



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

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## USAID Newsletter



**USAID and Kyrgyz Ministry of Health Host Tajik Delegation to Share Healthcare Reform Results.** The USAID Quality Health Care Project and the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic hosted a delegation from the Tajikistan Ministries of Finance and Health on July 3-9 to learn about past and ongoing health care reforms, with an emphasis on health care financing. The delegation traveled to Issyk-Kul Oblast, which was a pilot site for the implementation of health care financing reforms, to learn more about implementation at the oblast level. *(Photo: Saifudinov Safar Rahimovich, Head of the Department on Reforms and International Relations of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Tajikistan (left) presents a gift to the Minister of Health of KR, Mr. Sabyrbek Jumabekov (right))*



**USAID Celebrates Fourth of July.** USAID and Peace Corps were the center of attention at the 235th anniversary of U.S. independence reception at the U.S. Embassy in Bishkek. The USAID 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary banner and photo exhibit were displayed on the compound along with Peace Corps' photo exhibit. The U.S. Ambassador highlighted in her speech the two important 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary dates for both USAID and Peace Corps this year. The attendees had many more reasons to celebrate and enjoyed the U.S. Air Forces Band "Blue Hawk" repertoire of Latin and pop music. *(Photo: USAID photo exhibit)*



**USAID Helps Launch First Almaty-Tamchy-Almaty Commercial Flights.** On June 30, the first regular flight from Almaty landed at the Issyk-Kul International Airport with Kazakh tourists and tour operators. The flight route was promoted by USAID Local Development Program in partnership with Muza Tour Operator (Kyrgyzstan) and Kompas Tour Operator (Kazakhstan). Regular flights are scheduled for the duration of Lake Issyk-Kul's tourist season. Regular flights will increase the number of tourists in Issyk-Kul from Kazakhstan, stimulate economic growth in the region and strengthen the tourism sector in the Kyrgyz Republic. *(Photo: Mayor of Cholpon-Ata, Maratov Mirlan (far right), arriving from Almaty with tourists from Kazakhstan at the Issyk-Kul International Airport on June 30)*



**USAID Initiates First Annual Ride Around Issyk-Kul.** To promote tourism in the Issyk-Kul region and celebrate the launch of the tourist season in 2011, the USAID Local Development Program organized a "Ride Around Issyk-Kul" bike and ferry tour, and a music festival. These activities were part of a larger initiative to kick-start the tourist season in Issyk-Kul a week earlier than in previous years and extend the tourist season to increase the volume of visitors to the region. *(Photo: Participants of the bike tour)*



**Famous Astronaut Salizhan Sharipov Opens Summer School of Democracy.** On July 11, 46 young people from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan started the second Summer School of Democracy, which was organized by the USAID Youth project "Jasa.kg" and implemented by the International Youth Foundation in partnership with Soros Foundation and UNDP. A well-known astronaut from Russia, Mr. Salizhan Sharipov, came to Bishkek to welcome the youth participants. An ethnic Uzbek born in Uzgen, in southern Kyrgyzstan, Mr. Sharipov shared with the participants his career challenges and successes as an astronaut, his experience in space, and reflections on life. Together they discussed national identity and diversity

issues, and different chapters in Kyrgyzstan's history and other post-Soviet countries. *(Photo: Astronaut Salizhan Sharipov (front center) with 46 participants of Summer School of Democracy in Kyrgyzstan)*



**USAID Kyrgyzstan Supported National Scholarship Testing Provides Equal Chance for Higher Education Based on Merit.** On July 7, the President's Office and Ministry of Education organized an award ceremony for the 59 best students who received top scores in the National Scholarship Testing among 39,527 test participants. The top students received gold certificates which will allow them to attend any university in Kyrgyzstan on scholarship. The event was attended by President of the Kyrgyz Republic Roza Otunbaeva, and USAID Representative Carey Gordon. President Otunbaeva highlighted the importance of USAID's support to the National Scholarship Testing for the last 10 years. The testing program is a major anti-corruption effort implemented with USAID funding and technical assistance in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education and an independent testing organization "Center for Educational Assessment and Teaching Methods." (Photo: High school students at the National Scholarship Testing 2011)



