), by talking with technical experts. Take the first step towards using similar naming conventions can be a quick win in terms of streamlining data collection and facilitating the sharing of that information with other partners.
- **Build a robust communications and outreach plan:** Develop public information or outreach campaign to extend the reach of the information. At the outset, develop a framework for how the activity will be monitored and evaluated based on the reach and use of the information.
- **Consider the “exit” from the “entrance”:** Include an “exit strategy” that identifies a local partner who will eventually take over for the grantee and maintain the data/platform. If the platform is established during the emergency response phase, build in a plan to transition the platform to meet the needs of long-term development.
- **Host regular meetings with stakeholders to solicit feedback and ensure utility of information:** It is particularly important to address potential sensitivity or security concerns. When the project is under design, meet with different stakeholders from the community, local organizations and levels of government. Solicit and address concerns regarding the collection and dissemination of data. Determine how far each data set can travel based on this feedback.
- **Determine what level of accuracy and “catchment area” is required:** Is it more important to collect information from a wide variety of sources or through a few subject matter experts or officials? Is it more important to include a wide spectrum of data points even if unverified, or to collect fewer data points while imposing higher standards for quality assurance/control? The answer to these questions will drive the methodology and tools used to collect information.
- **Ensure strategic focus from the outset and keep the scope tight throughout implementation:** Focus on the quality of the data and dialogue around the use of that data rather than the sheer volume of information gathered. It’s tempting to incorporate different components over time based on community demand. However, make sure those requests can be realistically fulfilled with available resources without draining resources from other components.
- **Target the products to where decisions and resources are located:** If the goal is to inform the appropriate allocation of public resources, feed the information into the mid-level of government where those funds are divided. At the local-level, there is not much information and communications technology

(ICT) capacity to support sustainable collection and analysis. At the national-level, bureaucracy can often prevent the trickle down of benefits to communities.

- **Consult the right technical resources for the job:** Solicit the opinion of an information officer, web developer, social scientist, and GIS analyst. Each has a different area of technical expertise and can walk through how to use different collection methodologies and tools.
- **Share the data publically:** Consider using OpenStreetMap.org and Google Maps to share data with the public and donors. While Google Maps is believed to have a broader audience in Kyrgyzstan, OpenStreetMap.org is a web map created by community mappers and is open-source (think Wikipedia for maps) and can be easily used by community members with access to a computer and the internet.
- **Consider public input:** “Crowdsourcing” information from the public can be an excellent way to get a snapshot (albeit not representative) of what the public thinks, feels, or sees on a topic. However, crowdsourcing cannot take the place of scientific surveys which are structured in such a way to be able to extrapolate the results to an entire population of interest.

Important Considerations for Technical Professionals

- **Integrate low-tech alternatives:** Create a plan for how to reach communities without access to technology e.g. disseminating paper products at public service points. Consider the integration of mobile technologies only based on the penetration of mobile technology.
- **Develop a simple user-friendly web interface to access information:** There are many technical solutions available to design interactive maps and data portals. There is no silver bullet. The right one will depend on the problem set, what type of information is in question, and user requirements. An exhaustive list of technical options is beyond the scope of this case study. However, this study recommends using out-of-the-box, open source applications and databases whenever possible, and optimizing performance for low bandwidth environments. Proprietary options can often tie projects to expensive maintenance fees and software.
- **Streamline the presentation of information:** Design each web frame so that discovery and analytical tools are easy to access. Build a user-friendly site with separate views, limiting the density of information to tell a meaningful story or lend itself to analysis on a specific subject matter.
- **Produce outputs in a variety of formats and languages:** Make sure that the language of the tool is appropriate to the target audience and consider utilizing a multi-lingual interface.
- **Train early and often using practical examples:** Using any type of information requires a degree of literacy. Host “meet-ups” of stakeholders to discuss the

collected data, what it represents, and how it could be used. Ask tech-savvy groups and youth to lead local trainings.

- **Track quantitative and qualitative information on data usage:** For evaluation purposes, it's important to collect narratives about the actual platform use and impact, not just reported numbers. Monitor unique page and layer views and try to identify patterns between outreach activities or events and spikes in usage. Build in functionality that allows for user feedback to be solicited through the site.
- **Consult legal staff about regulations around data sharing and intellectual property rights:** This is for the protection of partners, data and platforms. It is particularly important that donors and grantees have a clear understanding of the property that will be handed over during and after implementation.

Building Confidence & Reducing Tensions through Public Infrastructure & Irrigation Rehabilitation

By M-Vector

I. Executive Summary

Kyrgyzstan's public infrastructure – including schools, parks, government offices, streetlights, and electricity and irrigation networks – has gradually but steadily deteriorated over the past 20 years. Poor maintenance, budgetary constraints, financial mismanagement, and revenue loss due to corruption inhibit local officials from repairing or replacing critical public works. Anger over the sharp decline in services and collapsing infrastructure played a major role in the April 2010 political transition, and perceptions of unequal access to resources contributed to ethnic tensions in the south, in June 2010.

Since 2010, KRTI has used the rehabilitation and renovation of public infrastructure as a way of demonstrating the ability of the government to respond to community priorities, build the community, and mitigate ethnic tension as well as improve local economies and livelihoods. Early projects included providing immediate equipment to key national institutions like the President's office, Parliament, and the State Directorate for Reconstruction and Development. The program then focused on the rehabilitation of shared public infrastructure such as streets lights, traffic lights, and irrigation canals that were critical for public safety and rural livelihoods.

In 2013, KRTI commissioned two evaluations from the research firm M Vector; one of its public infrastructure rehabilitation (parks, electricity networks, government offices, etc.); and one of its irrigation infrastructure rehabilitations. M Vector traveled to communities where KRTI supported infrastructure rehabilitation, as well as communities where KRTI projects did not take place. They evaluated whether KRTI's projects met their intended goals of improving cooperation between local authorities and communities through increased transparency and access to public services, while also bringing different ethnicities together to reduce tension. ***This case study is a summary of the key findings of these two reports edited and prepared by KRTI staff.***

According to the results, infrastructure rehabilitation has had a positive impact on reducing tension, particularly in the south, as it has increased safety and security and improved attitudes towards local authorities. Irrigation infrastructure improvements both addressed tensions and improved livelihoods in the south. On the whole, local populations in KRTI-supported communities are more involved in community activities than non-KRTI supported communities. These projects have also had a minor economic impact, though not as significant as other factors. In the north, including Talas and Maevka, infrastructure projects provided new opportunities for youth, reducing involvement in criminal activities.

The projects have also had a positive impact on ethnic relations in some communities. According to respondents in the south, the rehabilitation of public infrastructure in their communities has helped them move past the events of 2010. The renovation of irrigation infrastructure resulted in a decrease in resource based conflicts, particularly in ethnically diverse regions of the south. In both the north and south, respondents who participated in the infrastructure rehabilitations reported that the projects successfully brought people from different ethnicities together to work for the common good.

II. Background

The Soviet Union invested heavily in public infrastructure in Central Asia during the 20th century. Factories, hospitals, schools, and government offices sprung up across Kyrgyzstan as the Soviet Union connected the country to its neighbors through extensive road and trade networks and heavy investments in the energy and irrigation sectors. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 abruptly ended decades of infrastructure investment in the region. The post-independence regimes that ruled the country after made little effort to maintain or replace dilapidated infrastructure. Gradually but steadily, much of Kyrgyzstan's infrastructure has deteriorated over the past 20 years, owing to poor maintenance, government budgetary constraints, financial mismanagement, and revenue loss due to corruption.

The 2010 outbreaks of popular discontent and ethnic violence worsened the country's economic woes. The disparity between urban and rural citizens, combined with competition for limited resources – land, energy, water, jobs, access to basic health, and education services – exacerbated the long-standing tensions among Kyrgyzstan's ethnic, geographical, rural-urban, and economic divides. Anger over the sharp decline in services and collapsing infrastructure played a major role in the April 2010 protests that contributed to the overthrow of the Bakiyev government.

While the revolution in 2010 was complex in nature, many felt a new optimism in its aftermath. Nationwide, people wanted immediate tangible changes to match their expectations for a better future. In the south, so recently wracked by ethnic violence, communities needed to see evidence that the new interim government was capable of protecting their interests and committed to rapidly rebuilding destroyed communities. The extensive damage to government facilities, coupled with the necessary learning curve of newly-created government agencies and procedures, understandably limited the government's ability to move quickly and rebuild. Government officials, particularly in smaller cities and towns, have limited funds to invest in maintenance, operation, and replacement of failing buildings, electricity, streetlights, and roads.

In the south, where 2,000 buildings were damaged or destroyed during the June 2010 ethnic violence, the perception of unequal access to basic infrastructure continues to exacerbate deep-seated tensions between ethnic groups. After the violence in Osh and Jalalabad, most people stayed within their own neighborhoods and few ventured out past sunset. The lack of functioning street lights in the city added to the sense of insecurity and increased the opportunities for criminal elements. Poorly functioning traffic lights increased accidents, often resulting in violence between ethnic groups and opportunities for corruption. Dilapidated government offices, parks and public spaces also discouraged residents from engaging with each other and local authorities.

The condition of Irrigation infrastructure in particular has an impact on stability in much of the country. In rural Kyrgyzstan, the vast majority - nearly 80 percent - of families depend on agricultural activities for their livelihoods. Most of these families reside and farm on land that is irrigated by a deteriorating network of canals and other infrastructure. While water distribution and infrastructure is often managed through traditional communal means, there is a long tradition of the state building and maintaining infrastructure. In the 20 years since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, government agencies have had limited resources and capacity to repair and maintain irrigation systems, causing them to become silted or damaged, reducing the volume of

water available to users. While studies confirm that in most areas there is sufficient irrigation water to feed both large fields and family gardens, resources are often scarce, due to both the state of infrastructure as well as poor management practices.

"Really, we watered 600 hectares by a pump in the past. There were lands, where we had to bring water to irrigate. «Kara-Jylgha» zone of 60-80 hectares, people brought water there and planted cotton, corn and clover for seeds. Today these lands are dry lands. Farmers rent them through auction and use the land only to mow grass there. Poor people cannot take part in auctions. Those who have money take these lands".

These canal networks are fed from mountain run off and/or rivers and tributaries and link various population centers together. The poor conditions of these systems result in less water available across the entire network, the majority of which is used, or at least perceived to be used, unfairly by population centers upstream, or closer to the source. This situation has the potential to create divisions between communities and often leads to conflict. Traditionally, ethnic Kyrgyz communities tend to live further upstream than Uzbek or other minority communities in Southern Kyrgyzstan, often lending an ethnic dimension to disputes over irrigation resources. These tensions and their underlying sentiments were seen as a trigger for ethnic violence in 2010.

*"My neighbor always takes water away. We argue for that reason."
Resident from Oktyabrskoe*

Overall, access to water depends not only on the state of infrastructure, but also on the ability of communities to manage its distribution. The deterioration of infrastructure has coincided with a decline in the traditional management systems that maintain canals and ensure fair access to water. These systems, which rely on mirabs (traditional irrigation managers) and joint Water Users Associations (WUAs), have suffered and in many areas area circumvented by individual farmers. More than 50 percent of the farmers interviewed in this study admit to controlling the flow of water themselves, without assistance or consultations from mirabs or water management associations. The study also found that there is at least a correlation between the state of canals and activity of formal water management mechanisms, and that communities with poorly functioning canals, frequently had poorly functioning water management.

The government's capacity to provide critical public services continues to play a critical role in the democratic transition. Although the *National Sustainable Development Strategy 2013-2017* prioritizes investment in infrastructure, including roads, electricity, and water, it recognizes that budgetary constraints continue to hinder development. In both the north and south, the gap continues to widen between northern and southern elites over control of resources and power, as citizens feel further isolated by the process. According to the study, the state of infrastructure including irrigation networks underpins various elements of stability in rural Kyrgyzstan, including local economies and livelihoods, interpersonal issues and moral and psychological issues. The report describes how these issues can fuel interethnic conflicts within and between communities. The report acknowledges the appropriateness of KRTI's interventions in addressing infrastructure.

III. Evaluation Methodology

M Vector conducted field research to determine whether KRTI met its stated objectives in regards to the rehabilitation and renovation of public infrastructure, including irrigation

networks in early 2013. M Vector delivered two reports on KRTI social infrastructure and irrigation infrastructure activities.

M Vector collected qualitative and quantitative data through focus groups and individual interviews in Chui, Talas, Naryn, Osh, and Jalalabad oblasts. Research on KRTI's irrigation infrastructure was only conducted in Osh and Jalalabad oblasts, as KRTI only supported irrigation activities in the south. The field researchers conducted focus groups and interviews in both KRTI project communities as well as control communities in which KRTI did not support activities. For the social infrastructure evaluation, M Vector interviewed 800 residents equally divided between ten KRTI project communities and ten similar control communities. For the irrigation support evaluation, M Vector interviewed 760 individuals divided equally between six KRTI irrigation support villages and six similar control villages. While evaluations did not have baseline data, researchers prompted stakeholders to recall specific indicators from before 2010.

The final reports included myriad findings regarding the causes of instability, particularly in regards to government relations and perceptions, ethnic tensions, public infrastructure and space, livelihoods, agriculture, and irrigation. To streamline these reports, and provide information and findings similar to KRTI's other case studies, KRTI has created the following summary of the key findings related to KRTI activities. The full reports from M Vector are publically available from M Vector and KRTI.

IV. Activities Implemented by KRTI

Since 2010, KRTI has used infrastructure rehabilitation of public spaces as a venue for encouraging government to respond to community priorities and mitigate ethnic tension. During the early days of the transition, KRTI partnered with a variety of key national and local government actors to deliver tangible improvements, stimulate economic recovery by injecting money into the local communities and creating short-term jobs, issuing contracts for rehabilitating small-scale infrastructure, and procuring equipment and other materials. The approach centered on helping local government and civil society partners mobilize a cross-section of community members in the most volatile areas to identify priority infrastructure rehabilitation projects. Government partners contributed to projects through labor, equipment, or other support, and were required to maintain the infrastructure following project completion. Communities were selected and projects designed to target the greatest sources of instability, and where groups prone to, or at risk of, conflict benefitted from improved services. These interventions also laid the groundwork for increased cooperation among communities and between communities and government officials.

Rebuilding Public Spaces

The KRTI-supported community-driven projects took on different forms. Early projects included providing immediate equipment to key national institutions like the President's office, Parliament, and the State Directorate for Reconstruction and Development. Soon after, the program focused on the rehabilitation of shared public infrastructure such as streets lights, traffic lights and irrigation canals that were critical for public safety and rural livelihoods. Additionally, KRTI supported improvements to common public spaces, like city parks, where citizens interacted with their neighbors. Other initiatives improved sports facilities, youth centers, and schools to better engage young people in constructive activities. Still other projects focused on rehabilitating critical buildings like

document and passport offices to help citizens access better services, and local council meeting halls, where local governments could meet more regularly with citizens to discuss community priorities.

Over a three-year period, KRTI also partnered with local authorities to repair street lights in several southern towns to bolster a feeling of safety and security among citizens. Similarly, dilapidated traffic lights resulted in high numbers of traffic accidents that often spiraled into violent conflict. KRTI initiated projects with local authorities and local municipal works departments in southern cities to repair or replace traffic lights and pedestrian crosswalks.

These tangible projects helped create an enabling environment for the democratic transition by building citizens' confidence that real change was underway. This confidence was necessary to get the national government back on its feet, and allow public officials at all levels to be democratically elected and begin to "deliver" on their democratic promises of greater accountability, transparency, and inclusivity.

