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**Quarterly Report
Youth Leadership and Democracy Program
Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan**

Grantee Name: International Republican Institute

Grant/Cooperative Agreement Number: #CCS0007-A-00-2021-00

Period covered in this report: 1/1/94-3/30/94

Anticipated date for evaluation:

1. Program Goals and Purpose:

IRI's Youth Leadership Program is designed to provide young people with the interpersonal, organizational, and communication skills which will help them become future leaders in democratization efforts. Leadership training intertwines the development of individual potential with a sense for civic responsibility. IRI program goals include training youth and their caretakers to take initiative, to develop organizational skills, to teach strategies for addressing community concerns, and to underscore the necessity of citizen involvement in a democratic society.

2. Output/Activities:

January Mission: January 15th-February 2nd

Turkmenistan

1. Ashgabat: January 15th-18th

Activities:

"Democratic Leadership and Interethnic Dialogue" brought together 20 educators, youth workers, school administrators, and entrepreneurs from 4 regions in Turkmenistan to introduce the basics of group process, implementing systems of collaborative leadership, problem-solving, decision-

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making techniques, and intercultural tolerance.

Resources:

Trainers: Igor Ovchinnikov, Natalie Mirimanova of "Center of Experiential Education and Democracy", Moscow

Results:

The "Democratic Leadership and Interethnic Tolerance" workshop generated interest in IRI programs. Participants expressed particular appreciation for conflict resolution exercises that could be applied in problem-solving in the workplace. Participants strongly recommended a follow-up workshop in March and certification program in the near future. Since this workshop, IRI's local Ashgabat facilitators organized meetings and conducted sample exercises throughout Ashgabat at schools, with parents, and the university to advertise the anticipated March workshops and introduce democracy concepts. The Ashgabat staff is feverishly documenting all exercises and activities collected from IRI workshops. They are translating a catalogue into Russian for others to use. They plan to design a program as a part of the curriculum to introduce in area schools in the fall.

2. Ashgabat: January 19th-20th

"Democratic Leadership and Interethnic Dialogue" conducted for 20 student representatives of the International Economics School. The workshop included the same topics as for the adults, however, some exercises were modified to suit the age of the participants.

Resources:

Trainers: Igor Ovchinnikov, Natalie Mirimanova of "Center of Experiential Education and Democracy", Moscow

Results:

Students at the International Economics School voted for student representatives to attend the workshop, a highly sought opportunity among classmates. Students openly discussed issues pertaining to democracy, particularly political developments in Russia, the prospects of fascism, and the implications of democracy in their daily lives. Student representatives returned to their classrooms and shared workshop information and materials with all students at the school.

Uzbekistan

1. Tashkent: January 25th-27th

Activities:

"Democratic Leadership and Interethnic Dialogue" included 10 participants from Khujand (Tajikistan) and from Uzbekistan 7 from Bukhara and 5 from Samarkand to stimulate interest in IRI work in outlying regions.

Resources:

Trainers:

Igor Ovchinnikov, Natalie Mirimanova "Center of Experiential Education and Democracy", Moscow

Results:

The "Democratic Leadership and Intercultural Tolerance" workshop initiated IRI outreach to Khujand, Tajikistan and to Bukhara and Samarkand, Uzbekistan. The training raised issues concerning cultural differences and democracy, uncomfortable topics which are usually avoided in this culture. Positive evaluations reflected that the workshop addressed issues and topics of interest and introduced useful skills, particularly, in conflict resolution.

2. Tashkent: January 24th

Activities:

"Organizational Strategies" for 20 students at School #17, an English language specialty school in Tashkent. The follow-up workshop to IRI's mock presidential election in November, measured the effectiveness of the newly elected leadership. The workshop presented students with concrete techniques to increase their ability to achieve their goals as an interest group and student government.

Resources:**Trainers:**

Igor Ovchinnikov, Natalie Mirimanova "Center of Experiential Education and Democracy", Moscow

Results:

Students learned concrete skills in achieving their goals as student leaders. The workshop elucidated the conflicting views and goals of the elected leadership and student followers. The students found areas of agreement on specific activities and goals. The workshop taught the students to set agendas and to organize effective meetings.

3. Tashkent: January 27th-29th

Activities:

"Advanced Community Building" workshop for 15 community leaders, members of the IRI inspired community organization "Rainbow". The workshop combined strategies for overcoming obstacles, both internal and external, to effect change at a local level. The program included writing goal statements, planning projects using timelines, and evaluating outcomes.