**USAID Supports Roundtable on Economic Recovery Efforts in Southern Kyrgyzstan.** On July 12, USAID Representative Carey Gordon participated in an open discussion organized by the University of Central Asia (UCA) with funding from USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives on the subject of economic recovery in southern Kyrgyzstan. At the event, UCA presented the findings of its report, *Giving Entrepreneurs a Voice in the Future of Southern Kyrgyzstan*, which was based on interviews with entrepreneurs in Osh, Jalalabad and Batken oblasts. The Director General of the State Directorate for Reconstruction and Development in Osh and Jalalabad, Zhantoro Satybaldiev, joined southern business representatives for a lively discussion of the existing barriers for business expansion in the south and potential opportunities for economic development in the future. (Photo: UCA President Dr. Krawchenko (center) gives an overview of the economic situation in the South; USAID Kyrgyzstan Representative Carey Gordon (second from left); and Mr. Jantoro Satybaldiev, Director General of the State Directorate for Reconstruction and Development in Osh and Jalalabad (right))



**Celebrating Diversity in the Kyrgyz Republic.** On July 14, USAID Representative Carey Gordon participated in the presentation of a new series of multi-language children's books developed in partnership with the Aga Khan Foundation, the Ministry of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic, and the Osh and Jalalabad city administrations. The dual-language children's books (Kyrgyz-Uzbek, Kyrgyz-Russian, Kyrgyz-Tajik, and Kyrgyz-English) promote peace, tolerance and respect for diversity and were developed through a series of dialogues and workshops with parents and teachers. This partnership also rehabilitated nine kindergartens in mixed neighborhoods of Osh, Nookat, Uzgen and Karasuu, serving approximately 1,900 ethnic Uzbek and ethnic Kyrgyz children. (Photo left: Carey Gordon (right), Ms. Nurjehan Mawani, Head of Representation, Aga Khan Development Network (center), and Ambassador of Austria Ursula Fahringer (left). Photo right: School children receive colorful new books in their own language)



**USAID/OTI Supports Improved Access to Electricity in Suzak Rayon.** On July 15, USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives awarded a \$237,015 grant to the Suzak Rayon Administration to install power lines and transformers in five villages of the Suzak rayon in Jalalabad oblast. The last year saw a substantial increase in electric power demands in Suzak resulting from the movement of people from areas in the south affected by the events of June 2010, and more recently by ethnic Kyrgyz citizens in Uzbekistan emigrating to Suzak. This impacted the already weak power supply infrastructure and led to suspicion towards migrants and frustration among longtime Suzak residents. By supporting the Suzak rayon government's efforts to provide increased access to electric power, this activity will help mitigate an emerging source of tension and support the peaceful resettlement of displaced citizens in Jalalabad oblast. More than 23,000 residents from the villages of Gazprom, Socialism, Tosh, Munduz and Jangy-Chek in Suzak rayon will benefit from this partnership.



**USAID Helps Bridge Gaps between Communities in Maevka Village.** On July 21, residents from Maevka, a marginalized community on the periphery of Bishkek, celebrated their achievement of rehabilitating a 2.5 km road in the Tendik district. This activity was designed to provide temporary employment to 65 at-risk youth aged 18-28, during the volatile spring and summer months, to improve shared community-prioritized infrastructure. Maevka experienced violent clashes in April 2010 when a group of Kyrgyz migrants tried to seize farm land occupied by ethnic Turks. By engaging at-risk youth, this activity demonstrated how working together can improve shared community spaces, boost confidence in local governance and bridge divides within the community. "I enjoyed participating in the road rehabilitation project, as I

was able to make new friends and spend my time constructively," a 23-year old participant said. *(Photo: Community youth work to improve their road)*



