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KYRGYZSTAN PARLIAMENTARY STRENGTHENING PROGRAM (KPSP)

END OF YEAR THREE ANNUAL REPORT



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Cover photo: Jogorku Kenesh Speaker Asylbek Jeenbekov greets British Ambassador to the Kyrgyz Republic Judith Farnworth and USAID Representative in the Kyrgyz Republic Carey Gordon at the official presentation of Phase Three of the Kyrgyzstan Parliamentary Strengthening Program on April 16 in the JK Building. Photo: KPSP.

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PARLIAMENTARY CONTEXT

Year Three of KPSP implementation took place in a relatively peaceful and stable political environment. The Kyrgyz Parliament (Jogorku Kenesh - JK) adhered to the parliament-centric system adopted in 2010, supported by and based on the values of pluralism, diversity, and the sharing of power. All parties and MPs were fully engaged and involved in the work of the Parliament. In 2013 the Kyrgyz Parliament celebrated its 75th anniversary.

No major public protests negatively influenced the ongoing work and activities of the JK during Year Three. However, at the very beginning of the year on October 3, a demonstration organized by the Ata Jurt party demanding the nationalization of the Kumtor mine (the largest gold mine in Kyrgyzstan) was followed by an attempt to storm the Parliament building. The attempt was suppressed and the demonstrators were dispersed. These events resulted in the arrests of the three Ata Jurt MPs who led the demonstration. They later faced criminal charges, were convicted under the Kyrgyz Criminal Code for attempting to seize state power through the use of force, and were stripped of their MP status. Debates over the status of the Kumtor mine and demands for its nationalization have been on-going and they presented a considerable challenge in Year Three.

With the collapse of the previous ruling majority coalition at the end of August 2012, uncertainty persisted during September and October about the JK committee structure and the retention of JK staff while a new coalition was formed. This uncertainty hindered the work of the Parliament and related processes at the beginning of Year Three.

A new majority coalition of the Ar Namys, Ata Meken and SDPK parties (with Respublika and Ata Jurt in opposition) was announced on September 3, 2012 and continued into 2013. A majority coalition council chaired by Felix Kulov (Ar Namys) was created. The JK Speaker, Asylbek Jeenbekov (SDPK), and the Prime Minister, Jantoro Satybaldiev, retained their posts in Year Three. The five political parties continued consolidating democratic and parliamentary reforms. The representation of parties in the JK has remained unchanged since October 2010 when these five parties met the national and regional thresholds necessary to acquire seats in the JK: Ata Jurt – 28 seats; the Social Democratic Party of Kyrgyzstan (SDPK) – 26 seats; Ar Namys – 25 seats; Respublika – 23 seats; and Ata Meken – 18 seats.

The number of legislative committees established in January 2012 remained unchanged in Year Three. After deliberations during September and October 2012 over the JK committee structure and staff retention following the creation of the new majority coalition, a new committee structure was formed on October 17. The number of legislative committees remained intact with each committee including no more than three members from each party.

The thirteen committees consist of:

- the Committee on Budget and Finance;
- the Committee on Legality, Rule of Law, and Combating Crime;
- the Committee on International Affairs;
- the Committee on Agrarian Policy, Water Resources, Environment, and Regional Development;
- the Committee on Economic and Fiscal Policy;
- the Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports;
- the Committee on Human Rights, Constitutional Legislation, and State Structure;
- the Committee on Ethics and Rules of Procedure;
- the Committee on Judicial and Legal issues;
- the Committee on Social Policy;
- the Committee on the Fuel and Energy Complex and Resources;
- the Committee on Transportation, Communications, Architecture, and Construction;
- the Committee on Defense and Security.

Two key committees, the Committee on Budget and Finance and the Committee on Legality, Rule of Law, and Combating Crime, are chaired by opposition parties according to constitutional mandate.

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the JK effective from December 2, 2011, plenary sessions were held on Wednesdays and Thursdays with committee meetings and other forums held primarily on Mondays and Tuesdays. Fridays and weekends were utilized by the factions for outreach and contact with constituents. The JK was in recess from July 2, 2013, through August 31, 2013.

OVERVIEW

The Kyrgyzstan Parliamentary Strengthening Program (KPSP) is a five-year technical assistance initiative funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID). The KPSP is implemented by Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI).

- Phase 1 consisted of the completion of a parliamentary needs assessment, the design of a parliamentary strengthening program, and implementation of limited activities during the six-month period from October 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011.
- Phase 2 was a full-scale parliamentary strengthening program during the 22-month period from April 1, 2011 to January 31, 2013.
- Phase 3 began on February 1, 2013 and will continue through September 29, 2015. It includes additional funds and an expanded scope of work, which will allow the Program to effectively respond to challenges and needs in 2013-2015 and significantly contribute to legislative and institutional capacity-building in the Parliament.

The KPSP is guided by three main principles. First, in all of its activities, the KPSP adopts a non-political, non-partisan approach. This approach advantageously positions the KPSP to produce solid results and achieve Program deliverables while also engendering the universal professional trust and good will of the JK Speaker and Vice-Speakers, faction leaders, committee chairs, and rank-and-file MPs. Second, KPSP programming is flexible, adaptable, and responsive to JK requests, initiatives, and needs. This responsiveness and timeliness sets the KPSP favorably apart from other international donor programs that frequently base their programming solely (or almost solely) on what they believe is best for the host country institution(s) they are assisting. USAID often refers to the KPSP as its “flagship” program in Kyrgyzstan and has frequently emphasized that the Program is very closely watched at high levels within USAID, the US Department of State, and the US National Security Council. Third, the KPSP serves as a coordinator and facilitator creating synergies and linkages between the JK and other USAID, USG and DFID-funded assistance programs. In this manner, the KPSP maintains close communications and cooperative relationships with other international donor programs to improve overall macro results and avoid duplication of activities, thereby better utilizing limited donor funds.

During the first quarter of Year Three (the ninth quarter of the Program), the KPSP continued implementation of programmatic activities through trainings, public forums, policy seminars, and field hearings relating to legislative process and procedure, committee strengthening, parliamentary information dissemination, and human resources management. In aggregate, 13 programmatic events were conducted with the participation of 842 attendees (279 of these were women), including 73 MPs (19 of these were female MPs).

- Component 1 focused on linguistic issues in legislative drafting and with a newly established working group began its active work preparing a Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Legislative and Other Terms to standardize the terminology used in translation from Russian into Kyrgyz and the drafting of original legal documents in Kyrgyz.
- Component 2 engaged in economically and socially important issues, and, together with partner committees in the JK, conducted five public forums on pre-school education, library works, automobile transport and road safety, and the state budget, as well as a policy seminar on micro-financing. Ten MPs representing five JK committees and two staffers from the JK Committee on International Affairs were sent on a Study Tour to Mongolia to visit Ulan-Bator and study the Mongolian Parliament.
- The main activity under Component 3 was the preparation of a bi-weekly Parliamentary Brief in Kyrgyz, Russian, and English. Twenty-three separate editions of the Parliamentary Brief were prepared and disseminated to 270 persons/entities overall. Attention was also paid to capacity-building activities with JK Press Service staffers and the providing of an embedded mentor on press, journalistic and publicity matters for the JK Press Service.

- Component 4 also provided an embedded expert to assist the JK Human Resources Division in organization and reorganization of the JK committee departments. Component 4 was functionally unable during the quarter to conduct its usual capacity-building trainings due to the insistence by JK Deputy Head of Administration Shabolotov that the KPSP help acquire an electronic entrance and exit system for the JK Building. This insistence became a de facto prerequisite for the continuation of KPSP-organized human resources management activities and trainings.
- During the quarter, the KPSP partnered with several donor organizations and local NGOs on different matters, including: UNICEF; the International Public Foundation “Initiative of Roza Otunbayeva”; and USAID-UNDP State Budget Transparency Program.

During the second quarter of Year Three (the tenth quarter of the Program), the KPSP helped implement numerous activities and initiatives and conducted 14 programmatic events attended by 658 persons overall (255 of these were women), including 46 MPs (19 of these were female MPs). Additional funds from DFID became available during this quarter, providing new opportunities and making the KPSP scope of work more diverse and extensive.

- Component 1 continued its work on the Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Legislative and Other Terms and conducted two policy seminars on the improvement of Civil Service legislation and the strengthening of administrative regulations and parliamentary oversight. A long-term analytical research project into the sources of legislative errors was initiated to analyze the situation and recommend concrete implementation mechanisms for further introduction into the Parliament.
- Component 2 engaged in full-scale work with four partner committees, organizing and holding four committee strengthening events, including a Study Tour to Malaysia for seven MPs and two staffers from JK committee departments, two public forums and one policy seminar on key economic and social issues. Topics addressed included the religious situation and religious education, funds for official archives, and customs tariffs. Component 2 also determined to increase the number of its partner committees from four to eight in the first year of Phase 3 and conducted a series of meetings with JK committee chairs to discuss potential cooperation, ultimately leading to the selection of its new parliamentary partners.
- Component 3 increased the number of Parliamentary Brief recipients to 1,130 persons/entities and prepared and issued 20 separate editions of the Parliamentary Brief in Kyrgyz, Russian, and English covering JK activities during this quarter. Another research project was initiated, to investigate and assess the internal and external communications of the Jogorku Kenesh with the aim to provide analysis and recommendations on how to improve information flow and communications between the Parliament and the Media.
- Component 4 resumed its activities after obtaining USAID approval to allocate up to \$71,211 for an electronic entrance and exit system for the Parliament. In total, Component 4 conducted two trainings for JK committee and faction staff on the topics “HR policy as the basis of an organization” and “Mobbing, bullying and outplacement practices” and one other training for the heads and senior staff of structural departments of the JK on employment and adaptation of personnel.
- In addition, the KPSP continued briefing the JK Speaker and his Office, DFID and USAID in detail about the KPSP expansion and Phase 3 activities aimed at parliamentary strengthening.
- Six embedded consultants and expert mentors assisted the JK Committee on Budget and Finance, the JK State Service and Human Resources Department; the JK Legal Department and the Legal Expertise Division; and the JK Press Service.