In total, KRTI supported 98 public infrastructure activities, not including irrigation networks, including:

- 7 Electricity Rehabilitations
- 9 Schools and Orphanages
- 11 Street and Traffic Light Projects
- 15 Youth Centers, Cultural Centers, Sports Complexes
- 18 Government Offices
- 85 Community Parks and Sports Fields

Repair and Rehabilitation of Irrigation Infrastructure

KRTI identified weak irrigation infrastructure and management as a key threat to stability and the ongoing democratic transition in southern Kyrgyzstan. The rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure in southern Kyrgyzstan has been a key focus area for the program. KRTI has repaired 31 different irrigation systems, including canals, gates, dams and wells, exclusively in southern Kyrgyzstan. These activities aimed at reducing tensions and the potential for conflict, in multi-ethnic rural communities in southern Kyrgyzstan. They also aimed to increase local economic output and provide short term employment for vulnerable stakeholders.

Irrigation rehabilitations often complemented or contributed to other donor projects. For example, In October 2010, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) launched the "Empowering Youth, Women and Vulnerable Communities to Contribute to Peace Building and Reconciliation" program, under the UN's Peace Building Fund (PBF), to address the need for reconciliation through increased peace building dialogue between the Kara-Suu communities which share access to water from the Uvam irrigation network. While, for example, the PBF project trained WUAs in peace building and conflict resolution and strengthened their management capacity of water resources, KRTI provided in-kind funding to hire mechanical cleaning and rehabilitation services, thereby increasing the carrying capacity of the canal (OSH038). Furthermore, KRTI supported UN's PBF2 and ACTED by expanding canal rehabilitation efforts to over 21 WUAs overseeing the Ak-Suu, Uvam

and Yujniy canals of the Kara-Suu Rayon (OSH078, OSH079 and OSH080) and the Taldik canal (OSH063).

Locations of projects were chosen based on their potential to contribute to broader conflicts, particularly of an ethnic nature. However, many target communities were mono-ethnic, which were linked to a multi-ethnic irrigation network. This is the case with more recent activities in Uzgen, Nookat and Kara Kulja (OSH143, OSH165, OSH173) where KRTI has partnered directly with local water management authorities.

V. Observed Outcomes and Achievements

These studies found a number of positive changes, as well as lessons learned, following infrastructure rehabilitations supported by KRTI. These include,

- Changes in relationships between local government entities and communities and access to services;
- Changes in the delivery and management of irrigation resources;
- Reductions in tensions and conflicts;
- Increased economic benefits from employment and irrigation; and
- Improvements in safety and security.

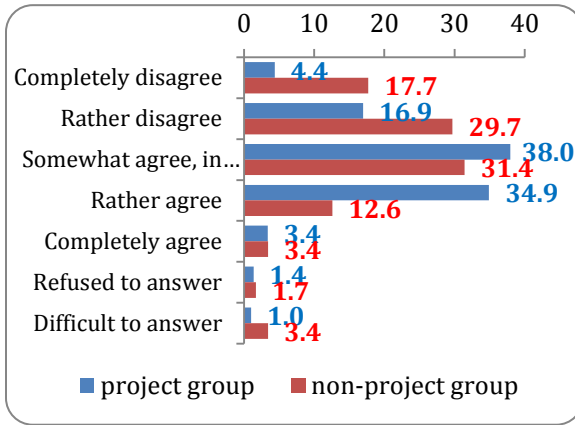
Government-Citizens Relations & Access to Services

KRTI rehabilitated a number of critical government buildings, such as passport offices and local crime prevention centers, to help citizens better access public services, as well as projects that improve engagement, such as local council meeting halls where local governments could meet more regularly with citizens to discuss community priorities. These tangible projects aimed to build citizens' confidence that real democratic change was underway.

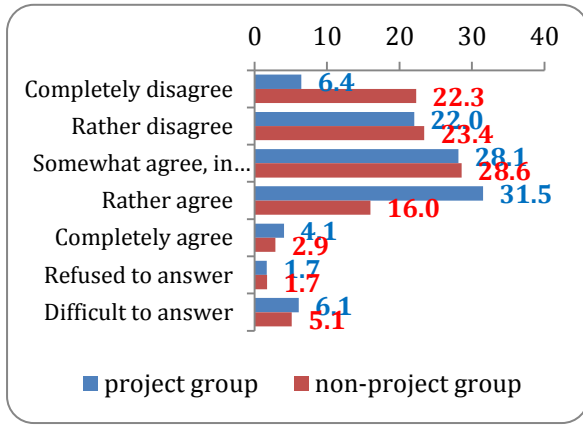
The South

According to M Vector's research, 35-48% of respondents from KRTI-infrastructure communities and 16-23% from non-KRTI communities agree that recent infrastructure improvements by local authorities improved transparency, security, responsiveness, and interaction between officials and local communities. The number of respondents who reported positive results by government officials in their communities is nearly 2 times higher in KRTI communities than non-KRTI communities.

The graphic below illustrates that more respondents in KRTI communities believe that local authorities are responsive to community demands and problems, and that dialogue between local authorities and their community has improved.



Local authorities respond to community demands/problems in timely manner

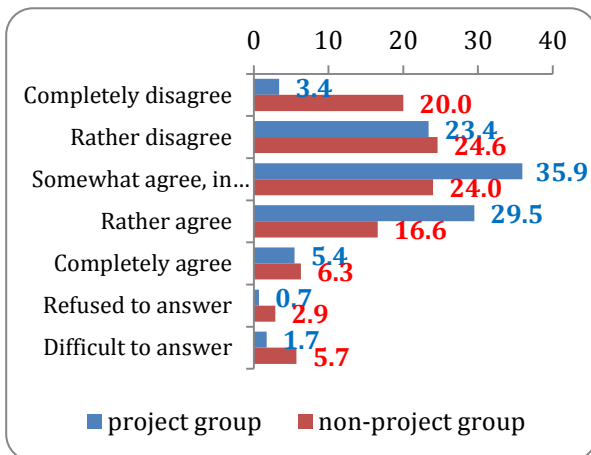


Dialogue between local authorities and community improved

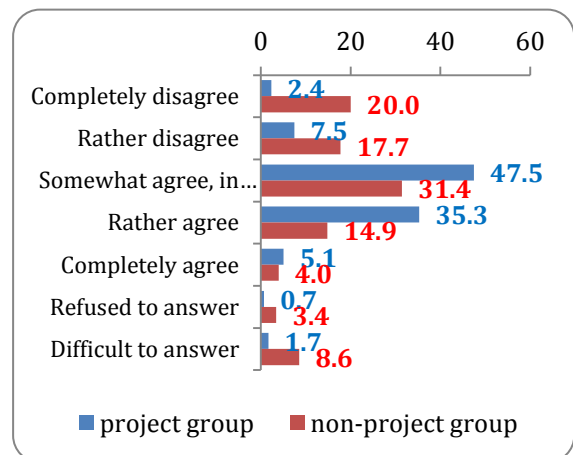
In addition, respondents in KRTI communities are more likely than other respondents to report that local authorities in their communities have been more transparent, and their confidence in these authorities has increased. The image to the right illustrates this difference.

In Osh, for example, rehabilitation projects significantly contributed to the local population's positive attitude towards city administration. The Osh Mayor, Melis Myrzakmatov, has significantly contributed to the improvement of infrastructure and construction of new houses in certain parts of the city, and supports many small and medium-sized businesses. As a result, many Osh citizens have very high opinions of the mayor and his work.

Many residents were not aware that the rehabilitation of Osh infrastructure – including streetlights and traffic lights - was carried out with the financial support from USAID. This was not necessarily a negative outcome, as KRTI's goal was to encourage the local government to take the lead in interacting with citizens about the projects.



My confidence in local authorities has increased



Local authorities are more transparent

*"The city is changing. Parks are being restored. Rehabilitation of the city is implemented by our administration. With time, Osh will be the second capital of our country."
Alima, resident of Osh*

In addition to Osh, residents in Uzgen, Nookat, and Jalalabad also reported positive attitudes towards local city administration as a result of recent infrastructure rehabilitations. Some of these projects were supported by KRTI, while others used local budget funds. In addition, 36.9% of respondents from KRTI-project communities agreed that local authorities are doing more now to address community problems, compared to 21.2% of non-KRTI communities.

Several KRTI-supported rehabilitation projects in the south were identified by respondents for their role in increasing access to government services. Passport offices and citizen service centers were two such types of projects, which reportedly reduced corruption for citizens and increased access to public services. The introduction of a single service window in passport offices, as well as a simplified passport application process, was considered a significant improvement to earlier processes. This especially helped internal and external labor migrants.

Infrastructure rehabilitation was not always well used in many of the communities surveyed. For example, respondents from a non-KRTI project community in Jalalabad oblast identified a recent project where local authorities, who did not partner with KRTI, used their authority to control access to services. In Bekabad in Jalalabad oblast, local authorities promised to provide electricity in the village if people vote for Almazbek Atambayev in October 2011. Authorities ultimately removed the electricity supply from key parts of the town: Local authorities promised to lay on electricity in the village if we vote for Almazbek Atambaev. Before the election, they installed electrical equipment. We voted. But after the election, the authorities took all the equipment."⁹¹

*"USAID assisted in opening the passport office in our village. Earlier, people had to go to Kara-suu in order to obtain a passport."
Resident of Kara-suu*

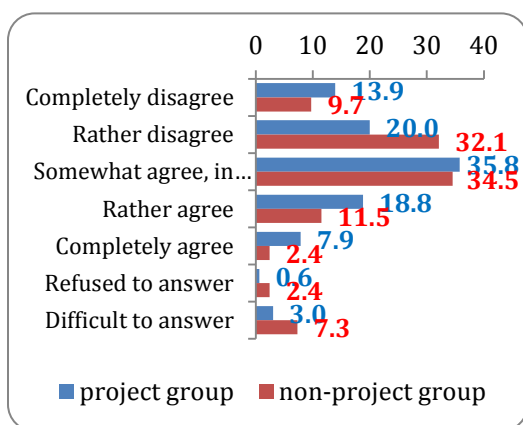
However, in villages where KRTI partnered with local government to improve access to electricity, the cost of electricity decreased for residents, while land value and prices increased and people were more willing to settle in these areas. A respondent from the village of Chapayeva, where KRTI did not rehabilitate infrastructure, identified a KRTI-electrification project in another village prompted people to build more houses along the street, increasing the value of land and property in that community.

The North

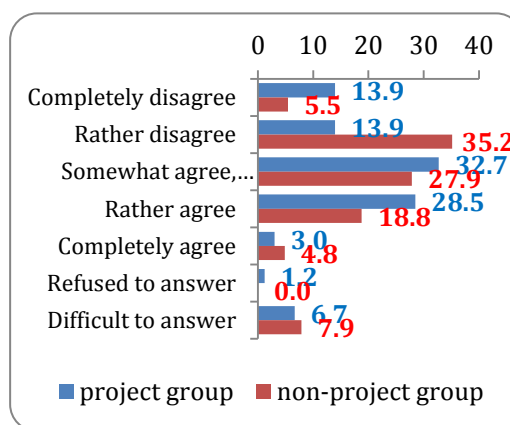
Compared to the south, respondents in the north overall reported lower levels of confidence in local authorities. The work of local governments was positively assessed by 25-37% of KRTI project communities, compared to 35-48% in the south, and by 13-24% of non-KRTI project communities, compared to 16-23% in the south⁹². However, KRTI infrastructure rehabilitation still clearly contributed to a more positive perception of authorities compared to the non-KRTI group. The work of local authorities in infrastructure improvements was positively evaluated by 43% of project communities and only 21.8% of non-project communities, as shown below.

⁹¹ Interview with Maksuda, resident of Bekabad, Jalalabad

⁹² Percentage indicator of the "Completely agree" and "Rather agree" responses.



Local authorities are more transparent

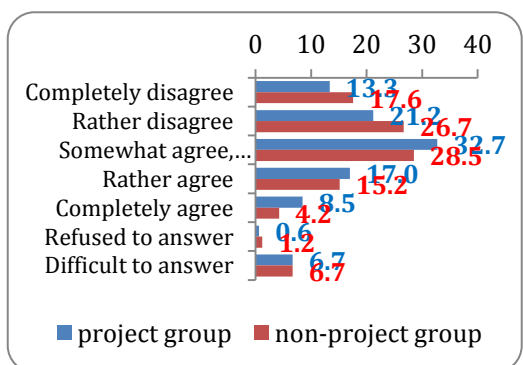


My confidence in local authorities increased

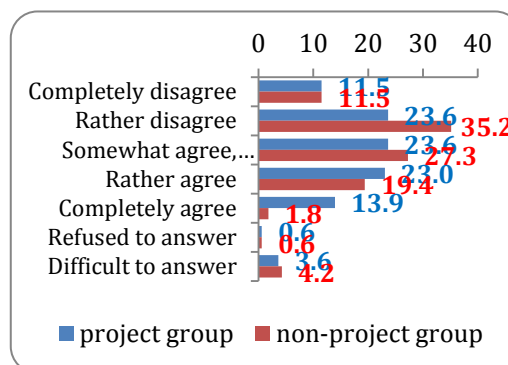
Opinions on government differed significantly by community. In non-project villages of At-Bashy and Bakai-Ata, the government recently conducted several infrastructure rehabilitations, and respondents reported positive attitudes toward local authorities. In Bir-Bulak in Chui oblast, KRTI partnered with local authorities to rehabilitate a school and gym. According to respondents, this improved citizens' opinion of government, and teachers and parents are grateful that the government responded to their request.

In contrast, residents of Maevka and Belovodskoe, have rather negative attitudes towards local authorities. The main reason, according to respondents, is land corruption. In Maevka, KRTI worked with the local government to rehabilitate a park, youth center, and 3 kilometers of road. Despite this, the general perception of the authorities is still negative. However, according to one respondent, the work done by the KRTI-funded rehabilitation was appropriate and cost-effective. Thus, they drew a line between KRTI's project and other donor and government-supported activities: *"We like how the club was rehabilitated. Money was used to its intended purpose."*⁹³

In



Local authorities respond community demands/problems in timely manner



Local authorities do more to address the community's problems

Bishkek, residents in both project and non-project communities demonstrated a very negative attitude towards local authorities. Members of one of the non-project

⁹³ Interview with Galina, resident of Maevka

communities reported that over the past three years, the situation has not changed. In addition, the participants believe that local authorities are often corrupt. This was further reinforced by respondents from KRTI-project communities who noted that the high rental prices were charged to youth for access to the KRTI-rehabilitated facilities, which inhibited students from participating. These prices were set by local government officials, which Bishkek residents disagreed with: –Sports facilities must be free and open to students and children.”⁹⁴

Positive feedback on government was given by respondents from Talas city, where KRTI rehabilitated a soccer field and a government-supported theatre, and the Talas government contributed substantially to infrastructure improvements using local budget funds. This has had indirectly reduced youth crime, according to residents. According to the movie theater director, attendance has increased by 50% since the rehabilitation, increasing the theatre’s revenue and its contribution into the local government budget. The Talas sports field is now rented by a local football club, providing revenue back to the field for maintenance.

“The rehabilitated movie theater has now become a home for various social and cultural events, as well as for a number of after school activities... Compared to last year, the theater attendance increased by 50%. Among the audience there were both young and the elderly”.

