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# KYRGYZSTAN PARLIAMENTARY STRENGTHENING PROGRAM (KPSP)

END OF YEAR FOUR ANNUAL REPORT



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This End of Year Four Annual Report is submitted to USAID KPSP COR Nazgul Akisheva, Project Management Specialist, Office of Democracy and Governance, USAID/Kyrgyz Republic.

Cover photo: MP Dastan Bekeshev demonstrates the newly-printed Braille edition of the Brochure on the Jogorku Kenesh to Speaker Asylbek Jeenbekov and other MPs, speaking about the value of this unique accomplishment, at the JK plenary session on June 18, 2014. Photo: JK Press Service.

The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) or the Governments of the United States or the United Kingdom.

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# PROGRAM 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). KPSP is implemented by Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI).

KPSP is aimed at the organizational and institutional development of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic (Jogorku Kenesh – JK). It is a non-political, non-partisan program that devotes equal attention to both the parliamentary majority and the parliamentary minority. KPSP provides assistance to two main groups of beneficiaries: Members of Parliament and parliamentary staff.

The KPSP implementation schedule consists of a five-year timeframe divided into three phases:

- 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, from April 1, 2011 till January 31, 2013, was a full-scale parliamentary strengthening program;
- 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 allow the Program to effectively respond to challenges and needs and significantly contribute to legislative and institutional capacity-building in the Parliament.

KPSP is guided by three main principles. Firstly, in all of its activities KPSP adopts a non-political, non-partisan approach. This approach advantageously positions KPSP to produce solid results and achieve program deliverables while also engendering the trust and good will of the JK Speaker and Deputy Speakers, factional leaders, committee chairs, and other MPs. Secondly, KPSP programming is flexible and responsive to JK requests, initiatives, and needs. This responsiveness sets 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 KPSP as its flagship program in Kyrgyzstan and has frequently emphasized that the Program is closely followed at high levels within USAID, the US Department of State, and the US National Security Council. Thirdly, KPSP serves as a coordinator facilitating synergies and linkages between the JK and other USAID-, USG- and DFID-funded assistance programs. In this manner, KPSP maintains close communications and cooperative relationships with other international donor programs to improve overall results and avoid duplication of activities, thereby better utilizing limited donor funds.

KPSP consists of the following four components:

Component 1: Legislative Process

Component 2: Committee Strengthening

Component 3: Information and Communications

Component 4: Parliamentary Management and Leadership

From the beginning of its implementation through to September 30, 2014, due to its thorough and targeted work within its four components, KPSP initiated and assisted in organizing (with and through JK partners) 231 different events, including: 83 trainings and presentations; 42 public forums; 74 policy seminars and working groups; eight study tours (to the USA, the UK, Mongolia, Malaysia, Germany, Hungary, Turkey, Sweden, and Denmark), and other events covering a variety of topics crucial for parliamentary development and capacity-building. In cooperation with its beneficiaries and counterparts, KPSP involved and trained 11,000 people, including over 4,600 women.

# PARLIAMENTARY CONTEXT

Year Four of KPSP implementation took place in a relatively peaceful and stable political environment. There were no major public protests or civil disorder affecting the ongoing work and activities of the Kyrgyz Parliament.

The Jogorku Kenesh adhered to the parliament-centric system adopted in 2010, based on the values of pluralism, diversity, and power-sharing. The representation of parties in the JK has officially remained unchanged since October 2010 when 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. However, the tendency of MPs to withdraw from their parliamentary factions and form other small groups continued during Year Four. Three MP groups were created in all: “Yntymak (Harmony),” “Onuguu (Progress),” and “Reforma Uchun (For Reform).” The MPs in these groups mainly came from the Respublika and Ata-Jurt factions. Some other MPs left their factions expressing dissatisfaction and disagreement with their parties’ platforms, but did not join any of the other MP groups. On September 24, 2014, the Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court ruled these non-factional MP groups to be unlawful. This decision, however, also recognized the right of MPs to join additional groups within their factions but without the rights and functions inherent to the official factions.

In Year Four, the ruling parliamentary coalition “Yrys aldy – Yntymak (Prosperity Through Harmony)” collapsed. It had been formed in September 2012 and consisted of three factions: Ar-Namys, Ata-Meken, and SDPK. The collapse of the coalition was induced by the withdrawal of Ata-Meken, which stated its decision was based on the failure of Prime Minister Jantoro Satybaldiev’s Government to meet its objectives. This withdrawal entailed the removal of Ministers. A new coalition, “Mamlekettuuluku bekemdoo uchun” (For Strengthening Statehood), was formed by the same three factions on March 31, 2014. This smooth transition helped minimize negative effects on the work of the Parliament and meant that the JK Speaker retained his position and the composition of JK committee chairs was not drastically changed. The Chair of the new coalition remained Felix Kulov, the leader of Ar-Namys. Deputy Prime Minister Joomart Otorbaev was nominated by Ata-Meken to be the new Prime Minister. He and his Cabinet of Ministers were approved by a simple majority vote. The Ata-Jurt and Respublika factions remained in opposition.

In Year Four, the number of legislative committees increased from the 13 established in January 2012 to 14, adding the Committee on Anticorruption. The number of members from each faction in legislative committees remained unchanged with each committee including no more than three members of a single faction. The fourteen committees are:

- the Committee on Budget and Finance;
- the Committee on Legality, Rule of Law, and Prevention of Crime;
- the Committee on International Affairs;
- the Committee on Agrarian Policy, Water Resources, the 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 the Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics;
- the Committee on Judicial and Legal Issues and Legality;
- the Committee on Social Policy;
- the Committee on the Fuel and Energy Complex and Mineral Resources;
- the Committee on Transportation, Communications, Architecture, and Construction;
- the Committee on Defense and Security; and
- the Committee on Anticorruption.

In accordance with Article 26 of Chapter 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the JK, effective from December 2, 2011, two key committees must be chaired by opposition parties: the Committee on Budget and Finance and the Committee on Legality, Rule of Law, and Prevention of Crime. Two out of the five Deputy Speakers also represent opposition factions. Both are women.

In Year Four, JK plenary sessions, in accordance with to the Rules of Procedure, were held on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Committee meetings and other forums were held primarily on Mondays and Tuesdays. Fridays and weekends were utilized by the factions for outreach and engagement with the public.

# CHALLENGES

No significant challenges impeded the work of KPSP during Year Four. Time constraints and administrative obstacles resulting from the collapse of the majority coalition had some impact on the Program and were successfully addressed by KPSP staff. The Program continued to make progress in all of its activities.

The collapse of the ruling parliamentary coalition “Yrys aldy – Yntymak (Prosperity Through Harmony)” and the creation of the new coalition “Mamlekettuuluktu Bekemdoo Uchun (For Strengthening Statehood)” in March 2014 presented no major challenges for KPSP sustainability and continuity. All changes in the Parliament and the Government were addressed accordingly and KPSP implementation was not impeded except for the postponing of some events. The new coalition contains the same factions as its predecessor (SDPK, Ar-Namys, and Ata-Meken), so the Speaker retained his position and so did most of the Chairs of KPSP partner committees. During times of political change, KPSP benefits from its reputation as a non-partisan and politically neutral program that reaches out to all factions on an equal basis and works only on capacity-building and institutional strengthening.

The debates over the Kumtor gold mine continued during Year Four but were calmer than in the past. No popular protests or demands for the Parliament to reconsider its past agreements with the Canadian company operating the mine impeded the work of the Parliament or KPSP. The only significant change resulting from the Kumtor mine debates was the resignation of MP Erkin Alymbekov, a member of the Ata-Meken faction, who left the Parliament in October 2013 stating his disagreement with the approach of the Government and Parliament to the mine negotiations. Mr. Alymbekov had chaired the Committee on Human Rights, Constitutional Legislation, and State Structure, and he was replaced in this position by MP Natalia Nikitenko, also of Ata-Meken. Earlier MP Nikitenko had been a member of the Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports, one of the most active and long-standing KPSP partner committees, and so had actively participated in many KPSP-sponsored events. Since her appointment to her new position, KPSP has established a productive relationship with MP Nikitenko, assisting the Committee with strategic planning and facilitating committee hearings on pressing issues.

The Kyrgyz Parliament was in recess from July 1 through August 31, 2014. During the recess, KPSP concentrated mainly on administrative issues and the planning of activities for Year Five. When regular work in the Parliament resumed in September, KPSP expanded its daily operations to continue its committee strengthening, capacity-building, public awareness and legislative process improvement work. The current year will be the last of this convocation of Parliament.

# PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Each quarter KPSP submitted a Quarterly Progress Report to USAID KPSP COR Nazgul Akisheva. Each of these reports featured descriptions of the deliverables achieved by KPSP during the previous three-month period. It also covered challenges encountered and collaboration with other donors and programs in relation to parliamentary strengthening in Kyrgyzstan. Each Quarterly Progress Report is accompanied by a Quarterly Financial and Accruals Report and an Event Statistics Matrix with attendance figures for events organized and held by KPSP. The Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Quarterly Reports were submitted on October 30, 2013, January 30, 2014, April 30, 2014, and July 25, 2014, respectively.

KPSP staff also regularly met with USAID and DFID representatives to brief them on KPSP programming activities and plans. During Year Four, meetings were held with USAID KPSP COR Nazgul Akisheva, USAID Democracy and Governance Office Director Ann Hopper, Head of DFID's UKAID Team in Kyrgyzstan Aida Akmatolieva, DFID Central Asia Regional Governance Advisor Alice Burt, and other high-ranking officials from USAID, USG, DFID, and the American and British Embassies in Kyrgyzstan. The parties also discussed joint efforts for promoting parliamentary governance in the Kyrgyz Republic.

In Year Four, DAI received two modifications to the underlying Contract between USAID and DAI. Modification #09, which redefined the operating mechanism of the joint KPSP-JK Research Fund in a way that it now functions on the basis of subcontracts and ICAs rather than grants, was approved by USAID and officially signed on April 4, 2014. This Modification also reduced the Research Fund budget from 490,000 to 200,000 USD and reallocated those resources to other Phase 3 activities, such as the distribution of the Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Legislative and Other Terms, the outfitting of the Press Gallery in the Parliament Building, and support for the English language training program, among others. Modification #10 was approved by USAID and officially signed on June 18, 2014. This Modification was issued to provide incremental funds in the amount of 813,574.00 USD.

In August 2014, KPSP worked on the Year Five Work Plan due for submission to USAID. Pursuant to F.4.2 (Phase 2: Deliverables) and F.5 (Progress Reporting Requirements) of the Contract executed with USAID, the KPSP Year Five Work Plan (October 1, 2014 – September 29, 2015) was submitted to USAID on August 27 and subsequently approved by KPSP COR Nazgul Akisheva on September 8, 2014. The Work Plan for Year Five closely follows the Contract and Modifications #07, #08, #09, and #10, as well as the DAI Technical and Cost Proposals for Phase 3.

All KPSP staff effectively managed the heavy schedule of activities during Year Four and worked hard to meet the high expectations from KPSP-sponsored programmatic events and other initiatives. Several changes were made to the composition of KPSP staff; some posed challenges to the smooth and timely operation of the Program's activities, but they were promptly and successfully addressed. All new staffers have been selected through open competition in accordance with approved selection procedures. All successful candidates were then duly approved by KPSP COR Nazgul Akisheva.