During the third quarter of Year Three (the eleventh quarter of the Program), the activities of all four Components gained momentum and were marked by a number of large-scale events successfully implemented together with KPSP partners and beneficiaries. In total, the KPSP conducted 36 programmatic events attended by more than 1,450 persons (more than 800 of these were women), including 70 MPs (36 of these were female MPs). At the beginning of the quarter, the KPSP delivered a presentation to its partners and beneficiaries detailing the activities to be implemented during Phase 3 between February 1, 2013 and September 29, 2015. In addition, detailed results and achievements of the first and the second phases of the Program were presented. The KPSP also added four new JK legislative committees into KPSP programming, bringing the total number of partner committees to eight.

- Activities under Component 1 continued to concentrate on the effort to standardize terminology in Kyrgyz and lead the Working Group to finalize the comprehensive Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Legislative and Other Terms. Aiming to make the legislative process more transparent and open, Component 1 facilitated the establishment of an interagency working group on transparency and security of the legislative process and began looking for a local higher-education institution to host a KPSP-initiated Legislative Drafting Institute.
- Component 2 was very effective in organizing large-scale public forums in Bishkek and the regions, attracting MPs, officials and the broad public to discuss such diverse pressing issues as education, library works, support for Kyrgyz cinema, protection of the population from tuberculosis, and the Water Code. Three policy seminars were conducted addressing public forum topics crucial for Kyrgyzstan, including: religious institutions and religious education; participation in international agreements; and results of income and property declarations by civil servants. In addition, Component 2 facilitated an international conference on “The Role of Central Asian Parliamentarians in the Development of Regional Cooperation.” Much effort was invested in the development of a Research Fund Management Manual that will outline the objectives of the joint JK and KPSP Research Fund planned for Phase 3 and detail the processes for awarding and implementing policy research and analysis.
- Component 3 was busy with the preparation of a competition among local media agencies and outlets to recognize the best coverage of parliamentary system development in Kyrgyzstan and the development of a School of Parliamentary Journalism for young journalists and students. The Component also worked on a brochure with basic information on the Kyrgyz Parliament for dissemination during tours of the Parliament by students and international delegations. Component 3 held three trainings for parliamentary journalists from Bishkek and the regions on the basics of parliamentary reporting, legal principles of journalism, and journalistic ethics, and it conducted a joint three-day training session together with NDI for four MPs, 14 MP consultants and assistants, and 20 press-oriented parliamentary staffers on political marketing and public relations. 25 separate editions of the Parliamentary Brief in Kyrgyz, Russian, and English were drafted and disseminated with 1,130 persons/entities in regular receipt.
- Component 4 covered JK human resources development and contracted three local English teachers to develop curricula and materials for upcoming English language classes for JK deputies and senior staffers. Four staff members of the JK Department of State Service and Human Resources, a JK Speaker advisor, and the Chief of Staff of the JK Administration were sent to study personnel policies and the work of HRM Departments in the German Bundestag and the Hungarian National Assembly. Component 4 also launched the Parliamentary Women’s Club, which aims to provide the most senior women serving in the JK’s administrative divisions with professional capacity-building and career growth opportunities. Much assistance in human resources development was delivered through embedded mentors and consultants including: a gender expert to assist the Parliamentary Women’s Club; a local human resources expert for the JK State Service and Human Resources Department; and two experts to develop aptitude and proficiency tests for the selection of new parliamentary staff and assessment of the professional knowledge and skills of current staff.
- Other entities that benefited from KPSP embedded experts were: the Government’s Office; the JK Committee on Budget and Finance; the JK Committee on Judicial and Legal Issues; and the JK Press Service, as well as JK MPs.

During the fourth quarter of Year Three (the twelfth quarter of the Program), activities were slowed down because of the JK’s summer recess from July 1, 2013 through August 31, 2013. The KPSP took advantage of the recess to schedule two study tours; in all it conducted 13 programmatic events attended by 232 persons (132 of these were women), including 22 MPs (6 of these were female MPs).

- Under Component 1, 10 senior legislative drafters from the JK, the Government’s Office and the President’s Office traveled to Des Moines, Iowa, USA, to study legislative drafting and process at the Iowa General Assembly. Efforts to standardize terminology in Kyrgyz continued, resulting in the finalization of the comprehensive dictionary of legislative drafting terms. The research project on the sources of legislative errors was completed with a final report produced, including suggestions on corresponding corrective measures. The report will be presented to the

Parliament. To sustain efforts to create a Legislative Drafting Institute, Component 1 also solicited proposals from local higher education institutions to determine which of them possesses the necessary capacity to host the KPSP initiative.

- Component 2 organized a Study Tour to the United Kingdom for seven chairs and one deputy chair from the eight JK partner committees and a Deputy Head of the JK Administration to study the roles of UK parliamentarians and the practices of the Parliament of the United Kingdom and the Parliament of Scotland. It also held an international conference on the establishment of a Unified System of Education in Central Asia. The work on the development of the Research Fund Management Manual for the joint JK and KPSP Research Fund continued.
- Under Component 3, equipment with a total value of \$5,000 was transferred to the JK Press Service and the assessment of the internal and external communications of the JK was presented to the JK Speaker and JK Press Service Head, providing analysis and recommendations on how to improve information flow and communications between the Parliament and the public. Work on a brochure with basic information on the Kyrgyz Parliament intended for dissemination to members of the public and international delegations during tours of the Parliament Building was completed and the brochure was printed. Seven separate editions of the KPSP Parliamentary Brief in Kyrgyz, Russian, and English were drafted and disseminated among 1,130 persons/entities in regular receipt. Component 3 officially launched the new School of Parliamentary Journalism for 25 aspiring parliamentary journalists to increase their professional understanding of the Parliament and enhance their capacity to cover political news in different genres.
- Component 4 organized two separate trainings for the heads and senior staff of structural divisions of the JK Administration on Professional Employment and Adaptation of Personnel and for members of the Parliamentary Women's Club on the Art of Public Speaking and Giving Presentations. The English language lessons for JK deputies and JK Administration staffers expanded to 13 groups organized by knowledge levels and a talking club for advanced students of the English language. Component 4 also hired a local expert to assess the total costs of procurement, installation, and maintenance of an electronic Access Monitoring and Control System (AMCS) for the JK building.
- Eleven consultants and expert mentors were provided by the KPSP to assist the Government's Office, the Working Group on the Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Legislative and Other Terms, the JK Committee on Budget and Finance, the JK Press Service, the JK State Service and Human Resources Department, and the Parliamentary Women's Club.

For each event held during Year Three under Components 1, 2, 3, and 4, the KPSP prepared an individual description covering topics discussed, participants, and results. All write-ups with photos were in each case submitted to USAID and DFID. Information on each event is also contained in the corresponding KPSP Year Three Quarterly Progress Reports and Weekly Updates. In addition, the KPSP prepared four success stories covering the improvement of legislative process, the first open competitive selection of parliamentary staff in the history of the Kyrgyz Parliament, the success of the Parliamentary Brief issued by the KPSP in conjunction with the JK Press Service, and the trainings of competent parliamentary journalists. The success stories were submitted to USAID. Their approval is pending.

CHALLENGES

During Year Three, the KPSP faced several challenges and some impediments that had an impact on the effective work of the Program. KPSP staff managed to successfully overcome these obstacles and continued to make progress on all of the Program's activities.

Lengthy deliberations over the JK committee structure and JK staff retention during the creation of the new majority coalition in August and September 2012 influenced the KPSP's work with the Parliament at the beginning of Year Three. Components 2, 3 and 4 did not hold large target-audience events and trainings in October 2012. After a new JK committee structure was formed on October 17 and approved by the JK plenary session, it became clear that the partner committee chairs would retain their positions under the new JK majority coalition. This settlement allowed the KPSP to resume its full-scale work with partner committees and target stakeholder audiences.

Another impediment that delayed Component 4 activities at the beginning of Year Three was JK Deputy Head of Administration Tazhimamat Shabolotov's strong desire to acquire an electronic entrance and exit system for the JK Building. Obtaining the system became a de facto requirement for continued KPSP assistance in human resources management activities and trainings. Mr. Shabolotov is in charge of overseeing human resources management and staff performance within the JK. As a result, Component 4 was functionally unable to conduct its usual capacity-building trainings for various types and groups of JK staff during the first quarter of Year Three, while the issue of the entry and exit system remained unresolved. The KPSP had to factor this issue into its plans for extending and expanding in Phase 3 through September 29, 2015. USAID approved the allocation of up to \$71,211 to assist the JK with acquisition of this electronic system during Phase 3. After obtaining the approval, Component 4 resumed its normal human resource management activities.

The on-going debates over the Kumtor mine and the various demands to nationalize that enterprise and dissolve the Government presented a perceptible challenge during the year. The situation was also complicated by unpredictable protests in Issyk Kul and other regions and popular demand for the Parliament to reconsider past agreements with the Canadian company operating the mine. As a result, the KPSP Components restrained from holding many large events or trainings in Issyk Kul in the third and fourth quarters of Year Three and were cautious when organizing events elsewhere outside of Bishkek, for the KPSP considers the safety of participants and staff to be of paramount importance.