Armanbubu, movie theater director, Talas

“USAID has done a lot of work for the city. For example, construction of a stadium which is very popular among people”.

Kubat, Talas

Outside Talas city, the perception of local and central authorities by local population is heavily influenced by a problem with the gold deposits, which undermines confidence in government.

In Naryn, where KRTI recently supported several infrastructure projects, participants criticize local authorities and do not trust them because of the situation with Kumtor. However, despite the negative perception of local authorities by residents, respondents reported a number of positive changes as a result of KRTI’s projects. According to a school director in Naryn, the rehabilitated school gym is very popular among students and students are now winning prizes at sports tournaments. The park and stadium are also well received. KRTI also rehabilitated the Naryn City Council and the regional Ombudsman’s office, but M Vector’s assessment was conducted prior to completion of these projects and the effects could not be measured. According to one resident, Kanaym, in Naryn: –We all see the changes. This park used to be a pasture for cows and sheep. Now, it has become a real park.”

“The oblast authorities rehabilitated a municipal park and a stadium. We are all happy. People have increased confidence in the authorities”.

Nurjan, Naryn

In addition, there also were complaints from respondents regarding the government’s use of the KRTI-rehabilitated school. According to them, local authorities tried to use the

⁹⁴ Interview with Gulnara, Bishkek resident

school building for administrative purposes and refused to allocate rooms for children with disabilities.

Delivery and management of irrigation resources

“Those, who were close to the dam irrigated fields somehow, but those who lived far away had difficulties. Their cotton did not grow at all. However, this year things are different, thank Heaven. We are happy.”
Resident of Cholo-Terek

According to the M Vector study, access to water, and the management of its distribution increased significantly in communities where KRTI supported irrigation infrastructure improvements. The volume of irrigation water in project villages increased almost two-fold, as reported by 66% of residents, in comparison with control villages, where only 37% of residents reported an increase in irrigation volume. This was verified by farmers in a focus group in Chimbai, “I planted up to 70 hundred square meters of carrot before the dam was built. While water was turned the whole carrot dried out. After the dam construction it became much better, you can go and turn water whenever you need.”

Respondents themselves describe their role and participation in the projects and in the ongoing maintenance of the infrastructure in a positive manner: “I’ve made a key for Murab could control water in dispenser. We have reinforced the dam, put sandbags, and cut trees.” Many users noted that during and even after the completion of rehabilitations, they contributed labor, money and other resources. However, the study also notes challenges in maintaining rehabilitation, and some respondents note that some infrastructure repairs were perceived as unfinished, or had again fallen into disrepair. There is a general concern with further maintenance, due to the lack of funds and equipment at the local level. Most stakeholders note a negative attitude toward those who do not contribute to the sustainability of infrastructure or dump waste in canals.

Improvements in irrigation infrastructure, particularly when done in collaboration with local water management authorities, appears to have a positive influence on the opinion of residents on local government bodies. In control villages without irrigation infrastructure improvements, residents do not report any changes in the management of water or relationships with local authorities. In fact, these farmers report the same basic problems such as low confidence in local authorities, corruption, lack of budgets and weak interactions with local government entities. In general, in control villages relationships and perceptions of local government are unsatisfactory compared to project villages.

“Conflicts occur between neighbors. Irrigation water runs through neighbors, there is no direct way. When water comes, the neighbor turns it to his plot. Particularly, during a season it is very difficult to get water and we have lots of scandals. Mirabs are corrupt; they give water to those who pay them.”

Resident of Oktyabrskoe

“I wouldn’t say it’s totally corrupt, but they give 100-200 som to get more water.”

Resident of Jalalabad

As a contrast, in project villages, the study observed an improvement in relationships between local government authorities and community members, as well as an improved management of irrigation resources. For example, in project villages, respondents reported that following rehabilitations, local water authorities now manage schedules for the distribution of water. Residents of some project villages report that now they receive receipts from local authorities when they use irrigation water. In project villages, 33% of residents reported that the work of the mirab had improved, and 18% said the same

thing about the local WUA. Residents noted a decrease in the number of violations of user agreements, and improved roles of these actors in the fair and equitable distribution of water. Residents also report to having greater awareness of and willingness to follow agreements and decisions of management bodies: “We didn’t get receipts before. Now we pay, take our queue and water the land. People get used to the new water distribution management. Mirabs have fewer conflicts with people. Water volume has increased.” Focus Group participant, Okktuabroskoe village

Residents also report less corruption between community members, water management authorities, and Mirabs in project villages was also observed as compared to control villages.

However, not all residents are satisfied. Just less than half of project village respondents believe that the infrastructure remains unchanged. This is likely due to seasonal or environmental changes, or the continued deterioration of rehabilitated infrastructure and poor management and maintenance. According to one resident of Tash Bulak, “I have heard and seen [the rehabilitations], they were a great help. Villagers had jobs, and they were paid 350 KGS. We thank them for that. Canals were cleaned and people had jobs for at least a month and a half. Water was initially delivered well. But, two years have passed and the canals are littered again.”

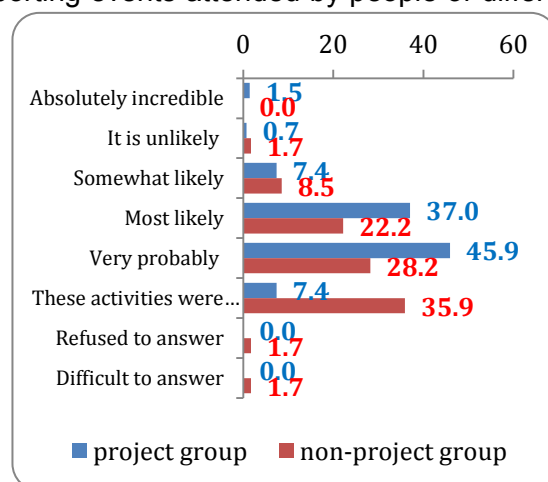
Addressing Tensions and Conflicts

In addition to improving access to government services, KRTI infrastructure projects supported improvements to common public spaces, like city parks and youth centers, where residents interact with their neighbors. Other initiatives aimed to increase access to resources, such as electricity, to reduce conflict between ethnicities.

The South

Interviews with southern respondents revealed that KRTI-sponsored infrastructure played a role in bringing together individuals from different ethnicities. Respondents from KRTI project communities identified sporting events attended by people of different ethnicities at a much higher rate (82.9% versus 50.4%) than other communities. KRTI projects also required local community involvement in rehabilitations. According to participants from many regions, this was an important factor in uniting people of different nationalities. Several respondents stated that these changes have helped residents to move past the tragic events of 2010.

Respondents from Nookat also noted that a park restoration indirectly improved ethnic relations in the town, as did the rehabilitated infrastructure and a new stadium in Aravan. In Osh, Jalalabad, and Uzgen, several activities were identified as having improved ethnic relations. These



Sporting events attended by people of different ethnicities

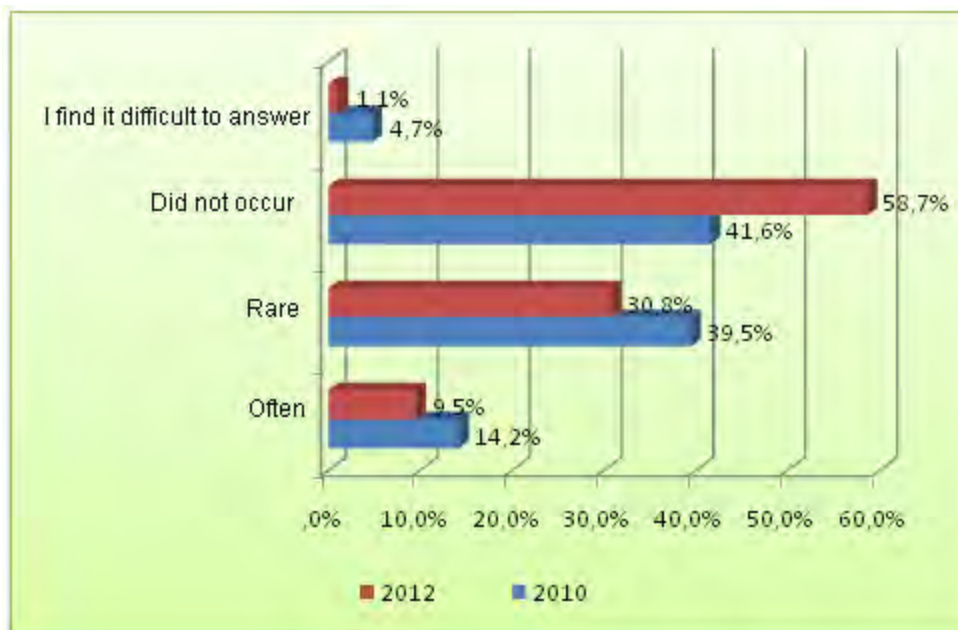
include the Barpy theatre rehabilitation and performance of new play –Neighbors”, parks rehabilitations, installation of traffic and street lights.

In Korgoshun-Talaa and Baryn, a new dam and mini-power stations contributed to the resolution of conflict between Kyrgyz and Uzbek villages over electric power and water resources. These were not KRTI-supported projects, but were further evidence that infrastructure improvements in the south often help reduce tension in communities.

«Kyrgyz argue with Kyrgyz and Uzbek argue with Uzbek mainly because of water and particularly in summer.”
Residents of Blagoveshenka village

Irrigation infrastructure, which KRTI supported exclusively in the south, also had an impact on interethnic relations. While, the tensions and conflicts addressed by these interventions are not exclusively of an ethnic nature, residents report a reduction in tensions and instability between and within villages. 22% of residents believe that the projects have contributed to friendly relationships between residents and villages.

Residents also noted that conflicts between villagers overall decreased significantly (according to 25.9% of respondents). 19.5% of respondents stated that conflicts between ethnic groups decreased, and 20.5% said the same about conflicts between neighboring villages. Among project group residents, only 41.6% of respondents reported no conflicts over water in their villages in 2010. However, this number grew to 58.7% in 2012.



Have there been conflicts over water in your community (project villages.)

The study found that the number of conflicts in the control villages was greater. Respondents in control villages report that the state of irrigation infrastructure leads to conflicts between water users, and also contributes to flooding and poor agricultural yields.

The North

The ethnic situation in northern communities is more stable than in the south, though significant issues still exist in places like Maevka. In Naryn, where grievances exist over

extractive industry activities, participants identified a KRTI-restored municipal park as a positive project that brought citizens together. In Bishkek, Talas and Chui oblasts, KRTI rehabilitated roads, a movie theater, sports complex, school and a soccer field that, according to respondents, was a positive opportunity for residents to work together for a common goal. In Maevka, where tensions remain high between ethnic Kyrgyz and ethnic Turks following 2010 clashes, KRTI rehabilitations helped to reduce tensions between ethnicities and improve the overall environment in the community. In addition, the rehabilitations bring people together from different communities to enjoy the infrastructure. In Bir-Bulak (Chui) for example, the renovated gym is popular not only among students, but also among youth from other communities who come together to play: “A new school soccer field school is very popular among students and adults. The rehabilitated movie theater is a home for various social and cultural activities,” according to Aibek, a resident of Talas.

«Rehabilitation of roads in Maevka was funded by the Project. People of various nationalities actively participated in construction works».

Natalia, Bishkek

Economic impact of improved irrigation infrastructure

Overall, 65% of residents in project villages attribute an improvement in the quality of life to the implementation of a KRTI supported irrigation project. Only 37.2% of residents in control villages state that livelihoods have improved in the same time period. In project villages, as much as 30% of previously un-irrigated land was put back to use. Residents who reported an increase in agricultural output, estimated that they earned an additional 10-15 thousand KGS per family. However, only larger landholders benefited from improvements. Farmers with land less than 1 hectare, or 57.1% of respondents, did not report a significant increase in crop output. However, 39.5% of respondents reported that their productivity increased by 30%.

Moderator: “What is your income this year?”

Respondent from Ylai-Talaa village: “10,000 [KGS] from 20 hundred square meters.”

Moderator: “What was your income before the dam construction?”

Respondent from Ylai-Talaa village: “Almost nothing, I used the land as a hay land.”

30% of respondents reported that they personally received economic benefits from the project through irrigation infrastructure through short term employment. This not only had a positive impact on family livelihoods, but also potentially reduced conflicts by providing young people and other vulnerable groups productive outlets and economic incentives. While increased agricultural output certainly has a positive impact on local economies, there is still a trend toward livestock rearing over farming in both control and project villages. Residents also cite remittances as a major source of income. This indicates that while farming outputs have increased, it still makes up an increasingly smaller portion of family incomes. Families do not seem to be moving back toward farming, in spite of improved irrigation resources.

“When there was no dam, we had a lot of water issues. It led to disputes and fights. People used to drink alcohol, farming became unprofitable since there was no water, and the unemployment rate was high.”

Resident of Ylai-Talaa Village

Safety and Security

Over a three-year period, KRTI partnered with local authorities to repair street lights in several southern towns to bolster feelings of safety and security among citizens. Similarly, dilapidated traffic lights resulted in high numbers of traffic accidents that often

spiraled into violent conflict. To improve the situation KRTI initiated projects with local authorities and local municipal works departments in southern cities to repair or replace traffic lights and pedestrian crosswalks. An unintentional consequence of many of these projects was reduced corruption by police. According to M Vector, in all 11 KRTI project and non-project communities, focus group participants indicated that the population avoids contact with the police, considering it corrupted and unjust. Many complaints were received from Uzbek participants in particular.

The South

48.5% of respondents indicated an increased sense of safety in the south over the past 3 years, since the 2010 events. Respondents were asked to describe the factors they believe have affected the security situation. More than 70% of respondents from KRTI-project communities indicated that KRTI rehabilitations improved local security. According to focus groups, the security situation improved in Uzgen, Osh, Jalalabad, and Nookat after the installation of street lights. Crime also reportedly decreased in many of these communities. Osh residents reported that rehabilitated municipal parks became safer following KRTI's support, and are now popular recreation areas among residents: "Rehabilitated infrastructure has changed the security situation in the city for the better. Recreation and entertainment areas and centers are extremely popular among people."⁹⁵ In addition, traffic and pedestrian safety increased and accidents – and conflicts over accidents – decreased in communities where KRTI rehabilitated traffic and pedestrian lights: "Rehabilitated street lighting has contributed to increasing of safety in our city. In some areas of the city roads are repaired."⁹⁶

"Traffic lights and street lighting improved our lives. Vital issues are resolved"

Gulnara, Osh

"In our city, digital traffic lights have been installed... this has created a positive environment on our roads."

Akby, Osh

"I do not know whether UNDP or USAID helped to install street lighting in the city. It contributed to reduction of crime".

Anarkul Jalalabad

However, while KRTI's street lights projects improved security in these communities – with respondents reporting that people were no longer concerned about traveling after dark – there is limited evidence that the projects improved trade recovery since all stores and shops still close around 8 or 9 pm.

The North

While KRTI did not fund traffic or streetlights in the north, other rehabilitation projects reportedly improved security. The use of rehabilitated parks in Bishkek, Talas, Naryn, and Bir-Bulak (Chui) significantly increased after KRTI's renovations, and crime diminished in Bishkek, Talas, and Bir-Bulak according to respondents.