The Component 2 Committee Hearing Specialist position was refilled twice during Year Four: in October 2013 and August 2014. In October, KPSP welcomed Irina Elebesova, a specialist with extensive experience in organizational development and parliamentary capacity-building, to the position. Ms. Elebesova replaced Aigerim Zholomanova, who had moved to a position at the US Embassy. Ms. Elebesova successfully organized Component 2's assistance to JK partner committees through to June 30, 2014, when she resigned her position to run a new EU-funded health care project. Following the standard KPSP procedures and a series of interviews, Zhyldyz Aimanbaeva was selected as her replacement through to KPSP close-out. Ms. Aimanbaeva, who had served as KPSP Office Manager since February 2013, was familiar with the demands of the new position. She began work as Component 2 Committee Hearing Specialist on August 25, 2014.

KPSP Component 3 Media Specialist Aliman Temirbek took maternity leave in June 2014. She was scheduled to return to the office in October. During the month of June, Component 3 was assisted by a short-term intern, Aizada Kadyrova, who provided assistance with the Parliamentary Journalism Competition and other matters during Ms. Temirbek's absence.

Ulugbek Chokushov, who had assumed the position of a short-term Human Resources Management Expert in February 2013, proved himself such a valuable addition to the KPSP team that his contract was renewed and ultimately modified to hire him as a permanent HRM Expert on February 15, 2014.

More changes were made in the Financial and Administrative Department. In February 2014, Administrative and Financial Manager Julia Korneeva returned from maternity leave. Jazgul Beyshenalieva, who had been Acting Financial and Administrative Manager during Ms. Korneeva's absence, resumed her main functions as Program Accountant. KPSP also competitively selected and hired a new Office Manager in September 2014 following the promotion of Zhyldyz Aimanbaeva to Committee Hearing Specialist. Ulana Ashimova was selected for the position out of 64 applicants, based on her years of administrative experience working for USAID-funded projects, good test results, and excellent references from her previous places of work, including the USAID Local Development Program.

In Year Four, the new position of KPSP Procurement Assistant was created to help the Procurement Manager with the demanding and time-consuming work of procurement, logistics and contract management with vendors. Aigerim Artykbaeva and Eliza Damirbek each held the position during Year Four, for periods of three and four months, respectively. Both were selected for the position following careful consideration of their applications and interviews with the Selection Committee. The creation of the Procurement Assistant position was approved by USAID for the period from February 10, 2014 through July 2015. KPSP is now working to fill the position again.

KPSP also accepted its first local and foreign interns during Year Four. Aigerim Artykbaeva came to KPSP as its first student intern on October 14, 2013, when she was finishing her studies in Law at the Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University. She assisted KPSP in that capacity through to the end of December 2013 and later became Procurement Assistant after the New Year. In February 2014, KPSP welcomed its second student intern, Aigerim Baiazbekova, a senior Comparative and International Politics student at the American University of Central Asia. Ms. Baiazbekova assisted KPSP as an intern through to the end of March. In June, KPSP accepted two American interns. Christopher Jarmas from Tufts University and Amanda Trabulsi from Wellesley College came to KPSP through an internship program sponsored and administered by Bard College and the American University of Central Asia. They successfully finished their internship at the end of July. Begaim Sadygbaeva became KPSP's third local intern in September. Ms. Sadygbaeva graduated from the International Relations Department of the Russian-Kyrgyz Slavic University and had interned with the JK Committee on International Affairs, during which time she became aware of KPSP. She will be working with the KPSP team through to the end of December 2014.

During Year Four, all KPSP staff underwent internal training on Employee Ethics to meet the requirements of DAI, USAID and DFID for integrity and ethical work.

KPSP Component 2 Manager Ruslan Myrzalimov successfully defended his doctoral dissertation at the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (RUDN) in Moscow and attained the rank of Doctor of Sciences (which in the North American system would be considered a post-doctoral degree).

# SUMMARY OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

In Year Four, KPSP continued providing the JK with high-quality work by staying organized and flexible and by properly prioritizing. KPSP received multiple commendations from the Jogorku Kenesh. The Head of the JK Administration, Radbek Eshmambetov, sent several letters of appreciation in which he expressed his gratitude to KPSP for its regular support to the Kyrgyz Parliament, its factions, committees, and Administration. He mentioned in particular KPSP's recent contributions: the organization and financing of field committee and factional hearings, the equipping of the Press Gallery, the purchase and installation of the Access Monitoring and Control System for the Parliament building, and the organization of professional development trainings for parliamentary staff. Mr. Eshmambetov also expressed his hope for continued fruitful cooperation between the JK and KPSP. KPSP COP Gregg Halstead also received an honorary award from the Parliament recognizing his "many years of fruitful labor, participation in the development of Parliament, and contributions to socio-political and national economic activity." The award ceremony was held to honor MPs, JK staffers, and representatives of the public for their contributions to the development of the country.

During the first quarter of Year Four (October 1 through December 31, 2013), 27 programmatic events were conducted with the participation of about 1,600 attendees (more than 400 of which were women), including 78 MPs (41 of these were female MPs). The activities included five public forums, six policy seminars, seven trainings, a study tour to Ankara, and various working meetings, presentations, and meetings with counterparts.

- Component 1 continued its efforts to standardize legislative terminology in Kyrgyz, leading the Working Group in finalization of the Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Legislative and Other Terms. The Kyrgyz State Law Academy (KSLA) was selected as the host for the Training Center for Legislative Drafting, a KPSP initiative to establish a sustainable and independent institute for improving technical drafting skills. Component 1 also held a legislative coordination meeting with the executive branch and various trainings for legislative drafters and disseminated a report on Legislative Errors and Their Causes, containing recommendations for corresponding corrective measures to be introduced in the Parliament.
- Component 2 conducted six policy seminars addressing issues of economic and social importance in education, culture, transport, the development of Paralympic sports, and the state of affairs in local court systems, as well as a public forum on the 2013 tourist season. The policy seminars were conducted in Talas, Osh and Issyk-Kul Regions, as well as in Bishkek, to reach out to as many interested parties as possible and provide a venue for their opinions. Component 2 also helped the JK Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports hold a conference on Analysis and Prospects for Legislative Activity, dedicated to the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Jogorku Kenesh.
- The main activity under Component 3 was the School of Parliamentary Journalism for students and young journalists. The School offered four classes and a practicum to its twenty-five students during this quarter. Attention was also paid to capacity-building activities with JK Press Service. KPSP sent three Press Service staffers and five accredited parliamentary journalists on a study tour to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT) to study parliament-media practices. Another important information dissemination initiative was completed during the quarter: 2,500 copies of a brochure on the Kyrgyz Parliament were printed with support from KPSP and IRG/OTI. The brochures are intended for dissemination to members of the public and international delegations during tours of the Parliament Building. The Parliamentary Brief on JK activities in Kyrgyz, Russian, and English was issued twice a week to 1,143 persons/entities in regular receipt.
- Component 4 provided an embedded expert to assist the JK Department on Civil Service and Human Resources in organization and reorganization of the JK committee departments. It also

conducted regular English language lessons and conversation clubs for JK MPs and senior staff, a new and warmly-welcomed initiative in the Parliament. The support to the Parliamentary Women's Club continued this quarter with two big open meetings organized to extend the Club's mission and vision to broader public. Component 4 also announced a tender for the procurement, installation, and maintenance of an electronic Access Monitoring and Control System (AMCS) for the JK building.

The second quarter of Year Four (January 1 through March 31, 2014) started with a short recess in the Parliament, after which MPs visited the regions to engage with voters. Regular work in the Parliament resumed on January 14. During the second quarter, KPSP helped implement numerous initiatives and assisted in the organization of 16 programmatic events. These included six public forums, two policy seminars, and eight trainings attended by 750 persons overall (about 200 of these were women), including 55 MPs (22 of these were female MPs).

- Component 1 continued its work preparing the finalized and approved copy of the Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Legislative and Other Terms for publication and conducted a series of training sessions on the Process of Developing Regulatory Acts for senior executive branch legal staff who work in legislative drafting and analysis. Expert support was provided to the Office of the Prime Minister in linguistic expertise of draft laws and to the Ministry of Justice in creation of a Centralized Database of Legal Information to make information about legislation widely available to all interested parties.
- Component 2 expanded the number of its partner committees in the JK from eight to ten, adding the Committee on Social Policy and the Committee on Transportation, Communications, Architecture, and Construction. It also organized seven committee-strengthening events, including six public forums and a policy seminar on key economic and social issues. Topics addressed included the sustainable development of environmental protection and the economic system of Issyk-Kul, the state of court facilities and the general population's level of access to the justice system in Batken, the state of affairs in science and innovation, the process for selection of judges, road safety and legal responsibility for reckless driving, and national budgetary issues. Component 2 also finalized the Research Fund Manual and translated it into English. The financial and operational mechanism for the Research Fund was modified to extend its services to old and new parliamentary partners.
- Component 3 completed the first round of the School of Parliamentary Journalism, with 20 students successfully graduating. It also initiated publication of the brochures on the Kyrgyz Parliament in Braille. Among other assistance initiatives to the JK were the allocation of 35,000 USD for a JK Press Gallery, work on the popularization and promotion of Parliamentary Radio (FM 90.2) in all regions of the country, and the provision of expert support to Press Service staff by embedding four television, radio, website, and video experts within it. Twenty separate issues of the Parliamentary Brief were issued.
- Component 4 conducted regular English language lessons and conversation clubs for JK MPs and senior staff and held a series of two-day training sessions on Employee Competencies and Performance Evaluations. Support continued for the Parliamentary Women's Club and the JK Civil Service and Human Resources Department through embedded experts and KPSP technical assistance. Component 4 also selected a vendor for the procurement and installation of the electronic Access Monitoring and Control System (AMCS) for the JK building.

During the second quarter, KPSP also prepared and presented to USAID a KPSP Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) and DFID Logarithm Framework (Logframe) update. Harvey D. Wagar III, KPSP STTA, worked from mid-February to mid-April 2014 to update the figures and percentage targets in the PMP for the period of October 1, 2012 through January 31, 2014. The Logframe, which had been finalized by DFID only in February 2014, was being filled out for the first time. The work involved distribution and analysis of questionnaires and a series of interviews with JK partners and beneficiaries as well as KPSP staffers to better assess their achievements. The final version of the updated PMP and Logframe Report was submitted to USAID on April 22, 2014. It concluded that KPSP had continued to meet or exceed the vast majority of its PMP targets that had remained relevant and reasonable.

During the third quarter of Year Four (April 1 through June 30, 2014), the four KPSP Components conducted 22 programmatic events attended by more than 1,000 persons (400 of these were women), including 84 MPs (39 of these were female MPs). Despite the heavy schedule, KPSP implemented all of the activities smoothly, including three public forums, six policy seminars, and four capacity-building and professional development trainings.

