
THE COUNTERPART CONSORTIUM

NGO SUPPORT INITIATIVE FOR CENTRAL ASIA

QUARTERLY REPORT

JANUARY 1- MARCH 31, 1998

Submitted to USAID/Almaty

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The Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs
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P r o g r a m G o a l :

To help the people of Central Asia build and maintain the political, legal, and social institutions critical to the emergence and development of functioning, healthy, stable democratic societies.

P r o g r a m P u r p o s e :

To create effective, democratic and sustainable non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Central Asia capable of expressing citizens' interests in dialogue with governments, providing services to vulnerable groups within the population while working in sectors critical to the economic, political and social development of the region.

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the first quarter of 1998, strong and widespread impacts and activities reflect the results of pro-active efforts to further USAID/ODT objectives and increase NGO advocacy efforts. The addition of significant programmatic elements (described below) will further mobilize the CAR NGO community behind USAID priorities.

NOTE: Some minor revisions to the format of this report will make it easier to read and will more effectively highlight impacts, pro-activity and a focus on advocacy and legal reform. Per USAID instructions, Performance Plans are now submitted every 6 months, rather than quarterly as during Phase One. Accordingly, Performance Plans will be attached to the next Quarterly Report.

NGO Targeting

Finalized in March with USAID concurrence, Counterpart identified a series of "super targets" in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan from the pool of target NGOs mandated under Phase II of the program. Super targets were carefully selected to serve USAID/ODT's democracy agenda and further the goal of fostering greater citizen participation in social and economic decision-making. For each of these super targets, program staff conducted needs assessments to develop a strategic plan for intensive and tailor-made assistance. Divided into three groups (A, B and C lists), these super targets can move up or down the list as they continue to develop programmatic and organizational capacity. A copy of the approved NGO Super Target List is attached to this report (Attachment 3). In addition, an update of the proactive approach and specific programmatic inputs provided by Counterpart for each A List super target is included as appropriate in the body of this report. *Throughout the report, target NGOs are featured as leading change agents contributing strong impacts in all programmatic objectives.*

Two New NGO Support Centers in Akmola and Chimkent, Kazakstan

Within only one quarter, both Centers became fully operational and now offer a full range of Counterpart's comprehensive package of NGO services. They have already facilitated improved NGO-government relations, provided assistance to super targets, increased access to training and contributed substantial information about the needs of NGOs in the Oblasts they serve. UNHCR is sharing the costs of the Akmola Center. This is a significant leverage of USAID funding and strengthens NGO access to UNHCR programs and resources.

Corporate Outreach: Building a domestic donor base

A highly qualified consultant was hired in the Kazakhstan office to increase mobilization of corporate support for NGOs. In addition to identification of the strongest sources of corporate challenge grant matching funds, Counterpart is providing pro-active linkages between corporations and target NGOs. We are compiling referral lists for corporations targeting specific sectors and are providing individualized corporate outreach strategies for target NGOs or proposals that are worthwhile, but do not clearly match our advocacy-focused criteria for other grant support. **Highlights include:**

- A roundtable of NGO and business leaders to discuss strategies for soliciting corporate support, donor perspectives and success stories from NGOs that have already tapped into the domestic donor base.
- An expanding relationship between Counterpart and Chevron, resulting in Chevron leadership at the roundtable, support of an environmental education project and closer coordination on corporate challenge grant funding opportunities.
- As a result of an independent effort, ATA has leveraged funds from the Rausing Trust to access European export markets for Central Asian Artisan Associations through marketing missions and representation at European gift shows and trade exhibitions.

Changes in Consortium SOs for Tajikistan and ATA

In February 1998, Counterpart was formally advised by USAID/CAR that the program for Tajikistan under Phase II of the NGO Support Initiative must refocus to promote the Peace Process. Collaboration between USAID/CAR and Counterpart has resulted in refocused objectives and a unique direction for our program in Tajikistan. The objectives in the Tajikistan country report - and the activities and impacts included in the report - reflect those revisions. (See page 26).

ATA and USAID collaborated to revise ATA strategic objectives to better reflect the priority focus on advocacy and citizen representation in ATA's program. USAID concurrence for the changes was provided in April and revised program objectives and impacts will be reflected in subsequent Consortium reports.

Early Advocacy Alert: Increasing Official Pressure on Uzbekistan Artisan Associations

Artisan Associations in Uzbekistan have demonstrated amazing strength and enhanced capacity over the life of the project. Established associations in Bukhara and Samarkand are providing peer counseling for fledgling associations in Khiva and Khokand and are working together to form a coalition of associations to better capitalize on tourism along the silk route. In collaboration with a quasi-governmental artisan support agency, artisan associations contributed to successful lobbying efforts resulting in the eradication of export duties on handicrafts - a major component of financial sustainability for artisan associations and other craft-based NGOs.

Perhaps due to these successful efforts, ATA in-country staff has just reported ominous indications of interference in the programs of democratic artisan associations, which is quickly worsening. The quasi-governmental artisan support agency, with which artisan associations have collaborated in the past, is stepping up attempts to force independent associations to merge and be absorbed by one, centrally controlled artisan collective. Duty-free exports, that have yet to be implemented, seems likely to be available only to State bodies channeled through the one centralized agency. ATA, Counterpart and ICNL are quickly developing a response in collaboration with artisan associations, USAID/Tashkent and other artisan support programs in Uzbekistan (Mercy Corps and UN Agencies).

Training: New Modules Introduced in Association and Financial Management

The two new modules introduced through regional TOTs this quarter support the growth and development of NGO associations and NGO financial management capability. Training in Association Management was developed with consulting support from an associate of the American Society for Association Executives (ASAE) and has already demonstrated impact. The first regional training for the strongest associations from around the region included a number of target associations that are already applying newly acquired skills. A special training conducted for ANESMI members spurred internal efforts to re-evaluate the structure of the organization. Financial Management Training provides advanced skill development in this key component of financial sustainability. *Throughout the report, a number of documented impacts are the direct result of new skills acquired through these and other counterpart training.*

Partnership Development

A month long field visit by the Washington-based Senior Project Officer in charge of mobilizing Counterpart's partnership development efforts included country-specific staff development and one-on-one NGO consultations in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. Staff met with more than 20 NGOs - the majority of which are Consortium targets - and developed a detailed partnership strategy for each of the NGOs involved. *Partnership highlights are included in each section of the report under Objective Two.*

US Representation of Consortium/USAID Accomplishments in Central Asia

Jay Cooper, Deputy Regional Director, and Erkin Kasybekov, Deputy Country Director for Kyrgyzstan, traveled to Washington to participate as featured speakers at a conference on Civil Society in Central Asia. The co-sponsors - the Center for Civil Society International and The Central Asian Institute (affiliated with Johns Hopkins University) funded their participation. Their

presentations focused on NGO cooperation with government and on the future of NGO development in the region, highlighting Kyrgyzstan as an example. Counterpart participation in this well publicized event, attended by representatives of the academic, NGO, private sector and USAID communities, gave high stateside visibility to the leadership role of the USAID-funded Consortium in the development of civil society in Central Asia.

In order to further leverage this opportunity and cost share, Counterpart brought the Deputy Country Director for Kazakhstan and the Director of the Rural NGO Support Centers in Kyrgyzstan (a key staff member leading localization efforts) to the conference, as well. After the conference, Counterpart programmed an intensive staff development program, including a localization strategic planning session with Washington project staff, an orientation to Counterpart programs in other countries and introductions to key staff members and organizational resources. In addition, internships with a State-wide NGO Support Center network in Texas were included to strengthen Counterpart CAR staff's management skills and vision of a sustainable network of localized NGO support centers.

Impact Highlights

Following are brief highlights of some of the impacts included in the body of this report. Complete descriptions of these and additional impacts can be found on pages 4-8, 44, 48, 52.

- Spurred by continued lack of support from the Deputy Khokkim, For an Ecologically Clean Fergana – in Uzbekistan - led successful a lobbying campaign to replace him with a candidate supportive of the NGO community. (Counterpart)
- Lobbying efforts by members and leadership of the Aktyubinsk Oblast Consumers Union (ADAL) have resulted in government support for the establishment of Rayon level branches. (Counterpart)
- 1,100 wage and benefit entitlement lawsuits, primarily put forth by single mothers and State factory employees, were won as a result of a training and legal consulting program offered by the Center for Citizen Initiatives – a Kazakhstan super target. (Counterpart)
- The Osh, Kyrgyzstan PFA held democratic Board elections, pushed aside a well connected, but ineffective President and elected a progressive member trained in the US through CNFA partnership programs. (CNFA/Counterpart)
- In an ICNL roundtable, three draft NGO laws in Kyrgyzstan have been consolidated by a committee of NGOs and government representatives. The committee will continue meeting until the draft is resubmitted for consideration in May's session of parliament. (ICNL)
- Grassroots activism on the part of a Kyrgyz Artisan Association has resulted in neighborhood acceptance of a special zoning license allowing the opening of an NGO retail shop in a prime location. (ATA)
- Assisted by CNFA program staff, the Talas Center for Women's Initiatives is developing the capacity to support micro-credit programs. Reports sponsored by the Swiss government and UNDP have both sited the absence of NGO capacity in this area as a problem. (CNFA/Counterpart)
- By responding to a request from the Kyrgyz Finance Committee for proposed amendments to the Tax Code, ICNL has introduced tax legislation that, if passed, will improve the fiscal and regulatory framework for NGOs in Kyrgyzstan. Regardless of the outcome, their submission has raised awareness of NGO taxation issues in the appropriate Ministries. (ICNL)
- A national Kyrgyzstani NGO Forum, led by Center InterBilim, has expanded its activities to rural locations throughout the country. As a result, rural NGOs have documented increases in positive public perception, recognition from government and acknowledgement of the value of coalitions. (Counterpart)

- An NGO assistance program providing mobile medical assistance to predominantly IDP, indigent senior citizens – especially vulnerable to the affects of civil unrest – has increased awareness of the problems of IDPs in Tajik society and has increased access to NGO services. (Counterpart)
- A fledgling NGO coalition in Tajikistan has committed to establishing a democratic operating framework including a charter, governing structure and election procedures. (Counterpart)
- A healthcare roundtable, sponsored by Counterpart in Turkmenistan, has resulted in the formation of an Association of Patients Rights Protection – an alliance of three health-focused NGOs. (Counterpart)
- In Uzbekistan, the Bukhara Physician’s Association has documented a dramatic reduction in child mortality rates from diarrheal disease resulting from a physician’s training and public awareness campaign. (Counterpart)

II. BROAD SECTOR SUPPORT: COUNTERPART INTERNATIONAL

A. PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of the Counterpart project component is:

To identify and empower a broad array of Central Asian non-governmental organizations in both rural and urban areas, regardless of sectoral focus.

B. PROJECT IMPACTS

KAZAKHSTAN IMPACTS

Lobbying Efforts Result in Government Support for Oblast Consumer Association

ADAL, **Aktyubinsk Consumer Rights Protection Society**, is a strong grassroots NGO organizing community action groups for constructive government engagement. Together with the Aktyubinsk Oblast Consumers, ADAL successfully lobbied the Oblast Akim and the Anti-Monopoly Committee to attain a decree promising the Akim's support for opening five rayon consumer associations throughout the oblast. The project not only addresses the information vacuum in the rayons – many of which are ecological disaster areas – but also engages the oblast government in resolving urgent issues in neglected areas. According to ADAL leadership, Counterpart training provided not only the requisite lobbying skills, but also the necessary legitimacy and credibility to effectively engage government by providing grant funding. As a result of their collaborative efforts, ADAL and the Aktyubinsk Oblast Consumers Union have developed a project proposal to carry out the project.

1,100 Entitlement Lawsuits Won through NGO Training and Legal Consulting Program

In May 1997, **Center for Citizen Initiatives (CCI)**, conducted a seminar entitled "How to Assert One's Rights" to address high legal illiteracy rates and lack of information in Kentau. As a direct result of this Counterpart funded seminar and subsequent legal consultations provided by CCI's resident lawyer in Kentau, 1,200 lawsuits were submitted to court by single mothers and state-employed workers who hadn't received their state assistance payments and/or salaries. 1,100 of the lawsuits were won, but by March 1998, only 150 plaintiffs have received compensation, due to the local government's budgetary constraints. However, several women participating in this lawsuit later went on to form an active NGO called "Women's Initiative". CCI is providing consultation in the registration process.

Drug Use and STD Awareness Increased Through Youth Peer Counseling

In the major cities of Kazakhstan, the past few years have seen an enormous jump in the rates of drug use by young people and sexually-transmitted diseases (STD's) - especially AIDS. **Equal to Equal** was formed to address this need by developing a peer training program (funded by USAID through Counterpart in 10/97) focusing on the dangers of STD's and drug use and how to avoid both. The \$5,000 grant has resulted in the development of a cadre of 60 high school and university student peer trainers, that has already held seminars for over 250 young people in Almaty, Karaganda, Temertau, and Kostanai. While filling an immediate need for information the government cannot currently provide, Kazakhstan youth are learning the importance of advocacy and individual responsibility in a democratic civil society.

Consumer Rights and Legal Education Increased Through NGO's Consumer School

A \$6,235 grant from Counterpart in 12/97 assisted **Taldykorgan's Contact Consumer Protection Society** in establishing a resource center and "consumer school" to educate local residents in the legal culture of consumer rights and address the alarming number of consumer rights violations. 250 of the

targeted 1500 citizens have already completed the training. Since it is nearly impossible to actually obtain a cash settlement in court due to the financial instability of local businesses, the training imparts a "consumer's consciousness" that helps consumers defend their rights up-front, as well as develops a stronger understanding of available legal recourse.

Leading Youth NGO Develops Young Leaders and Student Government Associations

Using skills and methodology learned as Counterpart contract-trainers, Natalia Bakhmutova and Lena Vinogradova helped organize the Kazakhstan branch of the **Young Leaders Association** to develop democratic alternatives to collapsed Soviet youth organizations. In 1997 alone, YLA Leadership Programs have conveyed team-building skills, conflict resolution techniques, personal time management, leadership skills, and effective communication to 550 young leaders from throughout Central Asia. Founded on newly acquired leadership skills, democratically-elected student government associations have formed in Kazakhstan and several ecological clubs have been established in Kyrgyz schools. However, AYL's most significant impact is the growing number of skilled youth trainers involved in expanding their activities. For example, the upcoming Leadership Program in April will be conducted entirely by past program participants.

Benefit Concert "Rock Against Narcotics" Raises Funds and Awareness of Drug Addiction

The rate of drug addiction among youth is particularly high in Kostanai, an industrial city with extremely high unemployment rates near the Russian border. A group of local doctors with almost no funding had already started their anti-narcotics campaign when Counterpart trainers offered the first ever NGO training in Kostanai in 1997. Since then, with Counterpart grant support, **Public Fund Help** has organized several highly successful anti-narcotics city events – with strong support from local media and city government. A benefit concert - "Rock against Narcotics" - was attended by more than 600 city youth and raised funds to cover the cost of the next concert and to develop public service announcements. "Help" has also organized a successful competition of paintings and poetry "Youth Against Narcotics" and is working with city administration to publish and distribute informational booklets

Fundraising Event Gains Increased Support From Government and Business for the Disabled

Almaty-based NGO **ARDI (Almaty Adults of Disabled Children)** is famous for its activity as a service delivery NGO working with disabled children and their families. According to Board Chairwoman Asya Artalova, Counterpart's training in Fundraising for Development has helped the group move toward financial sustainability. A 1998 New Years Charitable concert for disabled children was funded by a Korean company and attracted number of local and foreign sponsors including Soros Foundation, AED, German House and the Ministry of Social Protection. ARDI leveraged this attention to secure government support for future activities.

Farmer Association Newspaper Provides Sole Source of Legal and Market News

One of the strongest and most established NGOs in Kazakhstan, the **Farmers and Cooperatives Association of Taldykorgan Oblast (FCA)**, received a grant of \$11,414 from Counterpart to set up an Information Center and publish a news-bulletin. Recently, after gaining advanced skills through Counterpart's Public Education through Mass Media training, they have changed their format to publish the first newspaper for private farmers - "The Farmer". The newspaper is the only source of updates on domestic laws affecting agricultural, market information and available international support and information resources for farmers.

KYRGYZSTAN IMPACTS

NGO Forum Increases Sector's Visibility, Recognition from Government and Acknowledgement of the Value of Coalitions

Local NGOs and government acknowledge the impact of several fledgling initiatives with strong social and political resonance in the community organized by a Kyrgyzstan NGO Forum chaired by **Center InterBilim** – a Counterpart A List Target. Facilitation of independent observers in district parliamentary elections was a first for the oblast. Although controversial, this event was a strong

demonstration of the importance of being familiar with one's legal rights. The forum also submitted an appeal to the President of the Republic regarding the infringement of journalists' human rights. This appeal played an important role in resolving a conflict between government officials and journalists that received news coverage in the international press.

Members of the Forum's Coordination Committee, deputies of the Jogorku Kenesh (Parliament) and members from the Association of Lawyers of Kyrgyzstan developed a consolidated draft NGO law, combining three existing drafts. NDI, INCL and INTRAC representatives were also invited to provide outside expertise. These efforts will continue toward the end goal of passage of a new NGO law.

The forum is broadening its scope by including rural NGO coalitions to provide them with support and learn from their successful efforts. Rural NGO coalitions have requested assistance in capacity building (through training, consultations, joint activities and information exchange). They also reported that as the Forum becomes stronger, it attracts greater interest from government and lends greater credibility to their efforts and to the NGO sector at large.

NGO, Consumers and Government Officials Collaborate in Highly Visible Policy Forum

As a part of its long-term strategic planning, **Aikyn Consumer Rights' Protection Association** conducted a conference on consumers' rights protection on March 13 in Bishkek. The conference served as an important step in its goals: the appropriate presentation of information on consumer rights' problems, conducting practical advocacy measures, and training of consumers and representatives of oblast consumer advocacy institutions. Representatives of the legislative and executive branches took part in the conference, which generated acknowledgement that more attention should be given to consumer rights protection and legal awareness – especially regarding public utilities, medicine and food stuffs.

Participants submitted requests to Parliament to adopt a Code of Administrative responsibility and an implementation plan for the existing Law on Consumers' Rights Protection. Participants also appealed for local governments to support the consumer advocacy movement by participating in dialogue and supporting the development of a strong enabling environment. One of the most significant aspects of this half-day conference is that it was co-sponsored by the Anti-monopoly Committee which is chaired by a member of the Jorgoku-Kenesh (parliament).

Counterpart Consortium has supported Aikyn through training and also by providing 2 grants. The first grant was given to support its organizational structure, the second one was given to consumer training and to protect consumers of electricity, to conduct training for regional and Bishkek Association branches. Counterpart Consortium also participates in the conferences and round tables conducted by the Association and presents printed and videotaped information to "Aikyn".

Environment Education and Activism Mobilized Through Student Activism

Involving youth in changing societal attitudes toward solving ecological is a powerful avenue for increased democratization. As a result of workshops held by **BIOM Youth Ecological Movement**, a student task force was formed to involve students and faculty in improving environmental education efforts. Many students from rural areas will return to their villages upon graduation, so a coordinating body and the newsletter they publish are popular services with widespread impact.

As a result of the efforts outlined above, two small ecological clubs solicited donations of over 100 saplings used in the Frunze Forest. This unplanned project was a direct result of BIOM workshops and efforts to stimulate dialogue about environmental change is a significant impact and demonstrates an increase in ecological activity.

Also an unplanned result, BIOM efforts have spurred a significant increase in media coverage of environmental issues. BIOM had assembled a video/audio archive and has obtained media coverage in Russia, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan – as well as in Kyrgyzstan. Several programs were aired on the

Youth Television Channel to encourage the Bishkek community to become more involved in environmental issues.

As a result of BIOM's active work, including acknowledged impacts resulting from the Consortium-funded project, a number of international organizations (World Bank, Frederich Ebert, Conrad Adenauer and Soros Foundations) and local businesses (KyrgyzKRAMDS Bank, Areopag, AkylinvestBank) financed EcoForum, an Ecological NGO Conference for all Kyrgyz environmental groups. This indicates broad international support for BIOM's efforts – as well as increasing attention for environmental activities on the part of local business, government and the citizenry.

In order to facilitate coordination between government and NGOs, the Naryn NGO Support Center facilitated a meeting between 10 NGO representatives and the Deputy Oblast Governor. To address weak links and lack of information flow between the two sectors, initial plans to form a voluntary advisory committee were begun.

TAJKISTAN IMPACTS

Press Coverage of NGO Programs Increases Access to War Relief Services

Local press covered the activities of a current NGO grantee **Charity Foundation of Medical Assistance**, featuring their project "Assistance on Wheels." The project in Zheleznodorozhni District of Dushanbe provides free medical care to indigent senior citizens abandoned or stranded by the effects of the civil conflict.

IDPs and Returnees Receive Training in Conflict Reconciliation

The NGO **Fidokor** grant to work with returning refugees and communities through conflict reduction and reconciliation training in Kabodian rayon has resulted in dramatically expanded media coverage. This NGO is a good example of a strong NGO able to find resources and earn respect of the local communities, Government and international organizations. The leader, Dilbahar Khalilova is a CC Contract Trainer and former employee of the Migration Department of the Ministry of Labor.

Fledgling NGO Coalition Committed to Establishing Democratic Operating Framework

The **NGO Center Network**, a large group of NGOs, has met monthly in Dushanbe since September, encouraged by CC/Tajikistan. The members have created a sector-specific working group (Action Committee) of representatives elected by the member organizations. The first task of the Action Group is to develop the charter: define the mission, goal(s) and priorities of the new organization. Previous efforts of the full membership to define the charter had run into problems due to the large number of NGOs involved. Using the elected representative model seems to be a major step for this fledgling NGO association.

TURKMENISTAN IMPACTS

New Association Created After Counterpart Healthcare Roundtable

As a result of a Healthcare Roundtable facilitated by Counterpart, 3 health-focused NGOs have decided to join efforts and create a new **Association of Patients' Rights Protection**. The founding members are utilizing the Counterpart NGO Resource Library, participating in training and working with staff to develop a grant proposal.

NGO Offers Peer Counseling in Registration Procedures

As a result of the Roundtable on "Juridical Problems Facing NGOs, Counterpart grantee **Ynam**, has begun to provide consultations free of charge to NGO representatives seeking advice on how to complete registration documents. They will develop a modest grant proposal to enable them to provide this assistance without detracting from their current juridical and psychological consultations and women's crisis hotline activities. Ynam was recently awarded a \$24,000 grant from Soros to follow-up on the activities begun under the Counterpart grant. In a recent radio interview, Ynam credited Counterpart training as one reason for their achievement.

Improved Media Relations Gains Vocal Advocates for NGOs and Increased Media Coverage

4 local journalists interested in forming an organization of their own have attended “NGO and Community training.” As a result, they have continued to advocate on behalf of NGOs through published articles in the newspapers: “Neutral Turkmenistan” and “Ashgabad”.

UZBEKISTAN IMPACTS

Creative Strategic Planning Gains Access to Government Statistical Information

The **Matonat Society for the Disabled**, recipients of a grant from Counterpart Consortium in December, has been repeatedly denied access to the database on disabled persons of Uzbekistan, maintained by the “Ftech” governmental agency. After consultations with Counterpart staff, training and access to the lessons learned by other NGOs through Counterpart organized networking opportunities, Matonat presented a new, partner-oriented proposal to Ftech for mutually beneficial, collaborative efforts. As a result, they were granted use of the database, thereby opening a marvelous opportunity for expansion of the membership/client base, using its information on more than 1, 000 disabled persons in Tashkent alone. In the long term, the fledgling relationship between an NGO and a government agency will provide other, far-reaching impacts for the entire disabled community in Uzbekistan.

Gaining vital access to local government officials is extremely difficult. Remnants of a quasi-feudal system involve cumbersome bureaucracy and humiliating rituals. Lack of understanding about NGOs in general makes access even more restricted. A pro-active strategic approach – taught in Counterpart Consortium’s Strategic Planning training develops new skills in critical reasoning and introduces new techniques, SWOT analysis to devise new tactics for addressing on-going problems.

Grassroots Activism Removes Un-Cooperative Deputy Khokkim from Office

The **Association For An Ecologically Clean Fergana** used newly acquired skills to conduct a public forum that met with initial resistance from local government. They developed a plan to work directly, at the grassroots level, via the existing *makhalla* committees, thereby cutting the obstinate Deputy Khokkim out of the picture and establishing the contacts necessary to reach the largest possible number of consumers and making wise use of a form of “direct democracy.”

Following a regional seminar in Fergana (jointly sponsored by Counterpart/Global Training for Development/USAID/ABA) concerning legal regulation of NGOs, several local NGOs advocated for the removal of the Deputy Khokkim, whom they considered a hindrance in their attempts to carry out socially beneficial activities. Their efforts were rewarded: an official, who participated in the seminar, replaced the difficult Deputy Khokkim and has since been receptive to collaboration with NGOs and supportive of their initiatives.

Association Reduces Child Mortality Rates and Mobilizes Physicians for Public Health Advocacy

The **Pediatricians Association of Bukhara Oblast**, recipients of two Counterpart NGO Support Grants, has documented a dramatic increase in the incidence of severe diarrhea in the region. Extreme dehydration resulting from lack of treatment is the major contributor to a 23/1000 death rate among children. Realizing that many mothers and physicians were unaware of the extent of the problem, as well as of modern techniques for its treatment, the Association developed a training course benefiting 115 doctors throughout the Oblast. As a result of their training and a resultant public information campaign, **child mortality rates caused by diarrhea dropped to 7%**, and other official and non-governmental organizations are now applying the methodology developed by the Association.

Using funds provided by USAID, Counterpart Consortium reached 141 NGO representatives and a broad cross-section of government officials during the 5-city seminar cycle on legal regulation. As a result of these meetings, an in-active NGO Working Group has been reactivated with increased interest from government officials. Agreement was also reached about the need to hold a final seminar in Tashkent and to draft an entirely new NGO law, with the participation of NGOs, government officials and international consultants. Discussions on the composition of the Working Group have already begun and Counterpart will host a working group session at the request of local NGOs.

C. CONSTITUENCY BUILDING COMPONENT (BY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE)

OBJECTIVE 6

Build support and constituencies for democratic change and reform supporting USAID Strategic Objectives and improve understanding by the media of the role of NGOs in a civil and democratic society and media's role in creating change in a democratic society.

Women's NGO Campaign

In collaboration with local NGOs, Counterpart launched a coordinated media campaign to stimulate innovative projects targeting women. This campaign will run in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan between January 1 and May 1, 1998. We have worked with staff in Turkmenistan and Tajikistan to explore possibilities of working with the media in those countries to run campaigns in May and June. The campaign includes airtime for the "Women and the Changing of Society" video on both government and commercial stations. As a result of press conferences held in each of the countries, a total of 51 media organizations are informed about this campaign. **Results of the press conferences and campaigns to date are:**

- A national TV station in Kazakhstan broadcast the video during prime time.
- Station Tan also aired the video, which was distributed to six Almaty station directors.
- Two regional newspapers published a full-page article about women's leadership role in Central Asia written by Counterpart staff.
- Two Almaty newspapers wrote and published their own articles about the campaign.
- Television clips about the press conference and contest appeared on news programs of six stations, (Several of these stations continued to repeat the clips throughout the month).
- Four radio stations carried interviews and news clips about the press conference and contest in both Russian and Kazakh.