⁹⁵ Interview with Gulmira, resident of Osh

⁹⁶ Interview with Raher, resident of Osh

Appendix 1

Case Study Notes

Supporting Reform in Judicial Selection

List of Interviews

- Association of Attorneys of Kyrgyzstan (AAK); Chynara Satkynalieva, Project Coordinator.
- Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society Interview (CDCS); Dinara Oshurakhunova, Director.
- Institute of Public Analysis Interview (IPA); Rita Karasartova, Director.
- Council on the Selection of Judges (CSJ); Shamara Maychiev, Director.
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Centre in Bishkek; Fabio Piana, Senior Human Dimension Officer.
- USAID International Development Law Organization (IDLO); Mr. Akylbek Mamykeev, Project Coordinator.

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The following media articles also informed the case study:

Civic Council on the control over judicial system opens public reception
<http://eng.24.kg/community/2011/08/05/19596.html>

Precedent head requests Kyrgyzstan's president not to accept lists of candidates to the Supreme Court and the Constitutional Chamber

<http://eng.24.kg/community/2011/08/05/19600.html>

I still have many questions to work of members of Judges Selection Council - Roza Otunbayeva

<http://eng.24.kg/community/2011/08/10/19662.html>

If Kyrgyzstan's Parliament doesn't elect worthy judges then the people will topple you – Rita Karasartova

<http://eng.24.kg/politic/2011/08/15/19737.html>

70 per cent renewal of the judiciary of Kyrgyzstan does not mean that the judicial system has become transparent and open - Rita Karasatova

<http://eng.24.kg/politic/2011/08/24/19917.html>

Kyrgyz citizens most often complain about the Supreme Court's work - Aigul Dzhunushalieva

<http://eng.24.kg/community/2011/09/27/20564.html>

Aigul Dzhunushalieva: There was only one call to the "hotline" of the Civil Council on Monitoring the Judicial System

<http://eng.24.kg/politic/2011/10/11/20840.html>

Rita Karasartova: Collusion between the leaders of parliamentary factions in attempt to reform judicial system

<http://eng.24.kg/community/2011/10/13/20906.html>

Rita Karasartova: The civil society was unable to uphold independence of selection of the judicial manpower in Kyrgyzstan

<http://eng.24.kg/community/2012/03/13/23363.html>

Situation in Kyrgyzstan could be changed through judicial system reform – Rita Karasartova

<http://eng.24.kg/community/2012/03/16/23434.html>

The Law on Judges Selection that was signed by the President of Kyrgyzstan expanded its powers – Rita Karasatova

<http://eng.24.kg/community/2012/04/17/23907.html>

People in Kyrgyzstan don't trust judges because there is "phone" and "purse" law except for penal and civil law – Alexander Tiperov

<http://eng.24.kg/community/2012/04/24/24004.html>

Fight against corruption is perfunctory in Kyrgyzstan – Rita Karasartova

<http://eng.24.kg/community/2012/05/21/24342.html>

Judges Selection Council: calling for help

<http://eng.24.kg/community/2012/06/05/24590.html>

The formation of Kyrgyzstan's judiciary under new rules has reduced the role of the Judges Selection Council to a minimum – Rita Karasatova

<http://eng.24.kg/community/2012/07/23/25083.html>

Current court reform in Kyrgyzstan is profanation

http://www.akiyress.com//_en_news.php?id=133503

Civil council for court system oversight suggests additions to laws instead of dissolution of Council for Selection of Judges

http://www.akiyress.com//_en_news.php?id=74361

Civil sector to collect "incriminating evidence" on elected judges of Supreme Court and Constitutional Chamber

http://www.akiyress.com//_en_news.php?id=67961

Activity of citizens about situation of judicial reforms led to breakup of MPs' consciousness - MP Alymbekov

http://www.akiyress.com//_en_news.php?id=70981

Disciplinary Commission of Council of Judges "protects" colleague Bazarbekova - MP Alymbekov

http://www.akiyress.com//_en_news.php?id=71751

OSCE/ODIHR report recommends further reforms on judge selection in Kyrgyzstan

http://www.akiyress.com//_en_news.php?id=108531

Monitoring of judicial proceedings key instrument in increasing public trust, says Head of OSCE Centre in Bishkek

http://www.akiyress.com//_en_news.php?id=132895

OSCE to render technical support for court reform in Kyrgyzstan

http://www.akiyress.com//_en_news.php?id=133863

Candidates for judges give money to members of Judicial Selection Council – vice chairman of Supreme Court

http://www.akiyress.com//_en_news.php?id=134493

Ministry of Internal Affairs Reform

List of Interviews

- International Center Interbilim and Liberal Youth Alliance; Asyl Aitbaeva, Director; Timur Shaihutdinov, Head of Liberal Youth Alliance; and Urmat Kazakbaev, Liberal Youth Alliance.
- Central Asian Free Market Institute (CAFMI); Mirsuljan Namazaliev, Managing Director and Co-Founder of CAFMI.
- Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society (CDCS); Dinara Oshurakhunova, Head of CDCS.
- Ravshan Adbukaimov, Former MIA employee, Lawyer, Independent Security Expert for Civil Union
- KRTI; Jypar Bekeyeva, Program Development Officer for BIS237; and Eleonora Mamatova, Program Development Officer for OSH 116.
- Freedom House; Alnas Esengeldiev, Special Advisor and Lawyer for Freedom House.
- Civil Union For Reforms and Results Focus Group; Galina Davletbaeva, Committee of Students' Parents and Civil Union member; Atyr Abdrahmatova, Attorney and Civil Union member; and Timur Shaihutdinov, Head of Liberal Youth Alliance
- Saferworld; Samara Papieva, Civil Society Strengthening Project Coordinator

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SIAR Report. (2013, September). *The results of the survey on security and law enforcement agencies in Bishkek and Osh*.

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Basic ideas on police reform in Kyrgyzstan (rating-voting)

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheet/embeddedform?formkey=dDlqckF5SIRXaXFzOG95ZGRp%20%20NDVGR0E6MQ>

People in the reform: Civil society activists took up the transformation of the police

http://www.mk.kg/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4290:2012-03-21-16-47&catid=79:2011-07-19-17-30-52

Kyrgyz Interior Ministry reform should start with the indiscriminate firing of police officers led by Minister

<http://www.polit.kg/conference/5/139>

Why does police reform appear to have been more successful in Georgia than in Kyrgyzstan or Russia?

<http://pipss.revues.org/3964>

BIS237/OSH116 Upholding Public Participation in Decision Making: Ministry of Internal Affairs

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/krti/sets/72157632015708110/with/8186721341/>

Kyrgyzstan's president calls for OSCE support to Interior Ministry reform

<http://www.osce.org/pc/78568>

In Bishkek, the activists propose major changes to the Interior Ministry

<http://www.knews.kg/ru/society/19702/>

The government will establish a commission to develop a new concept of reforming the MIA system based on two existing projects

<http://kg.akipress.org/news:562248>

J. Satybaldiev: Civil union "for reform and the result is" bound to be taken into account in the reform of MIA in Kyrgyzstan

<http://kg.akipress.org/discus:569097>

<http://reforma.kg/articles/view/50>

Civil society activists in Osh and Jalal-Abad discussed proposals on police reform in Kyrgyzstan

<http://fergana.akipress.org/news:171501>

Activists of Osh and Jalal-Abad suggested to check the level of intelligence MUP
<http://www.knews.kg/ru/society/10791/>

Activists say the creation of the Civil Union "For reforms and results", which aims to reform the Ministry of Internal Affairs
<http://www.knews.kg/ru/society/11313/>

Prime Minister J. Satybaldiev: In reforming the Interior Ministry civil society should take an active part
<http://www.gov.kg/?p=19027>

Civil union "for reform, and the result" presented the final version of the concept of Alternative police reform
<http://www.knews.kg/ru/society/12816/>

Kyrgyzstan has started collecting signatures for fundamental reforms in the Interior Ministry
<http://www.knews.kg/ru/society/13053/>

Aziza Abdirasulova: "Only the withdrawal of employees from the staff will empty the Ministry of Internal Affairs"
<http://www.knews.kg/society/13568/>

Ravshan Abdukarimov: In the reform of the Interior Ministry, many representatives of interested government agencies and the police themselves
http://www.knews.kg/action/14013_ravshan_abdukharimov_v_reforme_mvd_zainteresovani_mnogie_predstaviteli_gosorganov_i_sami_militsionery/

Mirsulzhan Namazaliev: "The result of the implementation of alternative concepts police reform will not take long"
<http://www.knews.kg/ru/columnist/15426/>

Activists say the concept of reforming the Interior Ministry unfinished and devoid of logic
<http://www.knews.kg/ru/society/18523/>

The activists began collecting signatures in support of an alternative conception of police reform
<http://www.knews.kg/ru/society/22871/>

Timur Shaikhutdinov: Reform the Ministry of Interior without refresh rate - it is impossible
<http://vof.kg/?p=4725>

Kyrgyz Interior Ministry reform should start with the indiscriminate firing of police officers led by Minister
<http://www.polit.kg/conference/5/139>

Aziz Isa: "The confidence index of the population should be the main criterion for evaluation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs"
<http://www.knews.kg/ru/society/13066/>

Society: Digest this week

http://www.knews.kg/digests/13190_obschestvo_daydiest_za_nedelyu/

Expert: "We need to revive the United Center on Crime Prevention"

<http://www.knews.kg/society/13629/>

Lawyer Atyr Abdrahmatova: "We need a body that will monitor the effectiveness of the Ministry of Internal Affairs"

http://www.knews.kg/society/14389_yurist_atyir_abdrahmatova_nujen_organ_kotoryiy_budet_sledit_za_effektivnostyu_raboty_mvd/

Data on the size, structure and budget of Ministry of Internal Affairs may be declassified

<http://www.knews.kg/ru/politics/18129/>

The regions of Kyrgyzstan to discuss reform of the Ministry of Internal Affairs

<http://www.knews.kg/ru/society/19036/>

Activists and representatives of the Internal Troops discussed the upcoming reform of the Interior Ministry

<http://www.knews.kg/ru/society/19922/>

Every third citizen of the republic belongs to the police with hostility

<http://www.rg.ru/2012/04/12/pravo.html>

Kalicha Umuralieva: The success of the reforms - to bring together all stakeholders

<http://vof.kg/?p=4862>

In the regions of Kyrgyzstan will host public hearings on the alternative concept of police reform

<http://kabar.kg/society/full/36919>

Abdiev Quench-Aidarkul: "In the alternative concept of police reform must take into account the point of legal support by the police"

<http://www.kabar.kg/rus/law-and-order/full/37814>

Whether destined to be the new police Kyrgyzstan?

<http://vof.kg/?p=5974#more-5974>

Alternative concept of reforming the Ministry of Interior is growing in Kyrgyzstan

<http://www.kginform.com/ru/news/20121015/13573.html>

Kyrgyzstan: Bishkek Following Georgia's Lead on Police Reform

<http://www.eurasianet.org/node/64401>

Developing a Professional, Objective Media

List of Interviews

- Joint Industry Media Committee; Marina Kydyralieva, Chairman.
- Joint Industry Media Committee; Yelena Baranouski, Project Coordinator.
- M-Vector; Roman Pogojev, CEO.
- Vega Plus advertising agency; Lera Kasymalieva, Director.
- Dailer Group advertising agency; Vasily Usenko, Director.
- KRTI; Jyldyz Sattarova, Grants Manager.
- Graeme Moreland, Media Management Advisor/Consultant to KRTI.
- Office of the Vice Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic; Gulnura Toralieva, Freelance Journalist and Communications Director.
- USAID/OTI; Richard Haselwood, Country Representative for KRTI.

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Increasing Access to Multi-Language Media

List of Interviews

- Yntymak Radio; Kaarmanbek Kuluev, Director.
- KRTI; Asel Ikramova, Grants Manager.
- KRTI; Babur Bolshov, Program Development Officer.
- Information and Security Media Center; Shakhrukh Saipov, Director.
- KRTI; Lucien Lefcourt, Regional Manager.
- 5 anonymous “convenience sample” interviews July 20-24, 2013
- Radio Azattyk; Tolkun Umarliev, Uzbek-language journalist and Editor for Azattyk.
- Channel 7; Zalkar Anarbaev, Assistant Director.
- Additionally, interviews conducted by the report author in February 2011 with journalists and media experts in Osh were used as supplementary data:
- Osh Media Resource Center; Maksuda Atiev, Director.
- Eco-News Osh; Marif Panpinazarov, Director.
- Stanislav Polishuk, Freelance journalist in Osh
- AKIPress Osh; Ziakan Pasanova, Journalist and Editor.

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Support & Tools for Inclusive and Transparent Local Governance

List of Interviews

- Infosistema; Talant, Azat, Nurlan and Aibek, staff members.
- Center for Public Policy (CPC), Ahmat Nizamovich.
- Union of Local Self Government; Jalalbek Torogeldievich.
- Focus Group in Aravan, including members of aiyl okmotu, Public Advisory Board, and local deputies.
- Focus Group with community members, mediators, Public Advisory Board members, and aiyl okmotu and kenesh members from Masy, Shaidan and Kochkor-Ata (OSH074, OSH120).
- Focus Group in Uzgen with community member and local government.
- NGO ABAD; Cholpon, Rabi, Ainura, and two coordinators.
- State Agency for Local Self Government and Inter-Ethnic Affairs; Representative.
- Ministry of Finance; Zootbek Kadyralievich, Representative.
- Academy of Management; Salikh Murzaev, Representative.
- Talas City Council; Aimira, Representative; Talas Local Government Monitoring Group, Aigul Sarieva, and Talas residents.
- Interview with BIS275 – Aigul Sarieva/BIS285 – Aimira.
- Coalition for Democracy; Altynbek Ismailov, Deputy Director.
- United Nations Development Program (UNDP); Damira Sabyrjanovna Sulpieva, Coordinator of Social Justice and Governance program.
- INTRAC; Charles Burton, Program Manager.
- World Bank, Mr. David Nummy, Senior Public Sector Specialist, and Zhanybek Ybrayim Uulu, Consultant.

Increasing the Legitimacy, Transparency, and Accountability of Urban Development

List of Interviews

- NGO Interbilim, Gulgaky Mamasalieva.
- NGO DIA, Avazkhan Ormonova.
- KRTI; Babur Bolshov, Program Development Office.
- Lawyer for Interbilim; Akhmedov Nusratillo.
- Osh City Vice Mayor for Economic Affairs, R. M **Mirzamatov**, Office on Construction, Architecture, Development and Reconstruction of the city.
- Osh Mayor's Office; Medet Burgoev, Municipal Department Unit.
- Open Media/JSC Impresso; Azim Azimov, Director.

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Appendix 2

Project Summaries

BIS108 – First Wave of Media Consumption Research: This activity will provide the resources necessary for a local research organization to conduct a baseline survey that determines audience's preferences and behaviors for radio listenership, television viewership and print readership throughout Kyrgyzstan. The survey will provide quantitative data and analysis on citizen perceptions of Government recovery and reconstruction activities as well as household demographic information. The analysis generated will help to enhance decisions made by media managers that adapt to the needs of their target audiences, thereby improving business practices in the media sector. In addition, the research product will allow Government press relations staff to craft communications strategies that take into account citizen media preferences and behaviors, and therefore improve the efficiency of Government public outreach activities.

BIS111 – Socio-Economic Mapping and Conflict Analysis of Southern Kyrgyzstan: Given the lack of reliable information and the divergent perceptions of the sources of instability in southern Kyrgyzstan, this activity seeks both to mitigate conflict and improve governance by identifying potential tensions in key conflict-prone communities. This activity will provide a comprehensive overview of the socio-economic issues that are at the root of tension and conflict within the Kyrgyz Ferghana Valley. By synthesizing existing research and gathering micro and macro-level socio-economic information, through a variety of complementary methodologies, international NGO ACTED will produce an analysis and a series of interactive, multi-layered maps of the targeted area. This study will inform programming and magnify the impact of all domestic and international actors working to mitigate conflict, support good governance, and promote stability in southern Kyrgyzstan.

