

IFES/TAJIKISTAN QUARTERLY REPORT

Q2-02 – January - March 2001

I. PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES

Political Party Development Seminars

During the second quarter of FY2002, IFES/Tajikistan held two IFES Political Party Development Seminars. The first seminar, “Encouraging Activism and Volunteerism in Political Parties,” took place in Dushanbe on February 6. Representatives of all major political parties and movements in Tajikistan, registered and unregistered (except the Democratic Party) participated. The seminar focused on topics such as volunteerism, how to use volunteers, issues of members and cadres as key activists, and how to attract new members. IFES/Tajikistan Project Manager Christopher Shields led the one-day training, drawing on comparative experiences from other NIS countries and addressing developmental issues specific to the situation in Tajikistan. Most participants were “new faces” and represented Dushanbe district party organizations, with one more representing a party from Qurghonteppa.

As participants raised many questions and indicated the need for more information, IFES staff informed the attendees that IFES/Tajikistan is in the process of upgrading its Resource Center to make it more available and accessible to political parties. At present there is no primary resource information center either for political parties or providing information about political parties, and party representatives as well as private citizens have expressed interest in gaining access to more information, through one centralized resource, about political party activities in Tajikistan. The forthcoming IFES publication *Guide to Political Parties in Tajikistan* will be one source in particular made available to all interested individuals. The publication will provide a detailed overview of all parties and movements; both registered and unregistered, including platform and contact information.

The Third IFES Political Party Development Seminar, “The Role of Political Parties in Society and an Emerging Democracy” was held in Kulyob, on Friday, March 15. In addition to this issue, the topics of “International Patterns” and “Civic Education in Secondary Schools” were discussed. Mr. Abdulghani Mamadazimov, Director of the National Association of Political Scientists of Tajikistan (NAPST), and Ms. Rano Okhunova of the local NGO “Women Voters” were the main speakers. Representatives of political parties in Kulyob participated in the seminar. Currently, only two parties and one public movement are officially registered in Kulyob – the Peoples’ Democratic Party of Tajikistan (PDPT), the Communist Party of Tajikistan (CPT) and the Movement for National Unity and Reconciliation in Tajikistan. A representative of the Democratic Party (DPT) was invited, but he declined to participate, citing security concerns.

The next IFES Political Party Development seminar, titled “Media Relations and Public Outreach,” will be held in Dushanbe on April 18. IFES, working with the First Press Club of Tajikistan, will bring together key media players to demonstrate how to prepare media materials, approach media entities, state and private, and handle broadcast interviews.

IFES has been encouraging parties to send different representatives to the seminars in order to expose as many people as possible to trainings and establish contacts with colleagues at similar levels from other parties. IFES feels strongly that parties need to establish a diversified leadership base if they are to be sustainable and functional for the long term.

Munich-Prague Study Tour for Women Tajik Political Leaders

At the request of USAID Country Representative Michael Harvey, two participants of the IFES study tour to Munich and Prague, Nargis Kholova of the Islamic Revival Party and Mavzuna Karimova of the Congress of National Unity met with Daniel Rosenblum, Deputy Coordinator for U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia, Michael Fritz, Deputy Director of USAID/CAR, Abdurahim Muhidov, Project Management Specialist for USAID/Tajikistan, Michael Harvey at IFES/Tajikistan and IFES representatives at the IFES office to share some of the lessons and insights gained during the study tour, including women's roles in decision-making bodies of government, women's participation in political party election campaigns and education.

Evaluation forms from participants of the tour were collected and sent to the Academy for Educational Development (AED). The Final Report on the Munich-Prague Tajik Women Political Leaders Study Tour was also completed for submission to AED, the main sponsor of the tour. A series of "thank you" letters to all persons from sponsoring organizations in both countries were prepared.