- Component 1 officially presented the Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Legislative and Other Terms to the public and distributed it to beneficiaries in the Parliament, the Government, academia, and the NGO sector. The official launch of the Training Center for Legislative Drafting was held at KSLA with the participation of key MPs and officials from the JK, the Kyrgyz Government, the US and UK Embassies in Kyrgyzstan, USAID, DFID, and academia. Two KPSP-contracted legal experts continued assisting the Ministry of Justice in creating a Centralized Database of Legal Information.
- Component 2 was very active in organizing public forums and oversight visits followed by policy seminars in Bishkek and the regions. Two public forums and six policy seminars, featuring the participation of MPs, officials, and the broad public, were held to discuss such important topics as customs tariffs, the optimization of the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, the reconstruction of roads, participation in international agreements, the state of court facilities and the general population's level of access to the justice system, and the Kyrgyz State Civil Service and the results of income and property declarations by civil servants. In addition, Component 2 facilitated an international conference on the Parliamentary Role in Advancing State Policy Against Corruption, held under the auspices of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC). The joint KPSP and JK Research Fund began operation with a series of presentations to JK partners on the Fund's goals and procedures.
- Component 3 was busy with the Best Parliamentary Coverage Competition to recognize journalists in four categories: "Print Media," "Television," "Radio," and "Internet". Component 3 also conducted tenders for the equipment for the JK Press Gallery. The printing of Brochures on the Kyrgyz Parliament in Braille (150 copies in Russian and 150 in Kyrgyz) was completed, for distribution in the Parliament Library and among organizations working with people with disabilities. Component 3 conducted three trainings, for regional journalists, graduates of the School of Parliamentary Journalism, accredited parliamentary journalists, and press-secretaries of the five parliamentary factions. 24 separate issues of the Parliamentary Brief in Kyrgyz, Russian, and English were drafted and disseminated among 1,153 persons/entities in regular receipt.
- Component 4 continued rendering technical support to the Parliamentary Women's Club. It conducted a two-day training for interested members of the Club on leadership development and a study tour for six of its most active members to Sweden and Denmark to examine the best practices in the development of women's leadership. The HR expert embedded within the Civil Service and Human Resources Department continued his work, and English language lessons and conversation clubs for Members of Parliament and senior JK Administration staff continued. The work on the procurement and installation of the Access Monitoring and Control System (AMCS) for the JK building continued as well.

In the fourth quarter of Year Four (the sixteenth quarter of the Program), activities were slowed down because of the JK's summer recess from July 1 through August 31, 2014. During the recess, KPSP mainly worked on administrative and procurement issues and engaged in planning for programmatic activities through to the end of Year Five. In September, after the new session of the Parliament started, KPSP conducted eight programmatic events attended by 600 persons (out of which 400 were women), including 84 MPs (39 of these were female MPs).

- Component 1 continued distribution of the print and electronic versions of the Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Legislative and Other Terms and promoted the Dictionary on national television. It also conducted a workshop on strategic planning and sustainable development for the management of the Training Center for Legislative Drafting hosted by the Kyrgyz State Law Academy and contracted three experts to develop curriculum for the Center. A foreign legislative drafting expert was contracted to conduct an assessment and develop a report including recommendations for improving and streamlining both the legislative drafting and administrative regulations issuance processes within the executive branch.

- Component 2 supported two public forum discussions, in Osh and Bishkek, considering a set of three alternative draft laws affecting the electoral system. It also provided technical assistance in the organization of an oversight visit and public forum discussion of the state of affairs in education, culture, religion, sports, and the media in Batken Region. Another oversight visit and field policy seminar was held in Issyk-Kul on shipping routes. Full operation of the joint KPSP-JK Research Fund began with two research contracts being signed.
- Under Component 3, equipment with a total value of 35,000 USD was transferred to the JK for outfitting the Press Gallery in the Parliament building, a convenient workspace for parliamentary journalists. Component 3 also finalized the results of the Competition on Best Coverage of Parliament and presented awards to the winners. The second round of the School of Parliamentary Journalism was launched with 25 aspiring parliamentary journalists participating. The KPSP Parliamentary Brief was drafted and disseminated as per usual.
- Component 4 continued rendering technical support to the Parliamentary Women's Club and helped in the organization of an open meeting devoted to sharing knowledge gained on international exchange programs and study tours. The English language lessons for JK MPs and JK Administration staffers continued with 12 groups in attendance. Component 4 also extended the contract of the local HR expert assisting the JK Department of Civil Service and Human Resources. The procurement and installation of the Access Monitoring and Control System (AMCS) for the Parliament building was finalized during this quarter.

Individual write-ups covering topics discussed, participants, and results of events held during Year Four were prepared and submitted to USAID and DFID. Information on each event is also contained in the corresponding KPSP Weekly Updates and Quarterly Progress Reports.

In addition, KPSP prepared two success stories, covering the publication of the brochure on the Kyrgyz Parliament in regular type and in Braille and the personal success of MP Roza Aknazarova, who led a session of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment at the 13th Winter Meeting of the OSCE PA in English without the assistance of a translator. The success stories were submitted to USAID for approval and clearance.

## COMPONENT 1 – LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

KPSP Component 1 strives to improve the legislative process through building the capacity of the persons involved in it and by strengthening coordination between key parties, including staffers of the JK Legal Department and Analysis Division, experts working in standing committees, MP assistants and consultants, and staffers of the Prime Minister's Legal Department, the President's Legal Department, and the Ministry of Justice. Ensuring this coordination as well as the transparency of the process will ultimately make the legislative work itself stronger.

During Year Four, Component 1 held activities attended in aggregate by 496 participants, including 13 MPs and representatives from the JK, the Prime Minister's Office, the President's Office, and the Ministry of Justice. 299 participants were men and 197 were women. The events were the following:

- a joint event of the Committee on Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics and the Working Group for Improvement of Legislative Process, focused on a draft bill proposing amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Jogorku Kenesh;
- four training sessions on the Process of Developing Regulatory Acts, for four separate groups of senior executive branch legal staff. The sessions were organized at the joint request of the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Justice;
- a legislative coordination meeting focusing on the 2014 Legislative Calendar of the Executive Branch and featuring participation by representatives of the JK and the Government;
- a training session conducted by a KPSP-contracted expert from the International Consortium for Law and Development (ICLAD) on capacity-building programs to improve the skills of legislative drafters to develop more enforceable legal acts. The session was held for experts from the Kyrgyz State Law Academy and others being considered as potential trainers for the Training Center for Legislative Drafting (LDTDC);
- a training session for legislative drafters conducted by the ICLAD expert focusing on practical rules and techniques for developing laws;
- a three-day workshop on Strategic Planning and Sustainability for the staff of the LDTDC to discuss the goals of the Center, a strategic development plan through 2020, and fundraising and communications strategies;
- a number of meetings of the working group developing the Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Legislative and Other Terms, and a hearing of the JK Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports to review the completed Dictionary. The latter hearing was, attended by Committee members, the heads of parliamentary departments on translation and linguistics, and representatives of the Government and the National Commission on State Language.

In addition to these working meetings and trainings, Component 1 held two large public presentations: to mark the publication of the finalized Legislative Dictionary and the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the LDTDC, respectively. Both presentations featured attendance by highly-placed persons in the Parliament and Government and were covered by the media.

The interagency Working Group for Improvement of Legislative Process, the creation of which was made possible by KPSP involvement and promotion, continued its work to streamline lawmaking, guarantee the consistency of laws and administrative regulations, and improve the legislative process in general. The Working Group provides recommendations to MPs on amendments to make in the current legislation and ways of avoiding contradictions in legislation and Presidential vetoes on the basis of poor drafting and technical mistakes. KPSP Component 1 experts closely oversaw the activity of the Working Group in Year Four to ensure that its long-term goals are attained as planned and promoted by KPSP. Within the Working Group the following set of recommendations were considered feasible and advised for implementation: 1. establishing a legislative drafting training center that would increase the capacity of legislative drafters; 2. developing a legislative dictionary aimed at streamlining legislative process which was eventually approved by the JK Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports; and 3. drafting amendments eliminating discrepancies in law provisions. The JK Committee on the Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics utilized one of such recommendations and initiated an amendment to the Law

on the Rules of Procedure, which had a discrepancy with the Law on Normative Legal Acts relating to the powers of the Parliament when considering, accepting or rejecting bills. According to the Law on Normative Legal Acts a body with legislative functions, be it the Parliament, the Government or another body authorized to execute legislative functions, when receiving a bill has the power to either accept it, or reject it, or send it for revision and finalization. At the same time, the Law on the Rules of Procedure states that the Parliament has the power to either accept the bill or reject it. This issue was addressed by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics, and a corresponding amendment to the existing Law was made. However, due to the fact the amendment was submitted before the Parliament in a package of bills and MPs had questions to other drafts laws, the draft law amending the Law on the Rules of Procedure was rejected. It will be possible to submit it before the Parliament again six month after its failure to be adopted.

KPSP expanded its capacity-building trainings during Year Four to include senior drafters from the executive branch. 56.9% of bills are initiated by the executive branch rather than the Parliament, according to the JK Speaker's Report for the period from September 1, 2012 till June 30, 2013 (available at [www.kenesh.kg](http://www.kenesh.kg)), so it is important that its drafters are offered the same opportunities for training as their counterparts in the legislative branch. The decision to expand the group of Component 1 beneficiaries will have a positive impact on the legislative work of all branches through stronger rulemaking procedures, fewer errors in proposed and passed legislation, and better coordination of legislative activities.

*Participants at the first of four training sessions for executive branch staff focus on different aspects of the legislative process, developing regulatory acts, and eliminating errors in legislation. Photo: KPSP.*



Component 1 also completed an extensive analytical research project into why legislative errors occur and what factors influence this process, complete with proposals on how to best 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 cause errors so that those patterns could be counteracted and errors reduced. Research tools included questionnaires, focus group discussions, and expert analysis of bills and regulations. In November 2013, KPSP completed publication of the official report on Legislative Errors and Their Causes. The report contains a set of the following recommendations:

- Develop and introduce training courses on legislative drafting and the six types of analysis of bills for legislative experts from the JK, government bodies, and other stakeholders. This recommendation has been implemented through the KPSP-led Training Center Legislative for Drafting;
- Standardize and unify legislative terminology in the Kyrgyz language. This recommendation has been implemented through the development and publication of the unified Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Legislative and Other Terms;

- Develop guidelines for legislative drafting harmonizing all legislative practices and universally applicable in all branches. This recommendation is being implemented by KPSP partners in the JK – the Committee Department on the Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics, the Legal Department, and the Legal Analysis Department, which are working to streamline guidelines and prepare corresponding amendments to the laws regulating the legislative process, which will ultimately help improve the quality of bills.

Copies of the report were distributed to MPs and staffers from the JK Legal Department, the President's Office, the Prime Minister's Office, and the Supreme Court. The report was also distributed to academic institutions, law schools, international organizations, and civil society groups. KPSP received positive feedback regarding the report and expressions of gratitude from JK Deputy Speaker Asiya Sasykbaeva and representatives from the Prime Minister's Office, the President's Office, and other KPSP partner institutions.

Another Component 1 initiative during Year Four was the distribution of the manual "Seven Principles for Drafting Sound Legislation in the Kyrgyz Republic," which was prepared during Year Three in collaboration with the EU-funded project "Training Facility for Government Institutions and Civil Society in the Kyrgyz Republic." The manual presents international experiences and practical steps for improving legislative drafting, made user-friendly and illustrated by tables and figures. In total, 2,250 copies in the Kyrgyz, Russian, and English languages were distributed among government officials, parliamentary staff, and representatives of academia and civil society. It will be a useful tool for legislative drafters and analysts.

