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REVISED DRAFT REPORT

EVALUATION OF

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT NO CCS-0007-A-00-2021-00

WITH THE

INTERNATIONAL REPUBLICAN INSTITUTE

FOR

DEMOCRATIC PLURALISM INITIATIVES
IN THE
NEWLY INDEPENDENT STATES
OF THE FORMER SOVIE UNION
(PROJECT 110-0007)

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ACRONYMS

A I D	U S Agency for International Development
DRM	Democratic Russia Movement
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Svstems
IRI	International Republican Institute
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NGO	Non-governmental organization
USAID	An overseas mission of A I D
USIS	United States Information Service

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report constitutes a summary of an evaluation of International Republican Institute (IRI) projects that were funded FY 1992-1994 by AID's Democratic Pluralism Initiatives (DPI) in Russia and Central Asia. Total funding \$4 453 493

These projects have made a contribution to the immediate process of transition from communist, authoritarian states to democratic systems. They are significant because IRI has utilized a decentralized grassroots model of political development to foster political organizing across a network of cities in the NIS. They are one of the few grantees working in the southern tier of Central Asia where their programs are fostering long term democratic development through educational programs targeted to young people and their teachers.

The projects and their results to date were assessed positively. On the whole, they were well targeted and well functioning. IRI has successfully established its programs in the countries visited and conducted political and civic organizing training. They have established a network of contacts among reformers whom they continue to support.

Program Summary

The IRI programs in the new Independent States (NIS) of the former Soviet Union (FSU) are designed to foster the development of democratic political parties and civic organizations at the local and national levels. They have focused on political training in Russia and Central Asia-Northern Tier, specific infrastructure support with women in Russia and youth in Central Asia-Southern tier, and pre-election preparation in Georgia. IRI activities in Ukraine are financed by a National Endowment for Democracy (NED) grant.

IRI operates field offices in Moscow and Almaty for Russia and Central Asia, respectively, the southern tier countries of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are covered by a program officer located in the IRI/Washington office. IRI has just assigned a resident program officer to Tashkent.

Training programs, leadership conferences, print materials and other technical assistance have been the primary delivery mechanisms used by IRI within the NIS. In addition to conferences and seminars, IRI has completed regional assessments and informal party development meetings, prepared materials and provided lectures to small civic organizations and group of political activists.

In Russia, IRI has utilized a decentralized, grassroots model of political development. Its efforts have focused on establishing a network of potential training sites in 18 to 20 cities/towns throughout the country. Programming has included infrastructure support (some typewriters and a printing press), and training on grassroots development, leadership conferences, political and training and a women's conference.

In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, the IRI program began with a careful assessment of the political climate and potential party liaisons. Unlike Russia where the Democratic Russia Movement

(DRM) offered a vehicle for developing contacts in the targeted cities targeting potential participants in these countries had to start almost from scratch. The program has included general institution building conferences and work with women in politics.

In Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan political conditions are so poor that IRI has had to take a lower profile and longer-term approach. Here, the program has been targeted to civic education of young people and their teachers including a model United Nations program and the development of youth centers. The centers are fostering youth leadership, self help community projects and community development interventions.

Findings

The program in Russia was conducted in coordination with the DRM, its group members and affiliated organizations in the interest of promoting a better understanding of democracy and the grass-roots approach to political organization. IRI conducted a series of seminars which focussed on basic democracy education and the fundamentals of political and organizational development of political parties. Particular emphasis was placed on creating party structures, organization and management techniques, office operations, leadership responsibilities and internal communication.

Problems with registration have hampered the program in Central Asia from its inception. The IRI program is attempting to involve those groups, organizations and activists which are interested in moving the political power closer to the people, rather than supporting a "political elite". The focus is on institutional development, specifically membership recruitment, structural consolidation and name recognition for political groups.

Reports from AID grant managers indicate that basically sound financial management and accounting practices are followed by IRI. Like many of the other grantees, IRI reported delays in approval of amendments and obligation of funding, combined with drawn out contracting procedures. IRI appears to have done a good job of funds accountability and financial reporting, however USAID reported some frustration insufficient reports on program activities and the lack of timely report submission.

Some of IRI success clearly is attributable to its techniques for reinforcement, follow-up, identifying contacts, establishing networks, and success in attracting and addressing the special position of women.

Impact

IRI has successfully established its programs in the countries visited and conducted training which has resulted in changes in the operation of the political parties they have assisted. IRI's assumption that programs must begin at the grassroots level in Russia has contributed to the beginning of an infrastructure of political activists. In the other NIS countries, IRI sees its programmatic goals as much longer term. In Central Asia, this work is targeted to youth leadership development and community development interventions.

IRI has an effective program for orienting American and international consultants prior to their participation in IRI training programs and seminars in the NIS. IRI has trained a substantial cadre of political party leaders more than 1000 some of whom reported to the evaluation team a high degree of personal growth in political skills, motivation, and attitude.