**Local Development Program Conducts "Stimulating Local Economic Growth: The Direct Approach" Conference.** On July 28, the USAID Local Development Program conducted a conference on stimulating local economic growth in Bishkek. The conference was attended by government officials of all levels as well as local and international experts. Best practices from Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine and the Czech Republic were shared with the participants and a competition for best practices in local economic development was announced. Memoranda of Understanding were signed with 14 municipalities to stimulate economic growth at their respective local

governments. *(Photo: U.S. Ambassador Pamela L. Spratlen presents a Partnership Award to the Mayor of Karakol, Abdubaliev Kabynychbek Sabyrovich, a partner municipality of USAID's Local Development Program)*



**Documentary Supports Reconciliation.** USAID supported a series of documentaries under the project "The Country Where We Live" to tell stories on multiethnic communities living peacefully side-by-side to restore peace and stability in the country since last year's unrest and violence. One of the documentaries, called "Kyrgyzstani" and produced by grantee Door Media Agency, was selected along with the other 10 best documentaries for the film festival "Bir Duyinoo-Kyrgyzstan 2011" (One World Kyrgyzstan-2011 Film Festival) and will be shown this fall in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The documentary addresses an important process of reconciliation and shares some successes related to how Kyrgyzstanis of different ethnicities are striving to return to peace and unity. Door Media

believes that this will help engage people in the important discussion about how to tackle nationalism. *(Photo: Osh resident receives a new piece of identification after the conflict in the South)*



**USAID Improves Human Resources Management through Training.**

On July 22-24, the USAID Kyrgyzstan Parliamentary Strengthening Program conducted a training course for 23 heads and deputy heads of the Kyrgyz Parliament's Administration, Committee Departments and factions to improve their knowledge and skills on human resource management. The participants evaluated the training as timely, efficient and productive. Participants said they would like to continue receiving training on human resource management issues in the civil service; the psychological portrait of a leader; the relationship between a supervisor and an employee; the basics of communication technologies; and the

experience of HR management in parliaments of other countries. Participants also expressed their hope to cooperate with USAID and its program. *(Photo: Trainees show their certificates after the training)*



**U.S. Helps to Improve Child Health Care.** On July 18, USAID supported a five-day training workshop on Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) to expand its IMCI program, which has been nationally implemented at the primary health care level to the hospital level. As infant and child mortality remains high in Kyrgyzstan, the IMCI program provides practical skills training sessions to health care providers to improve the quality of health care services for children under five. *(Photo: Naryn Oblast Merged Hospital doctors at the IMCI training course)*



**USAID/OTI Supports Ministry of Youth in Naryn.** On July 29, a month-long sports tournament was launched in Naryn city to engage youth in constructive activities. This activity was led by the Ministry of Youth Affairs with support from USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives. Over 300 young soccer, volleyball and basketball players from various communities in Naryn city competed in sports matches from late July to late August. In addition to helping encourage trust and relations between youth and the local and national governments, this activity aimed to promote healthy

*lifestyles. (Photo left: Naryn Oblast sportsmen are ready for competitions in newly renovated sport field. Photo right: Young sportsmen are glad to exercise in a rehabilitated sport field.)*



**Ambassador Visits Summer Camp of Democracy at Lake Issyk-Kul.** On July 26, the U.S. Ambassador joined 52 Kyrgyzstani youth from across the country at the USAID sponsored Summer Democracy Camp, organized by IFES at Lake Issyk Kul in Kaji Sai. These camps have been held annually since 2000 at both Lake Issyk Kul and the Chui valley and are open to Kyrgyzstani youth between 14 and 17. At the 10-day camps held every August, young people participate in a variety of activities to stimulate their civic education and community leadership. Participants are then encouraged to take these

lessons to their community and participate in a camp alumni network to continue the lessons learned. Ambassador Spratlen found the camps and the enthusiasm of their participants to be very inspiring for the future of the country. *(Photo right: U.S. Ambassador with Summer Democracy Camp participants. Photo left: Participants present their show to guests)*