The expanded KPSP Work Plan for Phase 3 became a challenge in Year Three and required everyday maintenance and oversight. Even with the expanded staffing and increased funding, the KPSP could not accommodate all requests from MPs and sub-divisions of the Parliament for some type of KPSP-provided assistance. This situation required that the KPSP be more deliberate and selective in the types of assistance it provides, focusing on sustainability. In this context, USAID and the COR have been extremely helpful and supportive of the KPSP staying within its Work Plan and not overspending. JK partners have come to understand that they cannot simply go to USAID as an appellate court looking to reverse a KPSP decision every time they are not satisfied with a programming decision or level of funding assistance.

Following the enlargement of its staff and the resulting insufficiency of space, the KPSP needed to move to a larger office on March 1. The move provoked some administrative, IT and programmatic challenges, which were successfully addressed. IT issues and challenges were addressed and handled by the local KPSP IT Specialist and a DAI Home Office Associate Systems Business Analyst/Associate Network Administrator, who conducted an on-site STTA from March 2 – 17 to complete the IT setup.

During the JK recess of July and August 2013, the KPSP paused the extremely heavy event schedule of previous quarters. In September, when regular work resumed in the Parliament, the KPSP continued its committee strengthening, capacity-building and legislative process improvement work.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

During Year Three, the KPSP kept moving forward in a smooth fashion despite facing occasional challenges. Recognition of the KPSP's positive role in assisting and strengthening the JK led to numerous and frequent requests for assistance from nearly every JK committee, department, and sub-division. The KPSP had to prioritize and keep working within the frameworks of Components 1, 2, 3, and 4.

During Year Three, DAI received two modifications to the Contract executed with USAID. Modification #07, which extended the period of performance through September 29, 2015 and increased the Total Estimated Amount from \$3,249,799 to \$7,139,740, became effective February 1, 2013. This Modification also incorporated a supplemental scope of work for the KPSP and provided incremental funds for a joint JK-KPSP Research Fund in the amount of \$500,000. Modification #08 was effective as of May 24. This Modification made corrections in the Statement of Work for Components 2 and 3 and provided funds for the KPSP in the amount of \$1,472,667, bringing the amount already obligated to \$4,972,466 out of a total Contract ceiling of \$7,139,740.

On October 24, 2012, during the first quarter of Year Three, USAID officially informed DAI of plans to extend and expand the KPSP in Phase 3 through September 29, 2015, encompassing a Supplemental Statement of Work. USAID requested a corresponding Technical and Cost Proposal. The KPSP submitted the Technical and Cost Proposal outlining proposed KPSP programming, personnel, budget, subcontractors, Performance Monitoring Plan, and Branding and Marking Plan for the period from January 1, 2013 to September 29, 2015 with consideration of additional funds provided by the UK Government through DFID to USAID for expanding parliamentary strengthening in Kyrgyzstan. The proposal required lengthy discussions, with USAID posing Technical and Cost Questions and DAI submitting corresponding responses to USAID.

In relation to the Phase 3 expansion and extension, the KPSP conducted a series of meetings with USAID and DFID representatives on KPSP programming activities planned for Phase 3. On December 4, the KPSP team delivered a presentation on its programming activities and plans for Phase 3. In attendance at the presentation were: USAID Representative for Kyrgyzstan at the time Carey Gordon; USAID Head of the Democracy and Conflict Mitigation Office and then-COR for the KPSP Kevin Gash; USAID Democracy Specialist Nazgul Akisheva; UK Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan Judith Farnworth; DFID Deputy Director for Western Asia and Stabilization Unit Richard Dewdney; Team Leader for DFID Central Asia Bill Kilby; DFID Central Asia Regional Governance Advisor Alice Burt; Head of DFID's UK Aid Team in Kyrgyzstan Aida Akmatalieva; JK Speaker Jeenbekov; JK Vice Speaker Sasykbaeva; Head of the JK Administration Eshmambetov; and other JK officials. As a follow-up to the meeting, the KPSP also submitted, at the Speaker's request, comprehensive information on KPSP activities, events and initiatives for each of the Components from the start of the Program through November 30, 2012.

On December 6, Nazgul Akisheva was designated by USAID to serve as COR for the KPSP with Lira Djumadylova serving as Alternate COR. Ms. Akisheva replaced Kevin Gash, who had been serving as KPSP COR since its start in October 2010.

During the first quarter of Year Three, the KPSP prepared and presented to USAID a KPSP Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) update. Tom Bridle, KPSP expat STTA, visited Bishkek from November 20 to

December 1 to update the deliverable figures and percentage targets in the KPSP Performance Monitoring Plan through to the end of KPSP programming Year Two, which concluded on September 30, 2012. The work involved the development of a questionnaire and a series of meetings and interviews with JK partners and beneficiaries to better assess the work and deliverables of the KPSP. The final version of the updated PMP through the end of KPSP programming Year Two was submitted to USAID in January 2013. The PMP consisted of and featured figures and percentage indicators relating to the impact the KPSP had had on the JK. The PMP update found that the KPSP has exceeded its original three-year Program targets according to virtually all indicators.

During the second quarter of Year Three, the KPSP received official approval for Phase 3, beginning on February 1, 2013. USAID approved the Supplemental Statement of Work for the KPSP, extending the Program till September 29, 2015. The extension provided the Program with additional funds from DFID and expanded the reach and breadth of its activities. Some of the new high-profile KPSP activities included:

- Expanding from four to eight and ultimately to 10 partner parliamentary committees;
- Providing analysis and outside research to the Parliament through a joint JK-KPSP parliamentary Research Fund;
- Creating a Legislative Drafting Institute with a local partner university or a law school;
- Standardizing legislative and other terms in the Kyrgyz and Russian languages and developing a Russian-Kyrgyz Legislative Dictionary;
- Building a press gallery in the Parliament furnished with necessary technology and equipment;
- Developing and strengthening cooperation with the Speaker's Office;
- Creating a women's organization supporting and providing professional development opportunities for female parliamentary staffers.

In relation to KPSP Phase 3 expansion and extension, the KPSP team together with KPSP COR Nazgul Akisheva met with JK Speaker Asylbek Jeenbekov to brief him and his team about the KPSP's new programming activities. Activities and events planned under Components 1, 2, 3 and 4 were thoroughly discussed and received the full support of the Speaker. The parties exchanged information, comments and remarks and agreed to reaffirm cooperation to fulfill set tasks and achieve meaningful, sustainable and constructive results.

KPSP staff also regularly met with DFID representatives to brief them on KPSP programming activities in Phase 1 and Phase 2 and planned activities for Phase 3. In meetings conducted from January through March 2013, the KPSP Component Managers informed Aida Akmatolieva, the Head of DFID's UK Aid Team in Kyrgyzstan, and Alice Burt, DFID Central Asia Regional Governance Advisor, about KPSP-initiated and sponsored activities within each component, in progress or planned for Phase 3. The parties also discussed joint efforts for promoting parliamentary rule in the Kyrgyz Republic and the expansion of the Program, including the new DFID branding and marking requirements and efforts to clearly display the involvement of both donors in KPSP-facilitated activities and events.

With the start of KPSP Phase 3 on February 1, 2013 and the receipt of additional funds from DFID, Aida Akmatolieva, the Head of DFID's UK Aid Team in Kyrgyzstan, was designated by DFID to serve as DFID Coordinator for the KPSP.

During the third quarter of Year Three, 36 programmatic events were held with JK partners. Despite the heavy schedule stemming from a flood of requests from JK committees and administrative sub-divisions, the KPSP implemented all activities in a smooth fashion, including field public hearings and capacity-building and professional development trainings.

In the third quarter, the KPSP team delivered a presentation to partners and beneficiaries that detailed Phase 3 activities to be implemented between February 1, 2013 and September 29, 2015. Attendees of the presentation on April 16 in the JK Building included representatives of international organizations, Members of Parliament, and staffers from the JK Administration, the Office of the President, and the Government's Administration. In addition to discussing planned activities and deliverables for Phase 3,

the KPSP team detailed the results and achievements of the first and the second phases of the program. Opening remarks were delivered by JK Speaker Asylbek Jeenbekov, British Ambassador Judith Farnworth, and USAID Representative Carey Gordon.

During the fourth quarter of Year Three, the JK was in recess for two months and the KPSP Components did not hold large trainings and events, excepting two international study tours. Preparing for a Study Tour to the United States in July and a Study Tour to the United Kingdom in September was extremely intensive for the KPSP staff in terms of acquiring necessary participant information and documents so that the visa issuance process and program approval could go forward. USAID and DFID greatly assisted the KPSP in relation to these processes.

The KPSP Year Four Work Plan was submitted to USAID on August 29, 2013, covering the period from October 1, 2013 through September 29, 2014. It was approved by COR Nazgul Akisheva on September 6, 2013.

ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

KPSP staff worked intensively during Year Three to meet deadlines and deal with long work hours and stress while successfully conducting programmatic events with other initiatives and activities. The KPSP persevered and continued providing the JK with high quality work by staying maximally organized and flexible and properly prioritizing.

To effectively manage the expanded funding and scope of work during Phase 3, the KPSP resolved to enlarge its staff. KPSP Component Managers interviewed and tested more than 50 prospective candidates for nine new positions: Committee Hearing Specialist, Committee Research Manager, Legislative Process Specialist, Legislative Institute Manager, Media and Communications Specialist, Office Manager, Program Accountant, Procurement Specialist, and Program Officer. The best candidates, selected on the basis of interview results and evaluation, were approved by KPSP COR Nazgul Akisheva. The newly selected KPSP staffers included: Matthew Tappert, Program Officer; Aigerim Zholomanova, Committee Hearing Specialist; Mirbek Sydygaliev, Legislative Process Specialist; Bermet Kabylova, Procurement Specialist; Jyldyz Aymambaeva, Office Manager; Sanjar Djumadylov, Committee Research Manager; Aliman Temirbek, Media and Communications Specialist; Meder Dastanbekov, Legislative Institute Manager; and Jazgul Beyshenalieva, Program Accountant. Elis Akyzbekov and Ulugbek Chokushov were hired for the positions of local KPSP IT Specialist and HRM Expert, respectively. The staff additions strengthened the existing staff structure, comprising 16 specialists, 14 local and two foreign. New employment agreements with existing KPSP employees, covering April 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014, were concluded without delay on April 1, 2013, in compliance with Kyrgyz employment law.