Legislative Index Roundtable

In conjunction with ABA/CEELI and Counterpart Consortium, IFES/Tajikistan hosted the 2nd Annual Legislative Index Roundtable, conducted by USAID/CAR officials Greg Koldys and Igor Tupitsyn on Monday, January 28. The purpose of the round table was to bring parliamentarians and local NGOs together to discuss the status of citizen accessibility to the legislative process. Participants included members of the Majlisi Oli, representatives of local NGOs and the mass media. Legislative Index issues concentrated on the access people and mass media have to the legislative procedures, access to sessions of committees and the parliament and their subsequent minutes, utilization of CIS and other countries' experience in the legislative process, level of collaboration between legislators and NGOs, news media, political parties, parliamentary factions, and state departments and ministries. At the conclusion of the roundtable the participants completed evaluation forms, rating the parliament on its performance of the topics discussed.

Parliamentary By-Elections and Election Sector Developments

Two parliamentary by-elections, in Asht district of Soghd Oblast and Kolkhozabad of Khatlon Oblast, took place during the second quarter. The parliamentary elections, held on February 17, 2002 in Asht, raised considerable obstacles for opposition parties attempting to field candidates. Several applications to register candidates were turned down for various, but not fully explained reasons. However, one party – the Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) – was able to register its candidate. The outcome was a victory for the pro-presidential People's Democratic Party (PDP), winning the open seat in the Majlisi Namoyandagon (Lower House of Parliament) by a margin of 85% to 15% over the IRP candidate. The apparent problems stemming from the registration process and campaign period prompted the Speaker of the Majlisi Namoyandagon to approach the international community about possible assistance in reforming the existing political party and election laws.

As with the Asht by-election, several applications during the parliamentary by-elections in Kolkhozabad were turned down without any reasonable explanation. Only the Islamic Renaissance Party was able to gain registration of its candidate. The outcome was a victory for the President's People's Democratic Party winning the seat by a margin of 96% to 4% for the IRPT.

In light of these and other developments in the sphere of political development in Tajikistan, IFES and its international partners in the UNTOP and OSCE have been actively promoting an agenda of election system reform with the government. At the suggestion of USAID/Tajikistan Country Director Michael Harvey, Christopher Shields met with Ambassador Marc Gilbert, Head of Mission for OSCE Tajikistan to discuss how to proceed on election and political party law reform as a result of a direct request from the Government of Tajikistan. Ambassador Gilbert discussed a number of steps that can be taken in order to ensure democratic legal framework that is responsive to the needs and unique conditions of Tajikistan and asked IFES/Tajikistan to prepare a draft memo on how this process would be structured. It is expected that a working group would be set up to ensure proper coordination of the process.

Furthermore, IFES met with the Chairman of the Central Committee on Elections and Referenda, Mirzoali Baltuyev, to discuss possible areas and issues of collaboration between IFES and CCER. Chairman Baltuyev shared information on the forthcoming by-elections, describing problems encountered in the candidate registration process, and was open to possible technical assistance activities of IFES in the future.

While the government itself has responded with tepid interest in the electoral sector, the political parties have placed election law reform high on their agendas. IFES is prepared to work with international partners and USAID to organize an election law working group. Efforts are also underway to encourage revisions to the political party law. Election law issues have taken on increased prominence in the minds of party officials, who are looking ahead to the next elections and view the current timeframe as ideal for addressing shortcomings in the election and political party codes.

Student Action Committee (SAC)/Student Local Government Day (SLGD) Programs

During the months of the second quarter, IFES conducted a number of SAC and SLGD programs throughout Tajikistan. In January, following meetings with the Education and Ideology Departments of Kulyob and Khojand, IFES conducted SLGD and SAC training sessions in these cities. A total of 41 persons participated in the Kulyab training, among them 30 civic education teachers and 11 government officials. Twenty-five civic education teachers and 4 Hukumat representatives attended the SLGD training held at Lyceum No. 1 in Khojand. These events were covered in the local media, as the Kulyab newspaper “Sadoi Mardum” published an article about the Kulyab SAC/SLGD training and the local Khojand TV station SM-1 broadcast coverage of the SLGD training in Khojand.