This evaluation was conducted before many of the projects were completed and before final reports had been submitted. Although it is too early to focus attention specifically on the impact these projects were having on democratic development in Russia and Central Asia, outputs are in place which suggest that IRI is successfully contributing to political education and the development of civic organizations.

1 PURPOSE AND METHOD OF THE EVALUATION

A Background and Purpose of the Evaluation

This evaluation was conducted by Management Systems International (MSI) under IQC No AEP 0085-I-10-3001-00 Delivery Order No 10. It is the first evaluation of a major sectoral component of assistance from the Agency for International Development (AID) to the New Independent States (NIS) of the former Soviet Union. It pertains to a portion of AID's Democratic Pluralism Initiatives (DPI) Project No 110-0007, which was authorized on 10 April 1992 with a life of project funding level of \$25 million and a project assistance completion date of April 1996. Funding for the DPI Project has been increased twice, and the project has been extended to 31 December 1996.

The DPI Project was designed to help create and nurture democratic institutions, processes, and values in the NIS in the wake of the collapse of communism and the Soviet economic system. In its early phase, the Project funded Grants and Cooperative Agreements for US-based nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to provide technical assistance, training, and some equipment.

The Project has five components: rule of law, independent media, governance and public administration, political process, and civil society. The civil society component is intended to enable citizens to participate actively and effectively in the political and economic life of their countries, to check governmental powers and encourage responsiveness, and to provide services not provided by the government. The cooperative agreement with the International Republican Institute, which is evaluated in this report, is an element of the political process component of the DPI Project.

B Method

In December 1993, AID contracted with Management Systems International (MSI) to conduct field evaluations of the activities of seven DPI Project grantees and desk studies of the activities of two grantees.

The evaluations were conducted by a team of six management consultants: David Read Barker (Team Leader), Cynthia Clapp-Wincek, David Hirschmann, James S. Holtaway, Sally J. Patterson, and Alan Lessik. Four members of the team (Barker, Holtaway, Patterson, and Lessik) divided responsibility for the seven field studies, with three evaluators each taking lead responsibility for two studies and one evaluator taking responsibility for one field study and the synthesis report. The other two members of the team (Hirschmann and Clapp-Wincek) were each assigned lead responsibility for one desk study.

The professional backgrounds of the evaluators are development management, cultural anthropology, political science, and political organizing and opinion research. All four of the field evaluators had previous professional experience in Russia, three of them had worked in Russia within the previous 6 months.

A team planning meeting of the A I D project managers the evaluators and representatives of the grantees was held on 4 January 1994. The participants agreed to support the evaluation as a collaborative, candid, constructive, and creative process. The evaluators then interviewed A I D officials and grantees in their offices in the Washington DC area and California. Extensive documentation was gathered and reviewed by the team.

The field evaluators visited the Russian Federation from 20-29 January, at which time the team broke into two sub-teams, one of which visited Ukraine from 29 January to 5 February and one of which visited Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan from 29 January to 5 February. The method of the field visits was derived from rapid appraisal techniques which stress creation of a team, multi-disciplinary treatment of data, selective sampling, gathering information through interviews, and conscious efforts to identify biases.

With the full cooperation of IRI, the evaluators structured their itinerary to maximize opportunities to observe significant project activities. Similarly, IRI provided names of key beneficiaries who became priority targets for interviews. Interviews with Russian-speaking informants were conducted in English using professional interpreters. To the extent that logistics permitted, at least two team members participated in interviews with beneficiaries. However, intense time constraints required modifications of the optimal itinerary and interview schedule.

The authors of this report conducted a total of 69 interviews: 28 with U S Government officials in five countries, 10 with IRI staff members in four countries, and 31 with beneficiaries of IRI's programs in four countries. A list of people interviewed is given in Appendix A. The documents reviewed are listed in Appendix B.

Following the field visits, the team reassembled in Washington, DC to review findings. Team members met with A I D officials and individually with the IRI staff to present key findings and conclusions informally and to review critical issues.

The team expresses its sincere appreciation for the excellent cooperation and support received from A I D officials in Washington, from USAID and U S Embassy staffs in Moscow, Almaty, and Kiev, from the staffs of the grantees in their headquarters and field offices, and from the numerous beneficiaries of these programs.

2 THE COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

A Purpose and Description of the Program

The International Republican Institute (IRI) funded program under the Cooperative Agreement operates in two major regions of the NIS the Russian Federation and Central Asia. IRI activities in Ukraine are financed by a NED grant. IRI operates field offices in Moscow and Almaty for Russia and Central Asia respectively, although the southern tier countries of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are managed by a program officer located in IRI headquarters in Washington. IRI recently decided to place a Resident Program Officer in Tashkent for the southern tier of Central Asia.