**Summer School of Democracy for Central Asia’s Young Leaders Enters Final Stage.** The concluding sessions of the Summer School of Democracy for young leaders of Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan were held in Cholpon-Ata August 1-5. The program promoted civic education and youth leadership and brought together 40 young leaders aged 18-29 to focus on topics such as geopolitics and democracy, economy and civil society, environment and media, cultural diversity, and practical sessions on proposal development. Participants also had the opportunity to interact with prominent politicians, experts and public figures from the CIS, Eastern Europe and

Central Asia. The Summer School of Democracy was initiated by USAID and its partner, the International Youth Foundation. Contributing partners include the UNDP, the European Commission, the Government of Austria, and the Soros Foundation. *(Photo: Participants exchange views in a session)*



**B’Art Exhibit Showcases Young Artists’ Work.** On August 5, U.S. Ambassador Pamela Spratlen, along with representatives from the national and municipal governments, kicked off a youth art exhibition by the local organization, B’Art Contemporary, with support from USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives. Since the start of the summer, B’Art and the local government in four *novostroiki* (new settlements) have worked together to engage more than 330 marginalized youth, ages 9-16, in a two-month visual arts course. Ambassador Spratlen and host government representatives toured the capstone exhibition, offered congratulatory remarks to participants, and distributed awards at the opening ceremony. *(Photo left: Young artists present their work)*



**USAID Hosts First-Ever Central Asia Trade Forum.** USAID’s Central Asia Trade Forum took place August 11-12 in Bishkek with more than 230 service and production companies representing 13 different countries. President of the Kyrgyz Republic Roza Otunbaeva and U.S. Ambassador Pamela Spratlen made opening addresses to the audience of around 350 participants. The Central Asia Trade Forum brought immediate and significant results, including new contracts, skills, partners and opportunities for participating businesses. At least 11 deals were made among participants. Over 450 participant training hours were delivered across 15 master class and plenary sessions. Forty-five companies displayed their products and promotion materials at an interactive

trade show and received personal consultations from an international expert jury. The Forum was widely covered by local and international media, including over 60 journalists reporting for 6 TV channels, 5 radio stations, 9 newspapers and 18 news sites. The Central Asia Trade Forum was the culminating event of USAID’s nine-month effort to develop export partnerships among Central Asian companies. *(Photo: Trade Forum participants)*



**U.S. Supports Educational Opportunities for Children from Low Income Families.** On July 27, USAID’s Quality Learning Project organized a media tour to visit small grants projects implemented by non-governmental organizations in the *novostroiki* (new settlements) around Bishkek. The projects were designed to involve youth and school-aged children from low income families from the *novostroiki* into education activities, and encourage those who do not attend school to go to school next year. One of the projects supported creative educational activities at a summer camp called, “Gifting Happy

Childhood to Kids,” and the project “Make Yourself” provided training on healthy lifestyles. USAID, in partnership with the Bishkek Mayor’s Office and the Bishkek City Development Agency, selected 11 project proposals supporting youth and school-aged children in the *novostroiki* of Bishkek through an open competition. The projects are being implemented in Tynchtyk, Kelechek, Dordoi 1, Dordoi 2, Ak-Jar, Ak-Bata, Ene Say, Ak-Tilek, Kalys-Ordo, Altyn Kazyk, and Alga Elim. *(Photo left: School-aged children sing the Kyrgyz Anthem at the summer camp. Photo right: Two girls with their coach learning to play chess at a study club)*



**Children in Kelechek Orphanage in Kirg Shelk Get Improved Facilities.** On August 18, U.S. Ambassador Pamela Spratlen joined children, community members and local authorities from the Kirgshelk village near Bishkek to celebrate the reopening of the newly renovated Kelechek Orphanage. This project, supported by USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives and Peace Corps, was identified by community members as a priority need for their village and is part of an ongoing USAID campaign to support local community initiatives, revitalize important shared community spaces and foster constructive dialogue and interaction with local government. In addition to the Kelechek Orphanage project,

local communities partnered with USAID and Peace Corps to identify and renovate four area schools. *(Photo: U.S. Ambassador Pamela Spratlen shakes hands with the NGO leader who helped with the rehabilitation of the orphanage)*