In February, SLGDs took place in Qurghonteppa and Khojand. The events received the full support of the local government offices and were covered by media. In Qurghonteppa, 22 selected students went to 7 different departments of the City Hukumat, office of the Prosecutor, departments of Education and Interior, Court, and the Ministry of Justice of Khatlon Oblast. In Khojand, 22 students also shadowed public officials in a number of Hukumat offices, including those of the Prosecutor, Court officials, the Interior Department, and the Oblast Women’s Committee. Additionally, on February 22 all Student Action Committees (SAC) in Khojand presented their annual projects. Six schools were represented, with all mentors and 49 students attending.

The First Press Club of Tajikistan organized journalists and cameramen to film the events and they were later broadcast by local independent TV stations, local radio stations, as well as published in both Tajik and Russian language newspapers in Khojand. The press release and

photos from the SLGD events in Khojand and Kurghon-Teppa and the Khojand SAC presentations have been placed on the following Russian language websites:

<http://www.newtajikistan.com/russian/analitic.htm>

<http://www.tajikpressclub.org/smi.htm>

In March, IFES' Kulyob-based Student Local Government Day took place with 14 students and 10 government officials participating. The students gained a first-hand understanding of the work and responsibilities of local office holders, and each official took great care to explain their duties with each of the students in their charge. Students were tasked with preparing follow-up essays detailing their expectations prior to the event and impressions following the event. Each student was additionally tasked with bringing a community issue to the attention of a government official, who discussed with the student ways to effectively address it. Local officials were very generous with their time and encouraging of the students' participation.

Through student activities, such as Student Local Government Day, Student Action Committees and a forthcoming Young Women's Leadership Conference (scheduled to take place in May in Kyrgyzstan), IFES is continuing to encourage students' activism and preparing them to be educated citizens. The popularity of such programs is increasing, as shown by higher student turnout and growing level of cooperation by local officials, which have substantially improved since last year. The participants of the SAC and SLGD programs are very grateful for the initiative and indicated their hope to see more such projects in the future.

Civic Education Curriculum Textbook Project

At the beginning of the second quarter, IFES/Tajikistan staff met with USAID/CAR officials Greg Koldys and Igor Tupitsyn to discuss progress of the civic education textbook project. Utilizing comments of this meeting, as well as reviews and suggestions of Tajik educators and IFES Civic Education Curriculum Consultant Simon Jenkins, was able to bring the Volume One of the Civic Education Textbook to the final stage of revision. Once the draft is completed and published and a Protocol of Understanding is signed with the Ministry of Education, the draft textbook will be submitted to the Ministry for approval. The Teacher's Manual and student exercises books were revised. Volume One is expected to be completed by the end of April, with translation work to commence thereafter. Though there has been a fair amount of development time for the book, IFES has been able to trial test all exercises and add narrative for each topic that best meets the curriculum requirements of the Tajik Ministry of Education. In addition the text has been carefully crafted to reflect the unique history of the Tajik people while stressing the importance of tolerance and equality among all peoples. Local authors contributed material on Tajik-specific topics, and all written submissions were carefully scrutinized for inclusion into the final product.

The textbook already provokes interest in the educational and NGO spheres of Tajikistan. Students and teachers that participate in IFES civic education initiatives are enthusiastic about the upcoming publication of the textbook and see it as a mean to expand their knowledge of civics issues. Furthermore, during the meetings with IFES, Saodat Olimova, director of the local NGO *Avrora* (a member of the national OSI-Street Law Program), Gulchehra Kabilova, coordinator of the Open Society Institute's Gender Research Center (GRC), and Furqat Lutfulloev of the International Committee of the Red Cross were also interested in seeing IFES/Tajikistan textbook. IFES hopes to strike partnerships with other organizations working in the field of civic education curriculum and form knowledgeable and active young citizenry in Tajikistan.