In its proposal to AID dated 10 April 1992, the International Republican Institute (IRI) states that, 'programming will seek to develop and consolidate institutions which support pluralistic societies to strengthen democratic traditions and foster the inclusion and constructive involvement of various segments of society in increasingly open and competitive political process.

The program components outlined in this proposal included the following

- Russia Political Training Program highlighting the basic tenets of democratic societies specifically campaigns and elections the separation of powers and the rule of law
- Russia Infrastructure Support Program an international conference designed to promote an understanding of democratic institutions, their organization, management and communications capacity,
- Russia Women s Conference, a conference that allowed 200 women to participate in a mock campaign and election through a 2-day seminar,
- Central Asia-Northern Tier Political Party Building, a targeted training for the region focusing on party formation and development, ways to channel activism and achieve political compromise in a democracy,
- Central Asia-Southern Tier Youth Activism and Young Political Leaders Program, consisting primarily of lectures at various schools and encouraging the development of self directed community intervention projects, and
- Georgia Pre-election Preparation

The IRI evaluation plan of March 1993 says that the purpose for Russia is, "to help democratic political parties and civic organizations develop and strengthen at the local and national levels and to encourage political parties to form consensus on democratic principles " A subsequent IRI proposal dated May 1993, more simply says, 'the objective has been the development of

democratic institutions essential to the success of democracy and further states ' the institute has focused mainly on the development of a multi-party political system which can provide competition in the political process and ultimately the element of choice in elections '

B Country Context and Issues

Prior to the collapse of the Soviet Union democratic activists were scattered and loosely associated. Only the Democratic Russia Movement (DRM) had nation-wide representation and ties to the dispersed groupings of reform minded democrats in over 300 towns in each region. IRI worked through this conduit to initiate its own contacts, launch assessments, and establish plans for political party training. It was this joint outreach with DRM that put IRI in communication with many political parties and movements that eventually would participate in its seminars. Democratic Russia was not a counterpart in the traditional sense, and IRI was not tied to it exclusively.

The situation in Russia stands in stark contrast to the less developed political conditions of the northern tier countries of Central Asia. Many political parties exist but their sophistication and institutional capability lags. The northern tier countries must contend with profound ethnic divisions and party affiliation skewed toward nationality or ethnic loyalties. Consequently, political party training must in the first instance ameliorate ethnic and nationality differences and encourage unity and cohesion. Trainings have emphasized the fundamentals of conflict resolution, grass-roots organization and political coalition-building, rather than specific political party building and campaign and election related skills.

The government of Kazakhstan has little tolerance for the intrusion of foreign political activists from IRI or any NGO and in turn is more oppressive in the political, economic, and social life of the country. Political development and democratic reform experiences are in a formative stage. The legal status of NGOs is in question, and registration with the Ministry of Justice has been used as an instrument of control. The NGOs have had to toe a careful line of circumspection and self-discipline in their party training activities. For a time in 1993, the government imposed a ban on training activities and conferences in Kazakhstan. IRI had to resort to regional training activities in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to maintain its program momentum. Finally, the ban was informally lifted after a visit by the Secretary of State and an intervention by the U.S. Ambassador.

In Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, political conditions are sufficiently repressive so that IRI has taken a lower profile and longer term approach. With an intimidating if not hostile environment for political development, IRI concluded that its more conventional party development strategy would not succeed. They have chosen instead to focus a youth oriented democracy program in which the seeds of democratic behavior, leadership, and participation are nurtured in modest ways.

Similar to other NGOs attempting to support programs in these vast NIS regions, IRI is constantly strained by high costs, poor logistics, and inadequate communication infrastructure--not to mention potential harm from accidents, pollution and criminal attacks.

Finally there is a special challenge and not a little danger to advocating political change and the benefits of democracy when conservative and nationalist cadres outnumber reformers, stir emotions against reform efforts and exploit fears about economic deterioration to denigrate one's efforts

C Program Budget and Financial Management

The original cooperative agreement with IRI was approved in May 1992 for \$1,896,215. This was amended in August 1993 with additional funding of \$2,557,278. The current revised budget for the cooperative agreement stands at \$4,453,493. AID has extended the grant completion date to 30 June 1994 with some additional funding.

IRI actually began program initiatives before the AID cooperative agreement was signed. Due to the scheduling of elections in Azerbaijan, IRI began program implementation with a retroactive spending memo. They were the first NGO to begin working with the NIS Task Force under a cooperative agreement. When the cooperative agreement was finally signed, IRI was operating in Russia and Central Asia on NED funding. Due to the fact that new initiatives in those countries focused on similar program objectives to those of NED, AID requested that IRI complete the NED work prior to AID implementation to avoid confusion and grant overlaps. With a large IRI/NED Central Asia Conference in June 1992, an IRI/AID Azerbaijan election observation mission in June and extensive IRI/NED training missions in Russia during the summer of 1992, IRI could not begin full AID program implementation until September. IRI opened its Moscow office in January 1993.