Resources:**Trainer:**

Jeffrey Bercovitz of "Community Innovations", Vermont

Results:

The workshop offered management tools for outreach to target audiences and for the planning

and evaluation of programs. Participants focussed on specific goals in goal statements, which afforded them viable project plans. Community leaders committed to meetings in the future and the formation of a group. A logo and the name "Rainbow" were chosen to consolidate the resolution to work together. The group's purpose is to support activists with volunteer time, advising and networking as well as to recruit and introduce newcomers to the community building principles learned in IRI trainings. Since January, the group has met 5 times and worked on 3 different projects.

4. Bukhara: January 30th-February 1st

Activities:

"Introduction to Community Building" brought together 25 participants, 5 from Samarkand. The workshop introduced simple steps to initiate community projects. The emphasis in this workshop was on non-governmental, citizen-generated initiatives.

Resources:

Trainer:

Jeffrey Bercuvitz, "Community Innovations", Vermont

Results:

As a result of this workshop participants invited IRI to conduct a "Democratic Leadership" workshop in Samarkand in March. Follow-up meetings have not yet been conducted in Bukhara, however, an opportunity will arise at Youth Festival/Conference. Contacts were made in Bukhara, however, the likelihood of strong IRI support in this city is slim.

March Mission: March 5th-22nd

Turkmenistan

1. Firyuza (near Ashgabat) March 18th-23rd

Activities:

"Democratic Leadership and Interethnic Tolerance" and "Youth Leadership" workshops were introduced to 11 novices.

"Democracy to Affect Social Change" and "Advanced Youth Leadership" continued the training of trainers process begun in March. Twelve participants from previous workshops attended.

Resources:

Trainers:

Igor Ovchinnikov, Natalie Mirimanova "Center of Experiential Education and Democracy", Moscow

Charles Watson III, IRI In-country Program Officer

Results:

The Training of Trainers and introductory IRI workshops resulted in broadening the network of IRI supporters in Turkmenistan. It also increased the training ability of IRI Youth Center staff and others who have already attended several IRI trainings (2-4 trainings).

2. Ashgabat: March 21st

Activities:

Inspection of IRI Youth Center. Discussions on future cooperation with International Economics School Director Anjela Begjanova and IRI Program Officer Gabriela Schwarz

Search for candidates for IRI Women's Conference, Bishkek in June.

Results:

The IRI Youth Center has become alive with activity in Ashgabat.

With a paid staff, greater attention is being paid to outreach and training in the region. The staff has demonstrated drive and willingness to conduct training, arrange for problem-solving meetings with interested community activists, and introduce democratic education in school curricula. In addition, discussions and training held with parents is winning support from influential individuals in the community such as directors of enterprises and government bureaucrats.

Uzbekistan

1. Tashkent: March 9th-13

Activities:

"International Student Congress" (Model UN) at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy engaged 26 students in workshops in communication and negotiation skills, followed by the simulation exercise in which students applied the practical tools of the workshops and parliamentary procedure to learn about democratic processes.

Resources:**Trainers:**

Scott Ratzan and Gregory Payne, Emerson College, Boston

Results:

Students took on roles as delegates in the simulation, whereas trainers provided guidance on writing bills, coalition-building, parliamentary procedures and other instruments to facilitate the democratic process of the Congress. The trainers and IRI prepared and distributed an instruction manual to assist students in their roles as delegates. This manual will afford students the

opportunity to train classmates in future simulations that they organize themselves. The students plan to repeat this exercise in the summer with 90 students. IRI in-country officer will guide the proceedings.

2. Tashkent: March 9th-10th

Activities:

"Developing Working Relations and Win-Win Problem-Solving through Effective Communication" presented 50 students at the English language specialty School #17 featuring in-depth theory and practical application of communication and negotiation skills.

Resources:

Trainer:

Ivan Timofeev "Center of Experiential Education and Democracy", Moscow

Results:

Students demonstrated that IRI programming has had a cumulative effect over the past year and a half. Older students are providing mini-trainings for younger students, thus the information and skills are not lost as one experienced group graduates from school. Students adopt new information with alacrity. Students talked about how they have been able to apply the principles at school, at home, and in their informal student groups.

3. Tashkent: March 11th

Activities:

Presentation to 15 Tashkent teachers interested IRI's workshops and programs for youth.

Resources:

Speaker:

Ivan Timofeev "Center of Experiential Education and Democracy", Moscow

Organizer: Helena Galant, teacher and student organizer at School #17

Results:

IRI intends to replicate the success at School #17 as a model program for other schools. This meeting was organized for teachers who had heard of the positive effect of IRI's work at School #17. Russian trainer Ivan Timofeev demonstrated workshop exercises on communication skills and identified teachers open to innovation.