One of KPSP's major accomplishments in Year Four was the establishment of the Training Center for Legislative Drafting (LDTIC, formerly called the Legislative Drafting Institute). The LDTIC will provide professional training for legal and legislative staff in the institutions involved in legislative drafting and equip them with the special skills and knowledge that they need to develop higher-quality bills. The official opening ceremony of the Training Center was held on May 20, 2014 at the Kyrgyz State Law Academy (KSLA). It was a high-profile event featuring participation by US Ambassador Pamela L. Spratlen, Chargé d'Affaires of the UK Embassy Roy Wilson, and the leadership of the JK, the Prime Minister's Office, the Office of the President, and the Ministry of Justice, as well as other MPs, legislative staffers, academics, and representatives of USAID, DFID, and other donors. The event was covered by the media. JK Deputy Speaker Asiya Sasykbaeva spoke on behalf of the JK, noting that "professional training in the drafting of legislation is necessary, as improvement of the quality of legislative activity is a major requirement of our time considering the ongoing constitutional reforms in our country. The creation of the Training Center for Legislative Drafting brings us one step further in strengthening our legal framework." KPSP partners and beneficiaries in attendance pledged their support for the Training Center and underlined its significance in perfecting the comprehensive legislation that would guarantee a high standard of living for the people, a robust business climate, and sustainable development of the country itself.

*Guests of honor cut the ribbon at the official opening of the LDTIC. Left to right: U.S. Ambassador to the Kyrgyz Republic Pamela L. Spratlen, Minister of Justice Almambet Shykmamatov, Chief of Staff of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic Daniyar Narymbaev, Deputy Speaker of the Jogorku Kenesh Asiya Sasykbaeva, and Charge d'Affaires of the British Embassy in the Kyrgyz Republic Roy Wilson, May 20, 2014.. Photo: KPSP.*



The launch of the LDTC was the culmination of a year of preparatory work, including the finalization of the budget, the selection of the KSLA to host the Center after an open competition, a survey of beneficiaries' needs and expectations, and the development of curriculum, teaching materials, and training methodologies. KPSP selected the KSLA on the basis of its staff's high level of legislative expertise, extensive involvement with legislative drafting in the JK and the Government, and its ability and readiness to place its own resources at the Center's disposal and ensure long-term sustainability. KPSP will provide technical assistance to the KSLA and monitor the Training Center throughout the period of its implementation to ensure these sustainability goals are met. After the launch, work continued on curriculum development and the hiring of trainers and other experts. The four-week courses offered by the LDTC will cover legislative process in general terms as well as the six specific types of bill analysis required in the Kyrgyz Republic: legal, human rights, anti-corruption, gender, environmental, and regulatory impact. The first full training session of the Training Center for Legislative Drafting is scheduled for November 2014.

Component 1 also made an official presentation of the Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Legislative and Other Terms on April 25, an important milestone in this three-year initiative to standardize and unify legislative terminology in the Russian and Kyrgyz languages. Most legislation is drafted in Russian and later translated into Kyrgyz, but since Kyrgyz has the status of state language according to the Constitution, the translation is considered to have precedence over the original. Ensuring the consistency and accuracy of translation is therefore vitally important and was one of the concerns most commonly voiced by KPSP beneficiaries. The Dictionary contains more than 14,000 terms and expressions and is meant to assist the Parliament, the Government, and the judiciary in their functions and to facilitate the production of more clearly and definitively drafted legislation. The Dictionary was prepared in close cooperation with the JK Administration, Legal Department, Legal Analysis Division, and Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports. The Working Group, consisting of a total of 35 experts, considered and translated every word and phrase to make sure that there were no confusing ambiguities or misleading connotations. During Year Four all necessary approvals from USAID, DFID, and the Kyrgyz Parliament were received to publish and distribute the Dictionary. It was also officially endorsed and recommended for wider use by the National Academy of Sciences of the Kyrgyz Republic, the National Commission on State Language under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, and the JK Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports. Beneficiaries emphasized the urgent need for the Dictionary and its significance for the legislative process and law enforcement. It is also a major contribution to the overall development of the state language beyond lawmaking.

*Chair of the JK Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports Kanybek Osmonaliev delivers a welcoming speech at the official presentation of the Russian-Kyrgyz Dictionary of Legislative and Other Terms, April 25, 2014. Photo: KPSP.*



Component 1 distributed the Dictionary to the Parliament, the Government, the President's Office, the Central Electoral Commission, the National Bank, local self-government bodies, the media, and institutions of higher education. In addition to the publication of the printed version of the Dictionary, KPSP developed a corresponding software version released on CDs; it is user-friendly with a search engine and the option to automatically translate words and expressions from Russian to Kyrgyz and vice versa. The distribution of all copies of the Dictionary is free of charge and is taking place on a nationwide scale. The Dictionary is also available on the website [www.tili.kg](http://www.tili.kg) and the official website of the Ministry of Justice, <http://minjust.gov.kg>. In addition, Component 1 staff promoted the Dictionary initiative on national television on the morning TV show "Zamana," which is broadcast all over the Kyrgyz Republic. In February/March 2015, Component 1 will conduct a survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the Dictionary. The lag in time is needed to give the respondents time to assess the impact of the Dictionary on their legislative work.

KPSP's efforts with the Dictionary did not go unrecognized. Two Letters of Appreciation were received, from then-Prime Minister Jantoro Satybaldiev on behalf of the Kyrgyz Government, and from the Head of the JK Administration Radbek Eshmambetov on behalf of the Parliament. Both expressed gratitude for KPSP's continued assistance in development of the legislative process, promotion of the state language, and creation of the Dictionary. Component 1 Manager Jenishbek Arzymatov was awarded a medal of honor from the Commission on the State Language on September 23 at a special event celebrating State Language Day at the National Philharmonic in Bishkek.

Other Component 1 activities included consulting support to the Government Administration and the Ministry of Justice. Two linguistic experts were hired at the request of Deputy Head of the Kyrgyz Government Administration Kadanbay Baktygulov. They provided assistance to the Office of the Prime Minister with linguistic analysis of bills, including the editing of draft laws, administrative regulations, and decrees and the translation of those documents from Russian into Kyrgyz. Ultimately they developed an effective methodology for providing linguistic analysis of legislation, which will be introduced into the work of the Government through a specialized manual.

KPSP contracted two legal experts to assist the Ministry of Justice in the development of a Centralized Database of Legal Information to make information about legislation widely available to all interested parties, from the executive branch to the general population. The support provided by KPSP for this project was critical for including documents that had been missing and ensuring wide online access to the Database through the official website of the Ministry of Justice, which is visited by about 1,200 persons each working day.

## COMPONENT 2 – COMMITTEE STRENGTHENING

KPSP Component 2 focuses on strengthening the capacity of parliamentary committees to exercise their oversight functions over the executive branch. KPSP actively partners with select committees, helping them conduct public forums, policy seminars, and oversight visits. During Year Four, KPSP increased the number of its partner parliamentary committees from eight to ten (out of a total of fourteen in the Parliament), adding the Committee on Social Policy and the Committee on Transportation, Communications, Architecture, and Construction to the list. This increase was anticipated in the Scope of Work for Phase 3. The ten partner committees are:

- Committee on Budget and Finance;
- Committee on International Affairs;
- Committee on Education, Science, Culture and Sports;
- Committee on Economic and Fiscal Policy;
- Committee on Agriculture, Water Resources, the Environment, and Regional Development;
- Committee on Human Rights, Constitutional Legislation, and State Structure;
- Committee on Judicial and Legal Issues and Legality;
- Committee on the Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics;
- Committee on Social Policy; and
- Committee on Transportation, Communications, Architecture, and Construction.

All KPSP partner parliamentary committees were chosen in close consultation with USAID and DFID. Selection criteria included: demonstrated willingness on the part of committee chairs and members to work with KPSP; history of effective committee operations, including public hearings, legislative activity, engagement with the executive branch, and coverage in the media; and involvement in issues that are critical to Kyrgyzstan's economic and political development. The four parliamentary committees which do not partner with KPSP have been excluded because of the politically contentious areas in which they work, which could potentially compromise KPSP's reputation for neutrality. These committees deal with energy, defense and national security, law enforcement, and corruption.

Engagement with the new and old partner committees allow KPSP to cover all regions of the country and forward parliamentary governance in the consideration of all political questions. Throughout the year, Component 2 staff met with the partner committee Chairs to discuss plans for programmatic events and maintain a general schedule of Component 2 deliverables for 2013-2015. These meetings help identify areas where KPSP assistance could be of the greatest value, maximizing impact and participation from all committees and factions.

KPSP helps its partner committees to organize and hold events at which interested parties can share their points of view and pose questions to MPs and to the officials charged with implementation of laws and regulations. KPSP assistance helps facilitate better communication between committees and ministries whose areas of work overlap, encouraging more accountability within the executive branch under parliamentary oversight. Such events also make MPs more knowledgeable on particular issues because they have the opportunity to hear expert opinions and other input from civil society and the public before they make their decisions. The professional staff that assist a given committee also receive assistance and support under Component 2, gaining hands-on experience in effectively organizing committee events. As part of its Year Four expansion, Component 2 also started partnering with the five parliamentary factions and on an ad-hoc basis, while being careful as always to safeguard the program's political neutrality.

Component 2 held 29 separate events during Year Four featuring attendance by 2,901 persons in aggregate (1,934 men and 967 women), including 209 MPs (124 men and 85 women). Other participants included JK staff, the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers, other senior officials, and experts. NGO activists and academics also took part in these events. Technical and financial assistance was provided to the following committees and factions:

- The Committee on Human Rights, Constitutional Legislation, and State Structure held two public forum discussions considering a set of three alternative draft laws that would change the electoral system for both the President and the Members of Parliament. The Public Forums were held in Osh city and in Bishkek, both in September 2014. KPSP also supported the Committee with a policy seminar on strategic planning for the 2014-2015 parliamentary session, which was held in Chyckkan, Jalal Abad Region;
- The Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports is one of KPSP’s most active long-term partners. During Year Four the Committee organized and held seven events in all. Three were field oversight visits and policy seminars, in Talas, Issyk-Kul, and Bishkek. Another field event was a public forum held in Batken to discuss the current state of affairs in religion, archives, the media, and other areas covered by the Committee. A public forum was held in Bishkek on science and innovation in the Kyrgyz Republic and prospects for their development; another policy seminar in Bishkek considered Paralympic sports and the state of sports facilities in the country. The largest-scale event during Year Four was a Conference on Analysis and Prospects for Legislative Activity, held in October 2013 and dedicated to the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Jogorku Kenesh. The conference was meant to assess the historical development of parliamentary governance in the Kyrgyz Republic;
- The Committee on Judicial and Legal Issues and Legality received financial and technical assistance to conduct a series of three field oversight visits and policy seminars assessing the condition of local court buildings and the general population’s level of access to the justice system. The three visits covered Chuy region (Bishkek and Kant cities and Lebedinovka village), Batken region (Batken city and Kadamjay village), and Osh region (Osh city and Uzgen and Kara-Kulja villages). Other events with this committee included a series of roundtable discussions in Bishkek and Osh covering draft laws amending procedures for the selection of judges;
- The Committee on Economic and Fiscal Policy held a four-day hearing to assess the impact of social and political factors on tourism in general and on the 2013 tourist season in particular. Another public forum with this committee considered amendments to tariff policy;

*Participants at the public hearing of the Committee on Economic and Fiscal Policy consider the lessons of the 2013 tourist season. Photo: USAID.*