Following are outreach highlights in each of the target countries:

- The press conference to show the video and introduce the contest led off a day-long seminar on Women's Rights (traditional and contemporary) which was sponsored jointly by Counterpart/USAID and Konrad Adenauer Foundation. Sixteen members of the media attended the press conference. Forty-five NGO leaders and others interested in women's rights participated in the seminar. (Uzbekistan)
- The video was broadcast on local television and at Talkdykorgan's Women and Society conference, which received coverage on TV in both Almaty and Taldykorgan. (Kazakhstan)
- Through collaboration with the Business Women's Association, prime time repeat slots for the video and announcements of the Women's Project context have been secured in Actubinsk, Ust Kaminagorst, Kyzylorda, Karaganda, Uralsk, Pavlodar, Chimkent, Temurtau, Kustanai, Petropavlovsk and Taraz. (Kazakhstan)
- Copies of the videotape and the contest rules were sent to active NGOs throughout the country and placed in the Counterpart NGO Support centers in Jalal-Abad, Kara-Balta, and Naryn. (Kyrgyzstan)
- The "Women in a Changing Society" video was distributed to 11 centers which work with women's NGOs and three television stations in Djizak, Fergana and Samarkand Regions. It was also distributed nationwide to 17 television stations through the Internews system. (Uzbekistan)
- The Business Women's Association handled local press coverage and the loan of videotapes to NGOs wishing to view the video in their own organizations in 10 Oblasts. (Kazakhstan)
- Nine newspapers reported information presented at the previously mentioned press conference. (Kyrgyzstan)

- 5 TV stations aired clips on news programs – several repeatedly. (Kyrgyzstan)
- Nine radio stations have carried interviews and news clips about the press conference and contest. (Kyrgyzstan)
- Interviews and information about the contest resulted in seven newspaper articles in Russian language papers. (Uzbekistan)
- Two television news shows carried information about the video and contest and one station broadcast the video Women and Changing Society. (Uzbekistan)
- Two radio stations carried news and interviews about the contest and women's NGO programs in Uzbekistan. (Uzbekistan)

Overall Regional Constituency Building Activities

We worked with international donor organizations, USAID, ABT and USIS to determine the direction and receive input into **Selected Comprehensive Campaign on Health** as a part of the Kazakhstani Healthy Lifestyle Campaign. Activities included:

- Planned outreach strategy to get six Zdsrav reform developed messages about communicable diseases out to the people of Kazakhstan;
- Planned press conference to launch the campaign in cooperation with National Center for Healthy Lifestyles;
- Designed seminar to train broadcast and print journalists in background of selected diseases;
- Outlined contest for journalists to encourage creative, high quality media productions to educate people through media at local level;
- Developed distribution system to get Zsdrav reform television spots on communicable diseases used at local level throughout country;
- Explored ways to involve health related NGOs in getting messages to specific audiences.

We continue to work with the USAID-supported Kyrgyz Energy Campaign committee, made up of Hagler Bailly, State Energy Agency, local Consumer Rights groups, Counterpart Consortium and local journalists, in planning a **Selected Comprehensive Campaign on Energy** for Kyrgyzstan to begin in June. Activities included:

- Consultation with local Consumer rights NGO on consumer background research, funded through a Counterpart project support grant;
- As a part of the prelude to the campaign, the committee arranged for the Chairman of the State Energy Agency to appear on the TV call in program, "Call on Thursday" to discuss related energy issues.

Worked with USAID representatives, Counterpart Program Officers, and government and Housing Association leaders to develop the **Selected Comprehensive Campaign on Housing Reform** in Kazakhstan. Activities included:

- To be carried out through cooperation with Housing Associations and the training of local journalists who deal with Housing Issues.
- The initial training will begin in April with follow-up campaign activities carried out in 1998.
- Worked with USAID representative, local NGO Contractors and Housing Association Leaders to determine message ideas for USAID funded videotapes on housing to be used as a part of the selected Comprehensive Campaign on Housing Reform.

Discussed possible topics for **Selected Comprehensive Campaign in Marketing** with USAID OMT staff. Decision was made to delay this campaign until later in the year so that ongoing campaigns could be completed.

Worked with **Internews** to strengthen or build viable, functioning broadcast associations in Central Asia. Activities included

- Encouraged establishment of a partnership with a broadcast association in Arizona;
- Counseled with broadcast journalists on ways to make their organization a viable organization;
- Organized a special **Association Building training** program for **20 broadcast journalists from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.**

Developed and edited, with technical assistance from Internews, a training **video on “how to plan and conduct broadcast candidate debates”** which will be used in USAID ongoing civic education programs throughout Central Asia.

Conducted **three day training and workshop** for regional Constituency Building staff. Activities included:

- Briefing on expanding role in addressing USAID Strategic Objectives;
- Discussion of how to achieve coordinated approach throughout the region;
- Training in use of new equipment.

Ongoing work with newspaper journalists, radio and television station directors in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to schedule regular coverage during 1998.

Developed **Regional NGO Newsletter** to get current and pertinent Regional and International Information to NGOs in all areas of the region. Activities included:

- Finalized content direction made additional article assignments;
- Collected current printing and distribution information in all countries.

Developed Newsletter training for NGOs to use in creating or improving local NGO newsletters. Activities included:

- **Drafted, tested and rewrote newsletter manual;**
- Collaborated with regional Counterpart training staff in development and testing of two day training program.

Developed, scripted and edited a 15 minute **video about NGOs in a Civil Society in Kazakhstan** to be used as a part of the Selected Comprehensive Campaign. Highlights of the video include:

- Featuring three NGOs representing different segments of society;
- Highlighting different ways that NGOs are helping their constituencies;
- Designed to help the public and press understand the broad roles of NGOs in the country.

Production begun for Selected Comprehensive Campaign on NGOs. Materials will be presented as a part of a media campaign during the March, April and May in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

- Scripting and shooting video footage in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan on NGOs in a Civil Society.
- Recorded and began editing TV and radio spots.

Participated in the Regional Grant meeting to especially advise on the appropriateness of **Constituency Building components** in grant proposals.

Bright Ideas at Work

Program staff in **Turkmenistan** worked with a local journalist to produce and publish a detailed article about NGO activity. This one story has led to nine more during the next two months. Prior to

these articles, no government publication in Turkmenistan has ever mentioned NGOs.

Four roundtables were held between Media representatives and NGO leaders in **Uzbekistan** to generate press coverage of NGO activities and accomplishments. The roundtables resulted in the following:

- Two TV news programs and one newspaper article in the Samarkand local media;
- Two newspaper articles were written by journalists in Fergana;
- Three newspaper articles were printed in Nukus;
- Three newspaper articles and one TV news clip were produced in Tashkent.

Invitations to local press to meet a US consultant working in **Kyrgyzstan** to create the new Association Development training module for Counterpart Consortium led to clips on three radio stations, four TV stations and five items in newspapers to announce the new training.

Introduction of Government Journalist in Kazakhstan to the NGO idea and resources available to them resulted in a two-page article in the government newspaper "Vasha Prava" (Legal Newspaper) and a second phase of the article covered ½ page the following week.

As a result of Counterpart Consortium staff writing and/or arranging for local journalists to write articles, 106 newspaper articles were printed in Central Asia this quarter (See Attachment 4).

NOTE: Some of the regional activities included in the Kazakhstan section for reader convenience were actually initiated in Counterpart's Kyrgyzstan office – the Regional Training hub. Those sections are noted in the text.

D. KAZAKHSTAN ACTIVITIES (BY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE)

OBJECTIVE 1

Design and implement a demand-driven training and technical assistance program for NGOs in support of institutional and programmatic viability, using existing in-country training resources whenever possible. (USAID IR 2.1.1.2)

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

March Regional Workshop for Program Staff

- A 4-day regional workshop was organized and held in the Bishkek Center on March 16-19 for program coordinators and other program staff from all 5 regional offices (25-30 staff members). The overall goal was to increase program staff's understanding of their support role for Central Asian NGOs and in implementing the Consortium's USAID-funded program. Counterpart staff developed an assessment instrument based on USAID Sustainability Index and project indicators, which will be used to design pro-active support strategies for NGO targets. The following issues were also discussed: time management in the program office; how to identify tasks for the purpose of supporting NGOs, specifically target groups; the development of plans to support target NGOs. Participants were also taught how to interview NGO leaders during monitoring visits and how to devise a technical assistance/service package. (Source: Counterpart Kyrgyzstan)

Training of Trainers (TOT)

- A regional TOT workshop for "Association Development" was held from February 7-11. The TOT was organized and held in the Bishkek office. In addition to selected contract trainers, program staff also attended to strengthen their ability to provide technical assistance to associations. Dr. Walter Schaw, associated with the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) was contracted to develop the module, conduct the regional TOT and observe the first workshop conducted in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Currently Counterpart Contract Trainers are conducting workshops in Association Development and impacts have already been documented (see subsequent sections). (Source: Counterpart Kyrgyzstan)
- A second regional TOT workshop for "Financial Management" was held from February 21-25. One Program Coordinator and three Contract Trainers were trained as trainers. Alexey Kuzmin of Process Consulting of Moscow was hired to develop and conduct the TOT workshop. Mr. Kuzmin and his associates have extensive experience in financial management training in both the private and non-profit sectors. Financial Management workshops are now being conducted by Counterpart Contract Trainers. (Source: Counterpart Kyrgyzstan)

Regional Training Events

- In addition to on-going training activities and two TOTs, two regional training events were held. In addition to introducing the new modules to Central Asian audiences and insuring complete comprehension on the part of contract trainers, these regional workshops provide a networking opportunity for NGOs from around the region to share their experiences and tips for building stronger programs and best practices. While both regional events focused on Association Development, each took a different approach:

One included participants from the strongest associations in the region – from Kazakhstan,

Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. The mix of experience, sectoral focus and programmatic priorities strengthened the collective understanding of the new approaches and concepts.

- The second targeted regional members of ANESMI in efforts to reenergize and focus their efforts. The training was as important as a team building exercise than as an association development tool. While other factors effected the outcome, this approach is definitely of value to strengthen a regional association or coalition of NGOs. (Source: Counterpart Kyrgyzstan)

KAZAKHSTAN ACTIVITIES

NGO Target Overview

- Following is a summary of tailored technical assistance already provided to the 4 A List super targets since their final approval in March. For a detailed analysis of the reasons for selection, analysis based on a thorough needs assessment and planned EOP results, please refer to attachment 3.
- **National Housing Associations:** Coordination among a range of stakeholders, including ICMA and the World Bank, mobilized broad support for Counterpart's strategy for supporting housing associations. Based on this collaborative approach, program staff is designing four workshops for 22 regional housing associations and building level leaders from across the country. Including advocacy, association building, fund-raising, and relations with the media, the workshops will include an intensive member needs assessments and message identification exercise tailored for each association. The workshops will culminate in a strategic planning exercise resulting in each association developing their own plan for capacity building. Counterpart is already laying the groundwork for follow-on to these workshops, which includes proposal development and leveraged grant funding from other sources.

Program staff also provided extensive support for the development of a proposal to be presented at the April grant meeting by the Almaty City Housing Association, which would enable them to establish a prototype training center based on the experience of the Petropavlovsk and Semipalatinsk associations.

- **Center for Civic Initiatives:** Counterpart staff have already begun conducting a diagnostic assessment of CCI training programs to develop a strategy for delivering assistance in methodological and content modifications. A separate analysis of CCI's program office in Almaty revealed a committed core staff and serious agenda, but raised concerns about the long term potential for sustainability.
- **Business Women's Associations:** In an activity not included in the current work plan, Counterpart and BWA collaborated in organizing a roundtable to engage NGOs in dialogue with the new Akim of Pavlodar Oblast – a famous reform-minded administrator. BWA is a model for NGO-government collaboration. They lead other NGO communities in engaging government and building capacity and are strengthening those skills by implementing collaboration with Counterpart.

Training

- A total of 36 training workshops were held across the region for 450 people representing 280 different Kazakhstani NGOs. Every training module available through Counterpart's extensive training program was offered multiple times. Trainings were held in Balkhash, Taraz, Aktybinsk, Akmola, Kostanai, Kyzyl Orda and Almaty.

- As part of our strategy to strengthen the capacity of the Business Women's Association- - a super target- - a number of the workshops were organized in conjunction with BWA, including a large number of their members and fostering stronger ties between NGOs in those communities.
- In January, the COP, deputy director Marat Aitmagambetov and Ivan Apanasevich, met with Bruce Ross, Regional Public Health Advisor, and Tadesse Wuhib, Medical Epidemiologist, both from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) which is conducting a health care program in the Jambul oblast. Counterpart agreed to help CDC train their local personnel in such subjects as community organizing, NGO management and fund-raising.

Consultations

- As the cornerstone of Counterpart's on-going technical assistance activities, over 185 consultations were provided to NGOs during first quarter of 1998.

Moderating/Facilitating NGO Conferences and Roundtables in Central Asia

- Counterpart staff highlighted support of civic education NGOs at the Civic Education Conference sponsored by Soros Foundation and supported by USIS.
- Local Counterpart senior staff participated in the Karaganda National Human Development Report (NHDR) Workshop sponsored by UNDP. USAID representatives Patti Buckles and Marilyn Schmidt also participated in the workshop.
- On March 2-4, a four member staff team participated in the National Housing Association Workshop (a Counterpart target) in Akmola at which the representatives of 22 oblast and city housing associations were present. At the conference, Counterpart staff made a presentation about the Consortium's program and grants requirements and publicized the newly opened Akmola office. In addition, they provided one-on-one consultations for the Akmola City Housing Association and filmed the workshop as well as the activities of the Akmola City Housing Association.
- Counterpart and ICNL held a joint seminar on the capital's move to Akmola and its potential repercussions for the legislative advocacy of Kakakh NGOs. At the seminar, ICNL partner Vadim Nee and Counterpart Program Coordinators elicited questions from participants to form a list of issues to be submitted to parliamentarians and government officials in the form of a proposal later this spring.
- Counterpart grantee Taraz Diabetics' Society (TDS) helped program staff organize a round table for 31 local organizations, business and state structures, and the mass media to discuss opportunities for collaboration. The Oblast Deputy Akim stressed the importance of collaboration between all three sectors in his speech and promised strong support for NGOs. TDS Deputy Chair was a 1997 GTD participant in an NGO training course organized by Counterpart.
- A strong team of Counterpart staff played an active role the National Housing Association Workshop (Counterpart target organization) in Akmola at which the representatives of 22 oblast and city housing associations were present. At the conference, Consortium programs and grant requirements were presented, including special emphasis on the new Akmola NGO Support Center. The workshop and associated activities were filmed for use in constituency building and training efforts. Staff used the opportunity to conduct additional needs assessments and consultations with the Akmola City Housing Association.

OBJECTIVE 2

Catalyze the development of creative partnerships and strategic alliances between and among indigenous, U.S. and other foreign NGOs (supports USAID IR 2.1.1.2).

HEADQUARTERS ACTIVITIES

Partnerships

- The Senior Program Officer responsible for partnership development spent most of March in the field working with field staff and NGOs to facilitate partnership development. Informal, but intensive, local staff development created a stronger understanding of the complexities of facilitating partnerships. Meetings with a number of targeted NGOs helped the NGOs understand how a partnership could work and resulted in the development of concrete action plans for establishing partnerships for 20 NGOs from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.
- Building on past collaboration with Chevron, a potential US-based NGO partner with a proven environmental education curriculum will strengthen collaborative linkages between the Kazakh Ministry of Education, Chevron Munaigas and local environmental NGOs. Chevron has already funded publication of a Russian language workbook and translation into Kazak. Initial distribution and implementation was accomplished in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, which is extremely supportive and enthusiastic, as are both students and teachers. The creators of Jelly Jam will lead a teacher training this summer, which will include strong media coverage and components designed to strengthen cooperation between Ministry officials, NGOs, educators and the private sector – represented by Chevron Munaigas. This project presents unique opportunities for collaboration between NGOs, government and the private sector. In addition, potential partners from other Central Asian countries are being identified to leverage Chevron funding to forge NGO partnerships.
- Funded through the Soros Foundation, the US NGO Street Law is partnered with the Association of Young Leaders of Kazakhstan to develop a curriculum of grassroots legal education based on well established and field tested Street Law materials. NGOs in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan met with Street Law during a GTD delegation organized by Counterpart and are striving to develop partnerships. Counterpart is coordinating with Street Law to capitalize on this opportunity to leverage other donor funding and forge additional partnerships between Street Law and Central Asian NGOs.

KAZAKHSTAN ACTIVITIES

Partnerships

- Special Programs Consultant Nancy Barbee was hired February 11 to develop a partnership grant between one or more local NGOs and the League of Women Voters to strengthen women's advocacy and issue identification skills and grassroots democracy in Central Asia. Two Kazakhstani NGOs (the Feminist League and The Young Leaders Association) have already been identified and are working together to prepare a partnership grant proposal for Counterpart. The proposal will outline plans for a five day workshop and issues forum in September founded on a field tested Russian language training manual. The manual, "Making Democracy Work: A Citizen's Guide to Grassroots Activism" and two volunteer facilitators will be the contribution of LWV Colorado. Development of additional partnerships with LWV is also underway in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

OBJECTIVE 3

Develop a functioning and sustainable communications and information-sharing network for Central Asian NGOs (USAID IR 2.1.1.2).

REGIONAL/HEADQUARTERS ACTIVITIES

Information Network

- The Information Systems Manager in Bishkek is continuing development of CANGONet – Counterpart’s interactive web site. A number of new features have been added, including 25 links to Russian and English language sites, new search categories and an on-line chat feature. (Source: Counterpart Kyrgyzstan)
- In order to exponentially increase access to this valuable resource within Central Asia, CANGONET was written to CD-ROM in the Bishkek office and distributed to Counterpart’s offices and Support Centers throughout Central Asia. This will enable all NGO Support Centers and the NGOs who use them - particularly those in remote areas without internet access - to access extensive information about NGOs throughout Central Asia. (Source: Counterpart Kyrgyzstan)

Documents/Publications

- Training manuals for 6 training modules (“NGO and Community”, “Project Design”, “NGO Management”, “Fundraising”, “Strategic Planning” and “Public Education through the Media,” were translated into English in the Bishkek office. The manuals for “Association Development” and “Financial Management” were developed in both languages. A draft manual for “Newsletter Development” is currently being developed. (Source: Counterpart Kyrgyzstan)
- A new training newsletter - “TNEWS” is a monthly publication for Counterpart Consortium Staff, partners and Contract Trainers. It provides a CAR-wide training schedule, news and methodological information. TNEWS encourages dialogue between Contract Trainers throughout Central Asia, strengthening the sustainability of this valuable resource. TNEWS is delivered through Counterpart offices in CA as well as through a list serve. Four issues have already been published this quarter. (Source: Counterpart Kyrgyzstan)
- All offices are cooperating to compile a comprehensive catalog of NGO resource materials available through Support Centers across the region. This will facilitate information sharing and strengthen the resource base available for all Central Asian NGOs. Efforts are being coordinated by Nancy Barbee, a consultant retained by the Kazakhstan office.
- Based on the above mentioned efforts, Counterpart will develop a basic set of resource materials that will be made available through all NGO Support Centers. This will ensure maximum access to crucial resource materials for all NGOs – especially beneficial outside of capital cities, where information is much less accessible.

KAZAKHSTAN ACTIVITIES

Database

- The new Database Manager, hired on March 24, received initial training from Counterpart’s Regional database manager Alexander Korovinsky. While visiting from Bishkek, Korovinsky also conducted maintenance work on the database.
- More than 90 new entries were added to the database during the quarter. New staff also received orientation training in how to maintain and utilize the database. In addition to ongoing additions, a comprehensive update will be conducted in April.

OBJECTIVE 4:

Assist Central Asian NGOs in accessing financial resources in-country and abroad (USAID IR 2.1.1.2)

KAZAKHSTAN ACTIVITIES

Grantmaking

- On February 16-17, the Counterpart Almaty office hosted the bimonthly regional Grant Committee meeting. Participants included: country directors from all five country offices; David Smith, Regional Director; Sue Benedetti, head of the Constituency Building Program; Marat Aitmagambetov, Deputy Director; Ivan Apanasevich, NGO Development Specialist. USAID ODT Democracy Specialist Sean Roberts was also present. **17 grants were funded during the quarter, including 4 partnership grants and 2 corporate challenge grants. The total allocation was \$122,930.** Details are included below.
- The following seven Kazakhstan project proposals were approved:
 - ❖ **Informational Center “Green Future of Rudnyi Altay,” Ust-Kaminigorsk.** \$11,320 for creation of an informational center to provide mass media services to local NGOs. The Committee approved this grant because the organization is well established and has a strong track record and because environmental issues are very important in Eastern Kazakhstan. Like other environmental groups Counterpart has worked with, this group serves as a focal point for other NGOs in the community, those concerned with environment as well as others. Therefore the Committee hopes this group can encourage other groups the area to understand the importance and the uses of advocacy.
 - ❖ **Pokolenie. Almaty.** \$10,262 to design an advocacy campaign focused on utility costs in Almaty. This proposal was funded because the Committee believed it was important to encourage Pokolenie’s advocacy efforts. Counterpart will work with Pokolenie to refine both their information-gathering plan for collecting data as well as the advocacy effort itself.
 - ❖ **Center of Democratic Dissemination in Kazakh Language,** \$6,398 to distribute publications on democracy in the Kazakh language. This grant was selected not only because it will help Kazakh-speaking citizens play a larger role in political and economic decision-making but will encourage Kazakh-speakers to use NGOs to make their interests known to government.
 - ❖ **Diabetics’ Society, Taraz.** This is a **Partnership Grant** with Interlink Resources, (Muncie, IN). \$7,459 to put on joint conference with US partner. The Committee selected this grant because it reinforces an ongoing partnership between the Society and its US partner. The grant builds on a long-standing relationship with Counterpart and, since it is focused on broadening public awareness of diabetes, the Committee believed that it would help the Society widen its constituency. In addition, the Committee saw commonalities between this grant and the Healthy Lifestyles Campaign.
 - ❖ **Association of Pension Funds of Kazakhstan, Almaty.** \$14,665 to train its members and lobby in state structures. This is a new association, founded as a part of USAID/OMT’s work in privatizing Kazakhstan’s pension system. Approval was urged by OMT and USAID contractor IMCC. The grant will help place the association on a firm footing and provide a vehicle for establishing professional standards for Kazakhstan pension funds.
 - ❖ **Kazakhstan Association of Food Enterprises, Almaty.** This is a **Partnership Grant** with former USAID contractor Carana Corporation. \$14,430 to strengthen capacity to provide training and consultations to members and to conduct marketing studies throughout Kazakhstan. The Committee selected this grant because it will help to establish a professional association on a firm footing and to reinforce its relationship with a US organization, and thereby its sustainability. The decision was based in part on USAID’s interest in professional associations.

- ❖ **Center for Conflict Resolution, Almaty.** \$13,761 to develop and implement a nation-wide human rights education program with the Ministry of Education and support the center's human rights project with TACIS. The Committee selected this grant not only because it will enable a number of participating organizations to gain new advocacy skills as well as a greater appreciation of the importance of advocacy. In addition, it is an excellent example of donor coordination and leveraging, because USAID's contribution through Counter part matches a TACIS grant of \$137,577.

Corporate Challenge Grant Program

- Former Internews Kazakhstan Director Elizabeth Schuster was hired on February 20 as a part-time consultant to develop Counterpart's Corporate Challenge Grant program. Ms. Schuster's main tasks are to identify potential corporate sponsors for NGOs around Kazakhstan; to train Counterpart's program coordinators to more actively identify potential donors and appropriate projects to meet their interest; and to encourage stronger collaboration between NGOs and the private sector through information exchange and round table events.
- The following advances have already been made:
 - ❖ research on needy grant recipients within Counterpart's scope;
 - ❖ research on interested international corporations;
 - ❖ questionnaire developed to further develop Counterpart's database of potential donors, and to eventually match donors and recipients on the basis of geography and sphere of interest;
 - ❖ information provided to would-be donors about Counterpart and its activities;
 - ❖ several meetings have been set up between potential donors and challenge grant recipients.
- On April 21, Counterpart is planning to host a round-table in Almaty including corporate representatives, successful grant recipients such as Special Olympics of Kazakhstan, and would-be recipients. The round-table's objectives are as follows: to pick the brains of corporate representatives to give potential recipients a better understanding of selection criteria; to provide a forum for previous grant recipients to relate their experiences; and, to address possible problems NGOs may face in pursuing funding.
- Over the course of several meetings between Counterpart Almaty and DC staff and representatives of Chevron Munaigas, specific projects or types of activity that Chevron is interested in co-funding through Counterpart's Corporate Challenge Grant Program have been identified. In addition, on-going collaboration to support NGO activities has been leveraged into outreach efforts to encourage other corporate support for NGO activities. Chevron staff will take a lead role in upcoming roundtables to help NGOs and other corporations explore ways to work together and practical strategies for developing relationships. This represents a further strengthening of a partnership between Chevron, Counterpart and the local NGO community.

OBJECTIVE 5

Facilitate interaction between NGOs and all levels of government to serve community needs (USAID IR 2.1.3);

KAZAKHSTAN ACTIVITIES

NGO Support Centers

- **Akmola NGO Support Center:** Within this quarter, the Center has become fully operational and now offers access to Counterpart's full package of NGO support services. Deputy Director Marat Aitmagambetov was instrumental in providing a fast launch for these efforts. The staff has received training in the Almaty office and has attended Counterpart's NGO Management training. The office held an official opening for the local community in mid-March, which was well attended by government representatives, local NGO leaders and the media.
- **Chimkent NGO Support Center:** Also within this quarter, the Chimkent Center has become fully operational and now offers access to Counterpart's full package of NGO support services. The staff has received training in the Almaty office and is planning an official opening in April.

E. KYRGYZSTAN ACTIVITIES (BY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE)

OBJECTIVE 1

Design and implement a demand-driven training and technical assistance program for NGOs in support of institutional and programmatic viability, using existing in-country training resources whenever possible. (USAID IR 2.1.1.2)

Training

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| • 10 workshops "NGO and Community" | 188 participants from 131 NGOs |
| • 4 workshops "Project Design" | 78 participants from 61 NGOs |
| • 3 workshops "NGO Management" | 63 participants from 44 NGOs |
| • 3 workshops "Strategic Planning" | 47 participants from 39 NGOs |
| • 2 workshops "Fundraising" | 31 participants from 23 NGOs |
| • 2 workshops "Public Education through the Media" | 35 participants from 26 NGOs |
| • 1 workshop "Association Development" | 17 participants from 14 NGOs |
| • 1 workshop "Financial Management" | 14 participants from 13 NGOs |
| • 1 workshop "Newsletter Development" | 8 participants from 8 NGOs |

New Module: "Newsletter Development"

- A pilot seminar on NGO Newsletter Development was held in the Bishkek Counterpart office March 27 and 28. Two months of planning and research for the seminar included developing a resource manual, collecting results from questionnaires and informal interviews to establish the need for such a seminar, designing the workshop and conducting a pre-test on computer skills for the seminar participants. A training manual will be assembled from the pilot seminar outline and additional handouts will be developed. Because of limited computer facilities, it is likely that this seminar can only be held in the capital city offices. In addition, because of the heavily technical nature of the seminar, the pre-test on computer usage proved to be an essential prerequisite for the participants.

OBJECTIVE 2

Catalyze the development of creative partnerships and strategic alliances between and among indigenous, U.S. and other foreign NGOs (supports USAID IR 2.1.1.2).