BIS141 – Building Trust between Local Government and their Constituency: This grant seeks to increase citizen confidence in local government by improving overall budget transparency and efficiency. Recent data suggests that despite an overarching lack of confidence in national government, a relatively small percentage of the population considers corruption at the local level to be a major problem. While citizens do value and trust local government more than national government, most know little about local budgeting, even fewer are involved in the process, and nearly half of the citizens know nothing about the role of their local authorities. This activity will support Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia (EFCA) to train 1,266 local government officials and civil society representative from 197 communities (191 villages and six cities) in transparent and inclusive budgeting and hold hearings in 397 communities across Kyrgyzstan on the public budget. This project will more than double the impact of an ongoing project being funded by the World Bank in partnership with Kumtor Operating Company. This is an opportunity for representatives of local government (Aiyl Okmotu), local councils (Aiyl Kenesh), and civil society representatives to improve the inclusiveness and effectiveness of local budgeting processes and engage their constituencies in public budget hearings resulting in more transparent local budgets aligned with community priorities. Such improvements will increase citizen confidence in and the relevance of local governance structures and improve service delivery at the local level.

BIS159 – Promoting Accountability for the Judge Selection Process: This grant will improve accountability of the court system by increasing stakeholder and citizen awareness of and engagement in the process of nominating, screening and selecting judges in August and September 2011. The judiciary in Kyrgyzstan is currently in the process of recruiting judges for their local, supreme and constitutional courts. The Judges Screening Committee (JSC) has been formed to administer the process of nominating and selecting judges at all levels. After members of the JSC both failed to convince the public of transparent selection practices and allegedly violated a number of Kyrgyz laws, there has been public criticism of incompetence and impartiality in the JSC. To respond to this crisis of trust, on 22 July 2011, the President of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society established the Citizen's Council to Control Court System (CCCCS). The CCCCCS is a voluntary union of 14 civic activists, businessmen and lawyers committed to ensuring the transparency and accountability of the JSC. This grant will support CCCCCS's initiative to inform the public about the formation of the country's judicial institutions through a nation-wide media campaign and to engage citizens in the nomination of judges through the establishment of a telephone hotline. The hotline will allow

citizens across the country to report abuses about judges that have been nominated for positions. This activity will improve inclusive governance by enhancing accountability of the court system. It supports peaceful transition of the country, by confirming a commitment to transparency and rule of law, building trust in government among citizens.

BIS172 – Promoting SMS Hotline on Election Violations: This activity will support a nation-wide media campaign on television and radio to promote an SMS hotline on election violations to increase citizen awareness of and engagement in the process of monitoring election violations to promote accountability of the democratic process. The Civil Initiative for Internet Policy (CIIP) has been coordinating with the Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society and NGO Taza Shailoo to solicit reports on election violations from over 2,000 long term observers deployed throughout the country. The reports received from the observers through SMS messages become available on an Ushahidi-based website <<http://map.inkg.info>>. The CIIP also uses the long term observers in the fields to verify SMS information received from voters on their short code - 4414. However, voters have submitted only a few SMS reports so far because of the system's lack of visibility to the general public. To ensure that the general public is aware of how to submit reports about election violations, the service provided by CIIP must be publicized throughout the country. This grant will support a nation-wide media campaign on television and radio to promote an SMS hotline on election violations aimed at informing the CIIP report on violations. By engaging more citizens in the process of election monitoring, this activity will boost the capacity of civil society to play their role in the democratic process, while improving overall citizen confidence in the legitimacy of the democratic process in the Kyrgyz Republic.

BIS183 – Promoting Accountability for the Judge Selection Process – II: This grant will improve legislation that regulates the formation and functioning of the court system and increase citizen's awareness of and engagement in the process of nominating, screening and selecting judges in January and February 2012 to promote accountability of the process. In the fall of 2011, OTI supported a three-month initiative to inform the public about the formation of the country's judicial institutions through a nation-wide media campaign and to engage citizens in the nomination of judges through the establishment of a telephone hotline. Information received through the hotline was systemized and presented to the government and the president of the Kyrgyz Republic with the aim to improve legislation on court system and to inform the process of selection of judges for the Supreme Court. The public advocacy campaign informed by the hotline has contributed to a thorough selection of judges in which the president acted as a check against unbiased selection resulting in only few judges passing the examination. This led to a president vetoed law on the selection of judges and a request for the Citizen's Council to Control Court System (CCCCS) to provide observation-based recommendations to improve the selection process. This grant will further support the CCCCCS to improve legislation that regulates the formation and functioning of the court system and increase citizen's awareness of and engagement in the process of nominating, screening and selecting judges in January and February 2012 to promote accountability of the process. The grant will improve inclusive governance by enhancing accountability of the court system. This will have positive long-term effects in supporting Kyrgyzstan's transition to a democratic country, by confirming a commitment to transparency and the rule of law, thereby building trust in government among the citizenry. The grantee will cover the cost of travel for seven observers, rent of the public reception office for three months and stationary.

BIS225 – Strengthening Local Government Service Delivery through Practical Guide: This activity seeks to improve and expand delivery of key government services among local government offices by developing and distributing a Practical Management Guide to the heads of local government (aiyl okmotu) and the deputies of local councils (Keneshes), and strengthening their effective management skills in a delivery of public services through training on the use of the manual. In a relatively short period of time, Kyrgyzstan has undergone significant changes in leadership not just at the national level, but also throughout regional and local government offices. Many of these new officials at the local administration level lack the management and legislation expertise as well as the knowledge, and skills, necessary for working for and with

different groups of citizens of their territory, especially those representing multi-ethnic, multicultural communities with high potential for conflict. The Public Foundation (PF) –Center for Public Policy,” which works closely with the Union of Local Self-Governments of the Kyrgyz Republic, has received many requests from recently-elected heads of aiyl okmotu and elected deputies of local Keneshes to consult with them on legislation, management, communication, conflict management, and strategic planning. With local elections taking place throughout the summer and fall, this is a prime opportunity to build the capacity of newly elected local government officials, as well as those currently in office, to provide key services to their constituents. This grant will cover salary of three experts/trainers and one manager to develop a Practical Management Guide for the heads of local government and deputies of local Keneshes - 2700 copies of the manual will be printed in total, 1270 in Kyrgyz and 1420 copies in Russian and distributed to the heads of local government (aiyl okmotu) and deputies of local council. The manual will integrate data from needs assessment conducted within the framework of the International Republican Institute (IRI) project in Karakol, Tyup, Osh and Mady. The grantee PF –Center for Public Policy” will distribute the printed guide throughout the country in coordination with UNDP’s local deputy capacity-building project and IRI and will conduct trainings for heads of local government (aiyl okmotu) and local Kenesh deputies in seven regions of the country. By helping local government officials understand current legislation and key responsibilities, as well as important, effective management, communication, and strategic planning techniques, this activity will support capacity building of heads of local ail okmotu to promote responsive and inclusive governance at the local level during a critical window of opportunity during the political transition.

BIS237 – Upholding Public Participation in Decision Making: Ministry of Internal Affairs: This grant will support efforts to persuade the Jogorku Kenesh to consider civil society’s recommended reforms to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). The violence in April and June 2010, and the aftermath of these events, demonstrated the ineffectiveness and corruption within the MIA, and highlighted the need for dramatic reform. In September 2011, the government of the Kyrgyz Republic established an interdepartmental committee, composed of relevant government and civil society representatives, to draft a reform proposal for the MIA. During this process suggestions of civil society were ignored by the interdepartmental committee, resulting in their ultimate withdrawal and the establishment of the Civic Alliance for Reforms and Changes, an informal association of experts and stakeholders from 21 different civil society organizations throughout Kyrgyzstan. According to the group, it is imperative that their recommendations are considered by the Jogorku Kenesh prior to the adoption in autumn 2012 of the unilateral reform bill proposed by the Ministry. These two complementary activities (BIS237 & OSH116) will support the Public Foundation Liberal Youth Alliance and International Center Interbilim to launch a nation-wide advocacy campaign to collect the necessary 10,000 signatures that will require parliament to consider their recommendations. Specifically this activity will fund 4 public meetings (seven total nationwide in each oblast), 8 community meetings (17 total nationwide) and nation-wide signature collection campaign. It will also consist of the translation of the reform proposal into Kyrgyz and Russian, broadcasting a series of Public Service Announcements, launching a web site, and printing and distribution of a newsletter on the subject. Costs will also include materials, transportation, and incentives for volunteer canvassers. By supporting this grant activity, it will help to encourage inclusive decision-making in parliament and support civil society’s efforts to hold the Ministry of Internal Affairs more accountable and transparent to citizens.

BIS239 – Promoting Accountability for the Supreme Court Judge Selection Process: This grant will support civil society’s continued engagement on the judge selection process, and boost transparency and accountability of the Supreme Court judges’ screening and selection process during the summer of 2012. In late 2011 and early 2012, KRTI supported two initiatives of the Citizen’s Council to Control Court System (CCCCS) to conduct a nation-wide media campaign to inform and engage the public in the ongoing national judge selection process – a process that civil society observers identified as being fraught with irregularity and a lack of professionalism. The campaign resulted in the president’s canceling and reinitiating a more accountable and

transparent process. Information received through the hotline was systematized and presented to the government and the president of the Kyrgyz Republic with the aim to improve legislation on court system and to inform the process of selection of judges for the Supreme Court. The public advocacy campaign informed by the hotline has contributed to a thorough selection of judges in which the president acted as a check against unbiased selection resulting in only few judges passing the examination. This led to a president vetoed law on the selection of judges and a request for the CCCCS to provide observation-based recommendations to improve the selection process. This grant will further support the CCCCS to increase citizen's awareness of the process of screening and selecting judges from July to September, 2012 and to promote accountability of the process. This grant will cover costs to support four observers, two lawyers and one project coordinator to monitor the Supreme Court judge application process until the 35 judges are selected in September 2012, and fund four press conferences to publicize the court formation process. The grant will support rule of law by improving impartiality, professionalism, accountability and transparency of the court system.

BIS247 – Piloting Training with Local Government, Min of Finance/Infosystema - okmot.kg:

This activity will pilot a training module to increase the active use of the new web portal, www.okmot.kg, by businesses, local government officials, and civil society actors in targeted Aiyi Okmotus (AOs). By regularly uploading and accessing financial data AO officials can use the portal as a financial management tool for daily accounting and tracking of revenues collected and spending; private sector users can more transparently access and respond to information about ongoing public tenders and procurement on this central e-procurement hub. Despite recent gains, corruption in government procurement remains rampant in Kyrgyzstan and public knowledge of budget allocations and spending is limited. In partnership with the Ministry of Finance, the ministry's Public Advisory Board (PAB), the state institution "Infosystema" developed the web-portal for e-procurement, open budgeting, and to map the distribution of budgetary allocations across state agencies and local government. The creation of the web-portal is a step in the right direction toward greater accountability and transparency; however, local governments, civil society, businesses and the general public are unfamiliar with the tool and how to use it. The grantee, Alliance for Budget Transparency, is a group of 16 NGOs committed to greater budget transparency and a constructive relationship with the Ministry of Finance. This activity will cover costs to hold six training sessions for government officials, civil society, business associations and the public, provide on-the-job coaching for 15 AOs in three rayons, and produce and distribute 20,000 brochures and 1000 video manuals on DVDs promoting the state-owned web-portal. The materials will be distributed to AOs, local government, civil society and relevant businesses. This activity is leveraging Soros Foundation resources and efforts to raise awareness of the web-portal through national PSAs. It builds on BIS225, which also supports capacity building of heads of local government officials to promote responsive and accountable governance. This project is supporting innovative national government efforts toward greater accountability and transparency, kick-starting much needed reforms in the government fiscal sector, and encouraging greater constructive engagement with civil society through national public advisory boards.

BIS257 – Supporting Transparent Judicial Selection Practices for Ranking Judge Applicants:

This project will promote transparency in the Judge selection Process by continuing, without interruption, the use of a computerized scoring system and the public posting of the computerized rankings and voting records on the Judicial Selection Council's website, while bringing together civil society and the Judge Selection Committee to jointly improve the process for judge selection. During the summer of 2012, the JSC of the Kyrgyz Republic, which is supported administratively by the Court Department under the Supreme Court of the Kyrgyz Republic, initiated and piloted on borrowed equipment, a unique system whereby its 24 council members used a locally-developed computer software program to rank applicants on their capacity as potential judges of the 35-member Supreme Court. The rankings and voting records of all members of the JSC are posted and available to the public on the JSC's web-site created. The borrowed computers had to be returned to the civil society entity that loaned them to the JSC, leaving the JSC without computers to rank and vote on candidates, risking an interruption in the selection process as well

as a lack of consistency in ranking and voting. To ensure transparent practices are used consistently throughout the judge selection process, this project will provide 25 computers to be shared by members of the Judicial Selection Council for ranking and voting in the judge selection process. The computers will be managed by the Asset Unit under Court Department according to an established system established and agreed upon in advance. To complement this provision of equipment, the JSC and civil society watchdogs will meet to determine criteria for JSC performance evaluations, which has been a request from both actors. This project will serve as one critical step of a longer and sustained process to support rule of law by improving impartiality, professionalism, accountability and transparency of the court system.

BIS269 – Investigating Citizen Access to Urban Development Plans: This activity will help civil society use video to generate discussion among Bishkek and communities about access to, and implementation of, urban development plans. Additionally it is building grantee capacity for investigative journalism through an experiential learning. Citizens throughout the country have limited or no access to urban development planning documents, known as “Master Plans”. City residents have not been able to review Master Plans, question planning decisions and provide feedback from districts scheduled for changes in infrastructure. As a result, rumors spread throughout Bishkek and Osh about corrupt development deals and discrimination against ethnic minorities. Few journalists are willing to explore this under-reported and controversial issue. This project will cover production costs of a 15-20 minute investigative short-form documentary on Bishkek and Osh urban development plans. The documentary film will be used by the NGO “Interbilim” as a tool to spark community discussions in Osh about implementation of the Master Plan, as well as by activists in Bishkek focusing on related issues. Through this activity, KRTI will increase access to reliable information about local government city planning and infrastructure development activities in Kyrgyzstan.

BIS275 – Increasing Dialogue between Talas City Council and Citizens: This activity will increase citizen engagement and dialogue with the newly elected Talas City Council (TCC) by revolutionizing public meetings through opening the agenda and sessions to public questions and comments on key issues and decisions. The recent local elections in November 25, 2012 serve as a window of opportunity to encourage transparent decision-making by the City Council and active citizen engagement in local self-governance. Absence of understanding among citizens of the inner-workings of their city government and poor public engagement by the City Council are major stumbling blocks towards the legitimization of democratic local governance in Talas, which has been a hot spot of the violent political protests in 2010 and continuous mining conflicts. The grant will provide shorthand equipment, 11 microphones and speakers, seats, two computers, a printer and projector to the TCC as well as renovate a hall of the TCC building to conduct regular monthly open sessions with citizen participation. Complemented by BIS285, this activity will support transparency, accountability, and inclusive decision-making of the Talas City Council, a key institution to the democratic transition process at the local level and help them provide better oversight to the executive body of the municipal government.