In-country program officer, Charles Watson will utilize students, teachers and trainers to pursue the leads.

4. Tashkent: March 12th-13th

Activities:

"Communication" workshop for 6 of IRI's "Rainbow" group of community leaders.

Resources:

Trainer:

Ivan Timofeev "Center of Experiential Education and Democracy", Moscow

Results:

Although the training group was small, the workshop information will be passed on to the trainers that were not able to attend. The "Rainbow" group's mechanism of sharing information and training will serve as an effective means for others to incorporate the new skills.

5. Samarkand: March 14th-17th

Activities:

"Democratic Leadership and Interethnic Tolerance" workshop in Samarkand for innovative community leaders and teachers in this relatively progressive city. The group of 17 included teachers, student leaders, a journalist and an artist.

Resources:

Trainers:

Igor Ovchinnikov, Natalie Mirimanova "Center of Experiential Education and Democracy", Moscow

Results:

The introduction of "Democratic Leadership and Intercultural Tolerance" workshop brought together twenty-five individuals of eleven ethnic groups. The participants were selected by their willingness to effect social and political change in their community. The hosts from the Youth Union of Uzbekistan of Samarkand impressed IRI with their desire to learn more about organizational strategies and assistance in effecting change in their city. They described Samarkand as a haven of freedom in comparison to Bukhara. In Samarkand, evidence of this freedom is reflected in the thriving commercial opportunities and the open-mindedness of the participants.

6. March 14th-18th

Activities:

Charles Watson investigated options for office space and living quarters in Tashkent. IRI and the US Embassy began the registration procedure as a result of the US-Uzbekistan bi-lateral agreement. Planning and organizational meetings were held in preparation for IRI's Youth Festival/Conference for 200 participants, 15 trainers, and a Youth Fair, to be organized by student leaders at School #17.

IRI staff began search for candidates for IRI Women's Conference, Bishkek in June.

Resources:

See general description

Results:

It is generally known that there are logistical problems involved in establishing an office and organizing a conference anywhere in Central Asia. Any action takes three to five times longer than in the United States due to bureaucratic intractability, lack of services, and ineffective

communication.

Resources (general description)

To accomplish these activities, IRI recruited expert trainers from the United States and Russia to conduct workshops and seminars on community building, democratic group processes, interethnic tolerance, communication, negotiation. In addition, IRI has identified local support in schools in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Trainers from the "Center of Experiential Education and Democracy" in Moscow have become participants in eight IRI training workshops. They are experienced trainers, familiar with the authoritarian frame of reference that participants must use and astute cultural observers. For IRI they assist in on the spot translation of materials and serve as interpreters.

The group has tailored a workshop specifically designed for the IRI Youth Leadership and Democracy Program. Their ability to work with participants, provide continuity and gain trust have been essential elements in the success of IRI's program.

IRI Youth Centers in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan provide translated materials on democracy and leadership activities. Materials include information on democratic institutions, descriptions of leadership activities, and training manuals for community organization.

Uzbekistan

Two staff coordinators in Tashkent undertake the logistic preparations for IRI workshops. In their capacity as IRI Youth Center Coordinators, the Tashkent staff conduct follow-up meetings with workshop participants, provide continuity for school-based programs, and spearhead community initiatives. The two staffers network with western NGO's and recruit local support for youth center activities. With the computer provided by IRI, they maintain e-mail communication with youth groups in the United States, translate materials, and develop newsletters.

IRI has enjoyed the cooperation of University of World Economy and Diplomacy. At the recent International Student Congress, the university donated meeting and conference rooms, use of fax, and issued invitations and visas at no charge.

PERDCA, Project for Economic Reform in Central Asia, a US non-profit group in Tashkent assists IRI and local staff with advice in logistical, set-up issues, contacts, and cultural information.

IRI could not operate without the volunteers and enthusiasts that emerge from the training program. This includes volunteers in Samarkand, at School #17, from Youth Union of Uzbekistan (substantial logistical assistance and participant selection has come from the Tashkent branch of the Youth Union of Uzbekistan), and from IRI's core group of trainers in the "Rainbow" group.

IRI receive assistance from the US Embassy in matters concerning the bilateral agreement, such as registration for IRI's official status, travel support (visas), and general advice.

Turkmenistan

IRI works closely in cooperation with the International Economics School. The director, Anjela Begjanova, works as a volunteer in matters of logistical arrangements. She arranges for workshop space, lodging, coordination of participants, travel for participants, airplane tickets and transportation, all of which require ties to officials and special offices.