Gender and Youth

In March, IFES/Tajikistan had an opportunity to individually meet with representatives of the Communist Party, Islamic Revival Party (IRPT) and the People's Democratic Party to discuss the status of youth and gender issues in each party's activities, as well as the party's methods of facilitating communication between their members of the Parliament and the party rank and file.

Mr. Tuighun Boirovich Karimov of the Communist Party indicated that the party had re-established all of its Women's Councils in recent years. The activities of each Women's Council are determined by its individual finances, which are limited. As for youth, there are Komsomol organizations established in each region. Overall, the CPT has about 1200 new members annually, of whom more than 45% are between the ages of 25 to 36.

Mr. Davlatoli Davlatov of the People's Democratic Party said that women hold approximately 40% of all positions within the party. He also noted that the party actively promotes women's participation in the government, it is evident in the prominent roles played by various female PDPT members in the Parliament.

Muhiddin Kabiri and Saifullozoda Hikmatullo of the Islamic Revival Party stated that about 25-30% of its members are women. The IRPT has established women's departments within the party and have now begun a monthly magazine called *Naison*. These women's committees hold seminars, conferences and round tables in the areas of women's problems in the society, women's rights and women's health issues. The majority of the IRPT members are young, although no exact figures were given.

In addition to the discussions with the representatives of various Tajik parties, IFES/Tajikistan began preparations for the regional Young Women's Leadership Conference, to be held on May 9-11, in Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan. IFES staff visited schools and began the selection process of students interested in participating. Those who apply will take an exam, which will determine the finalists. The list of participants will be finalized by April 12.

Throughout the second quarter, IFES worked with the parties to bring greater attention to women's and youth issues, and continues to encourage parties on a regional and national level to pay greater attention to the needs and interests of these two critical sectors. In April, IFES will mark the one year anniversary of its Conference which saw the signing of a Protocol of Understanding concluded by all major parties and movements, both registered and unregistered, guaranteeing their commitment to promoting women's political activism and creating opportunities for them in the party's work. Signatories also pledged to create sub-committees dealing with women's issues, a commitment that many of the parties have actively addressed since the event nearly one year ago.

II. MATERIALS PRODUCED

- No materials produced this quarter

III. ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

The reticence toward international efforts to bring Tajikistan in line with international standards is increasingly apparent in a number of Civil Society and Rule of Law efforts currently underway. There is growing speculation that the Tajikistan Government regards the

changes in the regional geopolitical situation as a means to abjure its previous promises to strengthen democratic structures based on an assessment that the major powers need Tajikistan's cooperation on geopolitical issues more than they need Tajikistan to move forward in the field of democratisation.

Recent indications from various Tajik Government entities, particularly the Central Commission on Elections and Referenda and the Chairman of the lower house of Parliament, gave impetus to development of a joint IFES/OSCE Election Law Reform Working Group proposal. However, the Tajik Government was not unanimous in its pursuit of this proposal, with the Presidential Apparatus being openly sceptical, if not outright hostile to any such effort that went so far as to offer substantive change.

The key area of Political Party Development for Year Two was to have been Youth and Gender Issues. However, given the ruling party's determination that there is no need for a women caucus in parliament or other gender specific programming, combined with the fact the ability of any other party which had not already established a full complement of women's and youth committees suffer from a lack of resources which make it impossible for them to establish women's and youth committees, it is difficult to pursue the original benchmark goals. However, it is hoped that through the television shows on the issue of youth and gender, survey of political parties, individual meetings with party representatives, and a roundtable with the signatories of the April 2001 Protocol of Understanding, the overall intent of the work plan's goals will be achieved.

With regard to other areas of Political Party Development, certain goals are problematic in the face of apparent local government hostility to political parties not aligned with the government, specifically affecting efforts to assist parties create new branches in areas previously lacking representation. Also, the goal of cross-party access to members of parliament is similarly affected by this situation. Efforts to bridge the gaps caused by this environment are focused on using the Parliamentary/Political Party Outreach television programming to address these goals, targeted at five this program year.