BIS281 – Rehabilitating Local Crime Prevention Centers - Talas LCPC #2: This activity will increase the effectiveness of the Talas District Local Crime Prevention Center (LCPC) #2 to receive and respond to citizens who raise public safety/security issues, and increase public attendance at weekly community meetings with residents and local police officers. The active Talas LCPC #2 lacks office space and reasonably sized conference rooms, and as a result, cannot fully engage the community in its activities. This grant will rehabilitate office space in the Territorial District office, and provide furniture and equipment to the Talas LCPC. Previously designed by OSCE LCPC materials, such as brochures, will be updated by the grantee to promote the LCPC’s activities. The activity will allow the LCPC to continue to encourage dialogue between constituents and police that mitigate tensions over contentious issues in Talas city while helping improve public safety and security in Talas city and will pair with self-assessment.

BIS284 – Rehabilitating Local Crime Prevention Centers - Balykchi LCPC #2: This activity will increase the effectiveness of the Balykchi District Local Crime Prevention Center (LCPC) #2 to

receive and respond to citizens who raise public safety/security issues, and increase public attendance at weekly community meetings with residents and local police officers. The active Balykchi LCPC #2 operates in a dilapidated office space which makes it difficult to conduct private and community meetings simultaneously, and as a result, cannot fully engage the community in its activities. This grant will rehabilitate office space in the Territorial District office, and provide furniture and equipment to the Balykchi LCPC. Previously designed by OSCE LCPC materials, such as brochures, will be updated by the grantee to promote the LCPC's activities. The activity will allow the LCPC to continue to encourage dialogue between constituents and police that mitigate tensions over contentious issues in Balykchi city while helping improve public safety and security in Balykchi city and will pair with self-assessment.

BIS285 – Strengthening a Local Government Monitoring Group in Talas: This activity will build up Local Working Group (LWG) to serve as a local government watchdog organization by monitoring the newly-elected Talas City Council as it works to increase direct citizen engagement and dialogue by opening up meetings for residents to question and comment on key issues and decisions. The November 2012 local elections provided a window of opportunity to encourage newly elected officials to engage in transparent decision-making processes and active citizen engagement in local self-governance. In Talas City, most residents struggle to understand the role and operations of their city government, and the City Council's poor public engagement efforts are major stumbling blocks for the legitimization of the democratic local governance in Talas, which is a hot spot for mining conflicts, and was the source of violent political protests in 2010. This grant will provide one desktop computer, laptop, camera, and projector to facilitate the LWG's monitoring of the Talas City Council. Complemented by BIS275, this activity will support transparency, accountability, and inclusive decision-making of the Talas City Council, a key institution to the democratic transition process at the local level, and build up the role of civil society to engage with local government.

BIS290 – Advisory Services for Expanding Use of Media Audience Behavior and Perceptions: This activity aims to help media outlets in the Kyrgyz Republic better use media consumption research to make business decisions in programming, scheduling, marketing, and advertising sales. KRTI recently supported three waves of media research in the Kyrgyz Republic, however media outlet managers still lack the skills and knowledge needed to apply the research data to their immediate jobs and business decisions. This prevents the media research from being used effectively by the key media market players. This project will provide STTA support through a Media Management Advisor to conduct a presentation, four consultations and two workshops for targeted media managers. The STTA's work will complement BIS249, BIS268 and BIS272. As a result, this project will help establish the regular use of media research among media outlets in order to boost financial independence and better provide more reliable, unbiased, and objective information for viewers and constituents.

BIS291 – Providing STTA Support to Develop Consultative and Participatory Bishkek Urban Development: This activity will initiate an inclusive urban planning approach whereby the Bishkek City Council and its citizens engage in a transparent, participatory and constructive dialogue regarding the Bishkek urban development strategy. The Bishkek City Development Strategy provides a five-year roadmap for city officials to follow in developing the infrastructure of the country's capital city. Following the expiration of the previous strategy in 2012, the newly elected Bishkek City Council has formed a working group to design a new urban development strategy with the involvement of local experts and active citizens. Still, the working and expert groups lack experience in developing such a strategy while engaging the public and meeting international city development norms. The grant will provide technical assistance to the Bishkek City Council working group to jointly design a Bishkek urban development strategy that has buy-in from the city council and citizens, and is consistent with international city development practices. The Participatory Urban Development Advisor will conduct workshops with the working and expert groups as well as provide guidance for the strategy development process. The Advisor will partner with New Independent Media and will support the Bishkek City Council in planning public discussions to solicit citizen feedback on the draft strategy. This project will encourage citizen-

government engagement processes for inclusiveness, responsiveness and transparency of policy making and service delivery.

BIS303 – Bolstering Effectiveness of City Kenesh Citizen Engagement through Trainings: This activity will bolster the effectiveness of local councils in holding open sessions with wider citizen engagement and information dissemination. The recent local elections on November 25, 2012, serve as a window of opportunity to encourage transparent decision-making by the City Council and active citizen engagement in local self-governance. The National Sustainable Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for the period of 2013-2017 highlights the importance of increasing professionalism and capacity building for the municipal service and improving accountability and role of bodies of local self-governments and their reporting to local communities. This activity will hire three local governance specialists and one assistant to assist local councils to develop and adopt citizen engagement procedures and regulations and prepare a six-month rollout implementation plan; and conduct practical seminars on holding open sessions in Naryn, Talas Kant and Karakol. Complemented by BIS275, BIS304, OSH144 and OSH215, this activity will support capacity building of city council deputies to promote responsive and inclusive governance at the local level during a critical window of political transition.

BIS307 – Improving Conflict Awareness and Prevention through LCPCs: This grant activity will leverage the rehabilitated workspace of two Local Crime Prevention Centers (LCPC) in Balykchi and Talas, in order to improve the capacity of targeted LCPCs to identify emerging crime and public safety issues, increase community awareness of the services and function of LCPCs, and improve LCPC engagement with citizens to deliver more professional and effective crime preventive services. LCPCs were established by decree in 2008 with the legal authority to carry out crime prevention activities within a neighborhood or territorial district to address growing distrust towards the law-enforcement bodies and court institutions which were perceived as corrupt by many citizens. These institutions advocate community security concerns, host Aksakal Courts and local Women's Committees, as well as provide a venue for informal community interaction with law enforcement bodies. However, the low outreach capacity of LCPC members and their weak community engagement results in reduced awareness of and public confidence towards the LCPC to actively prevent or respond to petty crime and other community security threats. This grant activity will support the Foundation of Tolerance International (FTI) to develop and deliver a comprehensive training program for members of the Balykchi LCPC #2 (BIS 284) and Talas LCPC #2 (BIS 284). FTI will conduct an assessment of the skills, experiences, and methods used by each LCPC to improve public safety and implement crime prevention activities, and design training modules that are customized for each location. By complementing the ongoing rehabilitation of LCPC facilities under BIS281 and BIS284, this activity will contribute to the ongoing dialogue between LCPCs and local law enforcement agencies. This activity helps respond to instability in these communities, increases the institutional capacity for local crime prevention and conflict mediation, and lays the groundwork for improvements in safety and security in northern regions of Kyrgyzstan.

OSH020 – Increasing Public Access to Post-Conflict Progress Reports: Osh and Jalalabad: This activity seeks to improve governance by enhancing the ability of ethnic communities to engage in public discussion of Government reconstruction and recovery programming in the South. Over an initial 12-week period, this activity will increase the distribution of "Mir Vashemu Domu" (Peace to Your House), a newsletter providing public information on current events and reconstruction programs that is disseminated to ethnic Uzbek, Kyrgyz and Russian communities in Osh, Jalalabad and Batken Oblasts as well as install 100 bulletin boards to post weekly issues in public space to counter rumors that exist regarding development projects ongoing in the area. Responding to the lack of credible information available to residents in these three key southern regions, the weekly newsletter will help to fill the void of credible news accessible by communities directly affected by the violent events of June 2010. The activity will be implemented in partnership with the Public Union Journalists, a journalist association currently working with the OSCE to produce the "Mir Vashemu Domu" newsletter.

OSH038 – Mitigating Conflict through Increased Access to Irrigation Water: Kara-Suu: This activity will minimize local tensions over access to limited water resources as Kara-Suu's communities prepare for the 2011 spring and summer harvests. Heavy rains and floods damaged the Kara-Suu district's Uvam irrigation canal system, used by Kyrgyz and Uzbek communities already traumatized and divided by the violence in June 2010. The resulting limited supply of water has undermined food production, reduced incomes, and is an emerging source of conflict between villages of varying ethnicities that will compete for these scarce resources in the upcoming growing season. This activity will finance the cost of hydro-engineering and mechanical excavation services to clean and rehabilitate 6 km of the Uvam canal which will impact 23,544 residents across 3,700 hectares of farm land in the Kara-Suu district. By leveraging more than \$278,000 through partnership contributions from the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Program, OTI will support the Union of Water Users Association Uvam to increase public access to irrigated water for enhanced agricultural production and complement an ongoing, community driven peace building project, thereby mitigating the potential for conflict in southern Kyrgyzstan.

OSH058 – Increasing Access to Information about Reconstruction Services in the South: This activity will increase citizen access to multi-lingual information about reconstruction and recovery activities across the south. Nearly a year after the fact, tensions remain heightened following last year's violence and the resulting humanitarian crisis, exacerbated by rampant rumors of inequitable access to services. Many citizens and experts decry the lack of accurate and credible information being reported and disseminated regarding reconstruction efforts by the government and international community, as well as the lack of locally-produced Uzbek language content and qualified journalists in the south. Building on OSH020, this activity will more than double the number of issues of the Public Association of Journalist's newsletter "Mir Vashemu Domu" (Peace to Your House) published and printed by a team of two editors and 10 journalists in partnership with OSCE. In addition to paying for the printing of 6000 weekly issues, this activity will cover the cost of having two additional journalists based in Batken and additional contracted staff members to ensure the timely distribution of the newsletter in targeted communities in all three southern Oblasts and Osh city, including posting it on 100 bulletin boards erected during the pilot phase from Nov 2010 to Jan 2011. By continuing to provide public information on current events and reconstruction in Uzbek, Kyrgyz and Russian, the weekly newsletter is helping to fill the void of credible news accessible by communities affected by last year's violence. This activity will improve access to reliable information across the south in an effort to reduce tensions about the progress of reconstruction, reduce the impact of rumors about the equitable or inequitable distribution of government and donor resources, and encourage community participation in the reconstruction and reconciliation decision-making processes.

OSH063 – Mitigating Conflict through Increased Access to Irrigation Water - Taldik Canal: This activity will minimize local tensions over access to limited water resources between volatile, mono-ethnic communities within the Shark, Nariman, Mady, Katta-Taldik and Joosh ayl okmotu districts of the Kara-Suu rayon and improve local government's capacity to manage water supply infrastructure along the Taldik irrigation canal. The dilapidated condition of the canal restricts the volume of water output and depressed budgets from local municipalities limit government's ability to restore the irrigation system's carrying capacity. Damage to the canal from floods in April 2010 resulted in a complete halt of water for downstream communities which has undermined food production, depressed incomes, and is an emerging source of conflict between villages of varying ethnicities that compete for these scarce water resources. Funds from this grant will support the Kara-Suu Water Management Department to revitalize the carrying capacity of the canal's main artery and reinforce it along the Taldik-Sai river bank to prevent future flood damage. OTI will leverage the expertise of Foundation for International Tolerance (FTI), a local partner with experience in mitigating localized conflict between communities in southern Kyrgyzstan, to organize and deliver five peace building and conflict resolution trainings that build the capacity of the Kara-Suu Water Authority and target AOs along the canal system to more effectively manage irrigation infrastructure and ensure an equitable distribution of water during the critical harvest months. This activity will mitigate potential conflict by improving equitable distribution of irrigation

water and increasing economic activity among volatile communities in the Kara-Suu Rayon. Increased access to water will improve agricultural yields and reduce competition for resources that can easily trigger a return to ethnic violence. By working together with their local authorities, residents will strengthen engagement with and increase public confidence in local government's capacity to deliver services and enhance agricultural production in southern Kyrgyzstan.

OSH071 – Extending Socio-Economic Mapping into Local Governance: This grant seeks to introduce socio-economic data for policy and budget planning purposes to aiyl okmotu (AO) local government districts in four pilot locations: Tash-Bulak, Masy, Nooken, and Chek-Abad. It will also expand the accessibility of the REACH socio-economic mapping platform as a planning tool for local government. The KRTI socio-economic and conflict analysis tool developed by the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) under OTI grant activity BIS111 has mapped more than 100 social and economic indicators of potential tension or conflict among all aiyl okmotu governance districts across southern Kyrgyzstan in an open online mapping system known as REACH. While widely available over the internet, access to the mapping tool and the database of indicators has not been presented to or fully integrated within local government offices. Funds from this grant will support ACTED to translate the REACH tool into the Russian and Kyrgyz languages and make an offline version accessible on DVD. ACTED will develop a pilot four-day training module to teach local AO offices and public advisory boards (PAB) to use the socio-economic data and maps to inform budgeting and policy development, deliver the module in four target communities AO districts followed by hands-on mentoring of the PABs to produce a proposal for their respective local officials to review, and produce a final report outlining the best practices for rolling out the mapping tool to additional local government districts in southern Kyrgyzstan. Moreover, ACTED will partner with Public Fund ABAD and extend the results of OTI grant OSH062 by building the capacity of PABs in pilot locations to access the mapping tool and participate in the planning process with aiyl okmotu offices. This activity helps to encourage responsive and inclusive governance in southern Kyrgyzstan by encouraging participatory decision-making based on accurate and reliable data and community priorities.

OSH074 – Increasing Access to Information about Local Government Fiscal Status: This grant seeks to introduce socio-economic data for policy and budget planning purposes to aiyl okmotu (AO) local government districts in four pilot locations: Tash-Bulak, Masy, Nooken, and Chek-Abad. It will also expand the accessibility of the REACH socio-economic mapping platform as a planning tool for local government. KRTI socio-economic and conflict analysis tool developed by the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) under OTI grant activity BIS111 has mapped more than 100 social and economic indicators of potential tension or conflict among all aiyl okmotu governance districts across southern Kyrgyzstan in an open online mapping system known as REACH. While widely available over the internet, access to the mapping tool and the database of indicators has not been presented to or fully integrated within local government offices. Funds from this grant will support ACTED to translate the REACH tool into the Russian and Kyrgyz languages and make an offline version accessible on DVD. ACTED will develop a pilot four-day training module to teach local AO offices and public advisory boards (PAB) to use the socio-economic data and maps to inform budgeting and policy development, deliver the module in four target communities AO districts followed by hands-on mentoring of the PABs to produce a proposal for their respective local officials to review, and produce a final report outlining the best practices for rolling out the mapping tool to additional local government districts in southern Kyrgyzstan. Moreover, ACTED will partner with Public Fund ABAD and extend the results of OTI grant Osh062 by building the capacity of PABs in pilot locations to access the mapping tool and participate in the planning process with aiyl okmotu offices. This activity helps to encourage responsive and inclusive governance in southern Kyrgyzstan by encouraging participatory decision-making based on accurate and reliable data and community priorities.