**USAID/OTI Builds the First “Half-Pipe” Skateboard and Bicycle Ramp in the Kyrgyz Republic.** On August 9, Osh city youth, residents and city government representatives commemorated the opening of a rehabilitated park in the Dostuk neighborhood in Osh. This park, located in the middle of a densely populated multiethnic neighborhood, boasts the first half-pipe for recreational biking and skateboarding activities in the Kyrgyz Republic. The half-pipe structure will be accessible to the public, free of charge. *(Photo: Children in Osh enjoying a bicycle ramp)*



**Equipping Mady Passport Office to Facilitate Replacement of Critical Documents for Citizens.** USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives finalized an agreement at the end of August to help local authorities in Mady reduce the obstacles and time it takes citizens in the Kara-Suu rayon to obtain replacement internal passports and other key documents necessary for accessing government services and participating in elections. This activity will partner with the Mady municipal government and work with the Osh oblast Visas and Passport Department to rehabilitate a public building and provide office equipment for a passport office in the Mady municipality. *(Photo: A staff member uses improved procedures in a reconstructed facility to process a visa application)*

**Promoting Freedom of Expression through Support to Independent Printing Press.** At the end of August, USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives launched an activity to ensure equal access to printing facilities for approximately 120 newspapers and all active political parties during the critical campaign period leading up to the Presidential elections. Through this grant, USAID will support the Media Support Center Foundation to replace a highly specialized dampening solution cooler and a set of rollers for the developer machine, which is used to make plates for printing newspapers. By ensuring that all candidates have equal access to printing facilities, the people of the Kyrgyz Republic will have better access to information about all candidates’ campaign platforms and be able to consider a plurality of political opinions, helping them to make more informed decisions on Election Day.



**Media Tour to School Opening Event.** On September 1, USAID Representative Carey Gordon and education officials of the Kyrgyz Republic participated in a media tour supported by the USAID Quality Learning Project. The participants attended the opening ceremony of the new school year in Kalys-Ordo School # 86, located in the *novostroiki* or new settlements around Bishkek. USAID-supported early learning activities, which are focused on ensuring that more than 1,350 school-aged children participate in a 100-hour state-operated training course, prepared the children for school and helped their families with school registration. *(Photo: USAID Representative Carey Gordon with first graders at Kalys-Ordo School # 86)*



**USAID Presents the Kyrgyz Property Tax System to State Tax Service.** On August 26, USAID's Economic Reforms to Enhance Competitiveness Project presented the first Kyrgyz Property Tax System developed for the State Tax Service to collect object-based taxes. The system facilitates the efficient and effective assessment and collection of property taxes through an online application that uses the latest web-based technologies. The Kyrgyz Property Tax System was designed for use by individuals, businesses and administrators, allowing them to securely access and maintain their property tax accounts via the online system. This web-based calculation and payment of taxes will also allow the State Tax Service to effectively administer taxes. The Deputy Chairman of the State

Tax Service expressed his appreciation for USAID's technical assistance in developing the Kyrgyz Property Tax System, implementing the new Tax Code, supporting public outreach activities, and providing IT equipment needed to enable online connections to the State Tax Service. *(Photo: Ms. Jill Jamieson, Chief of Party, USAID EREC Project, and Mr. Okbyabr Adbykaimov, Deputy Chairman of the State Tax Service under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, exchange documents on the transfer of the Kyrgyz Property Tax System)*

**Increasing Public Voice, Awareness and Confidence in the Legitimacy of Democratic Institutions.** USAID supports the Citizen's Council to Control the Court System (CCCCS), which was established by President of the Kyrgyz Republic Roza Otunbaeva and the Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society (a local NGO), to improve accountability and citizen awareness of the process for nominating, screening and selecting judges. A grant from USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives will support a mass-media campaign to inform citizens and potential nominees about the process as well as a telephone hotline to record citizen complaints about past abuses by judges, which are forwarded to the Judges Screening Committee and the President.

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