In terms of Civic Education programming for Year Two, IFES/Tajikistan is on schedule with all events. While the number of participants at the SAC and SLGD events is currently being tallied, it is expected that it will reach and possibly surpass the benchmark.

The Student Local Government Day program (SLGD) came very close to its stated goal of 80 students, despite being once again denied permission to conduct programming in the City of Dushanbe. The refusal of the local authorities to participate is still not fully explained other than the Deputy Hukumat is being extremely hesitant about associating with international organizations.

The difficulty of obtaining proper registration previously hindered progress in developing formal ties with the Ministry of Education and sanctioning the introduction of the textbook, but this should be resolved by mid-April. Once that hurdle is past, the Protocol of Understanding (PoU) can be negotiated with Ministry of Education to begin the piloting process. The first volume of the textbook, and its accompanying teachers' guide is ready for presentation to the Ministry of Education. There are still some discrepancies between information received by local staff regarding the textbook approval process, and that provided to IFES by the Soros Country Director. A meeting has been scheduled with Soros to iron out these issues, to ensure speedy implementation of the textbook project.

IV. RESULTS BASED ON WP ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED DURING Q2 FY 2002

1. Civic Education Course/Materials Development

Adaptation and production of textbook and accompanying teacher's manual proceeds resulting in an edition that reflects the unique political and cultural history of Tajikistan. Text and course overview submitted to Ministry of Education for review, which gets conditional approval allowing preparation for teacher training, publishing and distribution of the materials, and beginning of a pilot semester. Materials and course approved for commencement of pilot course. Teachers trained based on interactive student methodological approach. Conclusions reached with Ministry of Education and Soros/OSI for partnership.

During the Second Quarter, Volume One of the Civic Education Textbook reached the final stage of revision and is expected to be completed by April 2002. Once the draft is completed and published and a Protocol of Understanding is signed with the Ministry of Education, the draft textbook will be submitted to the Ministry for approval. The Teacher's Manual and student exercises books were revised as well.

2. Civic Education Curriculum Reform

Students in pilot schools gain greater practical understanding of democracy and civic responsibility; interest in civics and democracy enhanced. Students demonstrate their knowledge appreciation of democratic governance and volunteerism via exams and participation in extracurricular activities *such as Student Action Committees and Student Local Government Day*, as stimulated by the civics and democracy course. Students become more informed on the essential elements of democracy and citizenship. Teachers qualified to instruct new course using interactive methodology. Course and materials continually evaluated to assess effectiveness and to adopt recommendations and changes.

Pilot testing of draft chapters of Part I of the textbook took place in the second quarter. The timeline of the project was modified due to September 11. Full piloting is expected to begin in September 2002.

3. Student Action Committee

Students gain practical experience in problem-solving, community activism, civil society and local government. Relationships established with local government authorities, NGOs, media representatives. Students' leadership and communications abilities enhanced. Community interests and concerns addressed, and put on agenda of local authorities. Students evaluate the degree to which local officials in any capacity have followed up and responded to the work undertaken as part of the SACs. Students will use their experience to continue to be involved in civic affairs whether through NGOs, local NGO resource centers, volunteering, community service, or another non-school based form of activism. Results will be measured in the future as students become involved in community activities. "Contact" groups of select students will be created and monitored through regular contact with the IFES office.

In January, following meetings with the Education and Ideology Departments of Kulyob and Khojand, IFES conducted SAC training sessions in these cities. A total of 30 civic education teachers participated in the Kulyob SAC and SLGD training. On February 22, all Student Action Committees in Khojand presented their annual projects. Six schools were represented, with all mentors and 49 students attending. The event was covered by local media.