OSH078 – Magnifying Peace Building Fund Reconciliation and Canal Rehab Initiatives – Uvam: This activity will restore access to irrigation water for 24,615 residents in the Joosh, Shark, Mady aiyl okmotu districts of the Kara-Suu rayon, and magnify the impact of the UN-funded, FAO implemented Peace Building Fund 2 (PBF2) to reduce local tensions over access to limited

irrigation water and improve water supply infrastructure used within the Uvam federation of water users associations. Poor infrastructure within the Uvam irrigation system and uncontrolled water loss in unlined channels that are not cleaned or properly maintained result in reduced carrying capacity that limits access to irrigation water among residents of these target ayil okmotu districts. Lack of trust and confidence prevent farmers of different ethnicities from openly discussing water supply and management issues and working together within their respective water users associations (WUA) to resolve mutual problems. The reduced supply of water has undermined food production, reduced incomes, and is an emerging source of conflict between villages of varying ethnicities that will compete for these scarce resources in the 2012 growing season. This activity will finance the cost of deploying mechanical excavation services to clean 4.6 kilometers of the Ak-Dobo and Gudj-Gunam canals which will supply 24,615 residents with water to irrigate 2,900 hectares of farm land. By strategically deploying the OSH078, OSH79, and OSH080 grant activities, KRTI will leverage more than \$400,000 USD through partnership contributions from the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Program under PBF2, revitalize more than 18 kilometers of irrigation canals, increase production and household incomes of benefiting farmers, and help participating water users associations better ensure the equitable distribution of irrigation water to reduce tensions and mitigate conflict for 125,020 residents in the Kara-Suu rayon.

OSH079 – Magnifying Peace Building Fund Reconciliation & Canal Rehab Initiatives - Ak-Suu:

This activity will restore access to irrigation water for 59,500 farmer residents in the Nariman, Kashgar-Kyshtak and Ak-Tash ayil okmotu districts of the Kara-Suu rayon, and magnify the impact of the UN-funded, FAO implemented Peace Building Fund 2 (PBF2) to reduce local tensions over access to limited irrigation water and improve water supply infrastructure used within the Ak-Suu federation of water users associations. Poor infrastructure within the Ak-Suu irrigation system and uncontrolled water loss in unlined channels that are not cleaned or properly maintained result in reduced carrying capacity that limits access to irrigation water among residents of the Nariman, Kashgar-Kyshtak and Ak-Tash ayil okmotu districts. Lack of trust and confidence prevent farmers of different ethnicities from openly discussing water supply and management issues and working together within their respective water users associations (WUA) to resolve mutual problems. The reduced supply of water has undermined food production, reduced incomes, and is an emerging source of conflict between villages of varying ethnicities that will compete for these scarce resources in the 2012 growing season. This activity will finance the cost of deploying mechanical excavating and canal rehabilitation services to clean and restore 630 meters of the Yakkhalik, Gazy-4, Uzgen and Noviy Yakkhalik canals which will supply 59,500 farmer residents with water to irrigate 5,724 hectares of farm land. By strategically deploying the OSH078, OSH079, and OSH080 grant activities, KRTI will leverage more than \$400,000 USD through partnership contributions from the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Program under PBF2, revitalize more than 18 kilometers of irrigation canals, increase production and household incomes of benefiting farmers, and help participating water users associations better ensure the equitable distribution of irrigation water to reduce tensions and mitigate conflict for 125,020 residents in the Kara-Suu rayon.

OSH080 – Magnifying Peace Building Fund Reconciliation & Canal Rehab Initiatives – Yujniy:

This activity will restore access to irrigation water for 25,020 residents in the Shark, Mady, Katta-Taldyk, Nariman, Jany Alai, Otuz-Adyr and Kashgar-Kyshtak ayil okmotu districts, and magnify the impact of the UN-funded, FAO implemented Peace Building Fund 2 (PBF2) to reduce local tensions over access to limited irrigation water and improve water supply infrastructure managed by the Kara-Suu Water Management Department. Poor infrastructure within the Yujniy irrigation system and uncontrolled water loss in unlined channels that are not cleaned or properly maintained result in reduced carrying capacity that limits access to irrigation water among residents of these target ayil okmotu districts. Lack of trust and confidence prevent farmers of different ethnicities from openly discussing water supply and management issues and working together within their respective water users associations (WUA) and local government to resolve mutual problems. The reduced supply of water has undermined food production, reduced incomes, and is an emerging source of conflict between villages of varying ethnicities that will

compete for these scarce resources in the 2012 growing season. This activity will finance the cost of mechanical excavation and canal rehabilitation services to clean and rehabilitate more than 12.1 kilometers of the Yujniy canal system which will supply 25,020 residents with water to irrigate 3,525 hectares of farm land. By strategically deploying the OSH078, OSH079, and OSH080 grant activities, KRTI will leverage more than \$400,000 USD through partnership contributions from the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Program under PBF2, revitalize more than 18 kilometers of irrigation canals, increase production and household incomes of benefiting farmers, and help participating water users associations better ensure the equitable distribution of irrigation water to reduce tensions and mitigate conflict for 125,020 residents in the Kara-Suu rayon.

OSH091 – Rehabilitating Local Crime Prevention Centers – Turan: This activity will increase the effectiveness of the Turan District Local Crime Prevention Center to receive and respond to citizens who raise public safety/security issues, and increase public attendance at weekly community meetings with residents and local police officers. The Turan LCPC, located in a predominately Uzbek district of Osh city and established under article 14 of the Law "About crime prevention in the Kyrgyz Republic", serves as one form of mobilized citizen participation to increase trust and security and build relationships between constituents and police for the protection of law and order in local communities and neighborhoods. Although it has made progress to increase public safety and strengthen relationships between community residents and local law enforcement agencies, including a complete halt to arbitrary arrests and detentions of Uzbek residents following the June events from 2010, the Turan LCPC which is located in kindergarten #41 is in need of repair: the floor is warped and the walls are flaking, windows are broken and insecure, the electrical and heating systems do not work, and furniture and equipment belong to the city gas company or the local police. These conditions reduce the effectiveness of the Turan LCPC to efficiently and professionally receive citizens who would like to raise crime and public safety issues, and provide a more conducive conference area to hold weekly community meetings with residents and local police officers. This activity will allocate resources to support the rehabilitation of the LCPC's interior office, conference room, and small kitchen, replace the floor and windows, and install security bars behind each window, repair heating and electrical systems. It will also procure new office furniture, including four desks, a conference table with expanded seating, and a new desktop computer. Through rehabilitation and furniture procurement, this activity will help to improve public safety in Osh City, and continue ongoing dialogue between constituents and police to support effective law and order.

OSH105 – Rehabilitating Local Crime Prevention Centers – Manas-Ata: This activity will increase the effectiveness of the Manas-Ata District Local Crime Prevention Center (LCPC) to receive and respond to citizens who raise public safety/security issues, and increase public attendance at weekly community meetings with residents and local police officers. A nationwide network of LCPCs was established under the decree of the Ministry of the Interior Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic in 2008. Manas-Ata LCPC is located in a high-crime district of Osh city and serves as a venue and mechanism for citizens to engage in dialogue with police and highlight the most critical safety and security issues in the community. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)-supported Community Security Initiative (CSI) has identified the local LCPCs as a key institution to engage in their Community Security Working Groups. The Manas-Ata LCPC occupies a number of small rooms in the offices of the Manas-Ata Territorial Council and is in need of expanded workspace. The Osh municipal government has allocated additional premise located in the unfinished basement of a newly constructed multistory residential apartment building located in the Manas-Ata micro rayon. Funds from this grant activity will hire a local construction firm to renovate the basement, including separating the space into eight interior offices and individual meeting rooms for the aksakals council, women's council, and youth council, create a large conference room and one bathroom, and install electrical, water supply, and heating systems. The OSCE will complement the activity by purchasing information boards and new office furniture, including two safes, book shelves, a conference table with expanded seating following the rehabilitation. This activity will help to improve public safety and security in Osh city, and encourage ongoing dialogue between constituents and police to improve effectiveness

and accountability of the security sector. It is hoped that this project will serve as a key entry point for follow-on activities with KRTI.

OSH116 – Upholding Public Participation in Decision-Making: Ministry of Internal Affairs: This grant will support efforts to persuade the Jogorku Kenesh to consider civil society's recommended reforms to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). The violence in April and June 2010, and the aftermath of these events, demonstrated the ineffectiveness and corruption within the MIA, and highlighted the need for dramatic reform. In September 2011, the government of the Kyrgyz Republic established an interdepartmental committee, composed of relevant government and civil society representatives, to draft a reform proposal for the MIA. During this process suggestions of civil society were ignored by the interdepartmental committee, resulting in their ultimate withdrawal and the establishment of the Civic Alliance for Reforms and Changes, an informal association of experts and stakeholders from 21 different civil society organizations throughout Kyrgyzstan. According to the group, it is imperative that their recommendations are considered by the Jogorku Kenesh prior to the adoption in autumn 2012 of the unilateral reform bill proposed by the Ministry. This activity will support the Public Foundation Liberal Youth Alliance and International Center Interbilim to launch an advocacy campaign to collect the necessary 10,000 signatures that will require parliament to consider their recommendations. Specifically it will fund seven public meetings, 21 community meetings, one public forum, one public panel discussion, and nation-wide signature collection campaign. It will also consist of the translation of the reform proposal into Kyrgyz and Russian, producing and broadcasting a series of Public Service Announcements, launching a web site, and printing and distribution of a newsletter on the subject. Costs will also include materials, transportation, and incentives for volunteer canvassers. By supporting this grant activity, it will help to encourage inclusive decision-making in parliament and support civil society's efforts to hold the Ministry of Internal Affairs more accountable and transparent to citizens.

OSH120 – Increasing Access to Information about AO Services: This activity will increase, within six targeted communities, the number of citizen requests for information and substantive responses from local governments about official records, protocols and administrative procedures, tax data, and budget allocations. It will pilot a system that operationalizes legislation concerning citizen access to public information. In 2006, the national government passed the "Law on Access to Information Obtained by State Organs and Local Self-government Bodies" to ensure citizens the right to information about state structures and local self-government offices. During the implementation of previous OTI activity OSH074, Public Fund ABAD concluded that a widespread lack of knowledge of this law has contributed to a lack of awareness among the general public about the state's activity and this limits citizen participation in the decision making process. This inhibits public support for new laws or policies, increases citizen mistrust towards local authorities, and undermines confidence in government institutions. During the 2011 project, ABAD designed a sample information request form, which was later introduced to and approved by the national government in April 2012 for use at the national, oblast, rayon, and AO levels. Funds from this follow-on grant will support the salaries and transportation costs for four ABAD consultants to hold focus groups and public hearings in six AOs of Shaidan, Masy, Jany-Jol, Chek-Abad (Oktyabr), Aktam, and Sakaldy to identify constituents' priorities and obstacles to accessing public information. Simultaneously these consults will advise Public Advisory Board members and local government officials on how to facilitate and respond to citizen requests for information. Based on these processes, the activity will fund costs associated with developing and printing 4,200 brochures about the rights, obligations, and processes for requesting public information, and funds the costs of holding public hearings in target communities about the process. This project is helping to support transparent and accountable local government in southern Kyrgyzstan, promote substantive citizen engagement with local government, and increase citizen access to information to inform public decision-making.

OSH123 – Providing Legal Support for Monueva Street Residents: This grant will make available legal advice to Osh residents, including those with properties on Monueva street and other affected residents, to ensure that they receive fair compensation for their residence, land, and/or

commercial property, and the process of relocation does not compromise their rights as guaranteed by local and international law. In late April 2012, the Osh municipal government issued resolution #133 to extend and widen Monueva Street, a central artery through Osh. The rehabilitation will result in the demolition of 22 houses, reported to be occupied by 39 ethnic Uzbek families, including 132 individuals. There is speculation amongst the communities that Monueva Street would be a “test case” and that four to seven other streets would be subject to demolition in coming months. To date, 14 -19 of the households have signed compensation agreements with the Osh Mayor’s Office which consists of financial remuneration and land plots in the Amir-Temur territorial district. The remaining households have refused the agreements and oppose the compensation, stating that they are less than the true market value of their homes. Funds from this activity will support Interbilim, the lead organization on a commission comprised of municipal government departments and civil society organizations to represent the Monueva street residents, to hire two lawyers for three months to provide legal advice to Osh city residents whose homes are already targeted for demolition or who suspect their homes may be affected by similar city planning projects in the future. The project will lease a vehicle for both lawyers to visit with Osh city residents and make site visits to homes and residences targeted for demolition or potentially affected by the Master Plan, and organize a public hearing at a large venue in Osh city to raise awareness about the Monueva street expropriation problem and allow residents to ask questions and seek information about new city planning projects and the process to access financial compensation. Interbilim will contribute to this activity by allocating office space and equipment to the lawyers to provide legal outreach support. By supporting Interbilim through this initiative, this activity is helping to strengthen transparency and public decision-making within municipal processes for city planning and infrastructure improvement projects in southern Kyrgyzstan.

OSH141 – Increasing Citizen Engagement in the Public Budgeting Process: This activity will systematize and regularize engagement between local government and citizens via Public Advisory Boards (PABs) on local budgeting processes resulting in budgets that are better aligned with citizen priorities in eight targeted Aiyi Okmotu (AOs) of Osh, Batken and Jalal-Abad oblasts. In January 2012 decentralized fiscal authority was codified in law but has not been clarified for local level officials. Confusion among the AOs and PABs about their respective roles and responsibilities, as well as underdeveloped mechanisms that provide access to public information by citizens on the use of local government funds for public services, contribute to a lack of transparency in public budgeting and perceptions among citizens that local government is not adequately or appropriately doing its job. This grant will build on previous success with this type of activity (OSH074), by providing funds for “ABAD” to train and mentor representative of local government and PABs in each of eight targeted AO to use Community Based Performance Monitoring (CBPM), including using focus groups to identify citizen priorities, evaluating the quality of local government services through citizen surveys, and holding public hearings to present findings. Additionally ABAD will conduct additional outreach on the evaluation tool and process. This activity will support the printing and distribution of 150 manuals, funds necessary to support information sessions for stakeholders of 30 other AOs in the south. Funds will also go towards supporting a public hearing in Osh city for the representatives of the Regional Development Agency (formerly known as Agency for Local Self Governance), the Ministry of Finance and international organizations in order to present the evaluation tool used during the survey and the main issues facing community members and AO officials when making decisions based on the budgeting process. Funds will also cover salary of the project staff and trainers, transportation costs of project staff and training participants, stationary and presentation logistics costs, printing of manual and two desktop computers for ABAD. By systematizing and improving citizen engagement with local government over local budgeting and evaluation of services, this activity will leverage the impact of OSH074 by contributing to the improvement of local government services, responsiveness, transparency, and accountability of local self-government in southern Kyrgyzstan.

OSH143 – Protecting Access to Mogol Irrigation Canal – Uzgen & Kara-Kulja: This grant activity will ensure access to irrigation water and prevent disputes among the 12,255 farmers, who share

water from the Mogol irrigation canal, and who are irrigating 2,387 hectares of farmlands in Kura-Kulja and Uzgen rayons. This assistance will also enable the local government to develop its capacity to mitigate community conflict by better managing equitable access to the irrigation canal through the creation of a functioning water users committee. The walls of the irrigation canal, which run parallel to the Kara-Kulja River, are on the verge of being breached due to soil erosion after heavy rains and floods over several years. Depressed budgets from the Uzgen rayon government and principal water authority department have restricted investments for the maintenance and repair the canal for several years. The failure of the canal's wall will cut access to irrigation water for thousands of farmers, potentially instigating conflict between communities of Uzgen and Kara-Kulja rayons, as it would undermine food production and reduce household incomes. KRTI has worked previously with Uzgen water authorities, with significantly positive results (OSH083). Funds from this grant will support Rayon Water Authority Department to stabilize the earthen walls of the Mogol canal by installing 200 meters of gabion netting and stone, preventing collapse. This activity will help mitigate potential conflict by reducing concerns and competition over irrigation water, stimulating economic recovery among residents of the volatile communities in the Uzgen and Kara-Kulja rayons who farm and generate income from 2,387 hectares of land. Additionally it will help the local governments effectively respond to the prioritized needs of the community and pilot an innovative low-cost solution. The Rayon Water Department is matching KRTI with nearly 20% of the project's cost, or approximately \$15,000 USD.