- Due to coordination between Counterpart offices in Bishkek and Tashkent, a relatively new Consumers Right's group in Uzbekistan has approached one of our targets, "**Aikyn**" **Consumer Rights' Protection Association**, for assistance through an intra-regional partnership. At the same time, Aikun has been targeted for assistance in developing a partnership with a US NGO.
- The employees of the Social Fund and Ministry of Labor and Social Protection formed the **Association of Social Workers (ASW)** to improve social service delivery methods. They have developed a partnership with the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), funded by a \$5,143 Counterpart partnership grant. The project includes travel expenses for volunteer consultants from Denmark and Russia to hold training workshops for the Association. By the EOP, a team of local trainers for the Association will be qualified to conduct training for Association members throughout Kyrgyzstan. The project will promote the improvement of social services delivered through government and non-government channels as well as foster the growth and development of the Association of Social Workers. Currently ASW is discussing another project with an association of social workers in Great Britain.

- Initial discussions have taken place concerning a partnership between **BIOM Youth Environmental Movement** and Fauna and Flora, International (FFI). FFI currently has representatives in Bishkek working as sub-contractors for the Kyrgyz Government under a biodiversity project, funded by World Bank's Global Ecological Project. Potential partnership projects include lobbying for ecological reforms and a mass media campaign.
- NGOs can utilize the Counterpart Resource Center as a tool to develop partnership linkages with colleagues from both within and outside of CIS. The Counterpart Resource Center is providing full Internet access, through which NGOs can find needed information and distribute information about themselves. NGOs, "Alga" (Chui Oblast), "Bayastan" (Naryn Oblast), Training Center for Professional Training of Disabled People, Tree of Life, and Sanitas have created Home Pages available on the Counterpart Web Site.

OBJECTIVE 3

Develop a functioning and sustainable communications and information-sharing network for Central Asian NGOs (USAID IR 2.1.1.2);

Database

- Counterpart Database Manager added a map of Kyrgyzstan to extend data visualization and is developing a user/s guide. Two features were added recently: 1) the ability to transfer the list of NGOs immediately to the CANGONET website and 2) information about projects funded by other donors. A complete database on Counterpart's training program is being developed. It includes full information on workshops held since July of 1997 along with information on Trainers who have been trained and are working under contract with Counterpart.

OBJECTIVE 4

Assist Central Asian NGOs in accessing financial resources in-country and abroad (USAID IR 2.1.1.2);

- In preparation for the Grant Review Committee meeting of February 10 projects were evaluated during the in-country Grant Review Meeting for Kyrgyzstan. Seven projects were submitted to the Grant Review Committee for the February Meeting. The following five grants were awarded with a total sum is \$32,473.00:
 - ❖ **Legal Initiative Fund (LIF):** One of the goals of the project is to provide representatives of local NGOs with consulting support on a wide range of legal issues through a Legal Resource Center to be created at the Legal Faculty of the National University. Through this \$4,000 grant, LIF members will promote public awareness of the NGOs activities in the legal sphere through one-on-one consultations and legal training to be conducted in Bishkek and Issyk-Kul Oblast. The students of the Legal Faculty will be involved in the project implementation as volunteers, gaining experience working with the Third Sector.
 - ❖ **Association of the Social Workers (ASW):** The employees of the Social Fund and Ministry of Labor and Social Protection created the **Association of Social Workers (ASW)** to improve social service delivery methods. They have developed a partnership with the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), funded by a \$5,143 Counterpart **partnership grant**. The project includes travel expenses for volunteer consultants from Denmark and Russia to hold training workshops for the Association. By the EOP, a team of local trainers for the Association will be qualified to conduct training for Association members throughout Kyrgyzstan. The project will promote the improvement of social services delivered through

government and non-government channels as well as foster the growth and development of the Association of Social Workers.

- ❖ **BIOM Youth Environmental Movement:** With funding from an \$8,306 NGO support grant, BIOM will strengthen its support network of environmental organizations by conducting training workshops in remote rural areas of Kyrgyzstan. Local government officials, representatives of NGOs and the media will be invited. This project will support community participation in environmental issues at the grass roots level and develop linkages between NGOs, citizens and all levels of government.
- ❖ **Republican Center of the Young Scientists:** This project, targeting approximately 7,000 beneficiaries, will allow for publication and dissemination of a newsletter about the rights of young scientists and scholars. Funded through a \$2,500 **challenge grant**, the project will mobilize young people working in scientific and educational institutions to seek solutions through lobbying and advocacy to their interests and needs.
- ❖ **Consumer Rights Protection Organization "Aikyn":** This \$14,386 grant funds phase one of a two part strategy to include citizens in a solution to the on-going electrical power supply crisis in the Kyrgyz Republic. "Aikyn" has affiliate offices throughout the country and its members have great experience in representing the interests of ordinary consumers. Phase one will result in quantitative and qualitative data about consumer problems and opinions concerning pricing, management and other related issues. Phase two will leverage this information into a media campaign and citizen action to solve the problem.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The Grant Manager Kuban Asanov monitored 8 grant recipients throughout the country. See lessons learned for additional detail.

OBJECTIVE 5

Facilitate interaction between NGOs and all levels of government to serve community needs (USAID IR 2.1.3);

Rural NGO Support Centers

- The NGO Support Centers continue to play a vital role in monitoring and evaluating NGOs and their projects and in facilitating the on-going dialogue between the governmental and third sectors. The Centers have expanded their facilitation roles by developing exchange programs between NGOs from different oblasts.

Jalal-Abad NGO Support Center

- Due to *lobbying* by the Jalal-Abad Counterpart staff, a refugee group with a pending grant proposal with International Organization for Migration (IOM) received a letter of guarantee of tax exemption from the local government. The group in Tash-Bulak has applied for building a water supply system necessary for living in their refugee community.
- The staff monitored the NGO "Maksat" in the village of Kerben for a Counterpart grant on environment education. The NGO is considered strong as well as active and is a potential target NGO.
- On March 19 the NGO "Bureau for the Defense of Rural Children's Rights" led a Round Table on "Cooperation between Rural NGOs and Local Authorities" in the town of Bazar-Korgon. Leaders

from active rural NGOs and from the Aiyl Okmotus (village administration) attended. In conclusion, the participants plan to meet on a regular basis and realized the dire need to conduct more workshops on what is an NGO for the purpose of educating village authorities.

- On March 20 Aman Nusupov, Counterpart Coordinator of NGO Support Centers, and Elmira Mavlyanova, NGOSC Assistant in Jalal-Abad, visited the Sewing Workshop in the Lycee #71 in Kok-Jangak in the Jalal-Abad Oblast. They monitored its activities and products and how many women-refugees work there. The number of workers that are women refugees in the workshop was not in accordance to the grant contract. The director explained that it was due to the fact that women refugees declined to work. The staff of the Jalal-Abad NGOSC will conduct an assessment in April to investigate the reasons for the women-refugees' refusals.

Naryn NGO Support Center

- Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) Training: Manager Satarov and Volunteers of Peace Corps Catherine McNab and Leif Helgeson visited the village of Kenesh of the Naryn Region. The goal of the visit was to conduct activity in Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). The staff met with administration (Ayil Okmotu) of this village and the people of this village for two days. The results of the PRA in Kenesh were shown in the round table. The participants of the round table said that they are interested in working with PRA activity and analysis. The staff of the Center agreed with Interbilim about such training in the fall of this year.
- Center staff conducted monthly roundtables of Naryn Oblast NGOs attended by an average of 50 participants from 20-25 local NGOs, local government and media. The topic for January was problems facing newly established NGOs and discussion of the UNDP Poverty Alleviation Project. In February, the topic was collaboration between NGOs, the private sector and governmental structures. In March, the round table was held by a local NGO – Club of Intellectual Women and was devoted to the women's initiative support project of Counterpart Consortium. Contract trainers from experienced Kyrgyz NGOs participated in the discussion and Counterpart's Women in Development video was screened.
- Center staff visited Kochkor village, accompanied by leaders of three active NGOs. They participated in a round table led by the NGO NUR to discuss conditions of disabled children, women and orphans with village government leaders, educators and other civic leaders. As a result, the village developed a preliminary action plan for collaboration to address the problems identified in the round table.
- The Center consulted in the development of two proposals for donors other than Counterpart Consortium to help NGOs broaden their donor base and ability to write effective proposals.
- The Manager of the Center took part at the competition, which was held by the NGO "Egemen" (Leader: Rakhat Kadyrbaev). The competition was devoted to the democracy and civil society. The students of the Pedagogical School and Naryn State University took part in this competition. Three rounds of the competition will be held in March and April.
- The trip to Kara-Suu village was held by the Manager, N. Satarov. He met with the secretary of the administration A. Kapsalanova, the people of the village, and with the principal of the School Kasymbecova Bubusalysi. The manager of the Center presented Counterpart Consortium the third sector's role in society.

- In order to facilitate stronger ties between southern Kyrgyz oblasts, Center staff worked with the UNDP to plan a trip of 9 NGO leaders to Osh and Jalal-Abad Oblasts.
- The Deputy Oblast Governor met with NGOs and staff of the NGOSC and UNDP office to discuss collaboration between government and NGOs. On-going discussions will further develop an idea for creation of a Consultative Board to coordinate activities and share information.

Kara-Balta NGO Support Center

- Monthly round tables attracted approximately 40 participants from NGOs, government, business and the press. The topic for January was youth issues. In February, two NGOs – Paygar and the Red Crescent, also organized the round table. Representatives from two rayons attended a discussion about orphans in the oblast and included discussion of possible solutions and improvements to conditions.

F. TAJIKISTAN ACTIVITIES (BY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE)

Security Status: At the beginning of this Quarter, John Barbee, Country Director, was still in Almaty, and Farhod Bokiev was still Acting Director in Dushanbe, due to the continuing security advisory issued by the US Embassy in Tajikistan. The advisory described the security situation for ex-patriots (employees, contractors and grantees) as very serious and recommended that non-essential personnel not travel to Tajikistan. Fortunately, by late February there had been no significant violent events targeting expatriates a revised advisory was issued that stated the security situation has improved. The Country Director returned to Dushanbe on February 28. Until late in March the Government and the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), the major political players in Tajikistan, had been respecting the cease-fire and were actively negotiating and implementing power-sharing measures. This peace-directed process was beginning to take hold, but was interrupted in the last week of March. Government and UTO forces clashed in the Kafarnihon area seven km. east by southeast of Dushanbe and both sides refused to back down. On the 31st of March it seemed as if the hard-won accomplishments and hopes for positive movement towards peace were in serious danger of being dashed. Despite these problems the Counterpart efforts in Tajikistan are still moving forward.

MODIFICATIONS NECESSARY TO REFLECT THE PEACE PROCESS

In February 1998, Counterpart was formally advised by USAID/CAR that the program for Tajikistan under Phase II of the NGO Support Initiative must refocus to conform to the Peace Process. Refocusing on the Peace Process and its environment required that the program Objectives be examined and re-cast. In the areas most impacted by civil conflict and the return of refugees and people displaced to other parts of the country (IDPs), there are fewer local NGOs and the challenge will be to foster development of community-based organizations (CBOs), as well as NGOs. Involvement of local government officials will continue to be a priority, but will require new strategies to draw them into the process, especially at the community level. An important task is to support initiatives that constructively engage diverse (and often opposed) community groups to find common interests and to begin to work together to solve local problems. The Objectives that follow have been revised to reflect the Peace Process focus.

TAJIKISTAN OBJECTIVE 1

Design and implement a pro-active program including training, technical assistance and problem-related training interventions for local groups, CBOs, NGOs and Government to support programs and organizational capacity building in areas impacted by civil conflict and refugees/IDPs, using primarily existing in-country training resources whenever possible. (USAID IR 2.1.1.1; primarily PP 3 & 4);

Staff Development

- Under security conditions, Counterpart held an extended meeting for all Program staff in Khurog over a seven-day period. At that meeting, we read and discussed the Peace Process mandate, the need to re-focus CC/Tajikistan's program and came to consensus that the peace process focus makes a lot of sense for us, NGOs and Tajikistan in general. We agreed on the interpretation of the peace process environment as meaning education and advocacy regarding electoral issues, civic education, building a civil society, human rights issues, constitutional interpretation and reform and access to the legislative process. We also agreed that putting the changed focus into action will be a very difficult and challenging process where we will have to learn to work together with NGO colleagues in new ways and in new roles.

Training

- Counterpart Tajikistan training during the first three months of 1998 focused on the further development of Contract trainers and began to re-focus on the peace process. An average of five NGO training workshops per month were carried out by contract trainers under the supervision of program staff. Nearly 200 participants from over 150 NGOs completed the training workshops encompassing the topics: *NGO & the Community; Project Design; Public Education Through Media; NGO Management and Fundraising/Resource Development*. Efforts to hold trainings in Khurog, in Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Region were again thwarted by continuing impassable roads and also by weather conditions that prevented transportation by air.

TAJIKISTAN OBJECTIVE 2

Catalyze the development of creative partnerships and strategic alliances between and among indigenous NGOs & CBOs, U.S. and other foreign NGOs, dealing with refugees/IDPs on issues related to peaceful and constructive reintegration, reconciliation and advocacy in support of participation in democratic processes (supports USAID IR 2.1.1.2 and PP 1, 2, 3 &/or 4);

- In this quarter Counterpart Tajikistan has worked on two partnerships under the peace process guidelines. One involves the Khojand Philosophical Society (local NGO) and Street Law (US NGO) in a joint project on human rights education. The second is related to the issue of civic education and may involve a group of women's organizations as the local NGO and the League of Women Voters/Colorado as the US partner. In March a roundtable of representatives of women's groups was convened by Counterpart to assess interest in the topic – it was very high. Two more similar roundtables will be held, in Kurghan Teppe and in Khojand. If enough interest is shown, a national workshop on Women and Civil Society may be held subsequently.

TAJIKISTAN OBJECTIVE 3

Develop a functioning and sustainable communications and information-sharing network for Tajikistan CBOs and NGOs that includes specific provisions that enable community groups and CBOs in civil conflict-impacted areas of Tajikistan to access information relevant to the Peace Process and its environment from local, regional and other sources (supports USAID IR 2.1.1.2 & primarily PP 1, 2, 3 &/or 4);

- Counterpart Tajikistan continued its support for the NGO Center Network, This group of NGOs has been meeting every month since September and is in the stage of developing its charter. The group in March divided into sectors with representatives to the monthly meeting. The needs and ideas from each group were brought up and the need to proceed with finalizing the charter became high priority.
- Discussed and made preliminary agreements with UNHCR, UNDP and several other international IOs (ACTED, SCF/UK, CARE International and OSCE) regarding participation and sharing of facilities and services for local NGOs in the south of Tajikistan. The NGO Support Center will be located in Kurghan Teppe. Also discussed were needs for a similar facility in Kulyab.

TAJIKISTAN OBJECTIVE 4

Assist Tajikistan CBOs & NGOs involved in the Peace Process to access financial and information resources in-country and abroad (supports USAID IR 2.1.1.2 and PP 1,2,3 & 4);

Grant-making

- Three grants to NGOs targeting the peace process were approved at the Counterpart Consortium

Regional Review Committee meeting in February; the approved Grantees were ORZU, UMED and Khojand Philosophical Society:

- ❖ ORZU received approval for US\$8,190 to promote advocacy of human rights, and roles for women in civil society by establishing a Women's Development Center. Through the Center, ORZU will support the training and orientation of forty women specially selected for their leadership and community-focused activities from NGOs, CBOs and their communities. The result will foster the development of equal employment opportunities for women and build the NGO's active membership from its group of constituents.
- ❖ UMED received approval for US\$6,355 to build the capacity of a refugee enclave on the outskirts of Dushanbe so that a program of vocational training and income generation can be implemented by the NGO; over 600 beneficiaries in over 100 families are directly involved.
- ❖ Khojand Philosophical Society requested a partnership grant of US\$7600 for a human rights education project involving the US NGO "StreetLaw," and an additional item of support from USIA for publishing of translated educational materials. The grant was approved conditional on confirmation of the joint support agreements between KPS, Street Law and USIA. Upon further investigation, it was discovered that communication gaps had prevented adequate coordination between the partners and the grant was subsequently put on hold until Street Law visits the region for other activities in the summer.

TAJIKISTAN OBJECTIVE 5

Facilitate constructive interaction between CBOs/NGOs and all levels of Government to serve community needs related to the Peace Process in areas prone to significant levels of ethnic tension, refugee/IDP impacts and/or civil strife (supports USAID IR 2.1.3 and PP 1,2,3, & 4);

- CC/Tajikistan developed a Problem Identification (Prob-ID) Workshop plan to use in returnee-impacted areas; Workshop objectives include bringing people together to re-establish communication and to focus on common interests and problems. Participants will include community and group leaders and local government officials. Expected outcomes include improved communication among individuals and groups, joint planning between CBOs and local government and ongoing cooperation in communities.
- A current grantee NGO, *Fidokor*, conducted a follow-up workshop in Kabodian district (Khatlon Oblast), an area in the south impacted by the civil conflict in Tajikistan. The workshop involved local NGOs and CBOs, community members (children and adults) and local government officials to review the results of previous problem-solving and reconciliation activities. A current Counterpart grant titled "Peace to the Homes of All" supported it. While the feedback was very positive, there remains much work to be done in this and other districts in Khatlon Oblast. A video tape was made showing current project activities and this workshop; it was shown on local TV.
- CC/Tajikistan assisted the Coordination Center of the *Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project* by supplying a current list of NGOs in Tajikistan and consultation regarding the capacity of selected NGOs to mount and carry out project activities. The Post-Conflict Reconstruction Project is an effort by the Tajik Government and World Bank to rehabilitate public works infrastructure in Daarband, Garm, Tawil-dara and Tajikabad districts, where the civil conflict has had profound effects. The Project is looking for local NGO partners to help implement community-based activities.
- Productive discussions were held with the UNHCR/Tajikistan, UNHCR/CAR Regional Coordinator and the Ministry of Education regarding the development of a Conflict

Transformation and Tolerance Education Project in Tajikistan. This collaborative effort will use the lessons learned and technical assistance from the current successful UNHCR/Counterpart Conflict Transformation and Tolerance Education program in Kyrgyzstan. Discussions were also advanced regarding collaboration between Counterpart and UNHCR on aspects of NGO support.

- We are exploring ways that our resources can be pooled and services closely coordinated to maximize program effectiveness and positive impacts.
- A collaborative effort of Consortium member International Center for Not-for-profit Law (ICNL), a local NGO "Society and Law" and CC/Tajikistan in planning and organizing two conferences on NGO law. The first, a Workshop for informed NGOs and key government officials, focused on review and re-drafting of NGO legislation is scheduled for mid-April. The second would be a national-level conference for NGOs to review and explain the current NGO legislation, relevant international experience and the results of the April Workshop. The date and additional donor funding options for this conference are being explored. It is hoped that this national Conference on NGO Law can be held in the next quarter.

TAJIKISTAN SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND (TASIF)

[Note: The Tajikistan Social Investment Fund (TASIF) submits separate reports to the USAID Office of Social Transition and is included here to provide a comprehensive picture of Counterpart activities in Tajikistan.]

- Mr. Ara Nazinyan, Technical Advisor to the TASIF, was allowed to return to Tajikistan in early March, due to improvements in the security situation there.
- The TASIF leadership has made several changes in its grant promotion and selection process, based on recommendations and analysis initiated and facilitated by the Management Advisor. These changes will assist the TASIF to stimulate local community participation and to better select qualified organizations to carry out the work in communities targeted under the grants program.
- Recruitment and screening by Counterpart of candidates for the Community Participation Adviser/Specialist was re-initiated in February when advisement of the improved security situation in Tajikistan was received.

G. TURKMENISTAN ACTIVITIES (BY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE)

OBJECTIVE 1

Design and implement a demand-driven training and technical assistance program for NGOs in support of institutional and programmatic viability, using existing in-country training resources whenever possible. (USAID IR 2.1.1.2);

Training

- Six training sessions in NGO and Community have been conducted this quarter by contract trainers. 61 people (including 6 members of Counterpart staff and one member of Peace Corps local staff) have attended training, representing 42 NGOs from four of the five regions of the country. NGOs represented the following sectors: education, children, women, ecology, NGO support, culture, health, arts/artisans, agriculture, media, disabled, science, ethnicity and human rights.
- Contract trainers have participated in two TOTs – for Association Development and Financial Management and have conducted practice training sessions for an audience of local Peace Corps and Consortium staff – to practice their newly acquired skills before beginning to train NGOs.

Staff Development

- One local staff member participated in February's grant review committee where one proposal from a Turkmen NGO was submitted. This participation enhanced the effectiveness of Turkmenistan's preliminary in-country review in March in preparation for the April grant review meeting.
- Counterpart staff has also participated in the same two TOTs, and has received training from more experienced local staff in Almaty. Project Officers and the Finance Manager have received training in Almaty and 4 local staffers attended the Program Coordinator training in Bishkek.

OBJECTIVE 2

Catalyze the development of creative partnerships and strategic alliances between and among indigenous, U.S. and other foreign NGOs (supports USAID IR 2.1.1.2);

Partnerships

- Preliminary investigations are being conducted to identify potential partners and provide additional information to three NGOs: Turkmenistan International Business School Business Club; Association of Family Practitioners and Ashgabad Club of Young Entrepreneurs. Potential partners already identified include Rotary Club, Junior Achievement and a Kyrgyz Association of Family Practitioners. Utilizing a combination of US and regional resources, Turkmenistan NGOs have strong partnership development potential.

OBJECTIVE 3

Develop a functioning and sustainable communications and information-sharing network for Central Asian NGOs (USAID IR 2.1.1.2);

Coalition/Association Building

- Counterpart and Winrock International are discussing collaboration in providing assistance a local agricultural NGO “Kopetdag”. Kopetdag is working with farmers in southwestern Turkmenistan to teach them methods of farming soy and combining it with other grains to make cattle feed. Sixty villagers took place in an ISAR-funded project with this group last year - providing the farmers’ cattle a nutritious supplement to wild grass which lessens the impact of grazing on the ecosystem.
- Winrock and Counterpart are collaborating to develop a strategy for assisting 30 bee-keepers in creating an association. Their primary objective is to develop collective marketing strategies. The discussion is still in the preliminary stages.
- Roundtable discussion held in February to discuss challenges in the area of healthcare in Turkmenistan. This standing-room only event was attended by over 16 NGOs. The attendees represented both existing NGOs as well as groups of health care professional interested in establishing organizations of their own.

NGO Database

- Currently, 62 NGOs have been identified, completed questionnaires and have been through at least an initial interview process at Counterpart’s office. This information has been included in CANGONET and represents the most extensive information ever available about NGOs in Turkmenistan.

Documents/Publications

- As the results of requests from other donor agencies for information on NGOs in Turkmenistan, a descriptive list of Turkmen NGOs including information on NGO Focus and Level of development has been made available to other donor organizations in Ashgabad
- This quarter, thirteen articles/advertising materials have been published in Ashgabad papers regarding NGO activities in Turkmenistan, exceeding expectations regarding the official newspaper’s willingness to publish information on civil society activities.

Roundtable Discussions

- Two Roundtable discussions were held in February and March on the following topics: “Juridical Problems Facing NGOs’ and “Challenges to Healthcare in Turkmenistan”. The number of NGOs which attended the Roundtables both times exceeded the capacity of the room, indicating that NGOs in Turkmenistan are craving information and dedicated to spending time to learn how to build capacity and work together. The roundtables are also a great forum for networking and many NGOs exchange information and phone numbers after the meetings.

OBJECTIVE 4

Assist Central Asian NGOs in accessing financial resources in-country and abroad (USAID IR 2.1.1.2);

Grantmaking

- A \$6,000 **Corporate Challenge Grant** funded a Summer English Language Immersion Camp. The project involves the development of a TOT program of English language training for a fee. The camp counselors will charge students for English classes year-round to generate income, enabling the NGO to expand activities throughout the year, instead of only during the summer months. The project aims to build sustainability into

the NGOs existing year-to-year programming which has, in the past, been managed by Peace Corps volunteers through the SPA grant program.

OBJECTIVE 5

Facilitate interaction between NGOs and all levels of government to serve community needs (USAID IR 2.1.3).

Fostering Government Cooperation with NGOs

- In a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Social Services, Deputy Minister Rozieva shared many ideas of how Counterpart could collaborate with her ministry to strengthen NGO activities in the social sector, particularly with respect to pensioners and disabled people. She and her staff have already begun to refer volunteers to Counterpart's office and two of them have since then participated in the NGO and Community course. A follow-up brainstorming with Ms. Rozieva and NGOs working in this sector is planned for April.

H. UZBEKISTAN ACTIVITIES (BY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE)

OBJECTIVE 1

Design and implement a demand-driven training and technical assistance program for NGOs in support of institutional and programmatic viability, using existing in-country training resources whenever possible. (USAID IR 2.1.1.2);

NGO Target Overview

- Following is a summary of tailored technical assistance already provided to the super targets since their final approval in March. For a detailed analysis of the reasons for selection, analysis based on a thorough needs assessment and planned EOP results, please refer to attachment 3.
- **The Association of Accountants and Auditors of Uzbekistan (AAAU):** Counterpart Uzbekistan has provided an NGO support grant to cover the costs of printing a handbook for NGOs on all aspects of financial management, bookkeeping and taxation. To increase the impact and usefulness of the book, AAAU has requested that Counterpart also provide assistance by facilitating NGO training seminars, in which the book will serve as a guide.
- **Center for Women-Leaders (CWL):** CWL, a noticeable force in championing women's rights, provides a valuable information service through its bulletin. However, frequent equipment breakdowns have threatened its timely publication. To allow the CWL to carry on its work in advocating for positive change in the area of women's rights, Counterpart Uzbekistan has solicited a proposal for a small grant that will add the necessary, reliable equipment. Also Counterpart Uzbekistan has helped defuse a leadership conflict threatening to seriously impact CWL. This crisis highlighted one of the group's dire needs - - training in governance. Counterpart's upcoming training in governance will build institutional stability. Finally, Counterpart Uzbekistan solicited a proposal from the CWL for submission to the Israeli Embassy, provided technical support throughout the proposal writing process, and presented the proposal to the Ambassador of Israel at the end of April. It is fully expected that the proposal will receive full funding.
- **Committee for Protection of Individual Rights (CPIR):** CPIR and Counterpart Uzbekistan have determined that training is CPIR's most pressing need. Due to the Committee's having emerged from a former political party, "basic" training will be provided in the role and functions of NGOs in the context of Uzbekistan; advanced training in Governance, Financial Management, Fundraising, Personnel Management, Social Partnership and Volunteer Management will also be provided. Having determined that the Director of the Uzbekistan Office of the Ombudsman is enthusiastic about working with NGOs, possibly using their members as human rights monitoring volunteers, Counterpart Uzbekistan has proposed that CPIR be the leader in this effort.
- **Tashkent Public Education Center (TPEC):** TPEC has such a large portfolio of grants that they feel they currently do not have the resources or time to take on any additional grants. This provided an excellent opportunity for providing the type of training that will make them capable of managing available financial resources. Counterpart trained the two most visible leaders of the group as contract trainers, with Financial Management as one of the areas of their training expertise. We hope to encourage other members of TPEC's staff to acquire the same skills, thus adding to long-term institutional and financial viability. Additionally, Counterpart has agreed to hold a joint series of regional roundtables (5 cities around Uzbekistan) with TPEC, on the topic of Social Partnership/Corporate Outreach. These roundtables will provide them with the necessary baseline data to develop strategies for fostering NGO-government-business partnerships.