Two other changes in staff composition were made in May and September 2013. In May, Component 2 Manager Sheradil Baktygulov was replaced by Ruslan Myrzalimov, a legal expert with extensive work experience in the academic and development spheres. In September, KPSP Administrative and Financial Manager Julia Korneeva went on maternity leave. She will return in January 2014. Jazgul Beyshenalieva, KPSP Program Accountant, has assumed the position of Acting Financial and Administrative Manager.

All KPSP staff underwent internal computer management system training on June 18-27 during the STTA visits of DAI Home Office KPSP Program Manager Shikha Gupta and KPSP TAMIS Administrator Pavla Cornejo. The KPSP staff learned how to use TAMIS, a proprietary computer system developed by DAI, for planning, reporting, monitoring and auditing and studied its programmatic and administrative internal procedures. During the training, the TAMIS system was also customized to the administrative, technical and operational needs of the KPSP and the requirements of USAID and DFID to facilitate and streamline planning and reporting processes. Ms. Gupta also presented comprehensive trainings relating to all aspects of issuing and managing grants.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

COMPONENT 1 – LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Under this component, the KPSP strives to improve the legislative process in all entities responsible for it, inside and outside of the Parliament. The KPSP aims at building the capacity of the persons involved in various stages of the legislative process, including staffers of the JK Legal Department and Analysis Division, experts working in standing committees, MP assistants and consultants, staffers of the Prime Minister's Legal Department, staffers of the President's Legal Department, and staffers of the Ministry of Justice. The KPSP also places importance on strengthening coordination and cooperation between all persons and entities involved in the legislative process. Thus, the KPSP improves the quality of legislative work in drafting bills, as well as rules and administrative regulations by all participants in the legislative process chain. Ensuring concerted efforts by all parties involved in the legislative process and making the legislative process more transparent, secure, and open makes it possible to provide proper and focused assistance and ultimately make the legislative work itself stronger.

Under Component 1, the following activities were held over the course of the year, attended in aggregate by 573 participants from the JK (including 16 MPs), the Prime Minister's Office, the President's Office, and the Ministry of Justice. These participants included 341 men and 232 women. These events consisted of:

- Five presentations on bill drafting and oversight to legal staffers from the JK, Prime Minister's Office, President's Office, and Ministry of Justice and consultations to MPs and JK committees relating to administrative regulations;
- A Study Tour for 10 senior legislative drafters from the JK, the Government's Office and the President's Office to Des Moines, Iowa, USA, to study legislative drafting and process from A to Z at the Iowa General Assembly;
- A Policy Seminar, initiated by the JK Committee on Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics, on Improvement of Civil Service Legislation regarding the selection of, appointment to and dismissal from administrative state positions;
- A Policy Seminar, initiated by the JK Committee on Agrarian Policy, Water Resources, Ecology, and Regional Development, on the draft law "On amendments to some legislative acts of the Kyrgyz Republic," which aimed to ensure transparency of the executive branch's activities and improve the quality of adopted administrative regulations;
- Numerous working group meetings on standardization of terminology in Kyrgyz when translating legislative proposals originally drafted in Russian and the preparation of a comprehensive dictionary of legislative and other terms in Russian and Kyrgyz.

The KPSP organized and gave three presentations to JK, Prime Minister's Office, President's Office, and Ministry of Justice legal staffers and two presentations to JK committees during their normal weekly meetings. It also provided numerous consultations to individual MPs on the inter-relationship between adopted laws and the conceptualizing, drafting, proposing, adopting, implementing, and repealing or nullifying of administrative regulations. KPSP STTA Richard Johnson, Director of the Iowa Legislative Services Agency, visited Kyrgyzstan from September 30 to October 13 to provide these high-profile presentations and consultations. The focus of Mr. Johnson's visit was parliamentary oversight over the process of drafting, proposing, and adopting administrative regulations in the ministries; parliamentary oversight over the legal authority, fiscal impact, and political acceptability of administrative regulations; aspects of U.S. law that allow legislators, stakeholders, and citizens to critique and suggest changes in proposed administrative regulations; and oversight powers to delay the implementation of or nullify

administrative regulations, or to refer them for reworking or additional analysis. As a result of his visit, Mr Johnson prepared a manual entitled “Oversight of the Administrative Regulations Process – Principles and Practices from the Western Experience for Use by the Jogorku Kenesh,” which was translated and distributed among the target audience.

The KPSP sent a delegation of 10 senior legislative drafters from the JK, the Government’s Office, and the President’s Office on a Study Tour to Des Moines, Iowa, to study legislative process at the Iowa General Assembly. The Study Tour covered legislative drafting, support and coordination from A to Z. During the course of the Study Tour, the 10 senior legislative drafters studied all aspects of legislative process, legislative support, and legislative coordination. The participants were also exposed to committee work and services, oversight, constituent relations, parliamentary management, human resources management, inter-relations with other branches of government, and fiscal and budget analysis. The Study Tour participants visited the Iowa General Assembly, the Iowa Supreme Court, and the Iowa Governor’s Office, as well as other legislative, executive and judicial bodies and their various divisions. The participants held meetings with elected state legislators and numerous legislative staff; a Supreme Court judge; and the General Prosecutor. The Study Tour participants also shared the practices employed in the legislative drafting process in Kyrgyzstan. The Study Tour was organized with the help of the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and hosted by the Iowa Legislative Services Agency from July 12–20, 2013.



*Members of the Study Tour to the Iowa General Assembly, Iowa, USA, welcomed by Representative Tom Taylor and Senator Rita Hart of the Iowa General Assembly, who emphasized the incredible efforts all legislators make.
Photo: KPSP.*

During Year Three Component 1 continued its efforts to standardize terminology in Kyrgyz when translating legislative proposals originally drafted in Russian and led a newly established Working Group to finalize the comprehensive dictionary of legislative drafting terms. The Working Group was formed by a Resolution of the JK Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports on November 20, 2012 in order to develop and institute unified and standardized legislative terminology to be used when drafting legislation, conducting legal analysis, and performing other legislative work. In total, 16 working group meetings were held to finalize the dictionary. A first draft of the Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary, containing over 14,000 legislative and other terms often used in the legislative drafting process, was prepared in close cooperation with the JK Administration, Legal Department, Legal Analysis Division, and Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports with the assistance of a hired linguistic expert. The Working Group then considered and translated every word and phrase in this draft to make sure that there were no confusing ambiguities or misleading connotations. The comprehensive dictionary of legislative and other terms was successfully finalized by the end of Year Three. In order to finalize the Working Group’s activities and perform a definitive expert analysis of the Legislative Dictionary, the KPSP hired two linguists and one lawyer to review the polished version prepared by the Working Group for consistency and coherence and make necessary edits. It is expected that the Committee, through the Government, will recommend that the JK issue an order making the dictionary and its use mandatory in the JK and in

other state bodies and supplementary institutions involved in the official drafting and translating of bills and regulations in the Kyrgyz and Russian languages. The Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of legislative and other terms will facilitate the process of achieving more clearly and definitively drafted legislation.

The KPSP's effort to promote the use of the Kyrgyz language in professional spheres was recognized by the JK. KPSP Chief of Party Gregg Halstead, Legislative Process Component Manager Jenishbek Arzymatov, and Legislative Process Specialist Mirbek Sydygaliev were presented with Letters of Appreciation, recognizing and expressing gratitude for their hard work and contributions to the development of the Kyrgyz language.



Members of the Working Group made use of specialized dictionaries and glossaries to meticulously determine the best interpretation and translation of each considered word to avoid possible mistakes and eliminate errors in translation. Photo: KPSP.

In Year Three, KPSP Component 1 organized a substantial analytical research project into why legislative errors occur and what factors influence this process and to suggest exact implementation mechanisms to address the problem for further introduction into the Parliament. The research focused on the three main stages of the legislative process: preparation and drafting of a bill; consideration of the bill at the committee level and in plenary hearings; and enactment of the bill in engagement with the President's Office. The analysis aimed to identify patterns in the legislative process that lead to errors and to help reduce the recurrence of those errors. The research included qualitative and quantitative analysis of legislative errors, adhered to a nonpartisan approach, and applied research tools and methodology developed by two professional lawyers and a researcher contracted by the KPSP. Based on the analysis of questionnaires, focus group discussions, and existing legislative practices, bills and regulations, the experts made recommendations and worked out exact corrective mechanisms to be introduced in Parliament. The work resulted in the preparation of a report to be further disseminated among KPSP partner institutions and all other interested parties.

During Year Three, the KPSP began work on the transparency and security of the legislative process, eliminating errors or mistakes in draft legislation and also improving the overall step-by-step legislative process. At a series of meetings with influential MPs, KPSP Component 1 promoted the idea of forming an interagency Working Group for the Improvement of Legislative Process. The goal in creating the Working Group was to ensure coordinated efforts by all parties involved in the legislative process and make the legislative process more transparent and open. The Working Group was established by a joint Resolution of the JK Committee on Human Rights, Constitutional Legislation, and State Structure and the JK Committee on Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics in June 2013. The Working Group counts 9 MPs among its members, joined by key staff involved in the legislative process from the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Justice, the President's Office and civil society groups. The Working Group will work on problems relating to the legislative process and provide recommendations to MPs on how to streamline the legislative process, what amendments to make in the current legislation, how to guarantee the concurrence of laws and administrative regulations and how to avoid Presidential vetoes that impede

legislative work. KPSP Component 1 experts closely oversaw the activity of the Working Group to ensure the attainment of its long-term goals as planned and promoted by KPSP.