	ORIGINAL BUDGET	ADDITIONAL BUDGET	REVISED BUDGET
Management	\$435,000	(\$226,981)	\$208,019
Russian Federation	\$654,000	\$1,785,076	\$2,439,076
Azerbaijan	\$296,215	(\$233,721)	\$62,493
Asia North	\$323,000	\$646,424	\$969,424
Asia South	\$135,000	\$532,189	\$667,189
Georgia	\$53,000	\$54,291	\$107,291
TOTAL	\$1,896,215	\$2,557,278	\$4,453,492

Reports from AID grant managers indicate that basically sound financial management and accounting practices are followed by IRI. Like many of the other grantees, IRI reported delays in approval of amendments and obligation of funding, combined with lengthy contracting procedures. IRI appears to have done a good job of funds accountability and financial reporting, however USAID reported some frustration with inadequate reporting on program activities and the lateness of submission.

3 FINDINGS

A Inputs, Activities, and Delivery Mechanisms

IRI utilized a decentralized grass-roots model of political development in Russia. Once on-site, the Resident Program Officer devoted a large amount of start-up time to political and party assessments throughout the region, developing contacts and building networks of activists to participate in training programs and to serve as local trainers.

Seminars are the principal methodology for IRI political party training. The seminars feature two intense days of lectures, small group discussions, role-play, simulations, and workshop applications of new skills. The goal is to build a grass-roots structure at the local and regional level which can be mobilized for national action. IRI's approach involves follow-up training and observation visits as activities to reinforce early contacts, and to identify participants for leadership training conducted with the national parties. IRI is now completing the first cycle of party development at the local level and is moving to reinforcement, follow-up, and consolidation.

Finally, one other technique used by IRI is worthy of special mention: its preparation of international and U.S. experts as facilitators. The training team receives three rounds of orientation:

1. In the U.S., the volunteer trainers are given basic background information on the assignment.
2. After arriving in the country, the resident representative undertakes a second round of orientation, briefing, and planning for the seminar.
3. Once on-site, the entire team completes site orientation and begins a round of discussions with party leaders, local officials, and other interested groups. A social gathering is held on the eve of the seminar to bind relationships, begin socialization, and help create an atmosphere of friendship and informality.

Trainers and field staff reported that this orientation provided a solid orientation to the training and minimized culturally insensitive references during the program.

Russian Federation

After some initial workshops in Moscow, prior to the AID grant, IRI moved to establish a network of contacts and potential training sites in 18 to 20 cities and towns throughout Russia. Working with the Democratic Russia Movement (DRM), IRI was able to launch its assessments, identify contacts, and establish plans for political party training. Subsequently, when the DRM faltered, reportedly, for failure to provide the broad support, leadership, and vision required by its loose confederation, IRI was well positioned with a broad range of other political parties and continues its work with former DRM members and other emerging party activists. Special efforts

are made to encourage women to attend the seminars (sometimes as high as 40-50% of attendees), and to identify women participants for special issues conferences targeted to women leaders

Programming has included infrastructure support (some typewriters and a printing press) and training on grassroots party development, party leadership conferences political party training and a series of women's conferences

The program in Russia was conducted in coordination with the DRM its group members and affiliated organizations in the interest of promoting a better understanding of democracy and the grass roots approach to political organization. The IRI conducted a series of seminars which focussed on basic democracy education and the fundamentals of political and organizational development of political parties. Particular emphasis was placed on creating party structures, organization and management techniques, office operations leadership responsibilities and internal communication

National representatives of DRM were invited to attend the local seminars to encourage improved vertical networking and communication as well as to clarify the identity of the movement in an increasingly cluttered field of political contenders. In addition, the inclusion of national representatives allowed the Coordinating Council to better assess the strengths, weaknesses and needs of the local organizations

The recent elections in Russia accelerated the pace of training, contact expansion, and reinforcement. Observation teams for both the April 1993 referendum and the December 1993 elections were deployed according to a complex set of criteria

Central Asia

In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, IRI operates its program through a Central Asia Office located in Almaty. It is a smaller office than the Moscow office and is staffed by a Resident Program Officer and a Program Assistant

In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan the IRI program began with a careful assessment of the political climate and potential party liaisons. Unlike Russia where the DRM offered a vehicle for developing contacts in the targeted cities, targeting potential participants in these countries had to start almost from scratch. The program has included general institution building conferences and work with women in politics

The first round of seminars, due to logistical and political circumstances, were held at central locations rather than dispersed around the country

In Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan the program began with two high schools where IRI crafted a series of training programs, workshops, and community development interventions with a small number of young people. Young people and teachers are forming networks to undertake small-scale self-help projects. Youth festivals are planned with a large contingent of internationally

renown trainers presenting seminars workshops and exercises focused on youth leadership and initiatives democracy political awareness and sharing international experiences