Training

- A total of 26 training workshops targeting 353 representatives of 66 NGOs were conducted throughout the country – in Kokand, Samarkand, Bukhara, Nukus, Fergana and Tashkent. Counterpart Uzbekistan now has at its disposal a cadre of 15 contract trainers, conducting seminars in 9 training modules. The training schedule and above reported numbers, reflect the high demand in Uzbekistan for Counterpart training. Our office receives many requests to conduct both regular and specialized training sessions for various organizations, both from USAID contractors, as well as other international and local organizations.
- For example, Abt. Associates, in their effort to coalesce broad-based grassroots health care workers has requested that we coordinate provision of our entire series of modules in Fergana Oblast for a range of health care professionals, from administrators and senior doctors to nurses and midwives. In addition to the obvious benefit to the NGO/CBO participants, this initiative highlights the desired cooperation between USAID contractors, as well as necessary leveraging of training costs, with Abt. covering participants' accommodation, lunches and per diems.

OBJECTIVE 2

Catalyze the development of creative partnerships and strategic alliances between and among indigenous, U.S. and other foreign NGOs (supports USAID IR 2.1.1.2);

Coalition Building

- Coalition building was one of the main topics of the February cycle of seminars, conducted jointly by Counterpart Consortium/GTD/USAID and ABA. While committed to working together, many NGOs expressed concern that any formalized organization would become a mechanism for state control of the Third Sector, and that the government aims toward precisely that purpose. Past indications that this is a real fear were reinforced in remarks by the keynote speaker at the event, Akmal Saidov, former Uzbek Ambassador to France and Director of the National Center for Human Rights. Mr. Saidov, a senior government official influential in NGO policy formation, made several appeals for the formation of a republic-wide NGO Association and called for the creation of a single, state-run foundation – funded by foreign donor organizations – that would earmark and distribute funds allocated by these groups to “deserving” NGOs. This suggestion clearly alarmed both NGOs and the foreign organizations in attendance. NGOs and government have committed to continued dialogue. NGOs are striving to develop alternative proposals, including decentralized oblast or city level coalitions.
- Continued animosity and attempts to control NGOs on the part of the government certainly contribute to the lack of success in developing coalitions. However, there are continued NGO efforts to develop coalitions effective in advocating for change. Women’s NGOs recently committed to forming a coalition. A coalition of NGOs for legal reform has reactivated efforts to work with the government to encourage reform of NGO legislation. NGOs in Karakalpakistan continue to explore mechanisms and appropriate roles for an NGO association for their Oblast. Counterpart Uzbekistan will continue to take a proactive role to encourage the development of coalitions through round tables, public forums and other opportunities for non-confrontational dialogue.

Partnerships

- Development of a partnership program with one of our target groups, the “Ayol” Center for Women and Children’s Health and the “SOMARC” Program of the U.S.-based “Futures Group.” The partnership grant proposal call for Counterpart Consortium to provide the necessary infrastructure for an office, out of which Viktoriya Ashirova (Counterpart contract trainer) can work as “SOMARC’s” Samarkand implementing partner. This partnership will enhance

sustainability of another USAID-funded initiative. Most importantly, it provides grassroots education for young women in conservative Samarkand about their reproductive rights – a fundamental issue in the role of women in Uzbek society.

- In concert with Counterpart Washington staff, Counterpart Uzbekistan has been involved in the development of a partnership relationship between the National Parent Networking Association and the Tashkent-based target group “Kridi” Club for Parents of Disabled Children. Both partners are communicating to complete a proposal that will focus on constituency building and grassroots advocacy for disability rights. The Club has already been successful in engaging local government officials and the business community in their efforts and is well positioned to increase their advocacy efforts.
- The Association of Accountants and Auditors of Uzbekistan has requested assistance in identifying an appropriate State-level US association with which to partner. Although the Association offers training in International Standard Accounting, they would also like to provide their members with information and training about US accounting standards. In addition, they believe that US accountant associations are of a similar conservative nature and can provide assistance in improving government relations. Most important, the Association sees a partnership as an avenue to strengthening the services they provide to membership, including certification programs, legal and regulatory issue tracking and organizational management issues.

OBJECTIVE 3

Develop a functioning and sustainable communications and information-sharing network for Central Asian NGOs (USAID IR 2.1.1.2);

Information Sharing/Public Education

- In collaboration with Global/AED, the American Bar Association, the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, and with the support and encouragement of USAID Tashkent, Counterpart Uzbekistan played a pro-active role in the series of regional seminars, held in Fergana, Kokand, Samarkand, Bukhara and Nukus.

The aim of the seminars was to stimulate a dialogue between representatives of local authoritative bodies and NGOs, on the subject of legislation affecting NGO activities. Discussion focused on a draft law (prepared by the NGO “Working Group”) awaiting discussion by the Oliy Majlis, but tabled time and time again by the Ministry of Justice, expressing their extreme dissatisfaction with the draft law.

Participation by state officials was crucial to insure concrete impact rather than empty discussion among NGO converts. We were able to secure the participation of Akmal Saidov, Director of the National Center for Human Rights, Deputy of the Oliy Majlis and former Ambassador of Uzbekistan to France, as well as that of Akhtam Tursunov, Director of the Oliy Majlis Institute for Monitoring of Legislation.

In all, **141 representatives from NGOs and local government took part** in the series. There was, in some cities, an initial unwillingness on the part of the NGOs to be fully frank on issues of legal regulation and relations with local authorities. However, as time wore on and participation was continually encouraged – with Country Director Blair Sheridan moderating and stimulating discussion with open questions -- participants began to relax and air their opinions more openly.

Not only were the seminars on overwhelming success in themselves, raising as they did lively and constructive discussion in a manner rarely seen in Uzbekistan. The structure and, above all, content of the seminars raised the demand among all participants, both NGO and governmental, that a sixth and final session be held in Tashkent in April. Using contacts established in the run-up to the five previous meetings, Counterpart Consortium has again secured the support of

government figures key to the passage of any such law, with the result that the final meeting will be held in the building of the newly opened Oliy Majlis.

- In March, Counterpart Uzbekistan, together with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, held a roundtable in Tashkent, dedicated to the role of women in NGO developmental work in Uzbekistan. Apart from its broader purpose, the roundtable served as an ideal venue for the announcement of Counterpart Consortium's Central Asia-wide "mini-project" contest, entitled "Women, Society and Development". In addition, the first in a planned series of NGO issue-oriented roundtables focused on "The Role of Women's NGOs and the Future of Their Development in the Building of Civil Society in Uzbekistan." All told, 18 women's organizations (not only NGOs, but also influential GONGOS, such as the Women's Committee of Uzbekistan and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Society) were represented.
- In collaboration with PERDCA, a local NGO and email provider, Counterpart is providing a new mechanism for improved NGO collaboration, communication and resource sharing. BiNGO is an email list serve managed by PERDCA and moderated by Counterpart. Any NGO can post information or questions to a list of NGO subscribers and all can read the responses. This valuable new tool is provided at absolutely no additional cost leveraging PERDCA's technical expertise and equipment and Counterpart's pro-active efforts to mobilize NGOs.

Documents and Publications

- Through the Counterpart Uzbekistan Information Center in Tashkent, a comprehensive collection of information on donor activity in Tashkent, Central Asia, the NIS and the world (inasmuch as the latter have a Central Asian focus element) is being compiled. In addition to daily use in the Tashkent office, these resources are a valuable resource for Central Asian NGOs, through above mentioned efforts to develop a regional catalog of NGO resources available through Counterpart.

OBJECTIVE 4

Assist Central Asian NGOs in accessing financial resources in-country and abroad (USAID IR 2.1.1.2);

Grantmaking

- **Pediatricians' Association of Bukhara Oblast:** The Pediatricians' Association (Counterpart Consortium grantees in 1997 and, now, 1998) received a grant of \$6800.00, to launch a program of training and intervention, targeting children's respiratory diseases. Physicians will be trained in the skills and treatment techniques required to combat this serious threat of epidemic proportions.

At first glance, such a project may not seem to be in full accord with Counterpart Consortium's new priorities under the Office of Democratic Transition. However, this grant is, in fact, a valuable investment in the institutional capacity of a working, dues-collecting association, dedicated to the skills-improvement of its membership, and is, therefore fully in line with our new direction, especially as outlined in the "Special Understandings" section of the Cooperative Agreement. There is, of course, a "collateral" benefit, that being the amelioration of the general state of affairs in public health.

OBJECTIVE 5

Facilitate interaction between NGOs and all levels of government to serve community needs (USAID IR 2.1.3).

Nukus NGO Support Center

- In addition to offering access to Counterpart's full package of NGO support services, the Center held the first two monthly roundtables for Karakalpakstan NGO leaders. Both focused on the creation of a Karakalpak union of NGOs.

Kokand NGO Support Center

- The decision was made to locate our third and final satellite office in the Fergana Valley, in the city of Kokand. Originally, the proposal called for the office to be in the city of Fergana itself, but, due to the presence of a significantly more active NGO community in Kokand – as well as the presence there of two of Counterpart's contract trainers – we have changed the location to Kokand. The Center is continuing operations while completing renovations of office space – in the former city Communist Party headquarters. The grand opening is scheduled for early April.

Tashkent Information Center

- Our visitors' log continues to give us an accurate picture of what services NGOs are most in need of. The most common services provided by the Tashkent Information Center include: help in finding resources; help in working with electronic newsletters; orders for electronic materials; copying services; information on conferences and seminars; e-mail services and use of the Center's computer for word processing.
- The Tashkent Information Center received and provided services for 80 representatives of NGOs, from Tashkent and beyond, in March.
- Together with the Program Coordinators, Center staff had developed a marketing brochure advertising the services available at the IC. This brochure is being distributed to participant's at all regular Counterpart training seminars, to all international donor organizations in Tashkent, as well as in electronic form, via the PERDCA-based "BiNGO" e-mail mailing list.

I. ISSUES AND/OR PROBLEMS

TURKMENISTAN

As was the case during the last quarter, the Registration of Counterpart Consortium continues to provide challenges. It has become increasingly evident that an official request by USAID's regional mission and/or the U.S. embassy in Ashgabad would guarantee the prompt and accurate registration of Counterpart Consortium, according to the accepted protocol in the Turkmen administrative offices in charge of the Registration of International Non-Profit Organizations.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also changed its policy regarding Counterpart's ability to provide invitations for visitors. Until the Ashgabad office is registered, it is necessary for all visa invitations to be drafted by the consular section of the U.S. Embassy. This change has added several days to the visa granting process here. It is necessary to provide the request to the Consular section at least 10 days in advance of the date the visitor plans to arrive in Turkmenistan. For this reason, our office now requests a two week advanced notification of any visitors planning to travel to Turkmenistan on business.

J. LESSONS LEARNED

KAZAKHSTAN

The first quarter of 1998 has been one of tremendous strides for Counterpart Consortium in Kazakhstan. The targeting process was refined and three levels of target NGOs identified. Proactive capacity-building strategies were designed and launched for these targets and staff stepped up their outreach efforts. Program staff is increasingly more comfortable in broader, strategically focused roles and working aggressively with target NGOs.

Two NGO Support Centers were opened, in Akmola and Chimkent. This increased scope and the more aggressive approach to engaging with NGOs crucial to a democracy agenda have had a number of implications for Counterpart and, by extension, USAID. Two are of particular interest.

The first is that as Counterpart's Phase II USAID Cooperative Agreement allowed work to expand geographically, both through NGO Support Centers, which function as Counterpart branch offices, and through roundtables, NGO demand has increased significantly. This is true especially in Kazakhstan which has so many secondary centers with strong NGO communities. Demand, especially as sectoral range is narrowed by a democracy focus, exceeds capacity even with the expanded training capacity afforded by contract trainers. It will of course also tax grant resources.

Counterpart is taking several steps to address these issues. The first is to devote resources to training new Support Center staff adequately so that they can provide the one-on-one technical assistance that is critical to a proactive agenda. The second is to identify alternative funding sources and to provide staff skills in facilitating referrals to other organizations. Another is to further strengthen Counterpart's contract training capacity.

Perhaps most importance is to place increased emphasis on relations between governments and NGOs. It is in this working relationship, as local and regional governments learn to see NGOs as viable mechanisms for providing needed services, that NGOs can create linkages that will provide them sustainability and a credible role in their communities. Counterpart has emphasized this nexus throughout the Phase II of the NGO Support Initiative, beginning with the October NGO roundtable in Karaganda and particularly through the roundtables and trainings undertaken jointly with the Business Women's Association.

Typically, at the Taraz roundtable Akimayat officials played a key role and NGO-government relations are a central feature of the approach of the new Akmola Support Center. They will be the *raison d'être* for the roundtable planned in early April for Pavlodar in response to US Mission interest. Subsequent work in Pavlodar will reinforce this theme.

Another lesson is that, as was demonstrated by the specially-adapted training for electronic media providers undertaken in concert with Internews, proactive capacity-building sometimes can create situations that, in the short run, slow programmatic progress. In the media training, which was based on Counterpart's newly-created Association Building module, as participants learned more about the functions of associations, their level of satisfaction with ANESMI, which is the existing association, decreased.

Whether participants will create a new organization, attempt to reinvigorate ANESMI or do nothing for the moment is as yet clear. Nor is there a responsible way to hurry events. It is an axiom of NGO capacity building that efforts to force organizational growth rarely produce a viable entity. There is ample evidence of this in Kazakhstan, including ANESMI itself.

One unmitigatedly positive lesson of the ANESMI training experience is a methodology for adapting existing Counterpart modules to the needs of a homogeneous group of participants, culminating in a one-day strategic planning session that yields specific action objectives. Considerable time efficiency and the possibility of going into greater substantive depth result from working with participants who have a common level of experience and frame of reference. This approach will be adapted for the four regional housing trainings scheduled for April through June and could find a wider application in other training settings.

The underlying issues contained in these lessons are positive signs of a deepening NGO capacity in Kazakhstan. Using them to create an even stronger NGO Support Initiative that continues and a constructive part of USAID's overall programmatic direction, will be a key challenge for Counterpart in coming months.

KYRGYZSTAN

Two monitored grant recipients were given unfavorable reports. Both groups have strong potential and are not fundamentally dishonest. If we had monitored their grant in earlier stages of completion, problems could have been solved before having such a strong impact on the overall project.

TURKMENISTAN

During this quarter, the Ashgabad office has administered a successful training program based on the high demand of Turkmen NGOs to participate in our training modules. Unfortunately, in order to meet the demand, we have provided one training exercise per week, which has been a challenging load to our current small pool of three contract trainers in Turkmenistan. It is our staff's firm belief that an increased pool of contract trainers is necessary to enable Counterpart Consortium to reach the maximum number of NGOs who have requested to participate in our training program.

UZBEKISTAN

Staff training activities, such as the March Program Coordinators' Workshop in Bishkek, are key to the overall success of the Counterpart Central Asia NGO Support Initiative.

K. PROJECT CHANGES

TAJIKISTAN

In February 1998, Counterpart was formally advised by USAID/CAR that the program for Tajikistan under Phase II of the NGO Support Initiative must refocus to conform to the Peace Process. Refocusing on the Peace Process and its environment required that the program Objectives be examined and re-cast. In the areas most impacted by civil conflict and the return of refugees and people displaced to other parts of the country (IDPs), there are fewer local NGOs and the challenge will be to foster development of community-based organizations (CBOs), as well as NGOs. Involvement of local government officials will continue to be a priority, but will require new strategies to draw them into the process, especially at the community level. An important task is to support initiatives that constructively engage diverse (and often opposed) community groups to find common interests and to begin to work together to solve local problems.

TURKMENISTAN

As a result of the positive reception to Counterpart Consortium's activities in Turkmenistan, a proposal was submitted to the regional mission of USAID to expand the Turkmenistan NGO Capacity Building Program. The proposed expansion includes the development of a focused program on Water Users' Associations and a stronger presence for our partner organizations. Counterpart Consortium is currently awaiting the response of USAID on the request.

G. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

KAZAKHSTAN

In a recent agreement between Counterpart and Center for Disease Control (CDC) staff, Counterpart will provide training in community organizing, NGO management and fund-raising to the local staff of a CDC health care program in Jambul oblast. Not only is this a partnership between Counterpart and CDC, but it strengthens the potential for NGO-government collaboration in Jambul.

KYRGYZSTAN

A UNDP HIV/AIDS and STD prevention project for the CIS is being developed for introduction into Kyrgyzstan. The program includes advocacy for the human rights of those infected, as well as health education. Counterpart has provided information and facilitated meetings so that NGOs can be included as implementing partners with government and the UN. Counterpart will support these efforts through targeted training and partnership development.

Discussion was held with Soros Foundation concerning future cooperation in the support of NGOs. Aikyn is co-funded by Counterpart Consortium and Soros for current activity. Soros Foundation is renting 2 rooms in the Counterpart office in Bishkek for an Artist's Resource Center that will open in the near future – a modest, but significant leverage of USAID funds.

Discussions were held with the Meerim Fund to identify ways to provide them with support for the management of their existing network of computer centers throughout Kyrgyzstan. Meerim is closely connected to the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic including the President's and Vice President's wives as the top leaders. Potential partnership efforts were also discussed, as well as inclusion of Meerim staff in training and on-going round table events.

A meeting was held with Dan Bliss of Eurasia Foundation concerning areas of potential coordination.

Proposal development and referral were discussed as well as the Eurasia representative sitting on the Counterpart in-country grant review committee.

Carana Corporation has trained staff of the International Center of Management in Bishkek as trainers of accounting. Counterpart has been in discussion with Carana and with the International Center to design training for accountants working with NGOs.

Meetings with National Democratic Institute continue for the purpose of coordination of support to NGOs involved in elections, lobbying and advocacy. The Forum of NGOs has been identified by both Counterpart and NDI as a potential strength for the future of the NGO community in Kyrgyzstan and as an example for other coalitions in other countries.

Meetings have been held with International Organization for Migration concerning a regional program to work with Counterpart NGO Support Centers in Oblast centers. The plan would include the training of staff members of the offices to understand the issues of migration specific to more rural areas of Central Asia.

TURKMENISTAN

Counterpart Consortium has provided 6 training sessions at UN House as a part of partnership agreement between Counterpart and UNDP on NGO development in Turkmenistan.

Counterpart was visited by Dr. Carol Kervin and Chris Lunch, two social anthropologists working on an ODI desert livestock project in Turkmenistan. Their three-year project studies the effectiveness of privatization on the extensive livestock sector. Their project includes a participatory video component that enables rural farmers to develop small groups and produce videos that will show the Turkmen government improvements in the livestock sector at the local level. This exercise is considered the first step in an organization process that is strongly compatible with the development of farmers' NGOs. A follow-up meeting is planned for April on ways in which Counterpart and ODI can work together with farmers.

British Ambassador, Neil Hook approached Counterpart to discuss ways in which our NGO Capacity Building program could collaborate with the Know How Fund programs in the areas of: Environment, Charity, Training, and Democratic Reform (mostly privatization). Ambassador Hook is interested in working together on programming as well and has offered facilities at the embassy when needed. He also administers a "gift fund" from which he can potential offer computers and other equipment to NGOs not covered by our grant program.

The Country Director met with Heinrich Duffner, Director of an EU TACIS Program on Public Administration. This project is soon to end, and Mr. Duffner is seeking Counterpart's assistance to help the cadre of trainers which has been through the TACIS program to organize as an NGO.

Counterpart Consortium assisted a USAID team assessing Women's reproductive health care issues in Turkmenistan by arranging meetings with health care professionals and NGOs working on these issues. As a result, the team concluded that NGOs in Turkmenistan have great potential to play a strong role in the USAID strategy related to public education on reproductive health issues.

Counterpart Consortium and UNFPA plan to coordinate efforts on Reproductive Health Care and Family Planning in 1998-1999. Counterpart will work with UNFPA to develop programming efforts that accurately reflect the needs of women and incorporated active NGO participation. Efforts will also be made to coordinate with the UN WID Bureau, when appropriate.

UZBEKISTAN

USAID: In addition to regular updates provided to USAID/Tashkent and participation in "Democracy Roundtables," Counterpart Uzbekistan is in constant contact with USAID program staff – a contact which brings to the fore the close cooperation vital to our mutual success.

Examples:

- ❖ Liana Ibragimova, USAID/Tashkent Program Specialist, as an integral panel member of the five-city "Legal Regulation of NGOs" seminar cycle.
- ❖ USAID/Tashkent and Counterpart Uzbekistan held mutual consultations on the alarming criminal investigation of a Counterpart grantee, well known to USAID, the Alcoholics Anonymous Association. We may now report, with great relief, that the completely unfounded case has been dropped.
- ❖ Counterpart Uzbekistan organized a roundtable on issues of women's reproductive health at the request of USAID/Tashkent.

UNHCR: The Tashkent Office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees have been sterling partners and great supporters of the Counterpart Consortium program in Uzbekistan as a whole, in particular our NGO Support Center program. In this, the UNHCR has provided over \$20,000 of financial support, and is currently reviewing an extension proposal for an additional \$49,000 for 1998.

UNHCR has expressed satisfaction with Counterpart's strategy for the NGO Support Centers, as well as their willingness to consider such proposals in the future, providing the UNHCR with NGOs with the increased capacity to work as implementing partners.

Embassy of the United States of America: Second Secretary Keith C. Jordan has been of immense help in helping Counterpart Uzbekistan to navigate the tricky waters of human rights groups in Uzbekistan. Mr. Jordan's deep personal knowledge of the three main groups and the potential risks for Counterpart in seeking to expand its contacts in this field is invaluable.

Eurasia Foundation: In addition to Blair Sheridan's participation on the expert panel for the Eurasia Foundation's proposal competition for "Public Administration," Counterpart Consortium, in the persons of both Regional Director David Smith and Washington Program Officer Lorel Donaghey, maintain close contact with Eurasia, the goal being to discover areas of future cooperation, especially in the area of public housing associations.

Abt. Associates: As mentioned above, Abt. has requested that we provide their chosen grassroots health care workers in Fergana Oblast with the entire range of Counterpart training seminars. Coordination with Abt. has thus involved planning the timing of the introduction of the modules to their selected participants, as well as basic logistics and cost-sharing planning.

Republic of Uzbekistan Oliy Majlis Institute of Monitoring of Current Legislation: Director of the Institute and Deputy of the Oliy Majlis Akhtam Tursunov was both a key supporter and featured speaker of the five-city seminar tour on "Legal Regulation of NGOs." Meetings focused upon the logistics of the seminars, as well as future steps in the direction of NGO law reform.

Republic of Uzbekistan National Center for Human Rights: As was the case with Mr. Tursunov (above) Akmal Saidov, Deputy of the Oliy Majlis and Director of the Republic of Uzbekistan National Center for Human Rights, was the keynote speaker of our seminar tour. As the official co-sponsor of the series, Mr. Saidov was instrumental in the planning and conduct of the seminars, and must be allotted his share of their success.

Global Training for Development/USAID: One of the engines, in more than the funding sense, behind the legal seminar series. GTD provided a great deal of logistical support, in addition to the requisite financing. Counterpart Consortium was in close contact with GTD through the entire process, from initial inspiration, through planning and to eventual implementation and reporting.

ABA/CEELI: Meetings with ABA/CEELI staff have been directed at the following two key Counterpart activities:

- ❖ Needs-assessment and overall association development for the **Association of Judges of Uzbekistan and the Association of Lawyers of Uzbekistan.**
- ❖ Coordination on content and strategy for the February cycle of regional seminars on "Legal Regulation of NGOs." Along with the other partners (Counterpart Consortium, GTD/USAID,) the local liaisons of the American Bar Association played an important role in making these seminars the success that they were.

UNDP, OSCE: Counterpart Consortium met with representatives of these two international organizations on a regular basis, for the purpose of keeping our "silent partners" in the five-city seminar cycle well informed with regard to developments, as well as to find out what initiatives they are planning together with Uzbek NGOs.

Embassy of the State of Israel: Country Director Blair Sheridan had a very productive meeting with the Ambassador, Mr. Noah Gal Gendler, exploring the Embassy's capabilities for funding Uzbek NGO programming. Armed with the Ambassador's eager support for funding of training seminars (including financial support for Russian-speaking Israeli consultants,) Mr. Sheridan then contacted the Center for Women Leaders and solicited a proposal on women's legal education. The proposal has since been submitted and we await word of the final decision. Training opportunities for representatives of Uzbekistan's NGOs in the renowned "Mashav" program in Israel were also discussed.

United States Peace Corps: On March 25, Counterpart Uzbekistan Country Director Blair Sheridan spoke at the in-service training held by the United States Peace Corps in Chirchik. The goal of the visit was to "enlist" Peace Corps Volunteers as our volunteers, in the regions outside of Tashkent. Present were 45 of the 50 PCVs currently on assignment in Uzbekistan.

H. LEVERAGING

KAZAKHSTAN

- UNHCR and Counterpart have signed an agreement outlining UNHCR financial support of Counterpart's Akmola NGO Support Center – leveraging USAID funding with additional UNHCR funding. The meeting also began to develop future collaborative efforts to extend Counterpart's Support Center approach to other oblast capitals.

KYRGYZSTAN

- An agreement for \$130,000 was signed between Counterpart and UNHCR for 1998. In line with this agreement UNHCR will continue to fund two NGO Support Centers (Kara-Balta and Jalal-Abad) and the Tolerance Education Project. One of the results of this project will be transformation both NGO Support Centers into indigenous NGOs by the end of 1998.
- In February Counterpart Bishkek won a tender for the Jhumush Project from the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection funded through UNDP. The "Jhumush" ("Work" in Kyrgyz) Project provided training in Small Business Development, Micro-Credit, NGO Development and Strategic Planning to three unique groups of participants, including staff from the governmental Employment Centers and leaders from the non-governmental Employment Promotion Centers and the heads of village administrations (AiyI Okmotus). With \$30,000 in funding from UNDP, Counterpart's Contract Trainers worked in March on the first phase and will work in June for a follow-up TOT for those participants selected by the Ministry. Working with our affiliates in other countries, Counterpart's trainers from the Ukraine conducted the Small Business Development workshops. The second phase of the project will take place in June of this year.

TURKMENISTAN

- Counterpart Consortium and the UNDP have successfully evaluated their first quarter of cooperation on NGO development. As a result of the agreement, Counterpart has saved over \$500 in costs associated with the rental of space for training during the past three months.

UZBEKISTAN

- Counterpart Uzbekistan is currently awaiting final word of 1998 funding from UNHCR Tashkent. We submitted a budget of \$49, 000, to cover costs of maintaining one full-time NGO Support Center Coordinator, two NGO Support staff in each Center, as well as an infusion of necessary equipment, to ensure the professional development of the Centers and their future sustainability.

III. AID TO ARTISANS

A. PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of the Aid to Artisans' (ATA) project component is:

1. to strengthen the institutional capacity and sustainability of Central Asian regional and local craft service NGOs and their members;
2. to promote regional harmony and economic integration by formalizing existing linkages between craft NGOs in three republics and extending these linkages to another two republics.

B. PROJECT IMPACTS

Objective 1: Promote democratically governed, financially sustainable, market-driven, service-oriented craft NGOs.

ATA has worked closely in the past with the Almaty Applied Arts College to help organize the Almaty craft fairs. Although not an NGO, the Applied Arts College has been instrumental in helping two other non-governmental organizations (Shiber Aul and the Women's League of Creative Initiative) put together and host the fairs. As a direct result of observing how ATA has worked with Shiber Aul and Women's League and the consequent successes which these organizations have experienced, the Almaty Applied Arts College has now decided to form an NGO because they feel that it will help them work more freely and independently. The NGO will work to supplement the information that students and teachers cover in the existing curriculum and give both teachers and students more practical experience so that they can successfully function in a market economy. The College will hold an organizational meeting for both teachers and students in April to discuss in more detail the form and function of the organization as well as how to officially register.