In line with the activities aimed at increasing legislative transparency and security, decreasing legislative errors and avoiding contradictions in legislation, the KPSP decided to establish a Legislative Drafting Institute housed by a local institution of higher education. The KPSP partners in Parliament pledged their support for the suggested initiative. Once established, the Legislative Drafting Institute will provide a center for literature, publications, and other materials relating to legislative expertise and will maintain a roster of expert trainers with the ability to conduct regular trainings and promote the sustainable improvement of the legislative process. To find a local higher education institution with the necessary capacity to host the Legislative Drafting Institute, Component 1 conducted a preliminary evaluation of the law school market and held meetings with the management teams of the Kyrgyz State Law Academy (KSLA), the Law School at the Kyrgyz Russian Slavic University (KRSU), and the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic to discuss the initiative and assess the institutional and academic potential of these institutions. The host of the Legislative Drafting Institute will be determined through an open and competitive tender. In September, Component 1 solicited proposals from local higher education institutions. The results of the tender will be available in November 2013.

During Year Three, the KPSP, under Component 1, provided expert consultants and a mentor to the JK Legal Department and the Legal Expertise Division to work on regulatory impact analysis (RIA) and the restoration of the electronic database “Myizam” (“Law”), which contains laws and administrative regulations of the JK in both Kyrgyz and Russian, and to the Government’s Office to provide assistance with linguistic analysis of bills including the editing of draft laws, administrative regulations, and decrees and then translating them from Russian into Kyrgyz, ultimately developing an effective methodology for providing linguistic analysis of legislation when drafting, translating and analyzing bills.

COMPONENT 2 – COMMITTEE STRENGTHING

The main objectives of KPSP Component 2 focus on strengthening parliamentary committees. All Component 2 activities aim at increasing the capacity of parliamentary committees to exercise oversight over executive branch bodies and their actions. The KPSP actively partners with select parliamentary committees helping them conduct informational and educational events and policy seminars on oversight mechanisms and procedures during analysis of draft laws and implementation of adopted laws.

During Year Three, the KPSP increased the number of its partner committees from four to eight and plans ultimately to enlarge the number to 10 partner committees. Component 2 assisted the following select committees on an ad hoc need basis:

- Committee on Budget and Finance;
- Committee on International Affairs;
- Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports;
- Committee on Economic and Fiscal Policy;
- Committee on Agrarian Policy, Water Resources, Ecology, and Regional Development;
- Committee on Human Rights, Constitutional Legislation, and State Structure;
- Committee on Judicial and Legal Issues and Legality; and
- Committee on Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics.

These legislative committees were chosen in close consultation with USAID. The list of new partner parliamentary committees was formed based on the results of a thorough selection process and a series of meetings held with committee chairs and staff with detailed discussion of KPSP Phase 3 activities, proposed deliverables for 2013-2015, and the Committees’ own yearly event plans. The number will be enlarged to 10 parliamentary partner committees during the second year of Phase 3.

Two to four MPs from each committee were identified as a target group, and with other committee members and interested MPs were invited to attend and participate in KPSP-sponsored and organized

policy seminars, public forums, field visits, and parliamentary hearings. These events were conducted in an interactive manner including round table discussions with different points of view represented and time provided for committee members to pose questions to reporting ministers, deputy ministers, and other executive branch officials charged with implementation of adopted laws and formulation of administrative regulations. NGO activists and academics were also in attendance at these events.

KPSP committee-related events facilitate better communications between the committee involved and its corresponding ministry and encourage more accountability within the executive branch under the oversight of JK legislative committees. In addition, such events help receive expertise and other input from the public and civil society and, consequently, make MPs more knowledgeable on particular issues prior to their decision-making. Committee department staff also received assistance and support under Component 2 as well as training and gained direct hands-on experience in how to effectively organize and structure committee events.

Under Component 2, 22 separate events were held during Year Three featuring aggregate attendance by 2052 persons (1222 men and 830 women) including 182 MPs (115 men and 67 women) were organized and held. Participants included the Prime Minister, Vice Prime Ministers, Ministers, other senior officials, academics, NGO activists, and experts. These events consisted of:

- Three study tours to: i) the Mongolian Parliament in Ulan-Bator, Mongolia; ii) the Malaysian Parliament in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; iii) the Parliament of the United Kingdom and the Parliament of Scotland in London and Edinburgh, UK;
- Eight public forums on i) Problems of and Prospects for Pre-School Education and Implementation of Per Capita Funding for General Education in partnership with UNICEF and the International Public Foundation “Initiative of Roza Otunbayeva”; ii) Regulation of Motor Vehicle Commercial Freight and Passenger Transport; iii) the State Budget for 2013 and the Forecasts for 2014-2015 in partnership with the USAID-UNDP State Budget Transparency Program; iv) Road Safety; v) the Law “On the National Archive Fund”; vi) the Religious Situation and Religious Education in Kyrgyzstan; vii) Libraries of the Kyrgyz Republic; and viii) the Implementation of the Law “On State Support of Cinematography”;
- Four policy seminars on i) Microfinancing and Foreclosure of Mortgaged Real Property; ii) Customs Tariffs; iii) the Results of Income and Property Declarations by Civil Servants; and iv) the Religious Education and the Regulation of Religious Institutions in Kyrgyzstan;
- Five on-site field hearings, including public forums and policy seminars on i) Library Works and Methods (*Bishkek*); ii) the Law “On International Agreements” (*Issyk Kul*), iii) the Protection of the Population from Tuberculosis (*Osh*); iv) Problems Faced by Educational and Cultural Institutions (*Naryn*); and v) Amendments to the Water Code (*Issyk Kul*);
- Two international conferences on: i) the Role of Central Asian Parliamentarians in the Development of Regional Cooperation; and ii) the Establishment of a Unified System of Higher Education in Central Asia.



The Minister of Finance, O. Lavrova, presents a draft of the National Budget for 2013 to an audience of more than 220 participants, including 23 Members of Parliament and the Cabinet of Ministers at the Public Forum on November 26, 2012, sponsored by the KPSP and the USAID-UNDP State Budget Transparency Program. Photo: KPSP.

The Study Tour to the Mongolian Parliament (the Great Huraal) was conducted October 2-6 with the participation of 10 MPs representing five JK committees (Committee on International Affairs, Committee on Budget and Finance, Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports, Committee on Economic and Fiscal Policy, and Committee on Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics) and two staffers from the JK Committee on International Affairs. The participants specifically focused on how the committee structure within the Great Huraal has contributed to making the Mongolian Parliament one of the strongest legislative bodies among former communist bloc countries. The participants met with the Speaker of the Mongolian Parliament and other MPs, as well as the Mongolian Prime Minister, the Mongolian President, the Minister of Industry and Agriculture, and other key Mongolian officials.

The Study Tour to Malaysia took place February 2-10. The Kyrgyz delegation consisted of two staffers from JK committee departments and seven MPs from four KPSP partner parliamentary committees (Committee on International Affairs, Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports, Committee on Economic and Fiscal Policy, and Committee on Budget and Finance). The Study Tour participants focused on the Malaysian parliamentary system and its policies and explored the multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual approach adopted in the country. Malaysia is world-renowned for its religious tolerance, well-balanced interethnic relations and steady economic development and growth. The participants met with the Vice Speaker and Deputies of the Malaysian Parliament's House of Representatives, the Minister and Deputy Minister of International Trade and Industry, the Heads and experts from the Malaysian Industry Development Authority, the Economic Planning Department of the Prime-Minister's Office, and the External Trade Development Corporation.

The Study Tour to the United Kingdom took place August 31 to September 6. The delegation, including seven chairs and one vice chair from the KPSP's eight JK partner committees (Committee on International Affairs; Committee on Human Rights, Constitutional Legislation and State Structure; Committee on Judicial-Legal Issues and Rule of Law; Committee on Agrarian Policy, Water Resources, Ecology and Regional Development; Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports; Committee on Economic and Fiscal Policy; Committee on Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics; and Committee on Budget and Finance) and one Deputy Head of the Parliament Administration, visited London and Edinburgh to examine the roles of UK parliamentarians and explore the practices of the Parliament of the United Kingdom and the Parliament of Scotland. The participants met with Deputy Minister of International Development Mr. Alan Duncan and other influential figures involved in different aspects of the legislative process, the work of committees, and various fields of public policy and external relations. The Study Tour to the UK provided a comprehensive experience covering the whole scale of work in the national and regional parliaments.