- The Committee on International Affairs held a field policy seminar in Osh on the status of reconstruction projects being implemented in Osh and Jalal-Abad cities with foreign financing. A policy seminar was held in Issyk-Kul on international agreements and coordination with the executive branch under the new Law “On International Treaties of the Kyrgyz Republic” held in Issyk-Kul. A very high-profile event with this committee was the international conference on the Parliamentary Role in Advancing State Policy Against Corruption, held in Bishkek under the auspices of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC). KPSP also financed the publication and presentation of the Political Science Encyclopedia assembled by MP Kanybek Imanaliev, who chairs this committee;

- The Committee on Transportation, Communications, Architecture, and Construction held a successful joint oversight visit and field policy seminar with the JK Committee on International Affairs in Batken region. The visit focused on the border and water supply issues, and on the status of the Osh–Batken–Isfana road and Batken airport which are being reconstructed in accordance with international agreements. Involving both committees in the same event was a great opportunity to maximize impact for expended resources and facilitate coordination between MPs. This Committee also held a public forum in Bishkek considering road safety and toughening the penalties for reckless driving, as well as an oversight visit and field policy seminar in Issyk-Kul region on the condition of the Balykchy–Karakol road and the condition and prospects for development of the state-run enterprise Issyk-Kul Shipping Lines;
- The Committee on Budget and Finance held a roundtable discussion of the draft Budget Code, which was prepared by a working group created by the Committee in close consultation with the executive branch;
- The Committee on Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics held a field policy seminar assessing the 2013 income declaration campaign for civil servants. The event was held at the State Civil Service Agency in Bishkek. Another policy seminar was held discussing amendments to the Law “On Civil Service” and the proposed prohibition on possession of foreign assets by certain categories of officials;
- The Committee on Agriculture, Water Resources, the Environment, and Regional Development conducted a public forum assessing the state effort to reform and optimize management in the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Reclamation, addressing issues of optimization, water resources, veterinary and phytosanitary sciences, biodiversity, and the possibility of merging the various services within the system of agriculture;

*Members of the Committees on Transportation, Communications, Architecture, and Construction and on International Affairs get acquainted with the construction of the Osh–Batken–Isfana road, which is being rebuilt in accordance with international agreements, April 21, 2014. Participants at the public hearing of the Committee on Economic*



- The Respublika and Ata-Meken factions also made use of KPSP assistance during Year Four. Respublika held a field public forum on sustainable development of environmental protections and the economic system in Issyk-Kul. Ata-Meken held an oversight visit to the south of the country to assess the state of military bases in Batken and to conduct a policy seminar on the Kyrgyz armed forces.

In April 2014 Component 2 invited a short-term consultant, Mr. John Lis, to help build the strategic planning capacity of the Parliament. Mr. Lis was hired to create a strategic planning template and briefing notes for use by the Jogorku Kenesh and to conduct presentations and question-and-answer sessions for parliamentary staff. An expert with extensive experience working with parliaments all over the world, he conducted two presentations: one for JK committee and factional staff and one for MPs’ assistants and consultants. Topics covered in the presentations included principles for strategic planning tailored for both committee and factional needs. Mr. Lis stressed that planning lays the foundation for rational

decision-making and guides the entire convocation of a parliament. He also held a series of meetings, provided consultations, and observed parliamentary debates as part of his preparation of the briefing notes and template. The overall goal was to introduce best international practices for strengthening committee work; the strategic planning template is intended for use in both short-term and long-term planning. These resources were distributed among beneficiaries and were used by the Committee on Human Rights, Constitutional Legislation, and State Structure during its field policy seminar near the end of the summer.

The joint KPSP-JK Research Fund became fully functional during Year Four and began processing research requests in close observance of the Research Fund Manual approved by USAID. The Research Fund Management Manual is the main document guiding how the Research Fund operates. It specifies the functions of the various bodies involved with the Fund and defines the process for soliciting, implementing, and evaluating research projects. It also includes provisions for management of financial resources and contracting experts. In consultation with USAID, DFID, and the DAI home office, KPSP determined that the Fund could function much more effectively through contracts and individual consultant agreements (ICAs) rather than grants. A realignment of the KPSP budget was submitted to USAID to make the necessary contractual changes. As part of the process, the Research Fund budget was decreased from 490,000 to 200,000 US dollars. The other 290,000 USD was reallocated to other KPSP initiatives.

The Research Fund aims to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of JK activities by obtaining external research and analysis from contracted experts, NGOs, think tanks, and academic institutions. During Year Three KPSP assembled a database of eligible experts and organizations ready and able to provide such assistance to the JK. The database, along with the research reports, findings, and recommendations and the main principles and mechanisms of organization and operation of the Research Fund will be turned over to the JK Research Center during KPSP close-out so that the JK can continue obtaining outside research utilizing its own resources. These instruments will help ensure greater involvement of independent experts and think tanks in the research and analytical activities of the Parliament. However, given the economic situation in the country and the limited public finances, the efficient and prompt operation of the JK Research Center and its responsiveness to the research needs of the Parliament will depend on the mobilization of external funds, i.e. donor aid.

The Research Fund was established to provide committees, parliamentary factions, and ad hoc groups of MPs with access to expert research on an equal basis. During the year, Component 2 conducted a series of meetings and made presentations to interested committee and faction members and staff to explain in detail how the Research Fund works. It also conducted a series of trainings on how to prepare requests, including the technical specifications for the developing a Scope of Work (SOW), and how to submit the request to the Research Fund for consideration. KPSP hired an expert to assist in elaboration of the Research Fund application process, including drafting templates and instructions and making presentations. An informational brochure about the Research Fund was prepared for dissemination to all interested parties.

By the end of Year Four, two research requests had been approved by the Coordinating Council of the Research Fund, which consists of two representatives each from the Jogorku Kenesh and KPSP and one representative from the USAID Mission in the Kyrgyz Republic. The first request was for an assessment of the economic and financial impact of the draft law "On Adjustment of Income for Inflation," submitted by a group of MPs. The other was submitted by the Committee on Budget and Finance for finalization of the draft Budget Code and the draft Law "On the National Budget for 2015 and Forecasts for 2016-2017." Contracts were successfully signed with competitively-selected experts to perform the research in both cases. These projects attest that the Research Fund is now fully functional. Overall interest in the Research Fund is very high and KPSP expects more requests during the winter and spring.

Component 2 KPSP continued to provide embedded consultants to the Committee on Budget and Finance to assist with its ongoing work on the National Budget and related legislation. During the year, four experts were contracted by KPSP to assist the Committee. These experts monitored economic indicators affecting the state budget, analyzed legislative factors influencing state financial management,

and reviewed legislative proposals dealing with banking, commercial, and financial relations and the exercise of oversight over the executive branch. Based on a review of relevant legislation and background information, they provided comments and recommendations on draft laws and administrative regulations which aim to regulate state financial management, improve budgetary relations among stakeholders, maximize revenue, develop the securities market, and improve financial oversight and banking regulation. The expert hired to finalize the draft Budget Code performed extensive analytical work, promoted the unified version of the draft Code, provided advice and technical support in discussions with the Government, and developed a draft budget resolution for 2015 and forecast for 2016-2017. The resolution was first approved by the Committee and then by the Parliament on June 19, 2014. The final draft Budget Code was adopted by the Jogorku Kenesh in its first reading on the same day.

KPSP has a long history of work with the Committee on Budget and Finance and has provided it with expert support in relation to the national budget, budgetary legislation, and financial oversight since the third quarter of 2012. However, with the establishment of the joint KPSP-JK Research Fund, future expert support will be rendered through the Fund's new mechanisms.

Before the KPSP-JK Research Fund was functioning, KPSP extended its resources and support to MP Alla Izmalkova to perform anti-corruption expertise and regulatory impact analysis of the draft law "On Restructuring Debts on Accrued Interest, Fines, Financial Sanctions, and Penalties." KPSP solicited bids from expert analysts and selected a group of three short-term experts to perform the requested analysis. The final report was submitted for approval to MP Alla Izmalkova. The report concluded that the existing tax legislation cannot solve the problems of large businesses because of a number of socio-political and economic factors, and the experts therefore argued in favor of the adoption of the bill, which would enhance the effectiveness of state regulation, accelerate economic development, and create a more favorable business environment.

## COMPONENT 3 – COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

KPSP Component 3 works to improve the information flow between the Jogorku Kenesh and the public and to make coverage of the activities of the Parliament timely and objective. Component 3 organizes training and other capacity-building events to improve the professional skills of its target beneficiaries: the JK Press Service, accredited parliamentary journalists, and specialists responsible for public outreach in committee departments, factional secretariats, and the administration of the Parliament.

Component 3 held a number of activities during Year Four with 254 total participants, including 82 men and 172 women. It worked closely with the Press Service in the organization of these capacity-building and informational activities. Representatives of the Press Service frequently took part in those training sessions designed for parliamentary journalists in order to encourage the development of constructive working relationships. Training sessions for parliamentary journalists were aimed at enhancing their capacity to cover politics. These events consisted of:

- A study tour to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT) to study parliament-media practices, attended by three Press Service staffers and five accredited parliamentary journalists;
- Seven training sessions and one practicum on topics relating to parliamentary journalism for the participants of the first round of the School of Parliamentary Journalism, a joint KPSP and JK Press Service project aimed at encouraging a new generation of skillful parliamentary reporters;
- The first training of the second round of the School of Parliamentary Journalism, on the Role and Functions of the Jogorku Kenesh, for the second group of twenty-five participants;
- Two additional training sessions on US Political Reporting by guest lecturer Professor Eric Freedman, a Knight Chair, Director of the Knight Center for Environmental Journalism and Director of the Capital News Service at the Michigan State University School of Journalism. One of the sessions was for graduates of the first round of the aforementioned School of Parliamentary Journalism. The other was for accredited journalists and press-secretaries from JK factions;
- A two-day training for twenty-five regional journalists representing all seven regions of Kyrgyzstan, on the Formation and Development of the Kyrgyz Parliamentary System and the Main Jogorku Kenesh Functions. The training included a tour of the Parliament building organized by the JK Press Service.

*Three Jogorku Kenesh Press Service staffers and five accredited parliamentary journalists, accompanied by KPSP Component 3 Manager Nurzhan Mamyralieva, visit the official TV studio of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey during a study tour to Ankara to study parliamentary media practices. Photo: KPSP.*



On October 21-24, KPSP sent three Press Service staffers and five accredited parliamentary journalists, accompanied by Component 3 Manager Nurzhan Mamyralieva, to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT) to study parliament-media practices. The experience provided numerous examples of

effective parliamentary coverage for the Kyrgyz delegation. The Turkish partners shared general information on GNAT as well as specific information about its Media, Publications and Public Relations Department. They discussed GNAT's presence on social media networks, demonstrated the accomplishments and practices of its TV channel and official news website, and showed its bulletin and Library. The Kyrgyz journalists and Press Service staff learned that the whole country has access to live broadcasts of parliamentary hearings on TV and the internet, that the Public Relations section organizes press-conferences and other events for engagement with the public and media, and that the GNAT Publishing House publishes all sorts of materials devoted to the parliament, including books, newsletters, agendas, draft laws, booklets, and brochures. Guides and interpreters working in nine languages are available for visitors; persons with disabilities are provided with wheelchairs and any other equipment they might need. The Media, Publications and Public Relations Department maintains a telephone hotline that voters can call for consultation and to request help. During the visit, the Kyrgyz delegation conducted numerous meetings with GNAT staffers and also visited the Anadolu News Agency, one of the most famous news agencies in Turkey. They also visited the TRT Heber News Agency and the Association of Parliamentary Journalists of Turkey, which was established 60 years ago to protect parliamentary journalists' rights, improve their qualifications, and conduct joint events together with the Media, Publications and Public Relations Department.