4. Student Local Government Day

Students exposed to workings of local government gain a greater appreciation and interest in the work and responsibilities of elected officials and citizens' responsibilities vis-à-vis local government in a democratic society. Contacts established with representatives of local

government. Teachers trained to assume responsibility for implementation of project after IFES' departure. Materials used on SLGD implementation that serve as information source and guideline for future such events. Information exchanged among students through oral discussion and written essay leads to greater understanding of workings of local government, elected officials and public policy.

During the months of the second quarter, IFES conducted a number of SLGD programs throughout Tajikistan. In January, IFES led SLGD trainings in Kulyob and Khojand, with 30 civic education teachers and 11 government officials attending the even in Kulyob and 25 civic education teachers and 4 Hukumat representatives attending the Khojand SLGD training. These events were covered in the local media, as the Kulyob newspaper "Sadoi Mardum" published an article about the Kulyob SAC/SLGD training and the local Khojand TV station SM-1 broadcast coverage of the SLGD training in Khojand.

In February, SLGDs took place in Qurghonteppa and Khojand. The events received the full support of the local government offices and were covered by media. In Qurghonteppa, 22 selected students went to 7 different departments of the City Hukumat, office of the Prosecutor, departments of Education and Interior, Court, and the Ministry of Justice of Khatlon Oblast. In Khojand, 22 students also shadowed public officials in a number of Hukumat offices, including those of the Prosecutor, Court officials, the Interior Department, and the Oblast Women's Committee. In March, IFES' Kulyob-based Student Local Government Day took place with 14 students and 10 government officials participating.

The First Press Club of Tajikistan organized journalists and cameramen to film the events and they were later broadcast by local independent TV stations, local radio stations, as well as published in both Tajik and Russian language newspapers in Khojand.

5. Democracy Summer Camps

Students gain greater practical understanding of democracy in action through mock elections, NGO, and political party building exercises. Students gain awareness of critical social issues such as human rights, gender, and personal security *through participation in the hands-on activities as well as exit testing*. Training capacity for NGO leaders and teachers enhanced. Students encouraged to take a critical view of events surrounding them, and seek to hold government more accountable. Local NGOs ability to run camps improved, including ability to receive donor funding. IFES will conduct follow-on monitoring by tracking the progress of individual students in their academic and professional pursuits. A "contact group" of students will be created representing various regions that will be available to provide feedback on their activities as well as input on future IFES events. *Programmatic and financial sustainability plans created for each camp. 15% cost-sharing by IFES partners.*

IFES scouted possible Democracy Summer Camp locations in Soghd Oblast and in the Tursun-Zade area. Advertisements were placed soliciting student-participants. IFES met potential NGO partners and joint facilitators for conducting of the Camps. The first Camp is scheduled to take place in early July in Soghd Oblast.

6. University Civic Education

University-level students specialize in gender and elections studies as part of focus on civics; gain skills and specialization that will prepare them as future teachers, political leaders, and activists. Training capacity generated among student-trainers. Civics established as a course concentration at the university level.

IFES met with university professors from Tajik State University and Tajik Technological University to discuss the makeup of the project and inclusion of resource material. Timeline on the project has been delayed.

7. Political Party Organizational Development

“Encouraging activism and volunteerism” Seminar: Parties develop effective outreach strategies and local advocacy practices to encourage interest and involvement in party activities. Minimum of three parties establish “branches” in regions in which they are not based. Membership statistics on a regional level to be monitored regularly by IFES.

IFES Seminar on “Encouraging Activism and Volunteerism in Political Parties,” took place in Dushanbe on February 6. Representatives of all major political parties and movements in Tajikistan registered and unregistered (except the Democratic Party) participated. The seminar focused on topics such as volunteerism, how to use volunteers, issues of members and cadres as key activists, and how to attract new members.

“Region-based strategies for civic education and awareness of party work” Seminar: At least three parties increase visibility in Khatlon Oblast, and the regions surrounding the city of Kulyob, through outreach efforts aimed at attracting new members. Using strategies developed during Year One trainings, parties enhance organizational network and awareness in this critical region of the country, where the PDP has traditionally dominated. Results measured by gaining evidence of party awareness through an Enhanced, Rapid Appraisal Survey.