The evaluation team was not in a position to properly assess the relatively small components for Georgia and Azerbaijan We understand that pre-election assistance in Georgia was discontinued because of the outbreak of civil insurrection While in Azerbaijan, U S legal injunctions made it extremely difficult to operate the planned election monitoring assistance program

B Outputs

Russia Federation

IRI in Russia completed the first round of 10 political communication and campaign preparedness seminars involving approximately 800 party leaders addressing a variety of topics as reflected in the table below By the close of 1993 nearly 10 000 Russian language civic education and political training manuals were distributed throughout the Russian Federation

**Table 1
IRI Training Programs
Russian Federation**

LOCATION	DATE	TOPIC	# OF PARTICIPANTS
St Petersburg	3/92	Civic education Party organization	
Novgorod	3/92	Civic education Party organization	
Saransk	5/92	Civic education Party organization	
Voronezh	5/92	Civic education Party organization/ Campaign preparedness	
Chelyabinsk	7/92	Civic education Party organization	
Barnaul	7/92	Civic education Party organization	
Khabanoush	9/92	Civic education Party organization	
Voronezh	12/92	Political Communication Campaign Preparedness	
Archangelsk	2/93	Party organization, Political Communication, Campaign Preparedness	
Berezniki	3/93	Political Communication and Campaign Preparedness	

Novgorod	6/93	Women s Conference	200
Kemerove	8/93	Political Communication and Campaign Preparedness	
Irhutsh	8/93	Political Communication and Campaign Preparedness	
Moscow	9/93	Political Communication and Campaign Preparedness	
Perm	10/93	Political Communication and Campaign Preparedness	

In addition IRI provided infrastructure support (communications, commodities, specifically typewriters and a printing press in conjunction with NDI) to numerous regional communications centers to be shared by diverse party groups and coalitions. Prior to the 12 December elections, IRI organized and executed a poll watching and ballot integrity training program on short notice in 12 locations and mobilized and supported a 25-person election observation delegation.

Seminar participants were enthusiastic about their IRI training experiences. They were impressed with the pace, dynamism, and expertise of the trainers. The techniques of role-playing, simulations of meeting and press conferences, and how to effectively use TV for political education and campaigning were new experiences for these participants.

Some observers expressed concern that IRI limited its audience to compatible party groups or, by exclusive recruitment practices, to pre-selected reformers or categories of reformers. It is clear that some bias could potentially creep into the participant selection process since IRI frequently relied on its local contacts to conduct the initial solicitation for its training programs. Sometimes this was by word-of-mouth and restricted advertising by well-intentioned reformers who thought democratic political party training should be reserved for reformers and not communists and nationalists.

The staff is aware of this issue and has tried to avoid practices construed or perceived to be partisan. IRI was able in some circumstances to expand the advertisement or to broaden the invitation list for its seminars once it arrived on the scene. Its practice is to accept all participants who showed up, regardless of party affiliation. The IRI trainers suggested, though, that it was not unusual for some participants either not to show up or to leave early in the seminar after finding out about IRI, its U.S. association, or the seminar content. Although admittedly a small sample, a round-table discussion by former seminar participants in Vladimir, Russia, organized by the evaluators, revealed a strikingly diverse group of women, men, democrats, socialists, an agrarian, and a communist who had equal access to the IRI program and lauded its valuable effects.

The Russian parliamentary elections crystallized an unprecedented degree of cooperation, information sharing, and overall coordination among the NGO community, the U.S. Embassy and USAID. IRI was recognized for its useful clearinghouse operation for international observers.

Central Asia

In Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan IRI completed a series of six political development conferences despite serious undulations in the local political environment and suspension of its registration. Three of the conferences in the political campaign/election series were moved to Bishkek to accommodate the increased numbers of Kazakhs interested in the training. These particular conferences were keyed to forthcoming elections in both countries. As a result, there was demand for more one-on-one training for Kazakhs in Almaty after the conferences in Bishkek, and such training was provided.

In addition to its conference centerpieces, IRI Almaty engages in, and has completed, an ambitious array of regional assessments and informal party development meetings in locations throughout the two countries. IRI conducted women's round-table discussions, developed programs and lectured at Kazakh State University Departments of Journalism and Political Science, sponsored a 'model parliament' program for a local high school, and prepared innumerable information circulars from 'News and Analysis from the Steppe' to situation reports.

In Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan the oppressive conditions make even modest accomplishments significant. IRI has been able to maintain its presence in each of these countries, been allowed to establish an office in Tashkent, has worked with teachers in the high schools and officially registered a youth festival involving international organizations from all over the world with the Uzbekistan government. Two counterpart institutions are now the site for youth development training, community outreach programs and training of youth and adult trainers. Several women leaders and facilitators attended the IRI women's conference in Novgorod, Russia.