Another activity meant to improve the preparation and dissemination of information was the equipping of a Press Gallery for accredited journalists within the Parliament building. The JK Press Gallery was designed to be a place where parliamentary journalists can work effectively and engage with their colleagues, Members of Parliament, and JK staffers. Previously these journalists had had no designated work space or access to technical equipment in the Parliament Building. The JK Administration had set aside a space on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, demonstrating the high priority it had placed on this activity. KPSP received approval from USAID to allocate \$35,000 for the JK Press Gallery as part of the budget realignment completed during Year Four. Ultimately just under \$30,000 was spent on a conference system and other equipment procured through an open competition, including computers and furniture; a number of laptop computers were also given to the Gallery from the USAID Local Development Program, which was then in close-out. The property was officially transferred to JK ownership during the summer of 2014 so the Press Gallery could be fully operational by the start of the new parliamentary session on September 1. The Gallery was a major Phase 3 deliverable aimed at improving work conditions for accredited journalists and by extension the quality of the work they do. The Press Gallery will also be used by KPSP Component 3 to host capacity-building and other programmatic events in the Parliament, including trainings for the School of Parliamentary Journalism.

The School of Parliamentary Journalism was established to provide the opportunity for young journalists and students to acquire professional skills and become more familiar with the activities of MPs, factions, committees, and the Jogorku Kenesh in general. These students and young people, who are chosen through a competition, study parliamentary journalism through a hands-on approach with expert mentors and instructors. The School's curriculum is built so that the selected students can explore the peculiarities of parliamentary and legislative coverage and the role played by the media in the development of parliamentary democracy, through dissemination of accurate and balanced parliamentary information and ideas. The School of Parliamentary Journalism also offers the opportunity to meet MPs, representatives of the various parties, and independent parliamentary experts.

Altogether, seven sessions were offered in the School during Year Four. These sessions covered: the history and formation of the parliamentary system in Kyrgyzstan and the role and functions of the Kyrgyz Parliament; using and assessing information sources; international standards of journalism and analytical coverage of parliamentary activities; peculiarities of the work of journalists in the Kyrgyz Parliament; public relations and publicity; the use of the social media; and TV and Radio news production. The last was followed by a special two-day practicum. Experienced parliamentary journalists and media experts conducted the trainings and shared their experience. The first round of the School of Parliamentary Journalism was officially completed on February 22, 2014. Twenty participants had successfully completed the intensive six-month program. All received certificates attesting to their attendance and active performance. At the end of the training, the participants were given the opportunity to share their opinions and impressions of the School, and they responded positively. Some of the participants

remarked that at the School they had "learned more, in terms of how to be and work as a journalist, than in all [their] time at various universities studying journalism." In September 2014, KPSP announced the second round of the School of Parliamentary Journalism; 25 students were admitted through an open competition and the sessions will continue in KPSP programmatic Year Five.

*Twenty participants of the School of Parliamentary Journalism pose with their certificates of completion, which will help them get official accreditation as journalists with the Jogorku Kenesh. Photo: KPSP.*



Component 3 also continued its effort preparing and disseminating the Parliamentary Brief, which provides concise information on JK activities and events in a convenient format. Prepared in English, Kyrgyz, and Russian, the Parliamentary Brief covers bills of significance being considered and voted upon by the JK and highlights the activities of the JK Speaker, committees, factions, and individual MPs. In total, 77 separate issues of the Parliamentary Brief were prepared and disseminated during Year Four. The total number of recipients increased to over 1,150 persons/entities (1,040 Kyrgyz- and/or Russian-speaking persons/entities and about 110 English-speaking persons/entities) in regular receipt. The increase was caused mainly by strong interest in the Parliamentary Brief among US Embassy staff. Some recipients forward the Parliamentary Brief to their internal contacts and partners, so the number of ultimate recipients is much larger. A partner USAID-funded project, the Collaborative Governance Program implemented by the East-West Management Institute, began forwarding the Parliamentary Brief to its contacts in the NGO sector, thus doubling KPSP efforts to reach out to the broader public.

KPSP continued rendering expert support to the JK Press Service during Year Four, including four short-term experts on television, radio, digital media, and video. All four experts worked under the guidance of the Head of the Press Service and in consultation with KPSP; the key objective of their assignments was for their knowledge and skills to be passed on to the permanent Press Service staff in the interest of long-term sustainability.

- The TV expert assisted the Press Service in its efforts to provide balanced coverage of the Parliament on TV and improve its cooperation with local and foreign broadcasters. The expert provided mentoring services and advisory support to Press Service staff in the preparation of TV programs on the activities of the Parliament, including the weekly TV programs "Parliament Sabaktary" (Lessons on Parliament) and "Parliament." The expert also edited video montages and recorded voice-overs for the TV programs.
- The video expert handled camerawork, video editing, and graphics for the program "Parliament" and led the filming of parliamentary sessions and other events involving Members of Parliament. The expert initiated the development of infographics and their use in TV pieces for "Parliament" and on the official website of the Jogorku Kenesh.
- The digital media expert provided advice to the JK Press Service on how to improve, modernize and popularize the official website of the Jogorku Kenesh, [www.kenesh.kg](http://www.kenesh.kg). The expert performed an analysis of the website and recommended creating an online Parliamentary Radio stream, developing special programs and fonts legible to visually-impaired persons, and

improving the search and administration functions of the site. The Press Service plans extensive modernization of the official website which will incorporate the expert's suggestions. During the assignment, the expert also updated the JK website in Russian and Kyrgyz, managed the official JK accounts on Facebook and Twitter, and took part in the organization of interviews with MPs and the preparation of MP speeches and comments for publication on the website.

- The radio expert provided mentoring services on the content and shape of radio programs and features. He also assumed the role of a radio presenter, preparing and conducting live programs in Russian and Kyrgyz on Parliamentary Radio and hosting regular live interviews with JK MPs and other radio shows on various topics. The expert also analyzed the situation with Parliamentary Radio and identified obstacles that are impeding its development, 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 for radio development. To improve the situation, the expert suggested introducing a new system of management and personnel policy and reconsidering program policy to make more radio pieces with the participation of regular citizens and people outside Bishkek.

The radio expert also worked closely with Media Group Tumar, which had been contracted by KPSP to implement a popularization and promotion campaign for Parliamentary Radio. Media Group Tumar created a slogan, logo, and banner for the station, developed radio jingles and audio clips, and made two promotional videos. The campaign was requested by the JK Press Service, who wanted to advertise the expanded reach of the radio station, only recently able to broadcast to certain areas. All promotional materials were developed in both Kyrgyz and Russian. The Press Service accepted the final products and began using them with the beginning of the new parliamentary session in September 2014.

Component 3 and its Press Service partners also identified the winners of a competition for best coverage of parliamentary development in Kyrgyzstan. The competition was open to local media agencies and outlets, as well as less conventional bloggers and independent journalists. The purpose of the competition was to raise awareness among the population about the structure and functions of the Parliament, to bring the bills it discusses to public attention, and inform the public about other recent developments in the Kyrgyz parliamentary system. The Competition also aimed to encourage interest in parliamentary governance among journalists. The competition was held in four categories: "Print Media," "Television," "Radio," and "Internet." The winners were determined by an independent judging commission consisting of independent media experts and experienced journalists. In the first round of the competition, submissions were evaluated for their compliance with technical requirements and specifications. In the second round, the judging commission evaluated the submissions for relevance, originality, balance, and approach to topic selection. The official awards ceremony was held on July 2, 2014, at the Jogorku Kenesh Building. It was led by Head of the JK Administration Radbek Eshmambetov and Head of the JK Press Service Tolgonay Stamalieva. As prizes, media equipment was presented to the winners for use in their further work.

In 2013, KPSP engaged in the implementation of MP Dastan Bekeshev's initiative to prepare a brochure with basic information on the Kyrgyz Parliament for dissemination to members of the public and international delegations during tours of the Parliament building. The brochure, endorsed by the JK Speaker, was finalized, approved, and printed in November in the amount of 2,500 copies (1,000 copies in Russian, 1,000 copies in Kyrgyz, and 500 copies in English). The translation and publication of the brochure was also facilitated by the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI/USAID). The brochures, containing a brief description and history of the Parliament, were put at the disposal of the Jogorku Kenesh and are being used as informational materials given to members of public tours of the Parliament building. Every MP has the right to organize tours for voters and the general public and to make use of the brochures. They need to submit applications to the JK Administration Head for use of the brochures, stating how many are needed, why and in what language. The JK Administration itself also conducts tours of the Parliament and uses the brochures for informational purposes.

The Brochure on the Jogorku Kenesh is a transparency promotion initiative, increasing public awareness about the Parliament and its main functions and activities. In Year Four, KPSP initiated printing of the brochure in a Braille edition for visually-impaired persons. KPSP chose a printer through an open

competition and ordered 300 copies (150 in Russian and 150 in Kyrgyz). The finished brochures were delivered to MP Bekeshev's office for further dissemination among select organizations working with people with disabilities. Some copies were also kept in the JK Library and will also be distributed during tours of the Parliament to visitors who have special needs. MP Bekeshev, who is himself visually-impaired, presented the Braille edition of the brochure to Speaker Asylbek Jeenbekov and other MPs, speaking about the unique accomplishment and its significance for persons with disabilities in Kyrgyzstan, as well as for the Parliament itself.

*An MP reads the newly-published brochures on the Jogorku Kenesh. Photo: KPSP.*



## COMPONENT 4 – PARLIAMENTARY MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

KPSP activities under Component 4 provide support and assistance to the JK Department of Civil Service and Human Resources in the field of human resources management (HRM). This component helps to introduce modern HRM strategies to the Jogorku Kenesh Administration by training the Department's staff in the skills necessary to work efficiently and by promoting transparent procedures in hiring, evaluating, promoting, retaining, rotating, and terminating staff.

Component 4 always evaluates the training needs of JK staff in a timely and systematic fashion and works closely with the JK Department of Civil Service and Human Resources to respond promptly to emerging needs. The total number of participants at all Component 4 events during Year Four, including the working and public meetings of the Parliamentary Women's Club, was 333, including 43 men and 290 women (with five women MPs). Component 4 held four training events. The total number of participants in these events was 59, including 18 men and 41 women. The events included:

- A study tour to the Parliaments of Sweden and Denmark for six of the most active members of the Parliamentary Women's Club to study gender equality, anti-discrimination legislation, and women leadership development;
- Two two-day training sessions on Employee Competencies and Performance Evaluations, conducted for two separate groups of heads of structural divisions of the Jogorku Kenesh Administration. The sessions were part of a series of seminars on Modern Methods of Human Resources Management, developed for the managerial staff of the Parliament to improve their knowledge and skills;
- A training session for members of the Parliamentary Women's Club, aimed at improving their skills as public speakers and as leaders.