*Jogorku Kenesh Deputies meet the Right Honorable Alan Duncan, MP and Minister of State for the Department for International Development, on September 2 in London during the Kyrgyz parliamentary delegation's visit to the UK.
Photo: KPSP.*

As part of its Phase 3 expansion, the KPSP decided to establish a joint JK and KPSP Research Fund under Component 2, accessible on an equal basis to all parliamentary factions and KPSP partner committees as well as ad hoc groups of MPs. The Research Fund financed by USAID and DFID through the KPSP and implemented together with the JK aims at increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of JK activities by engaging and obtaining external research and expert analysis conducted by local experts, NGOs, think tanks, and academic institutions. Component 2 made a concerted effort to develop a Research Fund Management Manual outlining the objectives of the Fund and detailing the processes and procedures for approving and implementing requests for policy research and analysis. Two options for soliciting research and analysis under the Fund have been thoroughly considered, keeping in mind the necessity of operating in a timely and effective manner and preventing corruption: 1) awarding and implementing grants; and 2) using sub-contracts and individual contract assignments (ICAs). The KPSP also collected applications from research centers, think tanks, consulting companies, civil society organizations, and independent experts for inclusion in the Research Fund's database of potential experts and organizations. Those included in the database will be eligible to provide the JK with expert and consulting services, analysis, research, and other expertise. The KPSP has been working on the Management Manual in close cooperation with USAID. Once developed and approved by USAID and DFID, the Research Fund Management Manual will become the main document guiding how the Research Fund will operate and be implemented during Phase 3. It will also specify the roles, functions and relationships of the various bodies involved with the Fund, and prescribe the process of research solicitation and implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

During Year Three, the KPSP continued to provide embedded consultants to the JK Committee on Budget and Finance to assist with its ongoing work on the State Budget, budgetary legislation, legislative proposals dealing with banking, commercial, and financial relations, and financial oversight. Initially the request to assist the Committee was received in 2012 from Chair (and former JK Speaker) Ahmatbek Keldibekov, who made it clear that the assistance provided through these KPSP-sponsored consultants was very important for the Committee in meeting its targets for preparation for the 2013 State Budget adoption process and making forecasts for 2014-2015. The other expert assistance delivered by the KPSP under Component 2 included: consulting support to the JK Committee on Judicial and Legal Issues to review relations between the legislative and judicial powers in Kyrgyzstan and advise ways of improving them; and expert support through an established working group to conduct an RIA of a draft law regulating glaciers in Kyrgyzstan.

COMPONENT 3 – COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

KPSP Component 3 assists the JK Press Service in providing objective coverage of the activities and work of the Parliament. Component 3 applies training techniques to increase the professional skills of Press Service employees and accredited parliamentary journalists, ultimately to improve information flow on parliamentary activities between the public and the Parliament. Much attention is given to timely and proper coverage of the activities and work of the Parliament, its factions and committees by preparing, issuing and disseminating balanced and verified informational materials.

During Year Three, Component 3 worked closely with target groups consisting of JK Press Service staff and accredited parliamentary journalists, as well as JK committee, department and faction specialists responsible for public outreach. In the organization and carrying out of these capacity-building and informational activities, the KPSP cooperated directly with the JK Press Service. Training seminars and workshops conducted during this year for JK Press Service staff were aimed at enhancing their capabilities in the fields of TV, radio, photo and internet journalism. Training sessions for parliamentary journalists were aimed at increasing local journalists' professional understanding of their rights and responsibilities and the broader implications of their work as well as at enhancing their capacity to produce political coverage in different genres. For building constructive dialogue and better understanding between the Press Service and journalists accredited to cover Parliament, representatives of the Press Service always joined training sessions designed for parliamentary journalists.

Under Component 3, a number of activities were held over the course of the year. The total number of participants amounted to 163, including 64 men and 99 women. Five of these were MPs. These events consisted of:

- Training for JK Press Service staffers focusing on the basics of Photoshop and its advantages;
- Training for accredited parliamentary journalists focusing on the Basic Legal Principles of Journalism and Journalistic Ethics;
- Two separate training sessions on the Basics of Parliamentary Reporting and Coverage for parliamentary journalists from Bishkek and journalists from all regions of Kyrgyzstan;
- Three training sessions for four MPs, 14 MP consultants and assistants, and 20 press-oriented parliamentary staffers on how to convey a strong message and positive image to TV viewers, in partnership with NDI.

In Year Three, the KPSP contracted a local expert organization to conduct an assessment of the internal and external communications of the Parliament and provide recommendations for improving Parliament – Media relations. Door Media Public Foundation was selected to conduct this assessment and provide expert opinions on how to improve information flow and communications between the Parliament and the Media; the foundation was selected based on an openly announced and competitive tender. Door Media experts conducted surveys among target groups of respondents, including MPs, representatives of the media, voters, and JK staff. The assessment covered the following issues: relations between the Media and the Parliament; the accreditation procedure for journalists; public access to the Parliament and its MPs; and the current methods of communication used by the JK Press Service with journalists. The assessment also included analysis of the needs, expectations, and existing problems of MPs, parliamentary staff, the Press Service, and parliamentary journalists. The KPSP presented the assessment report with details of the research results and all well-balanced recommendations to the JK Speaker, the Press Service Head, and the Parliament's Administration Chief of Staff. Recommendations included the establishment of robust information flow and communications between the Parliament and the Media and the development of guidelines on how to improve public awareness of the JK's activities. Speaker Jeenbekov stressed that the recommendations resulting from this independent assessment will be taken into account when developing a communications strategy for the Parliament aimed at increasing the transparency of the legislative branch and improving communications with constituents.



Speaker Jeenbekov and Head of the JK Press Service Stamalieva are briefed on the outcomes of the Assessment of internal and external communications of the Parliament. Photo: JK Press Service.

Another activity meant to help the Press Service better meet the Parliament's needs in the preparation and dissemination of information was the transfer of KPSP-purchased office equipment with a total value of almost \$5,000 to the JK Press Service. The official transfer ceremony on September 6 in the JK Building was attended by the Head of the Parliament Administration, Radbek Eshmambetov, and the Head of the JK Press Service, Tolganay Stamalieva. The Head of the JK Administration thanked the Program for the support and assistance it has rendered to both the Press Service and the Parliament

itself. KPSP's next step in modernizing the JK Press Service will be the equipping and furnishing of a Press Gallery for accredited journalists within the Parliament Building. A fixed price ceiling of \$25,000 has been set for the equipment that will be provided for the Gallery. The delivery is planned for the second half of KPSP Phase 3.

In 2013, the KPSP engaged in the implementation of MP Dastan Bekeshev's initiative to prepare a brochure on the Kyrgyz Parliament for dissemination to members of the public and international delegations during tours of the Parliament Building. The brochure, containing a brief description and history of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic in Kyrgyz, Russian, and English, will serve as a transparency promotion vehicle increasing public awareness about the Parliament and its main functions and activities. Speaker Jeenbekov endorsed the idea and instructed relevant administrative departments in the JK to render all necessary assistance in its creation. The KPSP, together with MP Bekeshev's assistant, developed Terms of Reference for the project and solicited bids for the authorship of the brochure in Russian. When the writing was completed, the parties solicited bids for a designer of the brochure. The content and the concept design of the brochure were approved by the JK Speaker. The KPSP was then approached by the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI/USAID) with a proposal to support in the translation and printing of the brochures in Kyrgyz and English. The finalized and approved Russian version was also printed in 1,000 copies with financial support from OTI/USAID. The Kyrgyz and English versions will be finalized and printed in October: 1,000 copies in Kyrgyz and 500 copies in English. The KPSP will also seek to print these brochures in Braille and produce an audio version for the visually-impaired. This initiative became one of the key deliverables for KPSP Phase 3.

During Year Three, the KPSP and the JK Press Service developed a joint project focused on supporting a new generation of parliamentary reporters. They invited young journalists and final-year journalism students who are interested in covering and reporting on the Kyrgyz Parliament to take part in a School of Parliamentary Journalism. The School of Parliamentary Journalism is designed to promote opportunities for journalists to acquire skills in the preparation and production of political news and become familiar with the activities of deputies, factions, committees and the Jogorku Kenesh in general. The School of Parliamentary Journalism was launched in September 2013 and will be held for six months in two languages – Kyrgyz and Russian. The best media experts will explain and discuss with the students the strengths and weaknesses of parliamentary journalism, the peculiarities of parliamentary and legislative coverage, and the role of journalists in the dissemination of parliamentary information and concepts. The students will have the opportunity to learn political PR, analytical journalism, effective communication methods, the role played by social networks in today's society, journalistic ethics, and other topics. The School of Parliamentary Journalism will also offer meetings with MPs, representatives of the various parties, and independent experts. Experienced parliamentary journalists will conduct master classes and share their experience.



Participants of the first training of the School of Parliamentary Journalism learned about the Parliament and discussed their views on governance and separation of powers.

Photo: KPSP.

The first class of the School of Parliamentary Journalism, covering the Functions and Role of the Jogorku Kenesh, was held on September 21 for twenty-five young journalists and senior journalism students. The session concentrated on the history and formation of the parliamentary system in Kyrgyzstan. The training was designed to explain the process by which a bill becomes law, the relationship between the Jogorku Kenesh and the President and its administration, the forms and methods for working and engaging with voters, the roles played by parliamentary committees and factions, and the legal status of Members of Parliament. Through role-playing games the participants learned how hard it can be to create a coalition out of different factions and coordinate the activities of candidates.

Component 3 also continued its effort preparing and disseminating a Parliamentary Brief reporting on JK activities and events. The Parliamentary Brief was prepared in Kyrgyz, Russian, and English and issued on Tuesdays and Fridays. The Parliamentary Brief highlighted bills under consideration and voted upon by the JK as well as the activities of the JK Speaker, committees, factions, and individual MPs. In total, the KPSP during Year Three prepared 75 separate issues of the Parliamentary Brief. Due to the inclusion of 860 JK Administration staffers and JK media partners in the mailing list, in the second quarter of Year Three the number of recipients increased from 270 to a total of 1,130 persons/entities, including 1,040 Kyrgyz- and/or Russian-speaking persons/entities and 90 English-speaking persons/entities in regular receipt.

At the request of the JK Press Service Head, two expert mentors were embedded with the JK Press Service to serve its needs in Year Three. The KPSP contracted a local expert mentor on press, journalistic and publicity matters who assisted the Press Service on a daily basis working on a wide profile of parliamentary press and information matters. Primarily, the expert provided mentoring services to the Press Service staff in relation to the preparation of TV programs and TV shows on the activities of the Parliament. Currently, OTRK (the Kyrgyz state-run TV Channel) broadcasts a "Parliamentary Week" TV program and "Lessons of Parliamentarianism" TV feature produced by the JK Press Service once a week.