OSH148 – Strengthening Traditional Court of Elders (Aksakal Courts) in Osh City: This grant activity will build the skills of the Aksakals Court in Osh and increase positive collaboration with district police through training. The tradition of listening and respecting elders and granting them authority and influence over community decisions remains important in southern Kyrgyzstan. The Aksakal Courts were created in newly independent Kyrgyzstan to serve as mediators in small community conflicts, often between feuding families. They are legally mandated to handle small disputes and petty crimes, but the lack of interaction and communication between the Aksakal Courts and local police limit their effectiveness in dealing with petty crimes. The Police's response to petty crimes is often seen as "heavy-handed", lacking transparency, and not working in the interest of the people, often resulting in community resentment towards the institution that is designed to protect and to serve. Aksakal Courts are further undermined by the high turnover and the unprofessionalism of members due to limited understanding of their legal role and the Kyrgyz Constitution, resulting in a general lack of confidence among residents. To increase the capacity and effectiveness of these courts, and improve their interaction with police, the Human Rights Advocacy Centre will develop guidance and informational booklets based on the Constitution for Aksakal Court Members, and conduct training for Court Members and District Police on improving collaboration between Aksakals Court and District Police. Funds from this activity will support two trainers and one project assistant from the Human Rights Advocacy Centre who will organize the training, and one lawyer who will work on developing and publishing the guidance and booklets for Aksakal Court members. This activity will help to increase the effectiveness of the Aksakals Court as a means to mitigate community conflict, while strengthening relationships between the Court and law enforcement.

OSH149 – Strengthening Independent Uzbek-Language Media Outlets: This activity will improve journalism skills and create a sales and marketing plan at two independent Uzbek-language media outlets in the South of Kyrgyzstan, the "Digest" newspaper and the "Uzpress.kg" web portal and at one multi-lingual media outlet "Danek" newspaper. Through assistance to the two media outlets, Uzbek-speaking communities will have greater access to quality news and information about political, social and cultural developments throughout the country. Prior to June 2010, several independent Uzbek-language media in the south, such as Osh TV, Mezon TV, DDD, broadcast news and programs in Uzbek language. As a result of the violent events of June 2010 and their aftermath, local news outlets were either closed or ceased to disseminate content in Uzbek language. The Public Foundation "Information and Security Media Center" has published the only exclusively Uzbek-language newspaper in southern Kyrgyzstan, and created Uzpress.kg as a web-based clearinghouse for news on southern Kyrgyzstan in three languages.

Meanwhile, the Public Association of Journalists has begun publishing the multi-lingual "Danek" newspaper targeting multi-ethnic youth in communities in the South of Kyrgyzstan. KRTI will provide a consultant to train the 5-member staff of PF "Information and Security Media Center" and 5 staff members of the PF "Public Association of Journalists" on principles of professional journalism, assist the team to draft an editorial policy for "Digest", "Uzpress.kg" and "Danek" and develop a preliminary sales and marketing strategy. The intent of the activity is to increase access to reliable information for marginalized minority groups, while encouraging the growth of diverse media outlets available to audiences in southern Kyrgyzstan.

OSH165 – Improving Access to and Management of Irrigation Water in Nookat District: The activity seeks to minimize local tensions over access to limited water resources between mono-ethnic Uzbek and Kyrgyz communities within the Gulistan and Jany-Kyshtak Communities of Nookat District by ensuring the adequate flow of water along their shared irrigation infrastructure and improving local government's capacity to manage water supply infrastructure. Agriculture is the most important economic activity in the Kyrgyz Republic, contributing about 35% of the country's gross domestic product and playing a key role in alleviating poverty and providing employment to the more vulnerable sectors of the population. According to ACTED's preliminary findings from the socio-economic mapping and conflict analysis activity under OTI grant BIS111, one of the most significant and ongoing sources of tension in southern Kyrgyzstan is the limited and unequal access to irrigation water. According to the Nookat District Water Management Department, the Chilisaï irrigation system's Orto and Kyzyl interior irrigation channels are damaged during spring floods every year, resulting in reduced water flow through the system. This reduced water flow causes a negative perception in downstream Kyrgyz communities about upstream Uzbek communities, which are subsequently blamed for using more water than allocated by the district water management plan. Therefore, the water deficiency of downstream Kyrgyz communities serves as a potential flashpoint for localized conflict. The activity will (1) construct one headgate each for both the Orto and Kyzyl irrigation channels, (2) install 150m of steel pipe along the Kyzyl channel, (3) install five water distribution shields along both channels, (4) and hold six explanatory meetings in upstream Kyzyl and downstream Orto communities. This activity will mitigate potential conflict by improving the equitable distribution of irrigation water and increasing economic activity among volatile communities in Nookat District. By working together with their local authorities, residents will strengthen engagement with and increase public confidence in local government's capacity to deliver services and stimulate economic recovery in the South of Kyrgyzstan.

OSH166 – Mapping the Infrastructure Projects of KRTI – South: This activity seeks to provide government counterparts with clear geo-referenced mapping information on the exact location and extent of KRTI infrastructure rehabilitations. The Kyrgyz Republic Transition Initiative (KRTI) has undertaken over 110 activities focused around the rehabilitation of infrastructure to date, and is continuing to use improved infrastructure as a way to support the democratic transition and improved stability in Kyrgyzstan. These rehabilitations are completed in partnership with government authorities, who utilize and maintain the buildings after KRTI completes its activities. These rehabilitations are often conducted alongside mobilization and communication activities aimed at improving government service delivery and strengthening outreach with citizens. In addition to the technical schematics and bills of quantity for the work done, the program would like to provide its governmental counterparts with clear geographic information on the location and extent of the work completed by KRTI to help government keep track of rehabilitations, and ensure that the project sites are utilized and maintained in the years to come. In partnership with the Austria – Central Asia Centre for GIS Science this activity will collect GPS data on all of KRTI's infrastructure activities, to (2) design maps of each infrastructure activity that clearly shows the elements rehabilitated by KRTI and to (3) conduct special analysis of the impact and efficiency of KRTI's infrastructure activities. The activity will ensure the effective handover and longer-term maintenance and use of KRTI infrastructure rehabilitation activities to the respective government counterparts.

OSH168 – Increasing Balanced and Reliable News Programming on Yntymak Radio: This activity will allow the multi-lingual Yntymak Radio to maintain its broadcast programming during frequent electricity black-outs in Osh. After the ethnic violence of June 2010, two Uzbek-language television stations were shut down, and regular radio news and information programming in Uzbek language became non-existent. With US State Department funding, Internews created a multi-language radio station called Yntymak (“-Accord”) in Osh. However, weak power supply during the winter months and electricity black-outs regularly take Yntymak Radio off the air and prevent it from reaching a large audience. To guarantee that Radio Yntymak can provide listeners with programming in multiple languages without going off air due to power outages, KRTI will provide Yntymak with a generator, equipment and small-scale renovations necessary to house an electrical back-up system for the radio station. By doing so, this activity will increase the amount of balanced and reliable information available to marginalized minority groups in southern Kyrgyzstan.

OSH173 – Mitigating Conflict through Increased Access to Irrigation Water – Kum Canal: This activity will improve efficient and transparent management of the Kum canal for agricultural communities’ residents in Kara-Kulja and Uzgen Districts that share irrigation water, addressing a source of lingering tension between area farmers. In Kyrgyzstan, on-farm canals, inter-farm canals, and drainage networks inherited from the Soviet period have deteriorated significantly due to lack of funding for maintenance and repair. Collapse of irrigation systems is often a source of conflict between upstream and downstream communities as water management plans do not distribute water equitably between communities. MSDSP KG will rehabilitate the Kum irrigation canal, including cleaning the canal bed, constructing a sedimentation tank and repairing two gauging stations and eight water distribution facilities. MSDSP KG will conduct a needs assessment at water user associations followed by training on canal management and conflict mitigation techniques. This project will mitigate conflict and competition between marginalized and volatile communities in Kara-Kulja and Uzgen by delivering improved irrigation services.

OSH176 – Creating Uzbek-Language Television Programming in Jalalabad: This activity will help “7th Channel” in Jalalabad establish a team of journalists and technical personnel that produce quality Uzbek-language programming on a weekly basis. The multi-ethnic team will also integrate into the station's evening news production team to better reflect the diverse nature of the city of Jalalabad. In the aftermath of the June 2010 ethnic violence, local television stations in the south halted broadcast of all indigenous Uzbek-language programming. Since that time, the Uzbek community has been forced to receive their information from Kyrgyz or Russian media outlets, or from television stations in Uzbekistan. As a result, Uzbeks have received little news about events in local communities in their own language, and often rely on Uzbekistan state television to interpret regional events through the lens of Uzbek Government broadcaster. KRTI will provide 7th Channel with the equipment, financial resources and technical assistance necessary to launch an Uzbek-language program on social and cultural issues produced in-house. Through this support, 7th Channel will deliver balanced and reliable information to the Uzbek community in the south to improve Uzbek participation in government decision-making.

OSH206 – Building Responsive Local Councils in Southern Kyrgyzstan: This activity will strengthen the service delivery, budgeting, and land management practices of local keneshes (local council) in southern Kyrgyzstan through trainings for council deputies. Reforms in self-government and finance adopted in 2012 significantly increased power of Aiyl Okmotu and local council (kenesh) by (1) increasing financial independence of Aiyl Okmotu, (2) increasing the size of local budgets and (3) giving more power to local kenesh deputies to solve issues on the Aiyl Okmotu and District levels. The recently held elections, however, brought a large number of newly elected deputies to local councils, the majority of which (up to 85%) have no experience in working for municipal government or legislative bodies. This creates perfect conditions for corruption and the improper utilization of local budgets by the local councils. This activity will provide a cash grant and in-kind support to develop three manuals and hold a series of trainings and consultations on the structure and authority of local governments, land management, and transparent budgeting processes for 1,000 deputies of local councils from 40 aiyl okmotu from

Osh, Jalal-Abad and Batken Oblasts and a round table in Osh for deputies from local councils and the national parliament on the priorities for their municipalities. Funds from this activity will cover the salary and travel expenses for trainers, the production of training manuals, and the procurement of equipment and other training expenses. By supporting the grant activity, OTI will increase capacity of local governments, thus improve the responsiveness, transparency, and accountability of local self-government in southern Kyrgyzstan.

OSH209 – Providing Independent Appraisals of Homes to be Demolished by Osh Master Plan:

This activity will improve the negotiating position of Osh residents, faced with potential demolition of their homes or businesses as part of city improvement under the Master plan, and to improve their confidence that they receive a fair compensation package from the municipal government. Last year the local government in Osh began a campaign to widen some main roads in Osh City – an effort called the “Osh Master Plan” – that has resulted in the demolition of around 50 houses so far, with approximately 200 still slated for demolition in the coming years. On the first street affected by the Osh Master Plan, Monueva Street, the government failed to use a transparent appraisal methodology to assess the market prices of the homes that they seized through eminent domain laws, which resulted in a great deal of discontent among the residents affected by the widening of this street. Interbilim, the grantee under OSH123 activity, provided legal support for the 22 households on Monueva Street whose houses were demolished last year and 39 households on Oshskaya Street whose houses are scheduled for demolition this year. This activity will support the residents affected by the Osh Master Plan by hiring one lawyer, hiring an independent appraisal company to provide certified appraisal of their home’s market cost, to support one driver for the lawyer and appraisal company. The lawyer mainly will provide legal support, will closely work with Appraisal Company, will accompany the residents in State Registration Service, in the Courts, and Architect office. By supporting Interbilim as civil society, this activity will strengthen transparency and public decision making within municipal processes for city planning and provide an independent voice to advocate for fair compensation for residents of Osh affected by the Osh Master Plan.

OSH214 – Measuring Community Perception of their Safety:

his activity will enable civil society to advocate for improved security and police responsiveness and presence through a public perception survey and online social media instrument. The effective advocacy campaign of the alliance of civil society actors (OSH116, BIS237), a significant amount of media and governmental attention was drawn to their concept of reform and the Ministry of Internal Affairs included many of their suggestions in their official concept of MIA reform. One of the demands of civil society was to revise the criteria used to determine the effectiveness of the MIA’s work by including a citizen’s feedback mechanism on police performance. As of today, the Ministry of Internal Affairs just formally reports on their work at the end of the year in front of the Parliament by citing the statistics of crimes reported in comparison to the numbers reported during the past year. However, there is a risk that the inclusion of a citizen feedback mechanism may remain unimplemented, due to the lack of MIA’s inability to collect objective and relevant information on the wider public’s perception of their work. This grant will support Liberal Youth Alliance, a grantee for OSH116 that successfully conducted the advocacy campaign to lobby on civil society’s recommended reforms to the Ministry of Interior, to hold public poll on public perception of their security in Osh and Bishkek cities, printing report in Russian and Kyrgyz languages and presenting it, posting the report on www.reforma.kg and create social on-line instrument on informing about citizen’s concerns about security and violations by law enforcement body. The funds from the activity will cover costs for public poll, project staff’s salary, communication and travel costs, professional service for web-site design and hosting, logistics expenditures for the presentation of the survey’s findings in Osh and Bishkek. By supporting the grant activity, OTI will increase civil society engagement in monitoring of the government services and encourage the government for transparency and accountability to their constituents.

OSH234 – Preventing Youth Conflicts through Building Capacity of LCPCs in Kara-Suu:

This activity will increase the effectiveness of the five LCPCs in Kara-Suu District in responding to public safety and security issues, particularly those related to youth. Local Crime Prevention

Centers (LCPCs) were established by decree in 2007 with the legal authority to carry out crime prevention activities within a neighborhood or territorial district to address growing distrust towards the law-enforcement bodies and court institutions perceived as corrupt by many citizens. According to the Mayor of Kara-Suu, Mr. Akmadjan Rakhimov, the first LCPC in Kyrgyzstan was established in Kara-Suu City in 2007 to combat the issue of racketeering in schools, which then became the model for the national decree issued in 2007. Now six years later, 17 LCPCs are operating in Kara-Suu District at the municipal level. The funds of this activity will support the procurement of office equipment and furniture for the five most active LCPCs of Kara-Suu district, as identified by the Coordinator of LCPC activities for Kara-Suu District. The new equipment will help LCPCs to better register and follow-up issues submitted to them, file and maintain important documents and information for future reference, draft official correspondence and host community meetings. The furniture will also be used by the Aksakal Courts in Kara-Suu District, which are part of the LCPC in each municipality, to conduct their mediation sessions between community members. Finally this activity will support the OSCE's CSI Program's training of the LCPCs by giving LCPC members better tools to resolve conflicts and bring community issues to the attention of local authorities. This activity will increase the confidence of communities in law enforcement agencies and reduce the number of offences committed by youth or other community members.

KYRGYZ REPUBLIC TRANSITION INITIATIVE (KRTI)



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