In addition to the rental of the IRI Youth Center on the premises of the International Economics School, IRI pays a staff of three a token salary in order to compensate for their loss in teaching time. The staff has done a remarkable job in setting up the center, launching appropriate activities, and keeping records. The Youth Center is equipped set up with a computer and mimeograph machine provided by IRI.

3. Inputs/Financial Report:

4. Impact/Assessment:

IRI's impact over this reporting period is most visible in three areas. The cumulative effect of IRI workshops at School #17 continues to be encouraging. In Turkmenistan, the workshops and presence of a Youth Center with staff has had surprising results. New ground has been broken in Samarkand with the local Youth Union and in Tashkent with the partnership at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy.

School #17 has reaped the most from its consistent willingness to host IRI workshops. Parents, teachers, and trainers comment on the remarkable transformation of the student body to which the workshops have contributed.

In this reporting period, students embarked on training in organizational skills and specific conflict management tools that enable them to work more effectively as leaders and work together to achieve their goals.

Specific initiatives include the founding of a press center at the school, organized by a candidate in IRI's mock presidential election. The skills learned in the January workshop have become the foundation of regular class meetings. Work by means of a presidium with a chairman has been replaced with an elected facilitator, a time-keeper and a mediator. Decisions are reached by consensus and agendas are planned as a group.

Students successfully applied methods of conflict resolution to a concrete situation that arose in the school. On one occasion the students wanted to hold a Women's Day party at classmates' home. A school supervisor vehemently opposed their plans. The students concentrated on the problem, not on personalities and used arguments that stressed common interests. After a

discussion with the headmistress and the school supervisor, the students were granted permission to hold their party.

As an example of support on the part of parents, the following story was told by a teacher at School #7. One parent, a member of the local state council for education, came to School #17 to say how surprised she was to see all the sudden positive changes in her son. Having heard about the IRI program at the school, she regretted that other schools are not as cooperative in this respect and expressed the desire to see similar endeavors at other schools in Tashkent and in Uzbekistan in general.

Evidence of IRI's impact on the political environment may be anecdotal. However, the ability of students to take initiative, to learn skills that assist them in achieving their goals, and to carry out organized activities, and impress their elders demonstrate that such training is not futile in this region. Not only can other schools benefit from the example of School #17, but the example can be extrapolated to the training of other groups that will eventually have an impact on political reform.

In Turkmenistan, the sluggish backwater of Ashgabat has been transformed into an oasis. With the support of the International Economics School and its energetic director, the IRI Youth Center acts as a catalyst for community activism and educational reform. At first, IRI's impact was limited to the parameters of the school and showed no promise of expanding to other populations. However, the combination of the October "Training of Trainers", the January and March "Democratic Leadership and Intercultural Tolerance" workshops for adults, and a paid Youth Center staff stimulated community building and outreach to other schools. The energetic IRI staff and volunteer trainers conducted demonstration activities at three schools and at the university in search of potential participants for future IRI training workshops. Meetings were held with reform-minded individuals to discuss the integration of a democracy curriculum in local schools and similar projects.

On one occasion, an IRI trained teacher from this group conducted a workshop for parents from the International Business School. The response was tremendous. Parents not only requested more such sessions, but promised to use their positions of influence to promote the goals of the Youth Center.

Outreach has also been successful in involving women interested in offering community service independent of government intervention. Such women will be invited to IRI's Women's Conference in Bishkek and benefit from an IRI expert in organizational development to be deployed in the next project year.

The IRI Youth Center staff are well-organized, keep meticulous records, and seek means by which they can sustain the projects without IRI support. They strive to involve influential figures of stature in the community, who will support the overall goals, and sponsor workshops, the Youth Center and youth development activities.

The January workshop involved educators from 4 different regions of Turkmenistan. Its success can be measured in terms of the immediate request for another workshop in March, specifically a "Training of Trainers" workshop that would enable the teachers to conduct training themselves in order to effectively push for educational reform. The participants underscored the value of the conflict resolution pieces of the workshop. In March, they reported that they applied these instruments of gaining power through effective communication and mediation in their workplace.

The March workshop successfully increased the number of educators involved in the program, as well as, expanded the range of training ability of those already implementing the techniques.