The KPSP also contracted a local expert on radio who assisted the JK Press Service with Parliamentary Radio improvement on a daily basis. The mentor worked with the Press Service staff and mentored them on the content and shape of radio programs and features. The mentor also assumed the role of a radio presenter, conducting live programs in Russian and Kyrgyz on Parliamentary Radio, preparing 10-minute news segments five days a week and making other radio programs. Programs produced under mentorship were set to be recorded and discussed with the Press Service staff to identify strengths and address weaknesses. The mentor also analyzed the situation with Parliamentary Radio and identified obstacles that impede its development and broader coverage, such as the failure to produce a weekly broadcasting schedule, the lack of written guidelines for editorial and personnel policies and the absence of an overall vision or concept of radio development. To improve the situation and facilitate Parliamentary Radio development, the mentor suggested introducing a new system of management and personnel policy and reconsidering program policy, making more radio pieces with the participation of common people and working with the regions. Parliamentary Radio promotion should be done with the help of NGOs and the mass media.

In Year Three, the KPSP, together with the Press Service of the JK, announced a competition among local media agencies and outlets, as well as bloggers and independent journalists, to determine the best coverage of parliamentary system development in Kyrgyzstan. The purpose of this competition is to raise awareness among the population about the various functions of the Parliament, its committees, factions, and deputies; to bring laws, administrative regulations and other legal acts currently under consideration to public attention; and inform the public about recent developments in the Kyrgyz parliamentary system. The competition is being held in five categories: "Print Media," "Television," "Radio," "Internet," and "Analytics." Winners will be determined by an independent judging commission including media experts, NGO representatives, and public figures. Relevant announcements were made on the official website of the JK, www.kenesh.kg, the popular websites of the Internet-based agencies www.donors.kg and www.job.kg, and in two national newspapers, *Kyrgyz Tuusu* and *Slovo Kyrgyzstana*. Submissions are due October 21, 2013.

COMPONENT 4 – PARLIAMENTARY MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

KPSP activities under Component 4 aim to provide support and assistance to the JK Department of State Service and Human Resources in creating and developing the internal capacity of the Department's staff in the field of human resource management. Component 3 helps develop and introduce HRM strategies by training the staff in the professional skills and innovative HRM methods necessary to work efficiently and by promoting transparent procedures in hiring, evaluating, promoting, retaining, rotating, and terminating staff. The Component also evaluates the training needs of the JK staff in a timely and systematic fashion and provides a system of continuing education to equip parliamentary staffers with expert knowledge and skills.

To work more efficiently and render timely assistance, Component 4 assessed the functional responsibilities and needs of all target groups in the JK Administration with questionnaires about the design and implementation of training programs for JK staff. When developing, organizing, and holding such training activities, the KPSP works closely with the JK Department of State Service and Human Resources. It is this close cooperation that helps the Component to respond so promptly to emerging needs.

Over the reporting period, the KPSP, using modern and innovative training techniques and methods, conducted seven informative and well-designed training sessions which expanded the overall capacity of JK employees. The total number of participants in Component 4 trainings and events was 295, including 30 men and 265 women.

- A Study Tour for four staff members of the JK Department of State Service and Human Resources, an adviser to the JK Speaker, and the Chief of Staff of the JK Administration to the German Bundestag and Hungarian National Assembly to study personnel policies and the work of HRM Departments;
- Training on Human Resource Management and Development of Organizational Structures for two separate groups of senior Jogorku Kenesh employees, focusing on HR policy as the basis of an organization, mobbing, bullying and outplacement practices;
- Training for two groups of heads and senior staff of structural departments of the JK Administration, focusing on the topics of Effective Personnel Decisions and the Professional Employment and Adaptation of Personnel;
- Training on the Art of Public Speaking and Giving Presentations for members of the Parliamentary Women's Club;
- Training on Strategic Planning, Project Development, and Team-Building for members of the Parliamentary Women's Club.

USAID approved the allocation of up to \$71,211 to assist the JK with the acquisition and installation of an electronic entrance and exit system for the Parliament Building. The acquisition of such a system had been imposed on the KPSP by the Parliament as a necessary condition for continuation of its usual human resources management activities; USAID's approval therefore helped restore normal Component 4 activities in Year Three. Component 4 worked on the development of technical requirements for the system and solicited bids from local and foreign companies/experts to assess the costs of purchasing, installing, and maintaining such a system. As a result of the tender, Component 4 hired a local expert who examined the existing JK facilities in order to design system specifications and work out technical solutions and who worked on the development of the Scope of Work for installation. The JK released an official letter confirming its agreement with the resulting Scope of Work, equipment selection, and estimated cost of the project and expressing its willingness to continue work in this direction. The assessment, among other goals, determined the KPSP's contribution to this initiative in terms of investment (full or partial) and management.

In Year Three, with the aim of improving human resource management in the Kyrgyz Parliament's Administration and strengthening the potential and capabilities of HRM staff, the KPSP organized a Study Tour to the German Bundestag and the National Assembly of Hungary for four staff members of the JK

Department of State Service and Human Resources, an advisor to the JK Speaker who deals with human resources management and reform, and the Chief of Staff of the JK Administration. From May 26 to June 1, the participants explored the organizational and functional structures of the Bundestag and the National Assembly, the personnel policies used by those Parliaments and their main components, and the work of the Personnel/HRM Departments. In the Bundestag, the participants also considered the Personnel Training System with a focus on staff development, preparation, and the motivation of employees. In the National Assembly, the Kyrgyz delegation had the opportunity to learn about the work of the Information Service for Parliamentarians and the functioning of the Library and the Department for Outreach and Engagement with Civil Society. At both legislatures, the delegates discussed Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation and the further exchange of knowledge in addition to the most successful HRM practices.



*The KPSP Component 4 Study Tour participants at the National Assembly of Hungary.
Photo: KPSP.*

During Year Three, the KPSP organized English language lessons, which had long been a request from the Parliament. KPSP Component 4 conducted a survey of JK deputies and structural division heads to estimate their levels of English language knowledge, their need or interest to improve their English and their availability for lessons. In addition, interviews and written tests to determine potential students' levels and place them into appropriate groups were conducted. The results were analyzed and three English language teachers were contracted on a competitive basis to develop English-teaching curricula and materials. It was decided to form small groups of six to eight students to maximize participation. In total, fifteen groups were formed. Curricula and plans reflect different levels of knowledge and ability varying from beginner to upper-intermediate. In addition to the regular lessons, a conversation club for the more advanced students with a native speaker began in September.

During Year Three, in order to promote women's leadership in parliamentary development, the KPSP launched a female parliamentary staffer organization. The Parliamentary Women's Club aims to provide select female parliamentary staffers, representing the most senior women serving in the JK's administrative divisions, with professional capacity-building and career growth opportunities. Participating women will build a solid foundation of strong female leaders playing key roles in parliamentary development and strengthening in Kyrgyzstan. During the reporting period, the Parliamentary Women's Club conducted 10 working meetings to discuss the development concept, mission and main goals of the new organization, develop rules of procedure, membership rules and an organizational chart and three general meetings open to all acting and prospective members of the Women's Club as well as friends and supporters. The participants also assessed and worked on prospects and priorities for the Women's Club's expansion and development. Working meetings were complemented by master-classes and workshops tailored to the needs of the Women's Club's members, including trainings on the art of presentation and on the administration of the Club's official website, www.aiymjk.kg (the site was initially developed by a KPSP-contracted expert). The grand presentation of the Parliamentary Women's Club to the JK Speaker, MPs and the broader public is scheduled for October 2013.

The KPSP also provided an embedded gender expert to assist the Parliamentary Women's Club in developing a gender policy and strengthening the capacity of members in the areas of strategic planning, presentation, and the preparation of organizational policies and procedures. The assignment period was from April through September. During individual and group working meetings and consultations with members of the Women's Club the expert considered: 1) a gender audit of the JK; 2) analysis of the implementation of the Rules of Procedure of the JK; 3) promotion of a bill addressing domestic violence; 4) recommendations concerning media coverage of women's leadership; and 5) expertise in the consideration of bills with special regard for gender issues. In conjunction with the Women's Club's members, the expert worked on the preparation of grant application documents and fund raising proposals to better accommodate the Parliamentary Women's Club needs. Mini-project groups on writing project proposals for donors were formed. The expert also provided individual consultations on the development of projects and budgets, calculation of costs for activities and drafting of program documents focusing on the development and implementation of a coherent gender policy.

At the official request of the Head of the JK State Service and Human Resources Department, the KPSP accelerated its long-standing efforts to introduce transparent procedures for the selection of new parliamentary staff and assessment of the professional knowledge and skills of the current staff. Component 4 provided direct assistance to help the Parliament carry out the selection and evaluation of new and existing parliamentary staff and contracted two experienced professional experts to develop the necessary written aptitude and proficiency tests as well as a scoring system. These tests were included in the database of the Testing Center of the State Civil Service, providing the Parliament with the necessary facilities to recruit and retain qualified and trained personnel in the Administration through open competitive selection and proficiency examinations.



The Competition Commission invited 276 candidates for vacant administrative positions in the JK to the first computer-based testing session on May 28 at the Testing Center of the State Civil Service. Photo: KPSP.