The Parliamentary Women's Club was launched by KPSP in 2013 as an organization to promote women's leadership in political decision-making. Through the Club KPSP provides the most active women in the JK with professional capacity-building and career growth opportunities. The official presentation of the Parliamentary Women's Club to JK MPs and the broader public took place in October 2013, at a ceremony during which Club members presented its concept and goals to over 100 high-profile guests. Presenters shared the background and history of the Women's Club's founding, its mission, internal procedures, and priorities for expansion and development.

*Honorary members of the Parliamentary Women's Club receive medals at the official presentation held at the Park Hotel on October 24, 2013.  
Photo: KPSP.*



The Parliamentary Women's Club conducted four working meetings during Year Four to discuss its development concept and assess future prospects and priorities, as well as work on practical matters like progress reports and memoranda of cooperation with other associations involved in women's issues. The participants also worked on the Club's official website, [www.aiymjk.kg](http://www.aiymjk.kg). Three out of the four working meetings were dedicated to preparations for the Club's official presentation. These preparations also included lessons organized by KPSP including seminars on goal-setting and on public speaking and strategies for engaging with an audience and winning it over by controlling its attention.

An additional three general meetings were held during Year Four; these meetings were open to all current and prospective members as well as friends and supporters. At these meetings, members considered the achievements made by the Club and its members. Club members who had taken part in study tours to the US and Europe reported on their experiences, sharing their impressions and newly-acquired knowledge. During the year, Club members also engaged in individual counseling and participated in different events for promotion of gender equality, including the National Consultation Conference "The Female Perspective on The Future" (organized by the Forum of Women's NGOs of Kyrgyzstan) and a meeting of the Advisory Council on the Implementation of the Kyrgyz National Strategy for Gender Equality Through 2020 and the National Action Plan on Gender Equality for 2012-2014 (organized by the Bishkek City Government). KPSP did not directly fund these events, but Component 4 took on a mentoring role in the Women's Club participation in them.

Component 4 also organized and held a leadership development training, which covered confidence as the foundation of high-quality leadership and peculiarities of gender with regard to leading a team. KPSP also assisted in the development of the Club by contracting an expert on gender issues who assisted the Club in holding its working meetings and other programs promoting gender equality.

The study tour to Sweden and Denmark was for the six most active members of the Parliamentary Women's Club. It focused on gender equality, anti-discrimination legislation, gender mainstreaming, integration, and diversity. Participants visited the Parliament of Sweden (the Riksdag) and the Parliament of Denmark (the Folketinget), as well as other government agencies and ministries relevant to the development of women's leadership in political decision-making. They studied the issues of social security, women's leadership development, women's rights movements, and the methods of ensuring equal rights and opportunities in the public and private sectors. The opportunity was extended to examine policies and strategies which are not well-known in Kyrgyzstan, such as legal regulation of gender and social guarantees, the application of quotas in the electoral system, the relationship between taxes and social security development, the women's movement for equal rights and treatment, and women's leadership development programs. The participants also met with representatives of gender-oriented NGOs and information centers to discuss their work on gender issues and their collaboration with government authorities. The participants decided to analyze the information received during the tour and use it for the development of the Parliamentary Women's Club.

The English language program organized for MPs and the JK Administration's senior staff is also a Component 4 activity. These lessons were long requested by the Parliament. KPSP hired three English language instructors who developed curricula and materials based on a survey of beneficiaries' knowledge level and needs. Interviews and written tests to determine students' levels and place them into appropriate groups were conducted. In total, fifteen small groups were created in the beginning of Year Four, each containing six to eight students to maximize participation. The instructors constantly monitored the progress of their students and taught additional classes to help underachieving students catch up with the material and fill in the gaps in their knowledge. At the regular lessons the instructors taught English grammar and vocabulary, including vocabulary related to business and parliamentary governance, encouraging the students to ask questions and exchange opinions to develop active communication skills. In the early weeks of the program, conversation clubs with a native speaker were held once a week with interested students. Later it was decided that the conversation clubs would be led with each group individually during its regularly scheduled time: every third class for groups intermediate and above, and every fourth class for elementary groups. The conversation clubs both introduced new material and built on what the groups were learning in their regular lessons. These teaching practices

combined contributed to the students' active use of the language and practical application of grammar constructions, vocabulary, and pronunciation rules in daily and work life.

The English lessons were suspended during the summer recess in the Parliament. Final exams were administered to assess the progress each student had made during the previous parliamentary session. KPSP awarded Certificates of Accomplishment to students who had successfully passed their final exams, confirming their completion of one level and progression to the next. With the start of the new parliamentary session on September 1 lessons resumed; KPSP renewed the contracts of two English language instructors working with an updated curriculum and teaching materials for 2014-2015. The study groups were reorganized and there are now twelve of them; some include as many as 12 students while others are individuals.

The English language program also had a success story in Year Four, when MP Roza Aknazarova became the first Kyrgyz MP to chair an international meeting entirely in English without the assistance of a translator. MP Aknazarova heads the Kyrgyz delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and was selected to chair its General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment on February 13, 2014, in Vienna. MP Aknazarova has been one of the most enthusiastic students from the very beginning of the KPSP English program and she prepared for her speeches at the OSCE PA in close collaboration with the KPSP English instructors.

*MP Roza Aknazarova (second from right) moderates the meeting of the General Committee on Economic Affairs, Science, Technology and Environment of the OSCE PA, February 13, 2014, Vienna, Austria. Photo: [www.oscepa.org](http://www.oscepa.org)*



Component 4 also provided embedded experts for the JK Department of Civil Service and Human Resources. A mentor with extensive experience worked within the Department through Year Four to strengthen its work with regard to enrollment, service, promotion, tenure, and termination of staff. The expert assisted on a daily basis, working primarily on the organization and reorganization of the Jogorku Kenesh committee departments and administrative divisions with an eye for optimization of the staffing structure. Specifically, the mentor assisted in the collection, analysis, and presentation of job applications for competitive selection of candidates for vacant positions. He also handled logistical matters for the English language program and for the HRM trainings held for heads of structural divisions. He further provided assistance to Members of Parliament and JK staffers in completing the mandatory income declaration. Among other activities, the expert helped organize and hold the meetings of the Interim Commission for Filling Vacant Positions, the Commission for Appraisal and Awarding, the Commission for Ethics in the Civil Service, and the Commission for Financial Support and Material Assistance to MPs and Staff of the Parliament. He also prepared a list of parliamentary staff for annual evaluation and helped in the organization and conducting of the two rounds of the evaluation: computer testing and interviews.

The annual evaluations apply to all employees of the Parliament, including MPs' consultants and assistants as well as Administration staff. This year's evaluation took place in April at the Testing Center

of the State Civil Service. KPSP Component 4 Manager Zhamyila Nurumbetova monitored the process to ensure that tests were properly administered. KPSP developed the aptitude tests and created a scoring system during Year Three at the request of the Head of the Civil Service and Human Resources Department. They are meant to help the Department introduce transparent procedures for the selection of new staff and assessment of current staff. These tests were included in the database of the Testing Center of the State Civil Service so that they can be administered by the Parliament independently after KPSP close-out.

Year Four also saw the year-long effort to install an electronic entrance and exit system for the Parliament building near its end. USAID approved the allocation of up to \$71,211 to assist the JK with the acquisition of such an Access Monitoring and Control System (AMCS), the provision of which had become a necessary condition for continuing human resources management activities during Year Three. The system will streamline the bureaucratic process of issuing long-term and temporary access passes. It also contributes to better HRM practices at the Parliament because it includes time logs to keep track of hours worked by staffers and MPs. The system of turnstiles and surveillance equipment also serves a security function.

Technical requirements for the system were worked out with the help of a local expert, who also assisted in assessing the reasonableness of costs for purchasing, installing, and maintaining the system. The resulting Scope of Work was confirmed with the JK before the tender was announced. The local company Centurion LLC was selected out of seven potential vendors; this decision was made on January 8, 2014, after thorough and lengthy consideration by a special Evaluation Committee which was composed of the contracted expert and representatives of KPSP and the JK. The total cost of the AMCS project came out to just under \$90,000, of which \$71,211 was covered by KPSP and the remainder by the JK according to a separate contract. Both contracts with Centurion LLC were signed on February 10.

Equipment was delivered according to a set schedule and its transfer to authorized JK staff for storage was confirmed by an act of conveyance and acceptance from the JK and the contractor. The full installation was completed by a series of final checks and adjustments to correct any oversights and to check the accuracy of the work time logs and other components. After the final trial of the system and a training conducted for the Department of State Service and Human Resources and other staff on proper and effective utilization of the system, the AMCS was put into operation. The official transfer of the property to the JK is pending and anticipated in Year Five. All Members of Parliament and staff have received passes which they have to use every time they enter or leave the building. Accredited parliamentary journalists also received passes.

## GENDER REPRESENTATION

Out of 120 MPs in the Parliament, 27 are female, or 22.5% of the total.

Women occupy some of the most influential positions in the Jogorku Kenesh. Currently, four of the five Deputy Speakers are women: Bodosh Mamyrova (Ar-Namys), Cholpon Sultanbekova (Respublika), Asiya Sasykbaeva (Ata-Meken), and Jyldyzkan Joldosheva (Ata-Jurt). Three parliamentary committees are chaired by female MPs: Natalia Nikitenko (Committee on Human Rights, Constitutional Legislation, and State Structure), Damira Niyazalieva (Committee on Social Policy), and Ainuru Altybaeva (Committee on the Rules of Procedure and MP Ethics). Several committees have female Deputy Chairs.

KPSP worked closely with members of these and other JK committees, as well as women holding key positions in the Press Service, the Civil Service and Human Resources Department, the Legal Department, the Legislative Analysis Division, and JK committee departments and factional secretariats. KPSP also paid due attention to gender balance when holding events and nominating persons for educational programs sponsored by USAID and DFID. All events supported and conducted by KPSP were fully gender-inclusive with attendance by both male and female JK staff and MPs. In aggregate, out of 4,000 overall attendees at the 73 events conducted during Year Four, over 1,600 were female (41% of the total). 109 of the 241 MP participations were women (45% of the total). In addition, the short-term experts, consultants, instructors, and mentors contracted by the KPSP were gender-inclusive.

The main KPSP activity promoting gender balance and equality is the Parliamentary Women's Club. The organization was created to support professional capacity-building and career advancement for parliamentary women staffers. The Parliamentary Women's Club is a key KPSP deliverable promoting women's leadership, and it aims to build a solid foundation of strong female leaders playing key roles in the development of the parliamentary system in Kyrgyzstan. The Parliamentary Women's Club is described in more detail under KPSP Component 4, which plays a key role in the activities of this organization.

## PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

KPSP strongly adheres to a policy of improving the lives of persons with disabilities in Kyrgyzstan and seeks to raise public awareness of the disabled through a variety of initiatives.

During Year Four, KPSP completed its assistance for the initiative of visually-impaired MP Dastan Bekeshev to prepare a brochure containing basic information on the Jogorku Kenesh. It was printed both in standard type and in Braille for visually-impaired persons. This initiative became one of the key deliverables for KPSP Phase 3 and was endorsed by JK Speaker Asylbek Jeenbekov. KPSP printed 300 copies of the brochure in Braille (150 in Russian and 150 in Kyrgyz) and delivered them to the Jogorku Kenesh for use in the Parliament's Library and further dissemination among organizations working with people with disabilities. This number added to the original publication of 2,500 copies in regular type (1,000 copies in Russian, 1,000 copies in Kyrgyz, and 500 copies in English). These brochures are now primarily used as informational materials for members of international delegations and participants in public tours of the Kyrgyz Parliament building.

