Health and Education

**USAID Supports Osh State University:** On May 15, 2013, Carey N. Gordon, USAID Representative to the Kyrgyz Republic presented two grants from the U.S. Government to Osh State University. The two grants, totaling approximately $90,000, will provide equipment to support the expansion of the Independent Testing Center and improve student enrollment procedures at the University. USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives will help Osh State University establish two additional Independent Testing Centers by supplying 80 computers and software packages in addition to servers, a UPS system, scanners, notebooks, web-cameras and a hard disk for the entrants’ registration commission. Osh State University will contribute to both activities through repair of testing center premises and additional equipment in the amount of $15,713. More than 27,000 students and 1,500 staff of the Osh State University will benefit from the improved facilities. “By establishing modern technology at our university we would like to achieve maximum transparency and the exclusion of corruption,” said Kanybek Isakov, Rector of Osh State University.

*Photo: Rector of Osh State University Kanybek Isakov and USAID Representative Carey Gordon.*

Democracy and Governance

**U.S. Government Partners with Local Business to Provide a Conference Hall for Batken Citizens:** On May 1, 2013, U.S. Ambassador Pamela L. Spratlen officially opened the Altyn Beshik Conference Hall, recently refurbished and equipped by the USAID Local Development Program in partnership with local business woman and guesthouse owner, Ms. Gulnara Joiboldueva. Ms. Joiboldueva contributed more than 50% of the total budget towards the cost of this modern conference facility, which will contribute to local economic development, through the generation of new profits for the Altyn Beshik Guesthouse, increased tax revenues for the municipal budget, and the creation of new jobs in the local community. The conference hall will be rented out on a fee-basis to international organizations and the local business community who will use it for meetings with investors, therefore ensuring a quick return on the investments made. It will be open free of charge to Batken City Hall, providing a professional venue for hosting conferences, seminars, and municipal events.


**USAID Supports New Registration and Passport Offices in Suzak District:** On May 21, 2013, representatives of USAID’s Kyrgyz Republic Transition Initiative (KRTI) together with local government officials and community members opened the improved registration and passport offices in the Suzak district of Jalalabad Oblast. The event was marked with the registration of a marriage between an Uzbek-Kyrgyz couple, as well as the presentation of national passports to citizens. USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) provided the Passport Office with office equipment, furniture, and public information services for its four branches, in addition to rehabilitating and equipping the Registration Office. Together these offices serve over 250,000 citizens. Previously USAID/OTI rehabilitated Passport Offices in Nariman, Aravan and Mady districts of Osh Oblast.
USAID Supports Cooperation between Mining Stakeholders and Local Communities: On June 6, 2013, USAID, through its Local Transparency and Cooperation Initiative, implemented by the Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia (EFCA), organized a National Conference, “Building Cooperation between Mining Stakeholders and Communities.” EFCA presented a baseline report that provided feedback to leaders in the mining industry, to better inform them on industry-community dynamics and reduce conflicts. The participants suggested options on how to strengthen participation of mining companies and local authorities in community dialogue, reduce resource conflicts, and promote economic development in the Kyrgyz Republic. The report of the research exposes the main factors that drive conflicts between local citizens and mining companies and suggests recommendations for conflict prevention and mitigation. The report also highlights the importance of company-community relationships and identifies opportunities for conflict mitigation activities at the community level. The full report – in Kyrgyz, English, and Russian – is available at the Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia website (http://www.ef-ca.org/2013/05/ltti-report/).

USAID and UNDP Promote the Government and Civil Society's Joint Efforts to Fight Corruption: On June 7, the joint USAID and UNDP Support to National Budget Transparency project, together with human rights movement Bir Dyino Kyrgyzstan and the Anticorruption Business Council of the Kyrgyz Republic organized a round table discussion titled "Fighting Corruption in Kyrgyzstan: Evaluating the Progress." Civil society gathered together with the heads of government agencies and experts to analyze the challenges in current anti-corruption work and to assess the milestones and efforts to prevent corruption. Acting USAID Representative to the Kyrgyz Republic Mr. Lawrence Held noted that the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic has demonstrated its commitment to eradicating corruption, but there are many challenges and the fight must be based on a consistent strategic action plan. UNDP Resident Representative in the Kyrgyz Republic Mr. Alexander Avanessov highlighted the need for a comprehensive approach in fighting corruption, the importance of civil society participation and the need to eliminate all loopholes in legislation. Participants gave examples of the negative impact of corruption on economic growth, state governance and the investment climate. Participants also suggested specific mechanisms to increase effectiveness of anti-corruption efforts. These discussions helped the decision-makers and civil society representatives to understand that without joined efforts, fighting against corruption is impossible.

USAID Supports Informing Youth of New Bride Kidnapping Laws: The USAID Office of Transition Initiatives supported the Kyrgyz NGO Aruulan, to hold eight public performances of a play that presents the issue of bride kidnapping in a dramatic and humorous manner. The performances were seen by over 1,000 young people in and around the city of Osh. The play and corresponding outreach campaign raised awareness of new legislation addressing this issue.

http://www.flickr.com/photos/krti/sets/72157633983765308/

Photo: (from left to right) USAID Democracy and Governance Officer Ann Hopper, USAID Deputy Director Lawrence Held, First Vice-Prime Minister Joomart Otorbaev, ex-President Roza Otunbaeva, Minister of Economy Temir Sariev and Director of the State Agency of Geology and Mineral Resources Ishembay Chunuev.

Photo: (left to right) Mr. Lawrence Held, Acting USAID Representative to the Kyrgyz Republic, and Mr. Alexander Avanessov, UNDP Resident Representative in the Kyrgyz Republic made opening remarks at the roundtable and exchanged views on the matter.

Photo: Young spectators at one of the eight public performances.
Encouraging Constructive Youth Activities through Comedy in Rural Places: On June 24, the USAID Office of Transition Initiatives partnered with the Kyrgyz NGO Master Radosti to hold a comedy performance and competition between seven schools of the Kara-Suu district of Osh oblast as a final event of the Kara-Suu Summer Festival. This event engaged youth from isolated, vulnerable communities in activities that allowed them to express their views on issues facing youth such as crime, school racketeering and domestic violence.  
http://www.flickr.com/photos/krti/sets/72157634335944752/  
Photo: Young competitors at a comedy performance.

USAID Supports Building Responsive Local Government in Southern Kyrgyz Republic: Reforms in self-government and finance adopted in 2012 significantly increased power of local governments (Aiyl Okmotus) and councils (Keneshes) by increasing financial independence of Aiyl Okmotus, increasing the size of local budgets, and giving more power to local Kenesh Deputies. Recently held elections, however, brought a large number of newly elected Deputies to local councils, the majority of which have no experience working for municipal government or legislative bodies. USAID supported the Kyrgyz NGO Abad in the development of three manuals on laws and regulations. USAID also sponsored a series of trainings and consultations on the structure and authority of local governments, land management and transparent budgeting processes for 1,000 Kenesh Deputies in the Osh, Jalal-Abad, and Batken provinces. Additionally, on May 27, 2013, Kenesh Deputies met with Members of Parliament at a round table in Osh to discuss issues important to local governments.  
http://www.flickr.com/photos/krti/sets/72157633965677594/  
Photo: Kenesh Deputies.

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