Objective 2: Build local NGO sustainability and capacity in product design, development, and marketing of crafts.

After participating in ATA's training program which was held in conjunction with the February New York International Gift Fair, Ms. Orlovskaya, Ms. Ryskeldieva, and Mr. Narzullaev are all sharing the information gained during the training. Ms. Orlovskaya is planning trainings for NGOs in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan about booth display and marketing. These seminar will be held before the May Almaty craft fair so that all of the NGO members can immediately try out the information received in the training. Ms. Ryskeldieva will be holding training sessions for TSF members in Naryn, Kyrgyzstan on production and pricing, and Mr. Narzullaev appeared on an Uzbek morning news program to discuss his training and what it has meant for his ceramics center. Mr. Narzullaev's TV appearance featured clips from a video that he had taken of his training in New York.

Objective 3: Generate supplemental income for NGO members belonging to vulnerable groups such as women, unemployed and pensioners.

ATA participated in the February New York International Gift Fair where more than \$9000 in wholesale orders was written for Central Asian products. These orders represent additional income for local NGOs allowing them to continue providing services for their members who include women, unemployed, and pensioners. In addition, US importer Mediterranean Imports recently received an order from Daily Planet, an ethnic-inspired clothing catalogue, for embroidered chopan jackets. This

order for more than \$39,000 will provide income to women artisans in Uzbekistan.

Objective 4: Facilitate networking among crafts-producing NGOs throughout Central Asia through regional crafts fairs and training workshops.

Artisans from throughout the region have begun selling products through the ATA/TSF shop in Bishkek. In order to get products to the shop and collect money from sales, artisans are working together by consolidating their products and organizing systems for delivering goods.

C. ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS (BY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE)
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OBJECTIVE 1

Promote democratically governed, financially sustainable, market-driven, service-orientated craft NGOs (USAID IR 2.1.1.2).

KAZAKHSTAN ACTIVITIES

Ms. Gottschling trained ATA's Kazakhstan Program Coordinator Ainura Ashirova in how to use a digital camera and digital image transferring to help NGOs with product design and development. Ms. Ashirova will train ATA's other Program Coordinators in how to use the technology so that ATA design consultants and international buyers can follow-up with NGO Artisan Centers on product design in the US after their in-country work.

KYRGYZSTAN ACTIVITIES

Golden Thimble member Ms. Zulaika Ryskeldieva traveled to the US in February to attend the training program ATA offers in conjunction with the New York International Gift Fair (NYIGF). Ms. Ryskeldieva visited local non-profit craft organizations such as the Hartford Artisan Center and the Farmington Valley Arts Center to understand how they are organized and managed. She also received information on how they raise funds to continue their operations. In New York, Ms. Ryskeldieva also worked with ATA consultant Aram Sharambeyan on pricing and production issues. At the NYIGF, Ms. Ryskeldieva was able to see Golden Thimble products on display at the ATA booth and to gain a better understanding of the US market.

TAJIKISTAN ACTIVITIES

Ms. Bishop, together with Ms. Asadova and two artisans from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan developed a product quality seminar which Ms. Asadova and Maya Aminova, leader of ATA's Tajik local partner NGO the Women's Center for Initiative, presented to seven women artisans doing traditional embroidery in Tajikistan. The seminar helped the women produce better quality embroidery pieces, which will then be more marketable locally and regionally.

Several Tajik artisan NGO members also traveled to Uzbekistan in March to participate in product design seminars given by ATA product design consultant Jane Griffiths. Ms. Griffiths noticed a dramatic improvement in the quality of products produced by the Tajik women from the products, which she reviewed during her November consultancy. The products, which were brought to Tashkent for Jane's review, were quickly sold, thus providing immediate income to members of the Women's Center for Initiative.

UZBEKISTAN ACTIVITIES

Uzbek ceramist Abdullo Narzullaev and ATA Program Coordinator Genia Orlovskaya also attended the NYIGF training program. Through site visits to local artisan non-profit organizations, Ms.

Orlovskaya and Mr. Narzullaev learned the role such organizations play in the US. By attending the NYIGF, the trainees also learned about the US market and how to develop materials for marketing crafts. Such information will also help the trainees better market their products locally and regionally, thus earning more revenue to sustain local Uzbek NGOs.

ATA product design consultant Jane Griffiths worked with NGOs in Uzbekistan for three weeks in March. She conducted product development workshops with members of the Bukhara Artisan Center and Meros Center and held extensive training sessions on color and utility and how these features can make a product more saleable. NGO members have already created new products as a result of Ms. Griffiths training, and these products will be tested for market feedback at the May fair in Almaty.

OBJECTIVE 2

Build local NGO sustainability and capacity in product design, development, and marketing of crafts (USAID IR 2.1.1.2).

See activities under Objective 1.

OBJECTIVE 3

Generate supplemental income for NGO members belonging to vulnerable groups such as women, unemployed and pensioners (USAID SO 3.2, IR 3.2.3.1).

KYRGYZSTAN ACTIVITIES

In March, ATA and partner NGO Talent Support Fund (TSF) secured the retail license for their craft shop in Bishkek. The shop contains a mix of products from ATA's partner NGOs throughout Central Asia. The shop has already sold more than \$1300 worth of merchandise, which represents income to TSF, other NGOs in the region, and, NGO members including women, unemployed, and pensioners. TSF is also working with a travel agent called Kyrgyz Concept who has agreed to bring tour groups by the shop.

OBJECTIVE 4

Facilitate networking among crafts-producing NGOs throughout Central Asia through regional craft fairs and training workshops (USAID IR 3.2.1.1).

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

ATA/Central Asia has begun issuing a bimonthly newsletter for members of its partner NGOs (see attachment 5). The newsletter will be free for NGO members, and NGOs will charge a small fee to non-members to cover the cost of paper and printing. The newsletter will serve as a forum for NGOs to share advocacy successes, market information, and news about local events. ATA program coordinators in each Republic will translate the newsletter into the relevant local language. The newsletter will help to facilitate linkages between craft NGOs in the region.

D. ISSUES AND/OR PROBLEMS

In Almaty, Ms. Bishop and Ms. Gottschling met together with David Smith, Counterpart, and Sean Roberts, USAID, to discuss the possibility of revising several of ATA's project objectives and indicators. The previously agreed upon objectives do not fully capture ATA's successes in the areas of democracy, advocacy, and NGO capacity building. ATA will work with Counterpart in the next quarter to change project indicators so that they more effectively measure ATA's work in these areas.

E. LESSONS LEARNED

For several months, ATA partner NGO Talent Support Fund was unable to secure a retail license for the ATA/TSF retail shop, which was ready to open in Bishkek. Neighbors living next to the shop refused to authorize the zoning permit because they were concerned that if the ATA/TSF shop closed, a new and noisy business could move into the space. TSF worked with the neighbors on a compromise and proposed a restricted license which would allow TSF to operate the shop, but would not allow any other commercial activity move into the space should TSF move the shop to a new location. By working with its neighbors to find a solution instead of accepting a top-down decision from the government, TSF's efforts to find a suitable compromise exemplify democracy in action.

F. PROJECT CHANGES

In February, Ms. Ainura Ashirova accepted the position of Local Program Coordinator for Kazakhstan. Ms. Ashirova a graduate of both the Almaty Applied Arts College and the Kazak State Academy of Art. ATA now has Local Program Coordinators in each of the four countries in which it is currently working.

G. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

REGIONAL

Ms. Bishop traveled to the US in February to attend the NYIGF. Ms. Bishop also visited ATA headquarters in Farmington to plan and coordinate project activities for the coming six months with ATA staff.

ATA President Clare Brett Smith attended a debriefing in Washington given by Hillary Rodham Clinton about her recent trip to Central Asia. ATA's accomplishments working with the Meros Artisan Center in Samarkand, Uzbekistan were included in a USAID press release that was distributed at the event (see attachment 6).

UZBEKISTAN

ATA Country Director John Smart and representatives of artisan associations participated in Counterpart NGO legal seminars that were held in five cities throughout Uzbekistan. Participating NGOs were provided with information on the role and legal status of NGOs in Uzbekistan. Participating NGOs included the Meros Center, Bukhara Artisan Center, Ustozoda, Ghizduvan ceramists, Margilan silk producers, and the directors of Khunarmond from Bukhara and Nukus.

H. LEVERAGING

Using funds leveraged from the Rausing Trust, ATA's European Marketing Manager Karen Gibbs scouted three trade shows in Paris to identify trends in pricing, products and presentation related to Central Asian products and to identify importers/wholesalers who might be interested in the Central Asian products. Buyers were most interested in the Uzbek decorative ceramics, ikat fabrics, suzani embroidery patterns, and the Kyrgyz felt products.

As a result, Rausing Trust will fund a Kyrgyz marketing mission to Europe timed to coincide with an exhibition of Central Asian crafts in Paris at the Theatre Equestre Zingaro. The Maison des Cultures du Monde, a French organization dedicated to promoting foreign cultures in France, is coordinating the annual cultural program, "Festival de l'Imaginaire", in Paris between February 13 - April 4. The program includes concerts, dance performances, lectures, exhibitions, films, singing and theater. On April 3-4, a Central Asian concert will feature performers from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Aid to Artisans has been invited participate in a craft exhibition, demonstration and sale which accompanies the two evening concerts. This marketing mission will allow TSF personnel to further

expand their knowledge of the international market.

IV. THE CITIZENS NETWORK FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

A. PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of the Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA) project component is:

To assist in the creation of democratic and pluralistic associations, promote the economic viability of rural communities and raise the quality of life for people of rural Kyrgyzstan.

B. PROJECT IMPACTS

Ak-Siy PFA Members Extended Credit through KAFC

Twenty-two farmers from the Ak-Siy rayon PFA in Jalal-Abad will receive loans through the Kyrgyz Agricultural Finance Corporation (KAFC). Two groups of PFA members have formed credit cooperatives for channeling and monitoring KAFC credit. CNFA introduced the Ak-Siy PFA President to the manager of KAFC's Small Farmers Credit Outreach Program (SFCOP), and provides the PFA the training in organizational development that KAFC prefers in the groups it credits.

Cooperation between Talas Center for Women's Initiatives and CNFA local staff

The leader of the Center for Women's Initiatives, G. Kasymbekova, will make use of CNFA local staff in conducting seminars for women in Talas oblast. CNFA local staff will conduct seminars on credit programs for women farmers in four rayons of Talas oblast. The Center for Women's Initiatives will make use of CNFA staff and the materials developed by CNFA in cooperation with the National Bank/ADB Credit Union project and KAFC. This enables CNFA, KAFC, and NBK to reach more farmers and allows the Center for Women's Initiatives to provide much-needed training to women in Talas.

C. ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHT (BY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE)

OBJECTIVE 1

To strengthen existing and emerging private farmers' associations (PFAs), in Kyrgyzstan as self-sustaining, democratic rural-based NGOs through partnership with U.S. State Farm Bureaus and in-country technical assistance (USAID SO 2.1; USAID IR 2.1.1.2).

Local Staff Trained in Talas and Jalal-Abad

- Four people have been hired to carry out CNFA activities in the regions of Talas and Jalal-Abad. In Talas, two employees of the Agricultural Training and Advisory Service (ATAS) have been released from their positions for one year to work with CNFA on farmer association development. After a week of orientation and training with the CNFA-Bishkek staff, the Talas field staff attended a series of Counterpart training seminars and have made good use of the Counterpart methodology in their subsequent work with PFAs. The two people hired in Jalal-Abad oblast have been released from their work as professors in the Department of Animal Health at Jalal-Abad University for one year while they work for CNFA on farmer association development in the Jalal-Abad region. The Jalal-Abad field staff will attend a series of Counterpart training seminars in April. They were hired one month later than the Talas staff.

- The hiring of local field staff enables CNFA to have a greater impact with the PFAs. The field staff, since they are physically located close to the farmers, can provide more consistent support to these associations.
- CNFA also invited representatives of the Agri-Business Center in Chui oblast and the President of a PFA in Panfilov rayon of Chui oblast to participate in the CNFA training for the local consultants on farmers' associations. Involving employees of the agricultural extension services in CNFA training activities allows the CNFA program to have wider impact, since the agricultural extension service is active in all oblasts and reaches many more farmers overall, than does the CNFA program covering two regions.

CNFA Local Staff Organize Farmer Groups in Jalal-Abad

- CNFA field staff in Jalal-Abad with assistance from the President of the Osh PFA, conducted introductory seminars on PFAs in Nooken in Bazar-Korgon rayons in southern Jalal-Abad oblast. About 20 farmers attended each seminar and have since decided to establish PFAs in those rayons. Representatives of the local rayon administration also attended the seminars and became convinced during the course of the seminar, that strong PFAs will benefit rather than compete with the local administrations. PFAs throughout Kyrgyzstan struggle with the local administrations, which, due to lack of understanding about NGOs in general and PFAs in particular, sometimes obstruct the work of PFAs. The farmers in Jalal-Abad displayed a strong understanding of the function of a PFA and the role of the Board and Committees.

Indiana Farm Bureau Members Conduct Seminars for PFAs

- During the month of March, two members from the Indiana State Farm Bureau - Wayne and Glenda Bode - spent three weeks in Kyrgyzstan teaching PFA members about the role of Boards of Directors and Committees in a farm organization. A total of 99 people attended the seminars, which were held in the four rayons of Talas oblast: Manas, Kara-Bura, Bakai-Ata, and Talas rayon. In Jalal-Abad oblast, 71 farmers in three rayons: Ak-Siy, Nooken, and Bazar-Korgon, attended the Bodes' seminar. The Bodes and CNFA staff conducted a follow-up session for Board Members of two PFAs on developing an annual workplan, budget, and a rudimentary strategic plan. The session was extremely successful, and the two PFAs came away from the session with workplans, budgets, and plans for the future development of their associations. Toward the end of their visit, the Bodes met with Deputy Jurayev, Head of the Agrarian Commission in the National Parliament; and with M. Aitmatov, Head of the Agricultural Training and Advisory Service (ATAS) in Kyrgyzstan. In addition, during a visit to Manas rayon of Talas oblast, the Bodes held a short meeting with the head of the rayon administration (rayon *akim*), who requested an explanation of the different taxes paid by American farmers, and the relationship between the U.S. Government and the Farm Bureau.
- The Bodes provided a great deal of information on costs of farm operations in the U.S. The farmers were very interested in these statistics and they provided for lively discussions during the seminars.

Seminar on Credit Conducted for Talas farmers

- CNFA local staff K. Davletov, an economist, held a seminar for members of the Association of Vegetable Growers and the Association of Milk Producers, to explain the various credit programs available to farmers in Kyrgyzstan, and on the preparation of business plans to obtain credit. Responding to farmers' interest in credit issues, CNFA is cooperating with KAFC and the National Bank Finance Company to develop seminars for farmers on credit management and credit unions.

OBJECTIVE 2

Strengthen the capacity of rural PFAs to represent effectively the interests of farmers and widen their influence with local and national government (USAID IR 2.1.1.1).

Representative of the National Parliament meets with Issyk-Kul PFA members

- CNFA planned and facilitated a meeting between Deputy Jeksheev of the Tong and Tup electoral districts in Issyk Kul oblast and members of rayon PFAs in Issyk Kul oblast. About 40 farmers attended the meeting, which was conducted with the cooperation of Mercy Corps-Europe, which is implementing a democracy project with the Issyk Kul rayon PFAs. CNFA invited representatives of the Kyrgyz Agricultural Finance Corporation (KAFC), and the State Agency on Land Management and Land Resources (SALMLR) to address the farmers about credit and land issues respectively.

OBJECTIVE 3

Increase participation of women farmers in the ongoing activities of PFAs.

CNFA Supports Women Farmers in Talas

- In a seminar sponsored by the Center for Women's Initiatives in Talas oblast, CNFA local staff member G. Kaldaraliev addressed a gathering of women farmers, explaining the benefits of an association and the concept of a membership-driven association. As a result of the seminar, women farmers intend to organize an Association of Women Farmers in Talas oblast. The leader of the Center for Women's Initiatives, G. Kasymbekova, attended the early seminars for farmers conducted by CNFA in Talas oblast on PFA structure.

D. ISSUES AND/OR PROBLEMS

There is an incredible proliferation of groups at the local level, many of which form in order to get something from donors. There is a strong need for coordination among the donors on this activity.

Specifically related to farmers' organizations, many donor projects are using the farmer groups as a basis for purchasing or marketing cooperatives, or as a channel for credit and technical advice. In short, these projects are offering the farmers a chance to better their economic conditions. The farmers will likely be active in only one farmers' organization, and they will be active the organization that offers them the best possibility for getting ahead financially. Thus, the farmers' organizations that offer general support in information dissemination, facilitating meetings with parliamentarians, seminars on various aspects of organizational development, will not be of interest to farmers. These will likely be squeezed out in the short-run by the farmer groups that offer a concrete benefit to farmers such as credit, a market for wool and meat, access to a tractor or combine. Thus, our strategy will be to link our program as much as possible with other projects that have means to offer "commercial or economic" benefits to farmers. It seems that these projects are not as strong as CNFA's is on the various aspects of organizational development, which are badly needed in order for the associations to survive beyond the time of the given project that is has promoted their creation.

The concept of volunteerism has yet to take hold among farmers. Many of the people who serve now as presidents of the farmers organizations, or who work on behalf of the farmers organizations, expect to be paid for their efforts. Although CNFA continuously preaches that the officers and board members of an association work free of charge for the benefit of the members, farmers have not yet adopted this notion.

Due to the number of projects engaged in work with the farm population, every effort should be made

to inform other organizations of planned training activities. There was an initiative in November to set up a coordination group for activities related to locally based groups. This should be revived.

With CNFA's contract ending in December 1998, the project is making every effort to ensure that in the absence of a project extension, the work done by the project will be carried on. This was a major factor in hiring local staff and specifically, persons slated to work in the agriculture extension service in the future. The training CNFA provides these people during 1998, will then be institutionalized when they return to their positions with the extension service.

E. LESSONS LEARNED

In dealing with the farmer groups, we must be careful to check with other organizations that have had experiences with the group in order not to reward groups or individuals that have not played by the rules in the past. Further, we must share with other projects our experiences in dealing with farmer groups, in order to keep other projects from repeating our mistakes.

During the seminars conducted by U.S. farmers (Farm Bureau members), the information provided by the visitors on U.S. farming is the hook that gets farmers interested in the association development material. Discussion of organizational aspects of farmers associations is not so important to the farmers since it is not an immediate need and no immediate benefit is perceived. However, if these discussions of the organizational aspects of the farm association is done in the context of real problems faced by the farmers today, the need for an association becomes much more apparent to the seminar participants.

F. PROJECT CHANGES

Instead of working out of Bishkek, sending one trainer on road trips twice a month to Talas and Jalal-Abad, we have restructured the project to have staff posted in the regions. This gives us an opportunity to reach more farmers with our training and support.

Responding to farmers' interest in credit and marketing, CNFA, in cooperation with other organizations, will conduct seminars on credit management, credit unions, and the establishment of purchasing and marketing cooperatives. Also, due to a need to emphasize the election of board members and officers, CNFA staff will conduct seminars on general assemblies. This means that the dates for conducting seminars on women in the PFA, Accounting/Financial Record keeping, Membership, and Services to Members are pushed back into late summer, early fall. However, now that CNFA has local staff in Talas and Jalal-Abad, these changes do not present a significant problem for the program.

G. COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

CNFA is working with KAFC on developing a seminar on credit management.

CNFA is cooperating with the National Bank/ADB credit union project on developing seminars for farmers on credit unions.

H. LEVERAGING

Indiana Farm Bureau Members Wayne and Glenda Bode donated 21 days of their professional time to the Talas and Jalal-Abad PFAs, an in-kind donation of \$5,004.

CNFA has facilitated access to an essential resource, agricultural credit, for the members of the Ak-Siy PFA. CNFA introduced the PFA to KAFC and encouraged the farmers to participate in its Small Farmers' Credit Outreach Program (SFCOP) which will make loans for crop inputs to small farmers.

V. THE INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR NOT-FOR-PROFIT LAW

A. PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of the ICNL project component is:

1. **To nourish a continuing NGO-state relationship;**
2. **In coordination, cooperation, and collaboration with USAID, its contractors and grantees, to assist in the construction of a comprehensive legal and fiscal framework that will enable the NGO sector to thrive in the region and contribute in a meaningful way to the development of civil society.**

B. PROJECT IMPACTS

KAZAKHSTAN

- ICNL held a training session for its local representatives at the Regional Counterpart Office in January. Every Central Asian country was represented. Regional and local issues were discussed as well as the international norms of NGO legislation. Local expert, Vadim Nee, gave a presentation of regional legislative issues and distributed ICNL materials regarding NGO legislation. Each country representative gave an assessment of the state of legislation in their country and ways in which ICNL and Counterpart can assist their particular situation. Counterpart trainers were also present and provided the ICNL partners with a report of Counterpart methods for training. The Counterpart/ICNL relationship is mutually beneficial. The group discussed ways in which to utilize this relationship for the legal training of NGO representatives.

The effects of this training will spread throughout the region. ICNL partners now have a better understanding of Counterpart and its integral role in overall NGO development. **Through this meeting, the partners have created a network of NGO law specialists that will prove invaluable to region-wide efforts in reform.** This network has already proved invaluable to the Tajikistan and Uzbekistan programs and will prove the same during a region wide conference to be held in May.

- Counterpart and ICNL held a seminar in early March. The seminar was an introduction for the ICNL/Counterpart legislative initiative and was attended by more than 23 key representatives of NGOs. Kazakhstani legislation and the international principles were a focus as well as the move of the capital city to Akmola. The NGOs created a list of proposals regarding the legislative initiative and how NGOs could react to the relocation of the capital. This list of proposals extended into subsequent meetings as between ICNL, NGOs and parliamentarians and was used to highlight issues raised by the NGO community. ICNL established contact and good relations with seven deputies of parliament during the course of these round tables and meetings. These deputies have expressed interest in working on a legislative project. This opens an avenue for an April trip to Akmola to discuss NGO legislation as between ICNL, NGOs and parliamentarians.

KYRGYZSTAN

- The legislation in Kyrgyzstan is outdated and hinders development of the NGO sector. It burdens NGOs through heavy taxation and complex regulation. In short, it is much like the over-bearing, Soviet law that still prevails in most of the NIS. As a result the NGO community prepared two draft laws in attempts to kindle legislative initiatives. A third law was prepared by a parliamentary

source. These laws were without widespread support and hung in limbo for over a year.

ICNL organized a working group of NGO representatives, deputies of parliament and USAID grantees. The concept was to consolidate the three drafts into one that would be revised by the working group and submitted to the Parliament. After three days of solid drafting, a single draft was finalized which was submitted to the deputies for consideration. NGOs, ICNL and other USAID grantees will continue to revise the draft until it will be submitted for the voting process in May.

- ICNL was also given the opportunity to propose amendments to the Kyrgyz Tax Code. The comments and proposed amendments were developed by ICNL experts in Washington and sent to the USAID contractors in Kyrgyzstan, as well as specific parliamentarians. Mr. Remias met with Deputy Oktyabr Mulsulmankulov, Chairman of the Finance Committee, and other parliamentarians regarding these amendments. If adopted, these amendments will improve the fiscal and regulatory framework for NGOs in Kyrgyzstan. **These amendments have successfully raised the issue of taxation of NGOs and will be discussed for the some time to come.** ICNL is optimistic that at least some of these amendments will be adopted within the next year.

TAJIKISTAN

- ICNL has made an impact in Tajikistan where ICNL postponed activity last November. However, ICNL is now ready to return to Tajikistan to continue progress made last period. In the meantime, continuing progress is evidenced by a thank you letter and invitation addressed to the ICNL from the Ministry of Justice of Tajikistan. ICNL was encouraged to return to Tajikistan to work on a draft public associations law in April. This law is scheduled for introduction into Parliament in May.

UZBEKISTAN

- The current legislative framework of Uzbekistan is restrictive and constrains growth of the NGO sector. Former attempts at changing the legislative status quo have been stalled or forgotten. Counterpart Consortium, ICNL and deputies from parliament re-ignited the legislative initiative in Uzbekistan. This initial cooperation later extended into the NGO community and culminated into a series of seminars dedicated to the NGOs and the need for legislative reform. These seminars were respectively held in different regional capitals; Fergana, Kokand, Samarkand, Bukhara and Nukus. A sixth and final seminar was held in Tashkent at the building of the Parliament.

The seminars provided a rare opportunity for NGO leadership and government representatives to meet and discuss NGO/government relations. The six seminars combined attracted more than 200 participants from the government, NGOs and international organizations. The discussions focused on the possibility of new legislation, what issues that legislation should address and how legislation affects NGOs. The first result of these seminars was the creation of a list of issues and proposals from the NGO community that will be used as a guide for the next stage of reform efforts.

The second result of these seminars was the governmental commitment to form a working group of NGOs and government officials to address the legislative issues facing NGOs in Uzbekistan. Furthermore, the seminars drew attention and support from other international organizations and donors (OSCE, UNDP, UNHCR, World Bank, etc.). As a result of this support and subsequent communication, the international organizations, which were formerly scattered in their approaches to legislative issues, are now more unified in their efforts. These organizations declared their support for the creation of a working group and the resolution of the issues raised by NGOs.

C. ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS (BY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE)

OBJECTIVE 1

To assist indigenous organizations and individuals in constructing a legal framework that appropriately governs and supports the development of the NGO sector in the republics of Central Asia (USAID IR 2.1.1, IR 2.1.1.1., IR 2.1.1.2)

Technical Assistance with Drafting Laws

- **Kyrgyzstan:** The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) formed a working group to address the legislation in Kyrgyzstan. ICNL brought together the authors of three competing drafts to form one drafting group and one draft law. The working group is special in that it is a truly balanced collection of representation. NGO representatives from Interbilim and the NGO Forum actively participate in the working group. Working side-by-side with deputies, the working group is the best of NGO and governmental representation.

On March 20, largely due to the efforts of Natalia Bourjaily, Program Director of the NIS, the working group consolidated the three drafts into one, and formed a final consolidated draft which was sent to the participating deputies for further revisions. This law is a comprehensive draft, which comports with international standards and will tremendously benefit the NGO community of Kyrgyzstan. ICNL will continue to comment and revise this legislation with the deputies, NGO leaders, the National Democratic Institute (NDI), American Bar Association (ABA) and other consultants. ICNL will also assist in motivating the NGO community to lobby for such changes. The final law will be submitted to the Kyrgyzstan parliament for consideration in May.

- **Uzbekistan:** The National Center for Human Rights, Counterpart Consortium and ICNL reignited a legislative initiative in the Republic of Uzbekistan. This cooperative effort seeks to redress the current state of NGO legislation in Uzbekistan. Former attempts at reforming the soviet style legislation have been stalled and neglected. This present cooperation promises to involve all levels of the government, NGO leadership and international organizations in a collective effort to review the potential reform of NGO legislation. ICNL hopes to create a working group of legislators and international consultants to address the issue of Uzbekistan NGO legislation. This legislative initiative was discussed between the Uzbek-US Joint Commission and will hopefully blossom into solid legislative results.

Interest on the government's behalf is mainly represented by the National Human Rights Center of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The director of the Center, Akmal Saidov, is also a deputy of parliament. The initiative also has the active participation of another deputy, Achtam Tursunov, Director of the Institute of Monitoring Legislation.