28 Braille copies (14 in Kyrgyz and 14 in Russian) are being kept in the Library of the Jogorku Kenesh, while the majority of the others have been distributed to organizations working with persons with special needs:

- 20 brochures (10 in Kyrgyz + 10 in Russian) to the Special School for the Blind in Bishkek;
- 20 brochures (10 in Kyrgyz + 10 in Russian) to the Special School for the Blind in Osh;
- 10 brochures in Russian to the Russian Society of the Blind (All Russia Association of the Blind);
- 20 brochures (10 in Kyrgyz + 10 in Russian) to the Republican Library of the Kyrgyz Society of the Blind and the Deaf (KSBD);
- 200 brochures to the Kyrgyz Society of the Blind and the Deaf for further distribution among its offices in the regions.



*President of the Kyrgyz Society of the Blind and the Deaf Kalyk Mambetkunov reads a new Brochure on the Jogorku Kenesh in Braille, June 2014. Photo: MP Bekeshev's Office.*

MP Bekeshev's office has already received positive feedback regarding the brochures. The Director of the Republican Library of the Kyrgyz Society of the Blind and the Deaf (KSBD), Djumabay Ismailov, informed the MP that visually-impaired readers represent a great demand for these brochures in both the

Russian and Kyrgyz languages. The KSBD has begun the distribution of the brochures among its regional offices. Each regional office will receive between four and ten copies, depending on the number of members it serves. According to Marat Tashbaev, Director of the 1st Production-and-Training Enterprise of the KSBD, the brochures have helped to compensate for the unavailability of books in Braille since 1991. MP Bekeshev's office also received a letter from Olga Bubenova, Accountant of the Bishkek Primary Office of the Blind, who stated that the brochures are very popular among their readers and that many take these publications home.

MP Bekeshev is one of the most proactive MPs in the Jogorku Kenesh. He has been the most active advocate for the needs of persons with disabilities in this convocation of Parliament. He has also been a close partner of KPSP. KPSP has cooperated with MP Bekeshev and provided assistance to his initiatives on numerous occasions. In 2010-2011, he chaired the JK Committee on Human Rights, Equal Opportunities, and Public Organizations, which was later eliminated as part of the overall restructuring of JK committees. KPSP supported this Committee in holding policy seminars relating to issuing passports and employing persons with disabilities.

Currently, none of the 14 JK committees have taken the lead in proactively championing the causes of persons with disabilities. The JK Committee on Human Rights, State Structure, and Constitutional Legislation has not yet conducted any activities concerning the disabled or improving their access to education, employment, or public or private services. However, the JK Committee on Education, Science, Culture, and Sports did hold a policy seminar in December 2013 focused on the problems facing Paralympic athletes, such as inadequate financing, the absence of sports facilities accessible to persons with disabilities, and the generally discouraging attitude of officials. About 60 people participated in the event, including nine MPs, the Director of the State Agency for Physical Culture and Sports, and the Minister of Social Development. The interests and needs of Paralympic athletes were voiced by the President of the National Paralympic Federation of the Kyrgyz Republic. The seminar resulted in the decision to bring the issue of Paralympic sports development before the JK plenary in the next parliamentary session.

## DONOR COOPERATION

From the very beginning of the Program, KPSP has cooperated actively with other USAID, DFID, EU, GIZ, and United Nations donors and implementers to strengthen coordination, eliminate duplication of effort, and facilitate more efficient use of resources. To find synergies the parties meet frequently, exchange information on work plans and anticipated activities, and participate in one another's activities and events.

KPSP regularly briefs USAID, DFID, the UK Aid Team and officials from the US and UK Embassies in Kyrgyzstan as well as visiting high-ranking staffers about its activities. KPSP provides information and insights into the Kyrgyz parliamentary system, its strengths and weaknesses, and its needs and expectations. USAID and US Embassy officials often refer to KPSP as the US Government's flagship program in Kyrgyzstan. US Ambassador Pamela Spratlen, who is a frequent guest at KPSP-sponsored or -facilitated events, once underlined the important role played by KPSP and the productive relationship it enjoys with the JK. The donors often ask KPSP to recommend MPs and JK staff for participation in study tours and training programs in the United States and the United Kingdom focusing on parliamentary governance, rule of law, and other democracy issues. KPSP also renders assistance to the US Department of State and the US Embassy as well as to DFID and the UK Embassy in organizing visits to the Jogorku Kenesh and briefings in relation to JK structure, events, trends, and overall history.

During Year Four, KPSP participated in a variety of individual meetings with representatives from USAID, DFID, the UK Aid Team, the US and UK Embassies in Kyrgyzstan, the US Department of State, the United Kingdom Foreign & Commonwealth Office, and other donors and their project implementers. The meetings covered many topics, including parliamentary governance; the current state of affairs in the Jogorku Kenesh, recently proposed and passed legislation, the promotion of more substantive engagement with the general public, engagement with the JK Press Service and parliamentary journalists, and the impact of donor-funded programs on the development and strengthening of the Parliament.

KPSP staff also actively participated and engaged in many donor-sponsored events where they provided their expert opinions and delivered presentations on governance and the legislative process, media and public communications and leadership, capacity-building and fostering cooperation between the JK and its counterparts. These events included:

- USAID Partners Meetings attended by high-ranking officials from the US Embassy in Kyrgyzstan, USAID in Bishkek and Almaty, and all 27 ongoing USAID-funded programs. The meetings were called so that all USAID projects could become more familiar with one another and explore potential avenues for collaboration, whether in education, health, infrastructure, democracy and governance, or another field. USAID and the US Embassy, in their turn, informed the implementers about their own country-wide strategy and public outreach activities;
- USAID D&G Implementers Meetings attended by all USAID-funded programs and grant recipients involved in democracy and governance. Participants share news on Kyrgyzstan's democratic development with its accomplishments, challenges, and further prospects;
- DFID Deepening Democracy Meetings that gather representatives of KPSP, the National Democratic Institute, and the Collaborative Governance Program implemented by the East-West Management Institute. All three programs work in democracy and governance and all three are joint-funded by USAID and DFID.
- A policy meeting with representatives from the US Department of State, the US Embassy in the Kyrgyz Republic, and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Fund to discuss the role of civil society in Kyrgyzstan and the latest developments with legislation of interest to civil society (such as the foreign agents law, the criminalization of libel, and the anti-LGBT bill);
- A Media Sector Collaboration Meeting hosted by Internews Kyrgyzstan and focused on the challenges faced by Kyrgyzstan during its transition to digital broadcasting. The many donors in attendance stated that Kyrgyzstan is undergoing the transition more transparently than any of the other Central Asian countries, involving independent media and civil society into the process;

- Two Media Sector Collaboration Meeting organized by the International Media Support (IMS), attended by representatives of international donor organizations and implementers to discuss current projects, future priorities, and observations about recent developments in the media sector. Presentations were delivered at this meetings about recent developments in legislation and policy affecting journalists and civil society;
- A presentation by the Westminster Fund for Democracy, which implements the program Strengthening National Parliament's Consultation with Civil Society at the Regional Level. The presentation covered challenges faced by the Program, MPs' work with voters and available mechanisms for interaction, guidelines for organizing and holding parliamentary hearings, the creation of a database of civil society organizations and its publication on the JK website, and the development of universal performance assessment indicators for evaluating interaction between the JK and voters;
- A conference on "Concepts and Instruments for Elaboration of Second Language Training Programs," organized by the Kyrgyz Republic Education Sector Support Project, supported by the European Union in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, to provide information and guidance to Kyrgyz linguistic experts in addressing issues related to bilingualism;
- The closing ceremony of the Parliamentary Internship program sponsored by the OSCE and implemented by American Councils for International Education (ACCELS). The program was designed to introduce competitively-selected undergrads from the American University of Central Asia and graduate students from the OSCE Academy in Bishkek to the system of parliamentary democracy in Kyrgyzstan through a three-month internship at the Kyrgyz Parliament. KPSP was initially involved in assisting with the placement of the interns;
- A meeting of the Women MPs' Caucus led by the National Democratic Institute (NDI). KPSP used this opportunity to deliver a presentation on its activities, especially the Parliamentary Women's Club and the Research Fund;
- An event at the law department of the Kyrgyz National University, where KPSP staff delivered a lecture to graduates on "The Problems Facing Legislative Activities in the Kyrgyz Republic." They also presented the manual "The Seven Principles for Drafting Sound Legislation in the Kyrgyz Republic," which was produced together with the European Union-funded Project "Training Facility for Government Institutions and Civil Society in the Kyrgyz Republic";
- A round-table discussion on parliamentary governance organized by the Roza Otunbaeva Initiative and the UK Embassy, where British Members of Parliament Mr. John Mann (representing Bassetlaw) and Mr. Andrew Rosindell (representing Romford) spoke about the experiences and practices of the UK in the area of parliamentary development;
- A meeting with the President of the Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society Dinara Oshurahunova, focusing on common areas of activity and potential avenues for cooperation, including information dissemination through parliamentary digests and holding committee field events in the regions;
- Also, when visiting the US on July 7-10, KPSP COP Gregg Halstead delivered presentations on KPSP on Capitol Hill, including briefings with congressional staffers from both the US Senate and the US House of Representatives and a presentation at the US State Department which was attended by USAID personnel.

KPSP has always maintained constructive working relationships with other USAID-funded implementers, including IRG, NDI, IRI, Deloitte Consulting, IFES, Freedom House, the Eurasia Foundation, and Internews Kyrgyzstan. On numerous occasions KPSP has served as a bridge between these implementers and the JK. KPSP's extensive experience in organizing and holding hearings and other activities involving Kyrgyz MPs has made it a good source of advice for other donor programs. KPSP, in its turn, expects that cooperation with these programs will present other opportunities for JK factions, committees, and ad hoc MP groups to hold events on various subjects related to economic, social, and political reforms.

In Year Four, 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. More information about these brochures is available under Component 3. KPSP also partnered with the

USAID/UNDP Project on Promoting Transparency of the State Budget to organize a discussion of the draft Budget Code of the Kyrgyz Republic. The public discussion was initiated by the JK Committee on Budget and Finance.

The International Conference on the Parliamentary Role in Advancing State Policy against Corruption was held in Bishkek under the auspices of the Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) with the support of many donors, including the United Nations Development Program, the World Bank, and USAID and DFID through the KPSP. The conference was initiated by the JK Committee on International Affairs together with the Office of the President to consider state policies to combat corruption and share the best international approaches and practices.

*Michael Greene, USAID Mission Director to the Kyrgyz Republic, delivers a speech on the importance of international support in combating corruption and building democracy in the Kyrgyz Republic at the GOPAC International Conference, June 9, 2014. Photo: KPSP.*



KPSP also regularly briefs its main beneficiary, the Jogorku Kenesh itself. During Year Four, KPSP COP Kregg Halstead and the various Component Managers met with JK partners to discuss ongoing efforts. In particular, KPSP actively promoted the Research Fund, on the Legislative Dictionary, and initiatives to strengthen the oversight function of JK committees through field public hearings.