C. Impact

IRI's work in the countries visited appears to have made an impact on the clients they have served. Changes were noted in the behavior of individuals and in the operations of some political organizations, however it is too tenuous and probably too marginal to measure. The degree of impact has varied depending on the political climate and electoral timeframes as discussed above.

IRI has trained a substantial cadre of political party leaders, more than 1,000, who reported to the evaluation team a high degree of personal growth in political skills, motivation, and attitude. Several participants of IRI seminars have been elected to the new Russian Duma and Federation Council. One recently elected Deputy told the evaluators that his entire political education came from IRI seminars and support services. He claims to have always had a reformer's streak but his life as a geologist and journalist never prepared him for an active role in political reform. IRI did that for him.

Through its seminars and one-on-one consultations IRI has contributed to inspiring and empowering voters to take an active role in the political process and serve as political candidates. Nevertheless, it is important to note that tremendous political and social change must occur before democratization is successful at the national, regional and local level in the NIS. These challenges will be substantial and these efforts, by definition, will have to be initiated by the

voters of the NIS. Using the outcome of elections or the pace of political reform as measures of IRIs effectiveness is not appropriate since direct linkages are costly to trace in these kinds of programs.

Participants expressed some hesitation about the usefulness and cost of replicating these techniques in Russia. The participants also felt that the training program should blend Russian realities and Russian experiences into the program rather than relying too much on an American model.

In the southern tier of Central Asia, of course, IRI is still at a very modest, small scale input/output stage, with only minute measures of impact. But it is premature to establish correlation with IRI activities and certainly when compared to the size of the NIS, one has to be realistic about levels of achievement under the best of circumstances.

D Grantee Future Directions

IRI plans to continue to reinforce its current activities and expand its target groups and geographic coverage. To date virtually all the political development work has been directed at widely dispersed regional urban centers. Efforts should continue to link local, regional, and national party networks into sustainable political action structures.

The election-oriented mentality should give way to long-term sustainable political development and constituency building. Party unity needs to evolve into legislative policy coalitions. IRI also wants to expand its train-the-trainer program and to build more participation by NIS party operatives into its training programs.

4 MANAGEMENT

A Grant Management

Management by IRI

IRI management successful because of the personal initiative and industriousness of the entire staff both in Washington and in its field offices. IRI staff and volunteers are skilled and accomplished for their relatively young age. There may be a generation gap issue, but as one IRI staff member stated 'with good experience, demonstrable skills and professionalism we can overcome skepticism about our age'. The trainers and permanent staff were held in high regard. Criticism from trainees was constructive and focused on the need to blend American and NIS experiences, avoiding costly or unadaptable training methodologies, and avoiding American preconceptions and models. IRI is very sensitive to these concerns and is training local trainers as one means of addressing this issue. The qualification of the trainers/field staff was not an issue articulated by beneficiaries.

IRI effectively recruits volunteer trainers to supplement permanent staff for its seminar programs, one-on-one consultations, youth festivals and women's conferences.

IRI's procurement of equipment appears to be modest as a percentage of overall grant funds. It has been directed to supporting shared communication facilities in several regional locations. This equipment was mostly typewriters, and a printing press a joint purchase with NDI. By dealing in the local economy, IRI has found imaginative ways to cut costs in its field operations.

The IRI evaluation plan refers to specific indicators such as membership lists, activity profiles for leaders and political parties, establishment of local offices/organizations, communication plans, local/national coordination and structures, recruitment of candidates, and party coordination of platforms and legislative policy. Some of these things are occurring including the information management tasks. Program expansion is contingent upon additional funding.

The evaluation team has some concern about over-extension and burn-out among the resident staff in the NIS. The nature of overseas assignments and generally shorter contractual periods of resident program officers can lead to tensions in the workplace. The furious pace of activities, frustrating work conditions, and incessant demands on field staff can cause disruptions in program quality. In one seminar observed by an AID consultant, the Resident Program Officer had to assume full responsibility for the presentation when TDY trainers failed to arrive.

The evaluation team heard reports of excessive turnover in key program officers in IRI/Washington suggesting the possibility of problems in management within this office. IRI reported that turnover with staff was not excessive but routine for NGOs, however, the need for a long-term plan to provide program direction and continuity was acknowledged.

IRI is an effective production machine but there are warning signs which suggest that it might be appropriate for IRI to re-examine its resource/task balance, consider adding staff in some areas, and reevaluate whether or not it is over-committed either under the cooperative agreement or to politically driven internal demands.