The cooperation between all parties culminated into a series of seminars dedicated to the NGO legislation in Uzbekistan. These seminars were respectively held in different regional capitals; Fergana, Kokand, Samarkand, Buhkara and Nukus. The majority of funding was provided by USAID's Global Training for Development Project (GTD) and included the participation of the American Bar Association. The Counterpart Consortium handled logistical arrangements and used its extensive contacts with the NGO community to provide the optimal combination of NGO representation.

- **Tajikistan:** The legal and economic framework of Tajikistan collapsed under the weight of a civil war. The government, in conjunction with multi-national efforts, is attempting to move forward in reconstructing a shattered social and political framework. In order to step up this process, the government has set forth an optimistic agenda of new laws to be heard in the Parliament. In a surprising move, the government has scheduled a new NGO law for submission to Parliament. It is expected that any draft submitted will have a good chance of serious consideration under the

current circumstances.

The Ministry of Justice and unspecified parliamentarians have specifically requested ICNL assistance in finalizing the draft NGO law. This stems from the previous assistance of ICNL in its comments on two NGO draft laws. ICNL must fulfill its role as adviser and facilitator to the legislative drafting process to ensure the best possible draft is submitted to the legislative body of Tajikistan. ICNL activities, formerly stalled by the political crisis, will be re-ignited to take advantage of this small window of opportunity. ICNL is now ready to continue the Tajikistan initiative in full-force. IFES, ABA, UN and OSCE currently are continuing programming there.

ICNL and Counterpart will hold a round table meeting on April 15th and 16th for those already involved in the drafting process: representatives from the MOJ, NGO representatives and lawyers who are interested and qualified to assist in these technical matters. The group will necessarily include decision-makers from the government, in particular, people from the Parliament and Presidential Administration. The resolution of the round table will be to form a legislative working group to begin immediately on revising the draft legislation.

Training

- **Regional:** On January 9th, ICNL held a training session for its local partners in Almaty. Every Central Asian country was represented. Regional and local issues were discussed as well as the international norms of NGO legislation. Local expert and ICNL partner, Vadim Nee, gave a presentation of regional legislative issues and distributed materials regarding NGO legislation. Mr. Remias spoke on the ICNL objectives and the standards that the ICNL promotes. Each country representative gave an assessment of the state of legislation in their country and ways in which ICNL can assist their particular situation. Counterpart trainers were also present and provided the ICNL partners with a report of Counterpart methods for training. The Counterpart/ICNL relationship is mutually beneficial. The group discussed ways in which to utilize this relationship for the legal training of NGO representatives.

Mr. Remias also met with Roman Podoprigora to discuss the state of legal education in Kazakhstan. Mr. Podoprigora is the Head of the Administrative Law Department at "Adilet", the first and most commercial law faculty in the Kazakhstan. Mr. Podoprigora also attended the ICNL meeting and added his expertise to group discussions.

- **Kazakhstan:** ICNL and Counterpart held the first of a series of seminars on March 4. This first seminar addressed the capital's move to Akmola and its effect on the legislative advocacy of Kazakh NGOs. Mr. Remias addressed the legislative questions during this seminar. Vadim Nee and the Counterpart Trainers were also involved. The Counterpart Trainers elicited questions and responses to form a list of issues. This list will be reduced to a proposal and forwarded to parliamentarians and government officials later this Spring. In relation to this seminar and the Kazakhstan initiative, ICNL partner, Vadim Nee, spoke at a UNDP sponsored NGO round table about the ICNL/Counterpart Kazakhstan initiative.
- **Tajikistan:** ICNL organized two seminars, which were supposed to take place in Khojand and Dushanbe on the 22 and 23 of November 1997. Both government officials and NGOs expressed their wiliness to participate in these seminars. The purpose of these seminars is to help the drafters to improve the draft laws and to facilitate the collaboration between the government officials and NGOs. Seminars were postponed because of the political crises in Tajikistan and will take place in April 1998.
- **Uzbekistan:** The five regional seminars (See Activity Description under Objective 1) served as a training session to both government officials and NGO representatives. ICNL Regional Director, Rich Remias, spoke on the international principles of NGO legislation and the current legislation

in Uzbekistan. Deputy Saidov discussed the former project law and general need for new legislation. The ABA contributed an overview of American NGO legislation including its preferential tax treatment. Deputy Tursunov presented arguments in favor of new NGO legislation in Uzbekistan, which comported to the international standards.

Cooperation with US and International Organizations

- **Kazakhstan:** Along with meeting with local NGO representatives, ICNL has established good relations with other international organizations and USAID contractors. To date ICNL has actively cooperated with Soros, UNDP, UNHCR, ABA, Peace Corps, AED/GTD, IFES, IRIS, and the Almaty OMT team. ICNL local partner, Vadim Nee, spoke at a UNDP sponsored NGO round table about the ICNL/Counterpart Kazakhstan initiative. There, he met with a deputy from Parliament to discuss the possibility of a Kazakhstan working group. ICNL has met with the UNDP to discuss forms of cooperation.
- **Kyrgyzstan:** ICNL is a partner of Counterpart, which has developed into a truly mutually beneficial relationship. Beyond that ICNL cooperates very effectively with the USAID Resident Advisor on Commercial Law, who helped to develop strategy for the joint working group to finalize the NGO draft law; with Richard Stoddard and Scott Kearin, the NDI Representatives, who introduced ICNL to deputies of Parliament; with the ABA who assisted with the successful drafting process; Howard Ockman, the Group Leader for IRIS/CA who helped ICNL to translate comments to three draft laws from Russian into English and offered his advice on how to proceed.

Mr. Remias went to Kyrgyzstan and represented ICNL at the OSCE seminar, "NGOs and their Interaction with Government and International Organizations". Representatives from all the large Kyrgyz NGOs were in attendance and spoke on issues relevant to the NGO community. Government officials were also present and ranged from the Ministry of Justice, President's Administration and Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mr. Remias spoke to and made solid contact with the new NDI representative, Country Resident Representative of the UNHCR and with the entire Central Asian division of the OSCE.

- **Tajikistan:** The Counterpart/ICNL relationship has blossomed into joint seminars to take place in April. The seminar/drafting session will culminate into a concerted effort involving different organizations. ICNL has set plans to cooperate with the UNHCR in Tajikistan during March. As for USAID grantees, the ICNL is attempting to do joint seminars with the ABA, OSCE, Counterpart and IFES in June.
- **Uzbekistan:** Many groups and organizations have an active interest in ICNL's legislative project. In addition to working within the Counterpart Consortium, ICNL has established active cooperation with AED, UNHCR, ABA, Eurasia, GTZ, OSCE, Uzbekistan's Business Women's Association, and local NGOs. The UNHCR and OSI are also planning regional events in cooperation with ICNL. For different sponsors to hold a dozen or so seminars on NGO law is, in the long run, ineffective. The seminars/conferences must work into an overall plan or strategy. ICNL will play the role of "facilitator" so that all these efforts can be consolidated. If these resources and objectives are combined, the overall effort can have high impact. In addition, ICNL will rely on the Office of Market Transition and other USAID grantees to assist in identifying the specific legislative needs.

OBJECTIVE 2

Fair, consistent, apolitical implementation of the fiscal and regulatory policies affecting NGOs throughout the region (USAID IR 2.1.1.1).

Building Bridges

- **Uzbekistan:** The four mentioned seminars (See Activity Description under Objective 1) also provided an opportunity for NGO leadership and government representatives to meet and discuss NGO/government relations. The discussions focused on the possibility of new legislation, what issues that legislation should address and how legislation affects NGOs. Blair Sheridan, Director of Counterpart/Uzbekistan, moderated the seminars and initiated discussion sessions.

The five seminars combined attracted more than 150 participants from the government, NGOs and international organizations. Verified government representation included; parliamentarians, the Ministry of Justice, Council of Ministers, Ministry of Social Protection, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, representatives from the Presidential Apparatus, local Khokims (governors), and several academies/universities. The NGO representation of both "pure" NGOs and those representing quasi-NGOs (GONGOs) crossed the spectrum of registered and unregistered organizations. The seminars also attracted attendees from Soros, the UNDP, Peace Corps, Aid to Artisans and other international organizations. There was steady television and print media coverage of the seminars.

Technical Assistance with the Legal Framework

- **Kyrgyzstan:** Through on-going cooperation with Barent's Group, IRIS, NDI, OMT and USAID, ICNL was given the opportunity to propose amendments to the Kyrgyz Tax Code. The comments and proposed amendments were developed by ICNL experts in Washington and sent to the Finance Committee of Parliament, all the USAID contractors in Kyrgyzstan, as well as specific parliamentarians. The comments would alter the current tax code of Kyrgyzstan to provide the standard tax benefits to NGOs. It is hoped, that these comments will be reviewed and discussed by the parliament within the current year. It is critical that ICNL coordinate its legislative initiative with USAID's Office of Market Transition and various grantees so to promote overall consistency in USAID legislative reform efforts.

OBJECTIVE 3

Increase the capacity of indigenous NGO representatives and lawyers to sustain momentum on legal reform, improving public sensitivity to the rule of law in targeted countries (USAID IR 2.1.1, IR 2.1.1.1, IR 2.1.1.2, IR 2.1.3.2)

Training and Technical Assistance

Kazakhstan: See Activity Description under Objective 1.

Kyrgyzstan: See Activity Description under Objective 1.

Tajikistan: See Activity Description under Objective 1.

Uzbekistan: See Activity Description under Objective 1.

Providing legal materials

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan: the following materials (in English and Russian) were provided to all interested parties in Central Asia:

- The Checklist for NPO laws.
- New Legislation on Non-commercial Organizations in Russia.
- The Tax Treatment of Not-for-profit Organizations. A Survey of Best Practices from Around the World.
- Economic Activities of Not-for-profit Organizations.
- The World Bank's Handbook on Good Practices for Laws Relating to Non-commercial Organizations.
- Best draft NGO laws and valid laws from the NIS and from the Central Europe.
- Economic Activities of Non-Commercial Organizations, prepared by the ICNL, for the

Regulating Civil Society Conference in Hungary (May, 1996).

- Development of Legislation, the Regulation of Non-Governmental, Non-Commercial Organizations in Central Asia: Problems and Perspectives, Vadim Nee, Director of Law and Environment Eurasia Partnership.
- The Role and Purpose of the NGO Sector, Leon Irish, President ICNL
- Bases of regulating Activities of the Non-Commercial Sector, Karla Simon,
- Executive Vice President ICNL.
- Role and Purpose of the NGO Sector: Reasons for a Comprehensive Law, prepared by the ICNL (general fact sheet).
- ICNL commentary and proposals on Kyrgyz Tax Code.
- Azerbaijan draft NGO law (ICNL assisted project).
- Yemen draft law.

Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan: the following materials were presented to the newly established working group established by Association of Attorneys of Kyrgyzstan which started working on the draft Law on Charity:

- Bulgarian Law on Non-commercial Organizations (the list of articles)
- The Lithuanian Law on Charity
- The Moldovan Law on Charity
- The City of Moscow Law on Charity
- Russian Federal Law on Charity
- The Regulation on the Charitable Council of Moscow
- The Law on Foundations
- The Russian Federation Draft on Social Contract
- The Azeri Draft Law on Charity
- The Ukrainian Law on Charity.
- ICNL comments to the Ukrainian Law on Charity

Kyrgyzstan: ICNL provided all members of the joint working group with the copies of three competing draft laws and with ICNL analysis of these drafts. ICNL provided assistance to a working group drafting a new Law on Labor by providing legislation regulating labor contracts in other countries and helping the group to contact the Labor Law Branch of the International Labor Office in Geneva for further assistance.

OBJECTIVE 4

Promote credibility of the sector to affect its capacity to provide needed services and advocacy of responsible legislative positions (USAID IR 2.1.1.2, IR 2.1.3)

See the Activities Description to the Objectives 1, 2 and 3.

OBJECTIVE 5

Assist in promoting contracting between governmental entities and NGOs for the provision of social services (USAID SO 2.3, IR 2.1.3, IR 2.1.1.2, 2.1.1.1, IR 2.1.1)

See the Activities Description to the Objective 1, 2 and 3.

OBJECTIVE 6:

Assist in developing mechanisms to increase the level of self-regulation of the sector (USAID IR 2.1.1.2)

The activities described under other Objectives of this Report increase the level of self-regulation of the sector and they are directly related to this Objective. Providing general technical assistance ICNL

is preparing grounds to the future specific work purposed to assist umbrella NGO organizations with the development of codes of enforceable standards established for NGO financial and operating practices. When the new better legislation will be adopted ICNL will start more specific activities in this area.

OBJECTIVE 7

Support indigenous networks of individuals and organizations interested in NGO law (USAID IR 2.1.1, IR 2.1.1.2)

See the Activities Description to the Objective 1, 2 and 3.

D. ISSUES AND/OR PROBLEMS

Kazakhstan: The restrictive political environment might effect any NGO draft law to make it less effective and beneficial for the NGOs. Most NGOs are not particularly interested in the NGO legal reforms and push forward their own very narrow interests. Others have their own "agenda" and do not wish to cooperate with other NGOs. The Ministry of Justice is the official initiator and leader in drafting the NGO laws, but it did not include an NGO law for this year on it's legislative agenda.

Kyrgyzstan: The internal organizational problems of the President's Consultative Council on Legal Reforms might be the major obstacle for the accomplishment of the work on the NGO draft law. The lobbying of the draft law at the Parliament will be a real test for the NGOs. There are too many laws of different levels of importance currently before to the Parliament. The laws presented by the strongest lobbyists will pass while other laws might be postponed indefinitely.

Tajikistan: Political tensions in Tajikistan are distracting the people and government from legislative progress. However, the Peace and Reconciliation Commission is making great strides toward keeping the peace process on track.

Uzbekistan: The government is suspicious of NGOs and reluctant to change existing laws.

E. LESSONS LEARNED

Kazakhstan: ICNL will be focusing on contacts with the Ministry of Justice, other Ministries (the Ministry of Social Protection) and other officials (from the Cabinet of Ministers and the President's Administration). Those with the right to present laws to Parliamentary deputies who are interested in adoption of a better NGO law will be targeted. Varying degrees of knowledge and interest and unwillingness to cooperate with each other weaken the effectiveness of the NGO community to address legislative questions.

Kyrgyzstan: ICNL will attempt to keep the momentum going on this initiative. ICNL has learned that constant promotion and encouragement are necessary in order to maintain the current momentum. This means it will require personal presence of ICNL to make sure that the work of this group is organized and started.

Uzbekistan: ICNL needs to make sure that its legislative initiative is well rounded and maintains the participation of key governmental entities.

F. PROJECT CHANGES

Because of the progress shown to date, ICNL will increase its regional presence through mild additions to its pool of partners.

The trip to Turkmenistan will take place at the end of May 1998;

ICNL will add a summer intern, Kimberley Bulkley, a first year law student at the University of Oregon School of Law. She has Russian language capabilities and has NIS experience. She will work out of Kazakhstan and probably remain there most of the time.

ICNL resumes its activities in Tajikistan.

G. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

Note: Please refer to Objective 1, subsection C, for a country specific list of alliances and cooperation.

US and International organizations: Mr. Remias gave a presentation on Kazakh legislation at the CAR/Monthly Round Table held at USAID. In all Central Asian countries ICNL has coordinated its activities with its partner: Counterpart International, its offices in the regions as well as with its Washington office. All ICNL activities have been coordinated with the USAID regional offices. In addition, Mr. Remias established cooperative relations with the following organizations: ABA; NDI; IRIS; Soros Foundation, Eurasia Foundation, the World Bank, TASIC, OSCE, OSCE, UNHCR, UNDP. See Activity Description under Objective 2. Mr. Remias has met with the Ambassador of Uzbekistan regarding the Uzbekistan initiative. The legislative initiative was discussed between the Uzbek-US Joint Commission on the highest of levels and should develop into solid legislative results.

NGOs: ICNL has active cooperation or interaction with the following:

Tajikistan: Muatar Khaidarova, Chairman Society and Law ICNL's partner; Fund for Support of Civil Initiatives; Youth Ecological School; Oliy Somon; Fund of Legal Reform; Association of Intelligentsia; the Center of Youth Initiatives, Khujand, Tajikistan.

Kazakhstan: Vadim Nee, Kazakh lawyer, formerly with ecological NGO, LEEP and ICNL's main partner; the Charitable Foundation on Legal and Political Research "Interlegal"; the Consumer Protection Rights Group--"Legal Initiative"; the Association of the Invalids Organizations "Zhan"; Women and Law; Legal Development of Kazakhstan; Information Department and Zukhra Taranova, the Deputy Chief of the Registration Department of the Ministry of Justice; Deputy of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament Mr. Alisher Sabirov; other deputies of the Parliament: Rahat Atchilova, Jypar Jeckhsheev (the Chairman of Legislative Committee); Pamir Shentaev, Department of Education in the Kyrgyzstan Parliament.

Kyrgyzstan: Mirgul Smanalieva, Kyrgyz lawyer, the President-Elect of the Association Attorneys of Kyrgyzstan and ICNL's local partner; Ainura Orosolieva, Chairman of the Fund of Legal Initiatives; International Center Interbilim; Institute for Regional Studies; Forum of NGOs.

Uzbekistan: Akmai Saidov, Deputy and Director of the Center for Human Rights of Uzbekistan; Deputy Minister of Justice Pulat Samatov; Pulat Akhmetov -Head of the Control-Analytical Department, NGO Bureau, Ministry of Justice; Akhmat Toursunov, Director, and Kasanov Mikhail Yuryevich, Deputy-Director of the Institute of Monitoring of the Current Legislation of Oli Majlis (Parliament); Bakhodir H. Umurzakov, Minister of Social Maintenance; Sayera Rashidova, the Authorized Person for Human Rights (Ombudsman).

Purpose: To create financially stable NGOs in Central Asia through craft-based microenterprise development.

Results Indicators by Quarter	Quarter 1 July-Sept 97		Quarter 2 Oct-Dec 97		Quarter 3 Jan-Mar 98		Quarter 4 Apr-June 98		Quarter 5 July-Sept 98		Quarter 6 Oct-Dec 98		Quarter 7 Jan-Mar 99	Quarter 8 Apr-June 99		
	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A
Planned (P) vs. Actual (A)																
1) 4 recently formed NGOs registered. (USAID IR 2.1.1.2)																
a) NGO 1 identified.			X	X												
b) NGOs 2-3 identified.					X	X										
c) NGO 4 identified.								X								
d) NGO 1 registered.						X (Khiva)			X							
e) NGOs 2-3 registered.											X					
f) NGO 4 registered.													X			
2) 10 NGOs in 5 C. Asian Republics will increase membership by 50% over two years. (USAID IR 2.1.1.2)																
a) NGOs 1-5 identified.			X	X												
b) NGOs 6-10 identified.					X	X										
c) NGOs 1-10 raise membership by 10%.								X								
d) NGOs raise membership by 20%.									X							
e) NGOs raise membership by 30%.											X					
f) NGOs raise membership by 40%.													X			
g) NGOs raise membership by 50%.															X	

*N/A = Not available. Information will be reported next quarter.

Aid to Artisans' Performance Plan
 NGO Support Initiative
 July 1997 - June 1999

Results Indicators by Quarter	Quarter 1 July-Sept 97		Quarter 2 Oct-Dec 97		Quarter 3 Jan-Mar 98		Quarter 4 Apr-June 98		Quarter 5 July-Sept 98		Quarter 6 Oct-Dec 98		Quarter 7 Jan-Mar 99	Quarter 8 Apr-June 99
	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A
Planned (P) vs. Actual (A)														
3) 1,000 NGO members trained in product design, development, and business management. (USAID IR 1.3.2)														
a) 25 members trained.	X	X												
b) 165 members trained.			X	X										
c) 305 members trained.					X	X								
d) 445 members trained.							X							
e) 585 members trained.									X					
f) 725 members trained.										X				
g) 865 members trained.											X			
h) 1000 members trained.													X	
4) 100% increase in number of member artisans with access to design and marketing assistance over two years. (USAID IR 2.1.1.2)														
a) 2% increase.	X	X												
b) 5% increase.			X	X										
c) 10% increase.					X	X								
d) 20% increase.							X							
e) 40% increase.									X					
f) 60% increase.										X				
g) 80% increase.											X			
h) 100% increase.													X	

*N/A = Not available. Information will be reported next quarter.

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Results Indicators by Quarter	Quarter 1 July-Sept 97		Quarter 2 Oct-Dec 97		Quarter 3 Jan-Mar 98		Quarter 4 Apr-June 98		Quarter 5 July-Sept 98		Quarter 6 Oct-Dec 98		Quarter 7 Jan-Mar 99	Quarter 8 Apr-June 99
	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A
Planned (P) vs. Actual (A)														
5) 90% increase in number of members paying dues to ATA partner NGOs over current 15%. (1.9 x .15 = 29%)														
a) increase members paying dues to 17%.			X	N/A*										
b) increase to 20%.					X	N/A*								
c) increase to 22%.							X							
d) increase to 25%.									X					
e) increase to 27%.										X				
f) increase to 29%.												X		
6) NGO retail outlets retain 15% of profits.														
a) retail outlets open.					X	X (Bishkek)			X (Almaty)					
b) retail outlets breakeven.												X		
c) retail outlets retain profit.														X
7) 5% of member exhibition sales go to the NGO.														
a) 2% of sales.			X	X										
b) 4% of sales.							X							
c) 5% of sales.										X				

*N/A = Not available. Information will be reported next quarter.

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Aid to Artisans' Performance Plan
 NGO Support Initiative
 July 1997 - June 1999

Results Indicators by Quarter	Quarter 1 July-Sept 97		Quarter 2 Oct-Dec 97		Quarter 3 Jan-Mar 98		Quarter 4 Apr-June 98		Quarter 5 July-Sept 98		Quarter 6 Oct-Dec 98		Quarter 7 Jan-Mar 99		Quarter 8 Apr-June 99	
	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A
Planned (P) vs. Actual (A)																
8) Exporting NGOs retain 15% of export revenues.																
a) Retain 2%.			X	X												
b) Retain 5%.					X	X										
c) Retain 7%.							X									
d) Retain 10%.								X								
e) Retain 12%.										X						
f) Retain 15%.												X				
9) 75% increase in revenues to targeted craft NGOs through membership exhibition fees for NGO-sponsored local and regional crafts exhibitions.																
a) 5% increase in revenues.			X	X												
b) 15% increase					X	N/A*										
c) 25% increase							X									
d) 40% increase								X								
e) 55% increase										X						
f) 70% increase												X				
g) 75% increase															X	

*N/A = Not available. Information will be reported next quarter.

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Results Indicators by Quarter	Quarter 1 July-Sept 97		Quarter 2 Oct-Dec 97		Quarter 3 Jan-Mar 98		Quarter 4 Apr-June 98		Quarter 5 July-Sept 98		Quarter 6 Oct-Dec 98		Quarter 7 Jan-Mar 99	Quarter 8 Apr-June 99
	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A
Planned (P) vs. Actual (A)														
10) Increase new local, regional, and int'l. export sales for partner NGOs and their members by \$350,000 in two years, as follows: (Year 1: \$150,000; Year 2: \$200,000).														
Sales increase to:														
a) \$25,000	X	X (\$33,172)												
b) \$50,000			X	X (\$83,172)										
c) \$100,000					X	X (\$133,590)								
d) \$150,000							X							
e) \$200,000								X						
f) \$250,000									X					
g) \$300,000											X			
h) \$350,000													X	

*N/A = Not available. Information will be reported next quarter.

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Aid to Artisans' Performance Plan
 NGO Support Initiative
 July 1997 - June 1999

Results Indicators by Quarter	Quarter 1 July-Sept 97		Quarter 2 Oct-Dec 97		Quarter 3 Jan-Mar 98		Quarter 4 Apr-June 98		Quarter 5 July-Sept 98		Quarter 6 Oct-Dec 98		Quarter 7 Jan-Mar 99	Quarter 8 Apr-June 99
	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A
Planned (P) vs. Actual (A)														
11) Linkages made among at least 14 NGOs at regional craft fairs in Almaty and Tashkent. Craft NGOs from all five Republics establish a regional consortium.														
Linkages made among:														
a) 2 NGOs	X	X												
b) 4 NGOs			X	X										
c) 6 NGOs					X	X								
d) 8 NGOs						X	X							
e) 10 NGOs								X						
f) 12 NGOs										X				
g) 14 NGOs												X		

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*N/A = Not available. Information will be reported next quarter.

Aid to Artisans' Performance Plan

NGO Support Initiative

July 1997 - June 1999

Results Indicators by Quarter	Quarter 1 July-Sept 97		Quarter 2 Oct-Dec 97		Quarter 3 Jan-Mar 98		Quarter 4 Apr-June 98		Quarter 5 July-Sept 98		Quarter 6 Oct-Dec 98		Quarter 7 Jan-Mar 99	Quarter 8 Apr-June 99		
	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A	P	A
Planned (P) vs. Actual (A)																
12) A regional crafts association will be formalized by the EOP.																
a) NGOs meet to discuss regional association in conjunction with regional craft fairs.							X									
b) NGOs talk locally about regional branches.									X							
c) Working groups formed to draft assoc. policies and procedures.											X					
d) Groups meet to agree upon policies.													X			
e) Association formalized and officers elected. Meeting schedule and agenda for first meeting established.															X	

*N/A = Not available. Information will be reported next quarter.