The first round of skill evaluation and assessment of the current 70 JK Administration staff (including assistants and advisors to deputies, heads of departments and experts) as part of their qualifications examination took place in April. The computer-based testing determined their knowledge of the civil service and of relevant legislation, job descriptions and the code of ethics. Fifty percent of the staffers demonstrated sufficient knowledge to pass the examination. In May, the Parliament also held the first open competition with computer-based testing to fill 22 vacant positions in its Administration, including seven senior administrative positions and 15 expert positions. As a result, 17 out of the 22 vacant positions were filled; it was the first time in the 20-year history of the Jogorku Kenesh that vacant positions were filled through such open competitive selection. This marked the full implementation of the 2004 Law of the Kyrgyz Republic "On Civil Service," which established competitive selection for vacant administrative positions and provided a transparent anti-corruption mechanism for human resources selection and performance assessment.

In addition, to strengthen the work of the JK Department of State Service and Human Resources with regard to increased capacity in enrollment, service, promotion, tenure, and termination of civil service, the KPSP provided a mentor with extensive experience in the field who rendered direct support to the work of the Department throughout Year Three. The expert assisted on a daily basis, working primarily on the organization and reorganization of the Jogorku Kenesh committee departments and administrative structural divisions and aiming at optimization of the staffing structure and organization of the JK Administration. Specifically, the mentor assisted in implementing the parliamentary Resolution “On Amendments to the Resolution of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic № 30-V, dated December 23, 2010, ‘On Approval of the Structure of Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic,’ dated October 17, 2012, provisions to the Law ‘On the Civil Service of the Kyrgyz Republic,’ dated August 11, 2004, and the parliamentary Resolution ‘On Optimization of the Structure of the Jogorku Kenesh of the Kyrgyz Republic.’” The expert also helped Members of Parliament and JK staffers complete the income declaration procedure (which is mandatory for all civil servants) by holding consultations and assisting in the collection, analysis and presentation of information.

GENDER REPRESENTATION

In Year Three, out of 120 MPs in the Parliament, 27 were female MPs. Three Vice Speakers were women MPs representing three parliamentary factions: Ar Namys, Respublika, and Ata Meken. Two parliamentary committees (the Committee on Social Policy and the Committee on Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics) were chaired by female MPs. Also several JK committees had female Vice Chairs.

The KPSP during Year Three worked closely with women from the JK holding the following key positions:

- Vice-Speakers;
- Chair of the JK Committee on Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics;
- Deputy Chairs of the JK Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports;
- Deputy Chair of the JK Committee on Security and Defense;
- Influential members of other JK committees;
- Rank and file MPs;
- Head of the JK Press Service;
- Deputy Head of the JK Legal Department;
- Deputy Head of the JK HR Division;
- Numerous JK committee department staff;
- Numerous JK Legal Department staff;
- Numerous JK Legislative Analysis Division staff;
- Numerous JK Press Service staff;
- Numerous JK Human Resources Division staff;
- Numerous MP consultants and assistants.

All events conducted by the KPSP with attendance by JK staff and MPs were fully gender-inclusive and integrated. In aggregate, out of 3,190 overall attendees at KPSP events conducted in Year Three, 1,479 were female (46.4% of the total). In terms of JK MPs, 80 out of 211 MP participants were female MPs (38% of the total).

In addition, the short-term experts, consultants and mentors provided by the KPSP to assist the Government’s Office, the JK Committee on Budget and Finance, the JK Committee on Judicial and Legal Issues, the joint JK-KPSP Research Fund, the JK Press Service, the JK Legal Department and Legal Expertise Division, the JK State Service and Human Resources Department, JK deputies, and the Parliamentary Women’s Club were gender inclusive. Of the 19 experts, 12 were women.

The KPSP also created an organization composed of Parliamentary women staffers and providing professional capacity-building and career growth opportunities for them. The Parliamentary Women’s

Club, as a key KPSP deliverable promoting gender balance and equality, aims to build a solid foundation of strong female leaders playing key roles in the development and strengthening of the parliamentary system in Kyrgyzstan. KPSP Component 4 coordinates and leads the organization.

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The KPSP strongly adheres to a policy of improving the lives of persons with disabilities in Kyrgyzstan and continues its efforts to raise public awareness by conducting hearings and other types of activities concerning the disabled.

Currently, none of the 13 JK committees has taken the lead in proactively championing issues concerning the disabled. The JK Committee on Human Rights, State Structure, and Constitutional Legislation has not yet conducted any activities concerning the disabled or the improvement of access to premises, services, education, and employment within Kyrgyzstan for persons with disabilities.

Despite this fact, during Year Three, the KPSP continued its cooperation with MP Dastan Bekeshev, who is visually-impaired, offering support to improve the lives of persons with disabilities in Kyrgyzstan. The KPSP supported MP Bekeshev's initiative to prepare brochures with basic information on the Kyrgyz Parliament in Kyrgyz, Russian, and English for dissemination during public tours and visits to the Parliament by international delegations. The initiative will include the printing of these brochures in Braille and their recording into audio versions for the visually-impaired. This initiative became one of the key deliverables for KPSP Phase 3 and was endorsed by Speaker of the Parliament Asylbek Jeenbekov.

MP Bekeshev has been a close partner of the KPSP. The KPSP has previously cooperated with MP Bekeshev and provided assistance to his initiatives on numerous occasions.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER DONORS

The KPSP actively cooperates with other USAID, DFID, EU, and United Nations donors and implementers to further donor coordination, eliminate duplication of activities, and facilitate more efficient use of resources. Looking for common synergies and ways to provide mutual assistance, the parties follow key principles of cooperation:

- Meeting frequently;
- Exchanging information on work plans and anticipated activities;
- Inviting and participating in one another's trainings and events.

The KPSP regularly briefs USAID and US Embassy in Kyrgyzstan officials about ongoing KPSP activities and plans and also recommends MPs and JK staff for study tours to the US on parliamentarism, rule of law, and other relevant democracy issues. The KPSP provided to USAID its recommendations with regard to JK staff participants and alternates for a December Training on Committee Operations under the House Democratic Partnership (HDP) Program held in Washington, DC.

During Year Three, the KPSP conducted meetings with representatives from the US Embassy/USAID Assistance Working Group, the Department of Justice in the US Embassy to the Kyrgyz Republic, and USAID project implementers to cover a variety of topics, including: assistance to the JK Press Service; engagement with parliamentary journalists and promotion of stronger MP-constituent relations and services; the Kyrgyz parliamentary system's strengths and weaknesses; KPSP work with the Parliament; and program expansion and deliverables for Phase 3. KPSP also rendered assistance to the US Department of State and the US Embassy in organizing visits to the Jogorku Kenesh and briefings in relation to JK structure, events, trends, and overall history.

Since DFID became one of KPSP's donors, KPSP staffers have regularly met with the UK Aid team and representatives from the UK Embassy in Kyrgyzstan in order to acquaint them with KPSP activities in progress and discuss joint efforts for promoting parliamentary rule in the Kyrgyz Republic during KPSP Phase 3. KPSP regularly briefs the British Ambassador, Judith Farnworth, per her request, on plans, developments, and deliverables. She actively facilitated the organization of the Study Tour to the United Kingdom under KPSP Component 2 and met with the participants after the visit to discuss Study Tour outcomes and the establishment of professional relationships with the British parliamentarians.

The KPSP has established and supported constructive working relations with a number of other USAID-funded implementers, including IRG, NDI, IRI, "REFORMA," LDP, IFES, Freedom House, the Eurasia Foundation, Internews, and the Youth Project. On numerous occasions the KPSP served as a bridge between these implementers and their corresponding colleagues from the JK, be it committee chairs, MPs, and/or staff.

KPSP staff participated and engaged in many donor-sponsored events and in schools where they provided their expert opinions and/or gave respective presentations on governance and the legislative process, media and public communications and leadership. These events included:

- the launching of Phase 2 of the Westminster Program in Kyrgyzstan, charged with creating better linkages between the JK and civil society;
- USAID D&G implementer round tables and a Partners Meeting attended by all USAID-funded programs, projects, and grant recipients;
- US Peace Corps In-Service Training for volunteers serving in Kyrgyzstan on democracy development and related issues;
- Donor Coordination Meeting to discuss the Jogorku Kenesh Development Strategy with Kyrgyz parliamentarians from the Commission on JK Development Strategy;

- Model Parliament, an OSCE-sponsored program designed to introduce 30 high school students from Bishkek to the system of parliamentary democracy in Kyrgyzstan as well as other countries.

The KPSP's rich and extensive experience in organizing and holding hearings and other activities involving and attended by Kyrgyz MPs has made it a good source of advice for other donor programs. KPSP staff met and provided consultations to the ICNL Director in relation to MP attendance at and participation in the public forum on the draft law on charitable organizations held by ICNL. To discuss better coordination of mutual activities and assistance to the JK and build stronger relationships, KPSP staff met with the Head of the Westminster Program in Kyrgyzstan, the Head of an EU-funded project to improve legislative drafting, the ACTED team, and representatives from the UNDP- and USAID-funded budget transparency and public participation Program. Possible collaboration was also a key subject at a meeting with representatives from the University of Central Asia (UCA) and the Institute of Public Policy and Administration (IPPA).

In addition, the KPSP cooperated with NDI in conducting three joint training sessions on Political Marketing and Public Relations for four MPs including two Vice-Speakers, 14 MP consultants and assistants, and 20 press-oriented parliamentary staffers on how to convey a strong message and positive image to TV viewers. The training was led by media expert Rusudan Tskhomelidze, a Parliamentary Communication Center Project Manager at Internews-Georgia, who was specially invited by NDI to share her knowledge and expertise in writing, delivering, and commenting, developed over 20 years of work experience in media and PR.

KPSP closely cooperated with the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI/USAID) on MP Dastan Bekeshev's initiative to create brochures with basic information on the Kyrgyz Parliament. OTI/USAID took over translation of the brochures into Kyrgyz and English. It will also take care of printing the finalized and approved Russian, Kyrgyz and English copies in the amount of 1,000 items each in Russian and Kyrgyz and 500 in English.