AID has also criticized IRI's program activity in the southern tier of Central Asia because it emphasizes long-term democracy building over more immediate, higher impact political training and study tours techniques. IRI firmly believes that political conditions are too inimical to success and safety to pursue such a frontal campaign. Reportedly, U.S. Ambassadors in Tashkent and Ashkabad agree with IRI and further suggest that USAID Almaty's strategy is inappropriate for their countries. They suggest a more tailored approach that accommodates the political realities of what's both possible and feasible. IRI's assignment of a resident program officer to Tashkent satisfied part of this concern of USAID Almaty, IRI will continue to pursue its current strategy within the southern tier until political pressures ease.

In its 1992-1993 survey, Freedom House gives Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan political rights ratings of 6 and 7, respectively, with a 7 as the lowest possible rating.

Management by AID

The complicated approval, authorization, obligation, amendment, contracting, and country clearance procedures impede and foster the flexibility necessary for NGO success in the NIS. There have been mixed signals on policy guidance, shifting emphases and priorities, and redundant reviews and reports.

According to AID, IRI's proposals are generally very comprehensive, and thoughtfully crafted. AID would like to see more detailed reporting of outputs achieved, indications of impact, and some recounting of problems encountered. The evaluators did not see a comprehensive implementation plan as required by the cooperative agreement. Also, there was no evidence of a self-initiated mid-term evaluation that was required in the agreement.

AID has made limited visits to NGO project sites and headquarters. IRI and other grantees have requested more frequent advice on policy changes and program directions, and work with all the grantees to coordinate program activities and sharing of information. The series of AID/State round-tables leading up to the Russian elections was a fine example of working together. On the other hand, IRI has had more difficulty eliciting an interest in AID/W or the USAID in on-site observation or visits. Only one AID/W officer in 2 years had observed an IRI field activity, and visits from USAID staff, (who are closer to the action) are not much more frequent. It was reported that staff only rarely observe programs and trainings. To date, no senior level officers have participated in an observation team.

B Organizational and Institutional Factors

Both AID and IRI have been under tremendous operational pressure during the rapid build-up of the NIS assistance program. The principal criticisms leveled by participants at the IRI programs include (a) the difficulties and cost of replicating some of the methods in follow-on

training programs and (b) the desire to meld more of the Russian experience into the training program IRI is sensitive to these concerns and has attempted to identify potential trainers in each audience, working with these individuals to develop indigenous trainers for subsequent seminars

5 CONCLUSIONS

- 1 IRI has effectively promoted the development of democratic processes in elections in the four countries visited by the evaluation team. They are internationally recognized as an effective provider of needed technical assistance and political party and election training. With many of the beneficiaries, it is possible to see the impact of these programs in restructured organizations and more efficient planning of campaign activity. With other beneficiaries, quantification is more difficult.
- 2 The evaluation team was impressed with the quality of both contacts and programs developed by IRI, despite the challenges inherent in developing programs to reach political activists in isolated parts of countries without communication infrastructures. Their early collaboration with the DRM appears to have given them an organizing advantage early in the program in Russia.
- 3 IRI staff are of a high calibre demonstrating both technical competence and professional commitment, however IRI appears to be overextended organizationally. At times, the staff appears to be overworked and too busy for proper internal team building and dialoging about policy, strategy, and experiences. The field staff is seen as only operational or implementation oriented. Strategy and policy are defined in IRI Washington. Yet on some issues the field seems to be free-wheeling and planning its own activities without strategic and programmatic monitoring from Washington.
- 4 We presume that IRI is proud of its flat organizational and chain-of-command profile. Its self-motivation at all levels is remarkable. But we conclude that some of the symptoms reveal what appear to be a loss in coordination and communication--perhaps management overextension. Some tension seems to exist between Washington based program officers and resident program officers. Back-stopping reportedly can be uneven or slow. And several IRI staff mentioned the fairly high turnover in program and assistant programs officer, as detrimental to operations.
- 5 The IRI program is expanding very rapidly. This expansion needs to be supported by developing mechanisms for managing the increased level of programmatic activity.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 IRI needs to undertake an internal management review to determine if it has the right numbers and mix of staff resources. Organizationally, is it configured to maximize coordination, communication, field back-stopping and management control?
- 2 A system of internal evaluations and self audits should be initiated. Evaluation should focus on IRI's own corporate strategy and strategic objectives as well as the objectives of its various cooperative agreements and grants.
- 3 IRI operates at three distinct levels of sophistication and complexity in Russia (the highest), Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. As each program evolves at its own pace, a sustained effort should be made to vertically and horizontally integrate activities to maintain the momentum towards impact. This appears to be happening in Russia as the second generation of training activities gets underway. This practice should maintain the focus, concentration and impact about which AID is concerned.
- 4 AID should be encouraged to observe, participate, or make presentations at its training programs and conferences and to give informed feedback on programs.
- 5 IRI should do its part to maintain the practice of coordination and information sharing so successfully performed prior to the Russian elections.
- 6 While being impressed with the IRI sentiments for trainer of trainers, the evaluation team came away from its field experience with some concern that IRI do a better and more sustainable job of developing a cadre of indigenous trainers for its own seminars and assessing regularly the follow-on training initiatives of the other seminar participants.
- 7 IRI needs to provide more quantitative information to support its reports to AID. The evaluation team was hard pressed to define the number of people trained and routinely contacted by IRI.
- 8 USAID may want to examine its relationship with the NOG's it is funding, including IRI, to identify ways to increase collaboration and feedback.