IRI broke new ground in Samarkand. The hosts experienced IRI's "Democratic Leadership and Intercultural Tolerance" and "Community Building" workshops in January. The Samarkandians convinced IRI that the workshop would have a tremendous impact in their city. They organized the workshop in March, inviting a diverse group of citizens of all ages, professions and gender. The IRI workshop was well-received and paved the way for the future Community Leaders program. As the crossroads between Tajikistan and Tashkent, Samarkand will provide an ideal site for training.

Examples of IRI inspired activism in Samarkand include the organization of a talent show and dance for youth by a 22 year old participant of the two January workshops in Tashkent and Bukhara. This young man also took significant leadership role in organizing the workshop in Samarkand.

Finally, IRI's success at the University of World Economy includes reaching an entirely new audience preparing for governmental and diplomatic posts. The students were inspired by the exercise and challenged to learn more about democracy and world affairs. IRI will ensure that the students replicate the program at the University and at area high schools.

5. Overall Narrative:

IRI's work in Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan thrives on the energy and enthusiasm of local people who strive to create a society based on self-determination and fairness. The challenges that face these individuals also face IRI in the implementation of programs.

In Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, authoritarian structures and sprawling ministerial bureaucracies obstruct non-governmental initiatives. The refusal of officials to take responsibility or to make independent decisions thwarts action and implementation. (# how, examples).

Citizens do not so much fear government as they wish to relieve themselves of the endless petitioning for favors. Central Asian tradition relies on ties of kinship and family. For

individuals with relatives in the government decisions are made quickly. In addition, bribery and cultivated friendships remain as strategies for getting results.

IRI's programs begin on the lowest possible level to avoid the requisite permissions. Meetings are often conducted in schools or in homes for this purpose. IRI has been able to identify administrators and low level officials willing to assist in logistical matters.

As a rule, governments rotate administrators and officials in order to ensure that innovators lose their clientele and vice versa. Such tactics have forced IRI to seek new contacts on numerous occasions. The first instance was the editor of the Russian language youth newspaper in Tashkent. She supported IRI's program from the very beginning and offered to use her contacts to assist in the removal of the usual obstacles. Her position was cut within a few months. There may be various reasons for this. However, her tendency to publish reformist articles induced her early retirement.

The fruitful relationship to the Youth Union of Uzbekistan in the Tashkent district has also come to an end. Although the director's tenure stipulated the election of a replacement, the procedure and machinations indicated that the authorities wanted an administrator who would toe the party line in this position.

In Turkmenistan, IRI's association with the International Economic School has remained constant. IRI's success, however, depends entirely on the support of the school director. The director has her own contacts, but relates that these are constantly shifting. It is a full-time job to lobby for the school and to cultivate supportive contacts.

The obstacles in Uzbekistan will be greatly alleviated by registration of IRI as an officially sanctioned organization. The U.S. Embassy has negotiated a bi-lateral agreement that provides for registration of USAID funded groups. IRI's request for registration is currently being processed. The registration will facilitate IRI's ability to solve logistical problems, including the purchase of airline tickets, negotiation for a reasonable rate of exchange, permission to travel within the country, and the establishment of an office.

On another level, IRI has experienced difficulty in maintaining the momentum of the "Rainbow" group, participants from "Trainer of Trainers" and "Community Building Workshops." The group needs IRI leadership and direction to consolidate. IRI contact groups such as School #17, trainers, and the University of World Economy and Diplomacy need to work together and pool their resources. Programs will be replicated by the creation of volunteer ethic and expanded networks.

The presence of IRI's in-country program officer will ensure such cooperation, promote the sustainability of projects, and explore the possibilities for financial independence.

6. Projected Activities for next reporting period:

Next reporting period: April 1st-June 30th

April 1, 1994-April 1, 1995

Charles Watson's Deployment

Preparation for IRI's Youth Festival, open IRI office in Tashkent.

April 12th-19th

Sandy Doring in Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Organizational sessions with students at School #17 to ensure their involvement and leadership at IRI Youth Festival. Students utilize their leadership experiences to organize community fair.

May 8-17th

Youth Festival: Conference and Community Fair

Conference focus on community and organizational development

alternatives for youth service providers and delivery of programs with democratic leadership content.

May 16-24th Jeff Bercuvitz, Tashkent and Tajikistan

Community building for non-formal groups: start-up projects, target audiences, planning and goal-setting, evaluation, strategies for low budget expansion.

June 7th-9th

Lori Murray and Gabriela Schwarz: Evaluation of Programs, delivery of equipment, meetings with IRI groups for goal-setting in next project year, preparation of participants from Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan for IRI's Women's Conference in Bishkek

June 10th-12th

IRI's Women's Conference in Bishkek

7. Distribution