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CNFA/Counterpart-Kyrgyzstan Performance Plan Objectives and Results Indicators	Target level by: 9/30/97		Target level by: 12/31/98		Target level by: 03/31/98		Target level by: 6/31/98		Target level by: 9/30/98		Target level by: 12/31/98	
	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual	Planned	Actual
	<p>Objective 1 Strengthen existing PFAs and emerging private farmers' associations (PFAs) in Kyrgyzstan as self-sustaining, democratic, rural NGOs through in-country technical assistance from Kyrgyz field staff, U.S. state Farm Bureau experts, and other resources of the Counterpart Consortium (USAID SO 2.1; USAID IR 2.1.1.2)</p> <p>Indicators Targeted PFAs adopt components of American Farm Bureau Management and organizational practices (USAID IR 2.1.1.2).*</p> <p>Increased participation of farmer members, in lieu of government technocrats, as elected officers, board or committee members in targeted oblast and rayon PFAs (USAID IR 2.1.1.2);</p> <p>Targeted PFAs demonstrate skills in farm management and association development as measured by member participation in board selection and general assemblies, strategic planning and business plans; formation of committees, transparent financial management systems; increased income from membership dues, development of democratic bylaws; and clearly defined roles for freely elected officers (USAID IR 2.1.1.2);</p> <p>Targeted PFAs increase membership by 25 percent due to enhanced services to members and public outreach through the media (USAID IR 2.1.1.1.)</p>	7 seminars for PFAs in various aspects of AFB management/organization	6 seminars held	7 PFAs trained in AFB practices	9 seminars held	7 PFAs trained in AFB practices	9 seminars held	7 PFAs trained in AFB practices	7 PFAs trained in AFB practices	7 PFAs trained in AFB practices		41 total seminars
Collect baseline data			100 percent farmer-member participation									
Collect baseline data			Formation of: strategic plan, transparent financial records, and democratic bylaws for 1 oblast PFA	Started in Talas oblast (bylaws completed)	Formation of: strategic plan, transparent financial records, and democratic bylaws for 4 rayon PFAs and 1 oblast PFA	Completed for two rayon PFAs	Formation of: strategic plan, transparent financial records, and democratic bylaws for 6 rayon PFAs and 2 oblast				Formation of: strategic plan, transparent financial records, and democratic bylaws for 7 rayon PFAs and 2 oblast PFAs	
Collect baseline data	192 total members for Talas and Dzhahal-Abad	5 percent membership increase	262 total members for Talas and Dzhahal-Abad	5 percent membership increase	Target met for: 1 rayon PFA in Dzhahal-Abad; Insufficient data on Talas PFA	5 percent membership increase	5 percent membership increase	5 percent membership increase			5 percent membership increase	
<p>Objective 2 Strengthen the capacity of rural PFAs to advocate the interests of farmers and widen their influence with local and national government</p> <p>Indicators Kyrgyz PFA leaders and members trained in and adopt FB model for grassroots-based policy formulation (USAID IR 2.1.1.2)</p> <p>Kyrgyz Parliamentarians and representatives from oblast PFAs advocate interests of farmers through participation in forums on agricultural legislation (USAID IR 2.1.1.2)</p> <p>Institutionalization of consultations between Kyrgyz parliamentarians and PFAs regarding pending legislation to ensure resulting legislation is responsive to the needs of PFA farmer-members (USAID IR 2.1.1.2).</p>	1 general policy mtg.	1 policy mig. done	2 rayon, 2 oblast PFAs trnd. in policy dev.	not completed	3 rayon, 2 oblast PFAs trnd. in policy dev.	Not completed	5 rayon, 2 oblast PFAs trnd. in policy dev.				7 rayon and 2 oblast PFAs trnd. in policy dev	
			1 forum total held	postponed due to parliament schedule	2 forums total held	Not completed	3 forums total held				4 forums total held	
	Introductory mtgs. with deputies from six regions of Kyrgyzstan to intro program	Contacts made except for Talas (seat vacant) and Naryn	1 draft law reviewed total; initiated by CNFA	postponed due to parliament schedule	2 draft laws reviewed total; initiated by CNFA	Not completed	3 draft laws reviewed total; initiated by CNFA				4 draft laws reviewed total; final session of which is initiated by PFA	
<p>Objective 3 Increase participation of women farmers in the ongoing activities of PFAs (USAID IR 2.1.1.1)</p> <p>Indicators Women's committees developed in all targeted oblast PFAs and 50 percent of rayon PFAs.</p> <p>50 percent increase in the number of female board and committee members in each targeted PFA.</p>	1 oblast committee formed total	1 oblast coun. formed	1 rayon committee formed total	not completed	2 oblast committee formed total; 2 rayon	1 oblast committee formed	4 rayon committees formed total				2 oblast, 4 rayon committees formed total;	
Collect baseline data			10 percent increase total in female board and committee members	2 total on board and committees	20 percent increase total in female board and committee members	Completed for 1 rayon PFA	30 percent increase total in female board and committee members			40 percent increase total in female board and committee members		50 percent increase total in female board and committee members

* This implies seminars on the following topics: PFA structure, Boards of Directors and Committees, Budget and Financial Records

** Assumption is that project will target two oblast PFAs, and 7 rayons

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Memorandum

TO: Sean Roberts

FROM: David A. Smith, Regional Director, Central Asia

DATE: 30 March, 1998

RE: Supertargets

Per our agreement with your office, I am providing a list of "supertargets" for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. These targets represent groups that our staff feels best can move forward USAID's advocacy agenda, given political and social realities in each country. There are explanatory notes to clarify our choices and how we expect to work with each organization.

As we have discussed, the "A" targets represent organizations that we feel are the strongest right now and most able to make a positive contribution to the democracy agenda. The "B" Lists are similar organizations, in many cases almost as strong, that we will work with as well and which could replace any of the "A" groups should conditions changes over the next months.

The "C" list is a larger group of organizations that are either not as clearly focused on a democracy agenda or are not as strong as the other two groups but which we still feel merit attention. These three groups will form the core of our focus over the coming months and, as we have discussed, will receive special attention in our reporting so that USAID has a clear idea of how they are progressing.

As you know we are committed in our proposal and in our workplans to progressively identifying 75 core NGOs each in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and 50 in Uzbekistan. These "supertargets" do not replace those more ambitious targets; they are, rather, the beginning of that process. But in those cases where they vindicate our early confidence are, by virtue of being those we believe best suit USAID's Strategic Objectives and the limitations on our resources, the targets listed here are likely to receive a preponderant share of staff time, grants and training.

Counterpart Target NGOs –Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan

KAZAKHSTAN

“A” List

1. Housing Associations

Kazakhstan was one of the first CIS countries to reform its housing sector. Starting two years ago housing in all principal cities has been privatized almost entirely. Housing reform is not complete yet and is still an issue of pressing concern because many legal issues are left unsettled. Tariffs for the services (gas, electricity, water, heating) are the subject of triangle negotiations between housing associations, providers and government. Management of the associations themselves, as well as the National Association, is still weak. Many apartment owners do not understand the new systems nor do the 22 regional housing associations adequately understand their functions.

Nevertheless, housing associations in Kazakhstan present an opportunity for instilling the practice of democracy in a large proportion of the population in a context that is very important to them: the very roofs over their heads. Counterpart has been in contact with the National Housing Association since December 1997 and recently attended the meeting in Akmola for the regional associations. Two representatives of the national already have been trained in Counterpart modules. The goal of Counterpart support to housing associations will be to strengthen the ability of each level of the housing equation to understand and carry out its responsibilities more effectively and to reinforce the relationships of accountability among them.

Areas of Counterpart assistance:

- conduct a series of trainings for leaders of regional associations and the national association. This training will be an adaptation of Counterpart modules including Association Building, Media, Project Design and NGO Management. It will be followed by a special strategic planning exercise to help associations identify a systematic program of development;
- encourage associations to use Counterpart grants to support areas identified in the strategic planning exercise and work with other donors to generate additional support for a coherent plan for building their institutional capacity;
- offer Counterpart assistance to the Government of Kazakhstan (Anti-monopoly Commission) in designing a methodology and implementing training for housing associations required under the forthcoming World Bank loan to Kazakhstan;
- work with the Global training program to encourage a short-term participant training delegation in the US focused on housing association leaders and possibly some chairmen from building-level associations;
- using this visit as a base, encourage Counterpart-supported partnerships for one or more associations with similar US-based organizations;

- explore the appropriateness of linkages between regional associations and consumer rights NGOs since many housing issues of key interest are in fact consumer issues and can benefit from being addressed by the skills and methodologies that have been developed by consumer organizations;
- coordinate closely with the Counterpart Constituency Building component, one of whose major areas of focus is housing to develop a relevant and coordinated approach to building public awareness of housing issues and making decisions on housing issues based on accurate information.

In carrying out its focus on housing associations, Counterpart will work closely with the USAID's OST division and with ICMA in their implementation of the forthcoming Public Administration project as well as the World Bank Public Sector loan.

2. Center for Civic Initiatives (CCI)

The Center for Civic Initiatives is closely affiliated to the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Kazakhstan. CCI's mission is to help Kazakh citizens use the tools of democracy more effectively. Its principal tools are workshops focused on skill-building and encouraging dialogue between all levels of government and citizens, particularly citizen activists.

During 1997, the CCI leadership was trained by Counterpart in most modules, including NGO management, mass media and fundraising. CCI has adopted the Counterpart participatory methodology for its own workshops and uses some of Counterpart's training materials including those for NGO and community. In December 1997, Counterpart awarded this group a grant for seminars on democracy issues to be conducted in a number of Kazakh industrial cities. The goal of Counterpart support to CCI is to strengthen it organizationally, help to develop a network of CCI subsidiaries in the country and to build win-win relationships with government as well as improve the seminar curriculum.

To do so, Counterpart will:

- work closely within the framework of the Counterpart grant to improve seminar curriculum;
- help link CCI with other Kazakhstani groups conducting public education programs to stimulate exchange of experience and seminar materials;
- monitor CCI workshops closely to determine their impact and effectiveness in meeting USAID ODT Strategic Objectives. If indicators are positive, encourage CCI to seek additional grants and other assistance to widen their work;
- encourage the collaboration of CCI and other civic education NGOs in the creation of the nationwide association of civic education organizations for which Counterpart funding is being sought by the Association of Young Leaders;
- help CCI with technical assistance and, if appropriate, grants to strengthen it as an independent-institutional entity since, while its current relationship to the labor movement is in some ways valuable, its scope and potential range as a civic education mechanism are at the same time limited by it.

3. Business Women Association (BWA)

The Business Women's Association of Kazakhstan is a women-focused NGO with a network of organizations throughout the country. It has a strong relationship of mutual respect with local government officials in many areas of Kazakhstan. For this reason, it is a valuable partner for Counterpart in achieving USAID democracy Strategic Objectives;

BWA leaders, particularly the Almaty-based chairwoman, have been trained in various Counterpart modules and Counterpart grants have helped the organization to get established in the initial stages of their activity. Counterpart has already started closely collaborating with the BWA in training, having co-sponsored recent training in four cities (Kustanai, March '97, Lisakovsk, Nov. '97, Kzyl-Orda, Jan. '98, and Taraz, March '98). A fifth joint training will take place in Petropavlovsk in June this year. The goal of Counterpart's work with the BWA is to strengthen its ability to serve as a strong advocate for women in Kazakhstan and to strengthen its relationships with local government officials.

Counterpart assistance to BWA will include:

- providing assistance in developing a Corporate Challenge Grant proposal to extend their activity in skills training for women;
- mount a series of Counterpart trainings for oblast Association leaders to help strengthen institutions and encourage participation in the BWA network;
- assist in developing a partnership project with Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Germany) for business/management training for women;
- provide a range of one-on-one technical assistance to build the institutional capacity of the organization;
- explore the potential of a Partnership Grant to help BWAs strengthen their methodological and institutional skills.

"B" List

1. "ZeBRA" Informational Center, Ust-Kamenogorsk

In Eastern Kazakhstan there is a real demand for NGO support activity from a growing number of NGOs in the region. Many of them are not strong and could benefit from training and other forms of assistance from more mature groups. "ZeBRA" (Green Future) is one of the most mature, established groups in the area.

ZeBRA began by providing local ecological NGOs with specific ecological information. Later they developed into a true NGO support organization and started to conduct training on such issues as proposal writing and to distribute information on donor organizations working in Kazakhstan. They have received grants from various foreign donors and their leader is a Counterpart contract trainer. In 1996, the Center Director Mr. Vitaly Kulik participated in NET/Global delegation of NGO leaders to the US.

In accordance with their NGO support mission, ZeBRA has proposed to create a Press Agency for local NGOs. Its purpose will be to organize an information campaign about NGOs, write and distribute press releases and organize training on issues related to dealing with the media. Counterpart supported this idea with a grant in February 1998.

ZeBRA is meeting an important need in Eastern Kazakhstan and is a valuable Counterpart partner. Future Counterpart support will focus on strengthening ZeBRA as a support organization.

2. *Association of Civic Education Groups, Almaty*

Counterpart's longstanding partner, the Association of Young Leaders (AYL) is working to create an association of civic education groups in Almaty. Counterpart sees such an association as a promising way to reinforce the network of civic education groups and to strengthen their work throughout the country. As a result, Counterpart will present a proposal for an association of civic education groups at its April grants meeting.

Should the association be established, especially in view of the backing of AYL, which is a strong and well-respected organization, it could be a very good target organization for Counterpart because the work of the civic education groups is directly relevant to USAID's democracy Strategic Objectives. The association also has the potential for encouraging interaction among various countries in Central Asia.

AYL's Chairperson, Mrs. Natalia Bakhmutova, and her staff are themselves well trained. Ms Bakhmutova participated in the NET/GLOBAL Program in 1996, through which AYL developed a strong relationship with the Street Law organizations in the US. She and her staff have been trained extensively by Counterpart over two years. Ms. Bakhmutova and one of her senior staff persons are Counterpart contract trainers.

3. *Feminist League, Almaty*

Women's issues are important across the former Soviet Union. They are of special significance in Central Asia where attitudes and traditions are particularly conservative. The central mission of Feminist League is to develop the conditions for advocacy on women's issues. They have experience of successfully drafting and lobbying a law to make equal the legal marriage age for men and women.

Counterpart started to work with this group in 1995. During these last three years they received two grants. Their last proposal, approved in November 1997 will allow them to create videos about women's rights in Kazakhstan for local television. Several members of the Feminist League have been trained in all Counterpart modules. They would be an appropriate target organization for Counterpart.

"C" List

1	Public Union "Consumers' Advocate," Akmola (working with other consumer groups on setting up a Northern Kazakhstan association of consumer groups)
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2	National Association of Consumer Rights Protection Societies, Almaty (unites 50% of Kazakh consumer groups)
3	Eco-Center, Karaganda (candidate to be the partner for our Resource Center in Karaganda and becoming a major NGO support resource in the Karaganda area)
4	Public Fund XXI Century , Almaty (principal technical support group in Kazakhstan which needs assistance in developing a program for financial sustainability program)
5	International Kazakhstan Bureau on Human Rights, Almaty (successful advocacy group)
6	Association of Families with Disabled Children "Zhan", Almaty (advocacy group)
7	Public Fund "Help", Kustanai (successfully working with youth on drug related problems; could be our Resource partner in the area)
8	Consumer Rights Society, Aktiubinsk (actively working with a Counterpart grant)

KYRGYZSTAN

"A" List

1. *Center InterBilim*

The mission of Center InterBilim is to strengthen and empower non-governmental, grassroots and community-based organizations working with vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in Kyrgyzstan. It is an effective NGO advocacy organization and strengthens the role of NGOs in civil society by providing training workshops, consultation and information for the non-governmental sector.

Center InterBilim is active in various areas of the country and plays a major role in the Forum of NGOs. It is a mature organization with a widely read newsletter on NGO issues. The director, Asiya Sasykbaeva, participated in the Global/NET project and is a counterpart contract trainer.

Center InterBilim was organized in 1993 to offer support, training and services to NGOs working in the areas of poverty alleviation, health, environment, human rights, education, democratization and others.

Realizing the importance of international organizations' expertise and financial support in strengthening and developing NGOs, Center InterBilim has extended its services to this sector in order to facilitate a good working relationship between NGOs and donor organizations. At the same time, NGOs are encouraged to become independent and self-sufficient.

Center InterBilim has professional trainers who conduct sessions on NGO concepts, including fundraising, strategic planning, project design, and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). It is providing information through a newsletter published in three languages (Russian, Kyrgyz and English). In addition, its resource center has basic information on fundraising, strategic planning, proposal writing, Kyrgyz laws, ecology, agriculture, democracy, human rights, and women and children's issues.

With a presence in both the northern and southern parts of the country, Center InterBilim is in a position to accomplish its mission of strengthening and empowering NGOs in Kyrgyzstan. The goal of Counterpart's work with Center InterBilim as a target organization will be to further strengthen its role as a resource to NGOs and to reinforce the established ability to carry out advocacy activity.

Counterpart will provide assistance including:

- improve the quality of the newsletter through Newsletter training;
- improve the democratic and administrative structure of the Board of Directors through Governance training, Team Building training, and Leadership/Personnel Management training;
- develop the skills of trainers through participation in Counterpart TOTs;
- develop and improve advocacy skills through Advocacy and Lobbying training and Public Education through the Media training;
- help create transparent accounting practices;
- focus support on strategic planning using Counterpart's Strategic Planning and Financial Management training;
- support the development of a partnership through networking with the local and international community using email and Internet.

2. "Aikyn" Association for Consumers' Rights Protection

Registered in April 1996, the main sources of funding are membership and sponsorship dues but in reality these funds are minimal and currently grants from international organizations are the main source of funding. "Aikyn" helps consumers defend their rights in all areas, providing free consultations to everyone who enlists their services. If necessary, experts visit sites to investigate infringements on consumers' rights. "Aikyn" played an active role in the hearings before parliament on the proposed protection consumer law now being considered.

It has an impressive record of success and is a model for other NGOs in the respect of its transparency, its governance structure and its sustainability strategy. It is cooperating with

Counterpart in implementation of a Constituency Building campaign related to payment of utility charges. "Aikyn" was selected as a target NGO for a variety of reasons including its advanced association structure and extensive network throughout the country.

Support provided to "Aikyn" will include:

- develop a newsletter through Newsletter training;
- improve the governance and administrative structure through Governance training, Team Building training, and Leadership and Personnel Management training;
- develop and improve advocacy skills through Advocacy training and Public Education through the Media training;
- help create transparent accounting practices;
- focus support on strategic plan using Counterpart's Strategic Planning and Financial Management training;
- help introduce fees-for-services,
- support the development of a partnership through networking with the local and international community using email and Internet.

3. *Women's Support Center*

The mission of the Women's Support Center is to assist women in their involvement in democratic transition through training and legal consultations. Women who have experience in working with vulnerable families founded the Women's Support Center in January 1996. There also are branches in the Talas and Naryn Oblasts. The head body is the common assembly of members. The managing body is the Board of Directors numbering 31.

The organization is active in many areas. With the first grant that this NGO received from Counterpart, the members conducted special training for rural women to increase their level of the computer literacy in Talas Oblast. It published a book, "Ayal Ukuktary" (Women's Rights), which was funded by the US Embassy Democracy Commission. It contains International Conventions concerning the elimination of all types of discrimination against women (both in Russian and Kyrgyz). The book was ratified by the Jogorku Kenesh (parliament) in January 1996. As part of women's juridical awareness campaign, a presentation of book "Ayal Ukuktary" and one-day seminar on women's rights was held.

Among the reasons for selecting the Women's Center as a target are its advocacy for women's rights and related issues and its expansive outreach to women through an established network of branches. The Center works actively to mobilize rural communities to solve local problems and was supported in Talas region by a Counterpart grant.

Interventions Counterpart will provide to the Women's Center organization will include

- strengthening NGO structure and network of branches through our Association
- develop a newsletter through Newsletter training;
- improve the governance and administrative structure through Governance training, Team Building training, and Leadership/Personnel Management training;
- develop and improve advocacy skills through Advocacy and Lobbying Training and Public Education through the Media training;
- create transparent accounting practices;
- focus support on strategic planing using Counterpart's Strategic Planning and Financial Management workshop;
- support the development of a partnership through networking with the local and international community using email and Internet.

4. Republican Charitable Fund for Education and Science Support (EJIAD)

The mission of EIJAD is to improve the educational welfare of Kyrgyzstan by training young intellectuals, participating with the local population in the adaptation of educational institutions to market conditions and pushing for legislative reforms in the realm of education. The supreme administrative body of the Fund is the General Meeting of the Fund's members, which meets once a year.

The fund has 150 members who all have a vote in the annual meeting. The Fund's Council (the Board of Directors) is an executive body of five members. The General Director manages all activity and executes the decisions of the General Meeting and the Council. The main sources of funding are voluntary donations by the Fund's members, other organizations and people who support the Fund's ideas as well as charitable donations among commercial structures. EJIAD was established in 1992. The main goal is to establish and support schools that will work as self-financing institutions and provide education to talented children according advanced standards.

EJIAD has developed a program, "Education," that supports talented rural children. Within the framework of the Program the "Support Fund- Lyceum" was developed and tested as a model. The Lyceum "Nookat Bilimkanasy" was opened in 1989 and now five classes have graduated. Universities and institutions all over the Republic have accepted graduates. Currently the Fund has assisted in the opening of eight Lyceum local charitable support funds and more than 30 special courses.

An Information Center was established to promote democratic reforms through the dissemination of information to the general public. The Information Center has prepared and distributed videos and brochures about international organizations, and printed brochures about educational opportunities in the Republic.

EIJAD was selected as a Counterpart target because of its track record in advocacy for educational and legislative reforms. It has a strong institutional structure and an established sustainability strategy based on memberships. It has abroad geographical coverage extending to most regions of the country

and excellent ties with the government inasmuch as its leader and founder, Mr. O. Mamajusupov, is a member of the parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic. EIAD is a potential "bridge" between other NGOs and the government.

Among the interventions Counterpart will provide EIAD are:

- help to develop a newsletter through Newsletter training;
- improve the governance and administrative structure through Governance training, Team Building training, and Leadership/Personnel Management training;
- develop and improve advocacy skills through our Advocacy and Lobbying training and Public Education through the Media training;
- help create transparent accounting practices;
- focus support on strategic plan using Counterpart's Strategic Planning and Financial Management workshop;
- support the development of a partnership through networking with the local and international community using email and Internet.

"B" List

1. *"BIOM" Youth Ecological Movement*

The mission of BIOM is to support youth and facilitate their involvement in solving environmental problems as well as to provide access to information and education on the principles of democracy, tolerance and sustainable development. The main sources of funding are personal contributions, grants, and donations.

BIOM involves youth in the process of solving environmental problems through conducting roundtables, meetings, discussion clubs, media publications, and newsletters. BIOM has conducted several environmental events together with government employees and media representatives. In line with the project approved by Counterpart, the members of BIOM will create and develop a network of the small environmental groups throughout the country. They will deliver training for those groups and representatives of local governments.

BIOM has active public outreach and advocacy of environmental issues and has planned a major ecological conference in Kyrgyzstan involving a follow-up mass media campaign. It currently is developing a nation-wide network of environmental groups that has the potential to develop into an association. It has a strong organizational capacity and a large volunteer base which helps implement programs.

Counterpart will help BIOM develop a national environmental association based on its current NGO network and to establish a newsletter. Other interventions may include improving governance and

administrative structure, improving advocacy skills and helping to create stronger accounting practices.

2. Legal Initiatives Fund (LIF)

The mission of the Legal Initiatives Fund is to promote the development and enforcement of the non-commercial sector through lobbying laws and improving the legal basis of the Third Sector in the Kyrgyz Republic. LIF has a strong lobbying and advocacy track record on legislative and judicial reforms and a large volunteer base through their connection with university faculties/students. LIF is creating a Resource Center under a current Counterpart grant and is publishing a legal handbook for NGOs under a Soros grant.

The Ministry of Justice registered LIF in July 1995. It has 28 members including lawyers, deputies of the Legislative Chambers, professors of law, students of the Law Faculty of the National University and citizens. The main sources of funding for this NGO are monthly membership fees, donations and grants.

In assisting LIF Counterpart will:

- develop a newsletter through Newsletter Training;
- improve the governance and administrative structure through Governance training, Team Building training, and Leadership/Personnel Management training;
- develop and improve advocacy skills through Advocacy and Lobbying training and Public Education through the Media training;
- create transparent accounting practices through Financial Management training;
- concentrate on developing a partnership.

4. Association of Social Workers (ASW)

The mission of ASW is to protect the rights of the Association members, improve their professional skills, and at strengthen their legal and financial status. The group has considerable organizational capacity and offices and members in all rayons. It has a current Counterpart Partnership Grant involving a worldwide professional association (International Federation of Social Workers) and European trainers/experts.

The ASW has good contacts with government on all levels with about 3,000 members. It has 46 rayon affiliate offices in six oblasts of Kyrgyzstan. The governance body consists of the President, Vice-President, and Executive Director. The Board of Directors consists of nine people. The main sources of funding are membership fees, donations, voluntary contributions, and grants.

To assist ASW, Counterpart will:

- develop a newsletter through Newsletter training;

- improve the governance and administrative structure through Governance training, Team Building training, and Leadership/Personnel Management training;
- develop and improve advocacy skills through Advocacy and Lobbying training and Public Education through the Media training;
- create transparent accounting practices through Financial Management training;
- concentrate on developing a partnership.

4. "Alga" Rural Women Organization

The mission of "Alga" is to promote the process of solving the social and economic problems of rural women, and facilitate their participation in the decision making process. "Alga" has been successful in mobilizing community efforts and supporting rural and vulnerable women and helping them to develop enterprises. The more than 100 members of this NGO are involved in implementing small income-generating projects for rural, unemployed women. Last year the members of "Alga" created a group consisting of 18 families, headed by single mothers and widowed women. This group received 6 hectares of land from the local government. "Alga" works in close cooperation with FINCA.

To assist "Alga" Counterpart will:

- develop a newsletter through Newsletter Training;
- improve the governance and administrative structure through Governance training, Team Building training, and Leadership/Personnel Management training;
- develop and improve advocacy skills through Advocacy and Lobbying training and Public Education through the Media training;
- create transparent accounting practices through Financial Management training.

	Name	Leader	Address
1	Tree of Life	Ms. K. Moldogazieva	#255, Chuy Ave., Bishkek
2	Forum of Women NGOs	Ms. N. Janaeva	#147-7, Isanova St., Bishkek
3	Smoke Free - Kyrgyzstan	Ms. C. Bekbasarova	#3, Togolok Moldo St., Bishkek
4	Justice	Mr. B. Tolebekov	#27, Erkin Too St., Jalal-Abad
5	Tendesh	Ms. S. Sayakbaeva	#32, Zavodskaya St., Naryn
6	Kut Bilim	Ms. A. Jayloobaeva	Kuchana St., Kara-Too Vl., Ton Rayon, Issyk-Kul Oblast
7	Ata-Djurt	Ms. S. Ismailova	#105, Toktogula St., Gulcha, Osh Oblast
8	Kutman Jer	Mr. A. Temiraliev	#23, Dzejinskogo St., Talas
9	Sohopker	Ms. K. Barkydjokova	1 of May St., Naryn
10	Umut	Ms. S. Bashtovenko	Balykchy
11	Baychechekey	Ms. V. Sedlova	Veselyi Lane, Kara-Balta
12	Sanitas	Mr. I. Savchenko	#11, Inergel'po St., Bishkek

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13	Maksat	Mr. T. Khamdamov	Kerben VI., Aksy Rayon, Jalal-Abad Oblast	(33
14	Fund of Legal Reform Support	Mr. R. Akmatakhunov	#2-42, Jim St., Osh	(33
15	Club of Young Teachers	Ms. Z. Kochorbaeva	#200-18, Toktogula St., Bishkek	(33

UZBEKISTAN

“A” List

1. *The Association of Lawyers of Uzbekistan*

Reform of the legal system in Uzbekistan is a pressing concern. This association, aside from its dedication to the welfare and professional development of its membership, seeks to create a system in which lawyers are not subject to pressure from investigative authorities. Counterpart has already begun providing training for this group, having invited them to the first seminar in “Association Development,” held in Almaty in February, following up with “NGO and the Community” in Tashkent. At our first meeting, we conducted an informal needs assessment, discovering that, apart from training, the Association needs a modest infusion of Counterpart capital, in the form of office equipment.

We will continue to offer them priority access to our training seminars and look forward to developing a grant proposal to support their need for office equipment and to gain a clearer idea of other ways in which Counterpart’s resources can be used to strengthen their capacity to meet their organizational objectives. Working in concert with ABA/CEELI, Counterpart hopes to establish a partnership relationship with a U.S. state or municipal bar association.

2. *The Association of Judges of Uzbekistan*

Similar to the Association of Lawyers, the Association of Judges seeks to remove judges from undue pressure often exerted by the office of the Procurator on judicial decision-making. Counterpart, in view of its dedication to the strengthening of democratic trends in Uzbekistan, sees great worth in any steps taken to create an independent judiciary.

The Association of Judges has also already participated in Counterpart’s seminar on “Association Development” and has been put on our priority list for all present and future training modules. They have expressed their need for intensive training, as well as a need for basic start-up assistance, in the form of office equipment, modern communications, etc.

We plan to further strengthen this relatively new group in the future with a partnership grant. If possible, a partnership would include a U.S. association of judges and one from Kazakhstan, where a similar organization has existed for some time. In this, we will be assisted by ABA/CEELI.

3. *The Association of Accountants and Auditors of Uzbekistan*

This is an “ideal” association and a potential implementing partner for Counterpart in a number of projects. With 4000 dues-paying members, the Association of Accountants and Auditors is easily one of the largest associations in the region. The group’s charter speaks mostly of their aim to raise the

professional level of its membership, but their activity far outstrips this goal. AAAU has become one of the primary NGO support organizations in Uzbekistan.