APPENDIX A LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

Agency for International Development Washington, D C

Geraldine Donnelly ENI/NIS/DIHR
Mary Ann Riegelman ENI/NIS/DIHR
Illona Countryman, ENI/NIS/DIHR
Regina Coleman ENI/NIS/DIHR
Kris Loken ENI/NIS/DIHR
Paul Holmes, ENI/NIS/DIHR
Carlos Pascual ENI/NIS/PAC
Paul Ashin ENI/NIS/PAC
Julie Allaire-MacDonald ENI/NIS/PAC
Jean Hacken ENI/NIS/PS
Larry Garber PPC

International Republican Institute

Lorne W Craner Vice President for Programs

Kathryn Dickey, Regional Director, Eastern Europe and New Independent States, Washington,
D C

Jennifer Koberstein, Assistant Program Officer Russia, Washington, D C

Gabriela Schwarz, Program Officer Southern Tier, Central Asia Program, Washington, D C

Stephen E Biegun, Russia Resident Program Officer, Moscow, Russia

Scott P Boylan, Russia Resident Program Officer, Moscow, Russia

William Townsend, Russia Resident Program Officer Moscow, Russia

Eric Rudenshiold, Resident Program Officer, Central Asian Republics, Almaty, Kazakhstan

Keith A Kirk, IRI Trainer

Gene Ulm, IRI Trainer

USAID Moscow

James Norris, Director
Robert Burke, Deputy Director
Alan Reed Program Officer
Jean Bourgault, Project Officer
Anne Nesterchuk Project Officer
E Scott Osbourne PVO/NGO Officer
Talbott Penner, Private Sector Officer

United States Embassy Moscow

Thomas C Niblock, Jr First Secretary, Political Section

Russia

Mikhail Alexandrovich DANILOV Deputy in Duma
Vladimir Konstantinovich ANISIMOV, Choice of Russia Coalition
Leonid SHERGIN, Vladimir, Russia
Ida GERASIMOVA, Vladimir, Russia
Victor KROUGLOV, Vladimir Russia
Nikolai LALAKIN, Vladimir, Russia
Ljudmila YESHANOU, Vladimir, Russia
Alla TOVMARKINA Vladimir, Russia
Elena NARTSISSOVA, Vladimir, Russia
Sergei PRYANICHNILOV, Vladimir, Russia
Alexei S KOROTAEV, Director of Research, MEMORIAL Human Right Society
Elena V KOTCHKINA, Center for Gender Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences
Dmitri LEONOV, MEMORIAL Human Rights Society
Marina MALISHEVA, Center for Gender Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences
Sergey MARGARIL, Policy Council, Democratic Party of Russia
Sergei MARKOV, Moscow State University
Georgy A SATAROV, Director, Center for Applied Political Problems, INDEM
Mikhail SCHNEIDER, Executive Secretary of the Coordination Council, Democratic Russia
Movement
Alexander SHILOV, Executive Secretary of the International Committee, Social Democratic Party
Dmitri ZHUKOV, Center for Municipal Law

Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan

USAID Almaty

Craig Buck Director
Patty Buckles, Deputy Director
Paula Feenev, Democracy Officer
Jonathan Addleton, Program Officer
James Ahn Controller

U S Embassv, Almaty

Ambassador Willian Courtney
Jackson McDonald DCM
Richard Lankford, USIS/PAO

American Bar Association

Michael Gray

International Foundation for Electoral Systems

Catherine Barnes Project Manager
Linda Edgeworth, IFES Consultant, Almaty

Kazakhstan

Evgeniy Sheigar Social Democratic Party

Sergei Alexandrovich Dechenko, Unity Party

Oleg Kaciev, KTV, Almaty

Serik Temirbulatov, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Justice

Kirgyzstan

Kenekbaeva Kamelia, Past Chairperson, Ata-Meken, Director of Public Relations, Presidential Staff, Government of Kirghizstan

Soyuzbek S Saiev, Department of Public Relations, Presidential Staff, Government of Kirghizstan

Turganaleev Tokchibek, Chairman, Yerken Kirghizstan

Turaliev Kanibek, Deputy Chairman Human Rights Movement

U S Embassy, Bishkek, Kyrghyzstan

Ambassador Edward Hurwitz
Michael Scanlon

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IRI Seminar Evaluation Form

IRI Trainer Evaluation

IRI Procedure for Pollwatching the December 12th Election

Training Techniques for the IRI Women's Conference

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Contact List for IRI Programs