On March 15, in Kulyob, IFES held a seminar on “The Role of Political Parties in Society and an Emerging Democracy”. In addition to this issue, the topics of “International Patterns” and “Civic Education in Secondary Schools” were discussed. Mr. Abdughani Mamadazimov, Director of the National Association of Political Scientists of Tajikistan (NAPST), and Ms. Rano Okhunova of the local NGO “Women Voters” were the main speakers. Representatives of political parties in Kulyob participated in the seminar.

The next IFES Political Party Development seminar, titled “Media Relations and Public Outreach,” will be held in Dushanbe on April 18.

8. Publication of Political Party Development Manual

The manual, completed in Year One, will be published and distributed to political parties during the beginning of Year Two. IFES expects the following results in Year 2, during which IFES will be monitoring whether and how parties utilize the manual: Political parties and movements increase organizational capacity and outreach in part through implementation of manual with corresponding guidelines. Manual assists in campaign strategy-building and identifying and addressing ongoing developmental needs.

The manual underwent revisions in the second quarter and, based on needs of parties as identified during one-on-one development sessions, will be re-released in the Spring.

9. Youth/Women’s Outreach

Committees established within a minimum of three new parties and movements **in each region** that address specifically youth and women’s issues. Greater participation of women and young people in political party activities. Party platforms revised/updated to include focus on improvement of youth and women’s problems.

Platforms of parties include references to the party's commitment to involve young persons and women. Women and young person participation/interest and membership enhanced, and measured through monitoring of party membership at national and local levels based on reported status and direct observation. Short political party surveys will also be developed as a measurement tool to gauge changes in party structure and membership at regular intervals.

In March, IFES/Tajikistan had an opportunity to individually meet with representatives of the Communist Party, Islamic Revival Party (IRPT) and the People's Democratic Party to discuss the status of youth and gender issues in each party's activities, as well as the party's methods of facilitating communication between their members of the Parliament and the party rank and file.

10. Parliamentary Politics and Political Parties Project

Political parties/movements establish mechanism to express their views to and through national and/or local Majlisis. Deputies learn how to establish a gender caucus. Members of parties/movements increase and improve communication with party representatives sitting in legislature. Parties not represented in parliament gain conduit of communications with parties in power.

During the Second Quarter FY 2002, efforts were undertaken to encourage revisions to the political party law. Ambassador Marc Gilbert, Head of Mission for OSCE Tajikistan, met IFES/Tajikistan Program Manager Christopher Shields to discuss political party and election law reform as a result of a direct request from the Government of Tajikistan. Ambassador Gilbert identified a number of steps that can be taken in order to ensure democratic legal framework that is responsive to the needs and unique conditions of Tajikistan and requested IFES/Tajikistan to prepare a document on how this process would be structured.

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11. Parties Media Outreach Project

Party and deputy outreach enhanced through televised exposure on sensitive issues. Information made available to viewers enhances information knowledge among citizens, to be measured in media preference sampling conducted by First Press Club and Mediapolis.

Media outreach event was planned for April 2002 together with Press Secretary of the Majlisi Oli.

12. Election Law Reform

IFES maintains regular contact with the CCER and examines opportunities for assistance. Any possible assistance activity is discussed with USAID to determine if it is worthy of effort.

During the Second Quarter, two parliamentary by-elections took place in Asht district of Soghd Oblast and Kolkhozabad of Khatlon Oblast. The parliamentary elections in both Oblast raised considerable obstacles for opposition parties attempting to field candidates, as several applications of opposition parties were turned down without any reasonable explanation.

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election law reform and requested a draft memo. Furthermore, IFES met with the Chairman of the Central Committee on Elections and Referenda, Mirzoali Baltuyev, to discuss possible areas and issues of collaboration between IFES and CCER.