Having recently opened their own, small print shop, they provide NGOs with printing services at rates a fraction above cost. Since this type of service was previously available only in Almaty, AAAU has made a valuable contribution to the NGO movement in Uzbekistan, giving NGOs the opportunity to produce information about themselves and their goals economically and hence more widely.

In addition, the AAAU is leading an effort to create an NGO coalition in Uzbekistan, as well as lobbying the government on an issue that is a constant concern for the third sector: tax laws and state regulation of NGO commercial activities. In our needs assessment, we discovered that – although they are quite a polished organization – AAAU would benefit from further training, as well as certain equipment for their print shop. We are in the early stages of developing a proposal for the latter now. In addition it may provide useful to both organizations to put the AAAU in touch with the Century 21 printing facility in Almaty to see whether the two groups can learn lessons from each other with respect to their service to NGOs and long term sustainability of their activities.

4. Committee for Protection of Individual Rights

Violations of human rights are unfortunately an everyday feature of life in Uzbekistan. All too often, victims simply resign themselves to the fact that no one will protect them from arbitrary and/or corrupt application of the coercive power of the state. The Society for Protection of Individual Rights was established by Abdumannob Pulatov, a well-known political activist in Uzbekistan. Today, with Pulatov in exile in the United States, the Committee's work is carried on by Marat Zakhidov, former Deputy of the Oliy Majlis, and a small staff. The Committee is a member of the International Society for Human Rights based in Frankfurt-am-Main.

Needs assessment indicates that the Committee's staff requires training in the elementary functions of NGOs, and would benefit from further training in advocacy. In addition, the Committee has no permanent office and very little equipment to carry out their valuable work. Counterpart Tashkent will work together with them, drawing up a training schedule and developing a grant proposal.

5. Center for Women Leaders

A country's development cannot be said to be democratic if it bypasses 50% of the population, robbing these people, in effect, of all civic and human rights. Uzbekistan is undergoing profoundly negative changes in the official and widespread attitude to women: education is being slowly closed to them; the percentage of women in public decision-making positions is minuscule and shrinking still more.

The Center for Women Leaders has already taken steps to increase women's knowledge of the rights, both those stated in the Constitution and those implicit in their status as citizens of a state publicly committed to democratic transition and gender equality. At present, the Center strives to prevent further loss of rights acquired by women during the Soviet period. In the future, they foresee an intensive lobbying effort, in order to win rights for women, taken for granted in many countries, but – as yet – unthinkable in Uzbekistan. With many crosscutting issues, such as women's reproductive health, joining various groups there is strong potential for the creation of a viable coalition of women's organizations in Uzbekistan.

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Counterpart will work to help bring this about, providing the Center with intensive training, especially in advocacy and social partnership. In addition, we are expecting to receive their itemized list of equipment required, to be included in a grant proposal. We are now investigating the possibility of cooperation with the Israeli Embassy, who have made known their willingness to fund a lecture/seminar series, the content of which the Center is now developing.

“B” List

1. “Kridi” Club for Parents of Disabled Children

The marginalization of disabled people is a problem encountered across the former Soviet Union. They are denied work despite state assurances of guaranteed employment, and meet discrimination – well intended or not – in almost every sphere of public life.

These people must be integrated into society, not left to atrophy, physically and emotionally. They have the capabilities to make enormous contributions to the emerging Uzbekistan, as they have shown when given the chance. “Kridi” believes in beginning work with disabled people where it counts the most: at home. Their programs of training and support for parents of disabled children provide the aid needed to overcome the psychological barriers to full personal development, built up by public neglect and condescension.

“Kridi” has recently taken up lobbying and advocacy on the rayon hokkimiyyat level, but would like to gain access to the higher state authorities. In order to do so, they have expressed their need for training in advocacy from Counterpart.

The “Kridi” network is gradually expanding, with functioning offices in six of Tashkent’s 11 rayons. Their plans (in which Counterpart will be a partner in development and implementation) include opening and equipping offices in the remaining five districts. In addition, Counterpart Tashkent and Washington are in the process of facilitating a partnership program between the National Parent Networking Association and “Kridi.”

2. Tashkent Public Education Center

At this point in the transition period, many citizens of Uzbekistan are ignorant of the fundamental principles of democracy and civic duties and rights. Until such concepts are internalized, there can be no talk of broad public support for democratization.

TPEC has chosen to implement their excellent program of civic education among the future leaders of Uzbekistan, i.e. children of high school and university age. For three years, TPEC has garnered great respect with its program, and enjoys significant authority among NGOs in Uzbekistan and throughout the Central Asian region.

Counterpart can aid the TPEC by providing training in working with volunteers, governance and financial management. Counterpart also will explore the utility of contacts between the Association of Young Leaders in Kazakhstan, a well-established civic education group which is a strong partner of Counterpart, and TPEC.

3. “Ayol” Center for Women and Children, Samarkand

In Uzbekistan, questions of women's reproductive health are often decided by the woman's mother-in-law, thus robbing the woman of one of the most fundamental human rights. The "Ayol" Center strives to put the power of decision back in the hands of those to whom it belongs: the women themselves. Although this is a young organization, the staff has undergone invaluable training, working in the "SABR" Women's Crisis Center in Samarkand.

In order to get their program working, "Ayol" needs training for its staff, as well as office start-up equipment. In the future, "Ayol" will be the Samarkand implementing partner for the Futures Group SOMARC program.

4. The Physicians Association of Uzbekistan

Public health is, and will remain, one of the key areas of NGO activity throughout the world. With a diminished state budget for the administration of public health, as well as for the professional orientation and skills-improvement for physicians, the job is left to NGOs.

The PAU is an association of some standing, uniting more than 2000 physicians. They publish (with the support of the Eurasia Foundation) a quarterly bulletin, the focus of which is new medical techniques. For the PAU, Counterpart envisions enhanced training programs, focused primarily upon development of the association and its democratic governance. In addition, we are supporting the PAU in its search for similar associations in the United States, capable of providing long-term support and training in the latest medical techniques.

"C" List

1. Association "For an Ecologically Clean Fergana"
2. "Ecolog" Association
3. Consumers' Rights Society (Tashkent)
4. Samarkand Information Center
5. "Matonat" Society for the Disabled
6. Association of Trainers
7. Union for Defense of the Aral Sea and Amudarya, Nukus
5. Information and Culture Center, Bukhara
6. "Shod" Creative Association
7. "Targibot" Center for Copyrights
8. Public Research Center
9. Russian Cultural Center, Chirchik

30 March 1998

Newspaper Articles—January 1998

Kazakhstan

Headlines	Short Description	Languages	Newspapers
Women and change in society	Full-page article about the activities of women's NGOs in each of the Central Asian countries	Russian	Asian Economic Life- Kaz.1
Seminar is held	Businesswomen's Association/Counterpart seminar in Kyzylorda	Russian	Kyzylorda News- Kaz.2
Women can do everything	Women's NGO contest conducted by Counterpart and sponsored by USAID	Russian	Evening Almaty- Kaz.3
Women wait for change	Women's NGO contest conducted by Counterpart and sponsored by USAID	Russian	New Generation- Kaz.4
In the support of the non-governmental structure	About a meeting conducted by Counterpart, under sponsorship of USAID, with local NGOs	Russian	Kyzylorda News- Kaz.5 (published December 1997)

Kyrgyzstan

"Finka" program will be expanded	Connections between Finka and Kyrgyz government to improve Finka's effectiveness as a resource for NGOs	Russian	Kyrgyzstan Word- Kyr.1
Women against violence	Rosa Atmatova, leader of the NGO "Women's Help Center" presented information on the book "Women's Rights" at an international conference	Russian	Chuy News- Kyr.2
Shaw is not a show	About NGOs and Walter Shaw's development of association training	Russian	Morning Bishkek- Kyr.3
With social activists—it's about money	About Counterpart Consortium programs, under sponsorship of USAID, and Walter Shaw's development of association training	Russian	Evening Bishkek- Kyr.4
Loading Packets of Maggots!	About a woman's appeal to the consumer rights group "Aiken"	Russian	Kyrgyzstan Word- Kyr.5
"Chinson" appeals to unity	Interview with the president of the Korean/Kyrgyzstani association "Chinson" and this association's appeal for unity	Russian	Kyrgyzstan Word- Kyr.6
Counterpart consortium supports initiatives	Long article describing Counterpart and its consortium activities, under sponsorship of USAID, in Kyrgyzstan	Russian	Businessmen-K- Kyr.7 (December 1997)
Women and Politics	Central Asian conference in Almaty and a speaker on microcredit and women's NGOs	Russian	Businessmen-K- Kyr.8 (Dec. 1997)

Environment and work	An international conference on the environment including local and international NGOs, donor organizations, and governmental agencies	Russian	Businessmen-K- Kyr.9 (December 1997)
The most important rights	A conference with the International Federation for Family Planning and Central Asian NGOs	Russian	Businessmen-K- Kyr.10 (Dec. 1997)
Counterpart new training workshops	About the new training courses offered by Counterpart, under sponsorship of USAID	Russian	Evening Bishkek Morning Bishkek Kyrgyzstan Word-not in packet
It is never too late to quit smoking	The international contest encouraging people to quit smoking, sponsored in Kyrgyzstan by the NGO Smoke-Free Kyrgyzstan	Russian	Kyrgyzstan Word- Kyr.11
Counterpart Consortium: Supports NGOs	About Counterpart activities in Kyrgyzstan	Kyrgyz	Chuy News- Kyr.12
Hotline telephone	An interview with the leader of a women's rights protection NGO in Kyrgyzstan	Kyrgyz	Chuy News- Kyr.13
Kyrgyzstan first women's shelter succeeds	The activities of the Chui Oblast Women's League (NGO) and its opening of a shelter for women victims of violence	English	The Central Asian Post- Kyr.14

Turkmenistan

Meetings still to be held	NGOs and UN development plans	Russian	Neutral Turkmenistan- Turk.1
Conference on non-governmental organizations	The first NGO conference in Turkmenistan, co-sponsored by Counterpart and UNDP	Russian	Neutral Turkmenistan (December 1997)- Turk.2
Conference on the relationship between the internet and journalists, sponsored by Freedom Forum	About the conference held in Washington, DC	Russian	Neutral Turkmenistan- Turk.3
Unite efforts	The work of Eurasia foundation as an NGO resource	Russian	Neutral Turkmenistan- Turk.4
Reviving sponsorship	About the Children's Fund of Turkmenistan NGO	Russian	Neutral Turkmenistan- Turk.5

Newspaper Articles-February 1998

Kazakhstan

Headlines	Short Description	Languages	Newspapers
Non-governmental organizations (NGO) are gathered	The opening of the Soros foundation's new NGO resource center featured speakers from Counterpart and USAID	Russian	The Globe-Kaz 1
Human rights activist, political scientist, president's advisor and journalist are forwarded for the EU award	The nominees for the EU-US Democracy and Civil Society award include the Center for Conflict Management, a Counterpart grantee	Russian English	Kazakhstan-Kaz 2
(no headline)	Description of the Consumer's School, funded by Counterpart under sponsorship of USAID, started by the Taldy-Korgan NGO "Contact"	Russian	The "Contact" newsletter-Kaz 3
Women in a changing society	The work of women's NGOs in Central Asia, the text of the Counterpart video Women and the Changing of Society	English	The Central Asian Post-Kaz 4
How to obtain a grant	Two large articles in two issues on Counterpart Consortium, under sponsorship of USAID, interviews with Counterpart's Gulnara Shakenova and Ivan Apanasevich	Russian	Your Rights-Kaz. 5

Kyrgyzstan

Women's problems must be decided	The contest Women Society Development, conducted by Counterpart, under sponsorship of USAID, rules and contact information	Russian	Piatnitsa-Kyr 1
What? Where? In the week	Counterpart consortium, under sponsorship of USAID, organized a contest to aid the lives of women	Russian	Chuy News-Kyr 2
Women Society Development	The press conference announcing Counterpart's new contest	Russian	Businessmen-K-Kyr 3
Grants to support NGO	The seven grants Counterpart recently awarded to NGOs	Russian	Businessmen-K-Kyr 4
Feminist Problems	The press conference held by Counterpart, under sponsorship of USAID, to announce the new contest	Russian	Kyrgyzstan Word-Kyr 5
Week in Review	The new contest conducted by Counterpart, under sponsorship of	Russian	Respublika-Kyr 6

	USAID		
Beautiful, but not weak	The press conference and new contest held by Counterpart, under sponsorship of USAID	Russian	Morning Bishkek-Kyr 7
"Women's" ideas are worth a lot	The press conference and new contest conducted by Counterpart, under sponsorship of USAID	Russian	Evening Bishkek-Kyr 8
Counterpart Consortium: Supporting NGO Initiatives	Counterpart's organizational structure, goals, and activities, under sponsorship of USAID	Russian	Kut Bilim-Kyr 9
Who throws away, here wins	A conference held by Smoke-Free Kyrgyzstan NGO to promote their activities in an international contest to help people quit smoking	Russian	Morning Bishkek-Kyr 10
Seven times measure	Seven grants recently given by Counterpart, under sponsorship of USAID	Russian	Morning Bishkek-Kyr 11
American NGO provides support	Eight grants recently given by Counterpart, under sponsorship of USAID	Russian	Kyrgyzstan Word-Kyr 12
Know—so then help	Seven grants recently given by Counterpart, under sponsorship of USAID	Russian	Evening Bishkek-Kyr 13
Grants for NGO support	Seven grants recently given by Counterpart, under sponsorship of USAID	Russian	Respublika-Kyr 14
...Recognition	Regional seminar in Bishkek of associations sponsored by Counterpart	Russian	Evening Bishkek-Kyr 15
The time is here—anti-nicotine	Question and answer with the director of Smoke-Free Kyrgyzstan NGO, sponsored by Counterpart	Russian	Kyrgyzstan Word-Kyr 16
Umut means: hope	Question and answer with director of Umut women's crisis center and Counterpart's Gulmairam Uchugenova	Russian	Chuy News-Kyr 17
Any known alphabet	Bayastan NGO and its education of disabled children	Russian	Evening Bishkek-Kyr 18
There would be no trainers	Summary of Counterpart past activities and the association seminar with Walter Shaw	Russian	Kyrgyzstan Word-Kyr 19
Counterpart Consortium extends training programs	A summary of past and future Counterpart activities, including Walter Shaw's association training programs	English	The Central Asian Post-Kyr 20
For management of NGOs, eight	Eight grants were given to NGOs from Counterpart, under sponsorship	Kyrgyz	Chuy Bayany-Kyr 21

grants	of USAID		
"Women development society" contest	Counterpart's NGO contest to improve the lives of women	Kyrgyz	Chuy Bayany-Kyr 22

Turkmenistan

Introducing Counterpart Consortium	Announcing the opening of the new Counterpart Consortium office in Ashgabad and Counterpart's activities, under sponsorship of USAID	Russian (with English translation)	Neutral Turkmenistan-Turk 1
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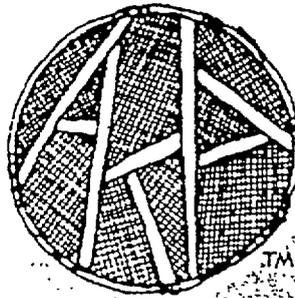
Uzbekistan

Contest about women and for women	The new contest conducted by Counterpart, under sponsorship of USAID, and the roundtable discussion to be on March 5	Russian	Evening Tashkent-Uzb 1
Shrovetide—spring holiday	The spring holiday and celebrations sponsored by the Chirchik Russian Culture Center NGO	Russian	Chirchik-Uzb 2
New facts from the life of Victor Tsoy	The new NGO of travelers, Rabat Malik, which can organize tours and educate about the history of Uzbekistan and the Silk Road	Russian	Young Uzbekistan-Uzb 3
Photobuilt "TT"	The new club, "Svoi," of young people interested in journalism	Russian	Young Uzbekistan-Uzb 4
"Svoi"—not only for them	"Our News", a children's newspaper, is one of the new initiatives by the Tashkent Center for Creative Development "Children and Adults" NGO	Russian	Panorama-Uzb 5 Tashkentskaya Pravda (not in packet)
Don't be worried, we are "Svoi"!	The club "Svoi", a group of future journalists, their activities and goals	Russian	Evening Tashkent-Uzb 6
Regarding NGOs, a book is the best present	The new book "Non-governmental organizations and law" and the work of the Center for Public Research	Russian	Karakalpakistan News-Uzb 7
A word about non-governmental organizations	Written by the director of the Center for Public Research, an article on the necessity of NGOs in democratic life	Russian	Karakalpakistan News-Uzb 8
New chairman—young and energetic	The recent NGO conference in Karakalpakistan on opportunities for the disabled	Russian	Karakalpakistan News-Uzb 9
What does "Women's Questions" mean	Written by a member of the Women's Resource Center NGO, her impressions of discrimination in	Russian	Eastern Pravda-Uzb 10

in Uzbekistan's mass media?	Uzbekistan as relating to the UN CEAFAW and Uzbekistan journalists		
The education of rights through children's stories	Sponsored by the Russian Cultural Center (NGO) and School 3, "Our Rights", a seminar in Chirchik, helped teachers' leaders understand human rights and how to teach them in the classroom	Russian	Uzbekistan Teacher-Uzb 11
Together with USAID	Regional conferences were held in five cities with NGOs and government leaders to discuss the legal framework of NGO registration	Russian	Eastern Pravda-Uzb 12
Our mentality and western experience	NGOs and their activities in the Ferghana Valley	Russian	Ferghanski Zori-Uzb 13
Do you know your human rights?	Discussion of human rights, the local and international organizations that support them, and how to educate the public	Russian	Chirchik-Uzb 14
Human rights and freedoms	In honor of International Human Rights Day, UN activities, seminars in Chirchik for teachers	Russian	Chirchik-Uzb 15
To live with a right government	Editorial on a human rights seminar, at which a representative of the Russian Cultural Center NGO spoke	Russian	Chirchik-Uzb 16



Funded by USAID



A member of the Counterpart Consortium

AID TO ARTISANS, INC. - Central Asia Program

The ATA Central Asia Regional Newsletter is free to members of ATA partner NGO

No 1, April 1, 1998

NEW REGIONAL CRAFT SHOP

ATA and Kyrgyzstan NGO partner Talent Support Fund opened Central Asia's first regional craft shop in Bishkek in March, 1998. Initial visitors have included tourists, Bishkek residents, and foreigners living and working in Kyrgyzstan. ATA and Talent Support Fund welcome high quality, unique handicrafts from Kyrgyzstan, Kazakstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan artisans for sale on consignment. For details, contact Ainura Bozgunchieva: telephone (3312) 28-27-02, or e-mail: office@tsfund.bishkek.su ■

ATA CONSULTANTS' PRODUCT DESIGN TIPS

In March, American design consultant Jane Griffiths made her second trip to Uzbekistan for ATA. Following up on her November, 1997, work with Central Asian artisans, Jane held workshops at the Bukhara Artisan Center and in Samarkand at the MEROS Handicraft Development Center. At these two centers, she worked with more than forty artisans to incorporate traditional design elements and motifs into new products which meet the demands of today's international customer. Jane also worked with Tajik artisans who traveled from Dushanbe to Uzbekistan for a follow-up to her November consultation with them.

During her workshops, Jane emphasized four product design points:

1. today's customers buy products which are functional, not just attractive.

(continued on page 2)

WHAT IS ATA?

Aid to Artisans (ATA) is a non-profit organization, founded in the United States in 1976, and dedicated to creating economic opportunities for crafts people around the world. ATA has been working in Central Asia as a member of the Counterpart Consortium since 1995. ATA began its work in Central Asia by working in the Republics of Kazakstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, with a core group of nine craft business groups representing approximately 350 microenterprises. In late 1997, ATA opened a program in Tajikistan, and conducted its first visit to Turkmenistan as preparation for starting work there in 1998. To date in Central Asia, ATA has brought several internationally acclaimed design consultants to the region to work directly with artisans, ATA's European Marketing Manager has made repeated trips to establish links to the markets in France, Germany, and England. ATA has facilitated visits by commercial buyers who now import Central Asian handicrafts to America. ATA has sponsored eleven regional craft fairs in Almaty, Bishkek, and Tashkent, organized largely by ATA's local partner NGOs and attracting thousands of visitors. ATA has sold Uzbek and Kyrgyz products at the New York International Gift Fair, the largest wholesale trade show for handicrafts in the United States, and in March 1998, ATA and Kyrgyz partner NGO Talent Support Fund opened a retail shop in Bishkek to sell handicrafts from the whole region. Through ATA, seven artisans have received specialized training in the United States in business and craft techniques. In April and May, ATA will send four artisans from Central Asia to Paris and London for specialized training in the European market, and to participate in an UNESCO celebration of Central Asian culture. ATA has also assisted local partner NGOs in learning to manage their organizations democratically, to work together, to voice common concerns to their local and national governments, and to seek ways to work in a spirit of partnership with local and state officials for the improvement of craft-based businesses.

In general, ATA in Central Asia provides a comprehensive program of assistance to artisans, "from Maker to Market". (To learn how you can benefit from ATA's assistance, see page 2). ■

DEMOCRACY AND ARTISANS

During March, leaders of artisan groups in Uzbekistan participated in ATA's first advocacy roundtable discussion to share common concerns and ways to work in partnership with local and national governments to solve problems facing artisans in their country. MEROS Handicraft Development Center President Zarif Muhtarov gave a brief presentation on how MEROS has successfully worked with local officials in Samarkand to get tax exemption for the organization. ■

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Product Design Tips

(cont.)

2. high quality raw materials and workmanship are critical for successful products.
3. small items with low prices sell more quickly than large, expensive items.
4. groups of related products which coordinate in color and function increase sales. ■

How Can You Benefit From ATA's Assistance?

1. Attend ATA-sponsored training seminars and product design workshops organized and offered by your craft NGO. Participate with other members of your craft NGO in the ATA-sponsored regional craft fairs and coordinate with other members of your NGO to send products top the new ATA / Talent Support Fund retail shop in Bishkek, "Kyrgyz Style". Read the ATA newsletter for notices about upcoming trainings and promotional events, tips for improving your business, ideas on how to work with your government officials to improve the business environment for artisans.
2. If you're already a member of one of ATA's many partner NGOs, speak with your fellow members and NGO leaders about what additional kinds of assistance would most benefit the members of your craft NGO.
3. If you're already a member or leader of one of ATA's partner NGOs, contact other nearby partner NGOs to discuss ways your organizations can work together to the benefit of the members of both.
4. If you're not already a member of an ATA partner NGO, join one! Contact ATA's Local Coordinator in your country for names and contact information for the partner NGO nearest you. If there are no partner NGOs in your area, talk with ATA's Local Coordinator about starting one. (See page 2 for pffice telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of ATA's Local Coordinators in each country.) ■

PROJECTS IN CENTRAL ASIA

Since 1995, Aid to Artisans (ATA) has been working as a member of the Counterpart Consortium (whose other members include the Counterpart Foundation, Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs, and International Center for Not-for-profit Law) on the Non-governmental Organization (NGO) Support Initiative for Central Asia. This initiative is funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and the project seeks to foster effective, democratic and sustainable indigenous NGOs capable of expressing citizens' interests, providing services to vulnerable groups within the population, and working in sectors critical to the economic, political, and social development of the region. In this project to date, ATA has produced the following results: 1) artisans and NGO leaders can now clarify artisan needs and understand how NGOs can strategize to meet those needs; 2) increasingly, artisans participate in ATA/ NGO training workshops, advocacy discussions, network formally and informally, and lobby their governments for improved conditions, all of which reflect newfound confidence in democracy and collective action; 3) product design assistance and marketing efforts, conducted by ATA through local NGOs, have directly generated more than \$200,000 in craft sales; 4) artisans have begun to market their products regionally through ATA / NGO contacts and program, developing new sources of income for artisans and their NGOs. ■

TAJKISTAN PRODUCT QUALITY SEMINAR

ATA's Local Coordinator in Tajikistan, Adiba Asadova, with help from Maya Aminova, Director of the Coordination Center of Women's Initiative in Dushanbe, presented a seminar on product quality to seven women in Dushanbe in February. Adiba and Maya worked with the women on how to distinguish good quality needlework from ordinary or poor quality needlework. The women learned specific techniques they can use to improve the quality of the products they make. Products the participants have made since the seminar, using the new methods, are of significantly higher quality, and foreigners viewing the new products purchased most within one day. ■

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT TIP

The most effective and least expensive form of advertising is "word of mouth" - satisfied customers telling their friends. To build positive word of mouth advertising. 1) learn what your customers like and want in your products, 2) sell only the highest quality products you can make, 3) charge reasonable prices, 4) treat everyone who walks into your shop as a special guest, even if she/he doesn't buy anything. 5) make it easy for a customer to buy your products, 6) give out business cards with your name and shop's address, and 7) thank each person as she/he leaves your shop. ■

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Turkmenistan (Ashgabad) -	Ms Margaret Bishop, Regional Director Tel (3272) 62-16-44 E-mail ata@cpart.alma-ata.su



U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PRESS RELEASE

WASHINGTON, DC 20523 USAID PRESS OFFICE
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February 12, 1998

THE FIRST LADY'S USAID SITE VISITS FROM HER TRIP TO KAZAKHSTAN, KYRGYSTAN, UZBEKISTAN & RUSSIA

The First Lady visited many U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) programs during her trip to Kazakhstan, Kyrgystan, Uzbekistan and Russia, many of which will be pictured during her slide show. These programs highlight USAID's role in supporting democracy initiatives, health and education programs and economic reform and private sector development.

The following USAID programs (listed in the order visited) were seen by the First Lady. For more information on these and other USAID activities in the region, please contact Ernie Gibble at 202.712.4047.

ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN - WOMEN'S WELLNESS CENTER

The USAID funded Almaty-Tucson (AZ) partnership is composed of a large group of Almaty health care institutions, including the Institute for Pediatrics and Children's Surgery, the Almaty City Emergency Hospital, the Almaty City Perinatal Center and others. The U.S. partners are a coalition of eight hospitals, the public health department and the Tucson, Arizona Medical Center.

Unlike traditional family planning oriented programs, the Almaty Center focuses on the full spectrum of women's health issues. The center is not restricted to serving only the reproductive health needs of women, but includes general health services, screening, education and health promotion activities in areas ranging from prenatal care to menopause. As such, the Women's Wellness Center serves as a new model for healthcare delivery which reduces duplication and fragmentation of health services in order to provide better health care and easier access to services for a population group which has long been ignored or under-served.

BISHKEK, KYRGYSTAN - WOMEN SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

In 1994, USAID approved a \$6.2 million grant to the Foundation for International Community Assistance (FINCA) to establish a microenterprise credit project in Kyrgyzstan. With the collapse of the Soviet system, many men lost their jobs. Families lost a comfortable lifestyle as food became expensive and scarce. Schools and medicine were no longer free. For some, self-employment became the only hope. With the help of FINCA, many women were able to obtain small working capital loans to buy rice, eggs, and other products which they could sell in the local bazaars. Through FINCA's village banking savings system, these women have increased their working capital and income. They can now purchase butter, sugar, and meat - luxuries they previously could not afford.

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TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN - WOMEN'S WELLNESS CENTER

The USAID funded Tashkent-Chicago Partnership is composed of the Second Tashkent State Medical Institute (TashMI II), one of the ten largest hospitals in the NIS, and the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Medical Center. The partnership has developed a model comprehensive women's wellness center. This one-stop-shopping approach will provide an integrated set of services (primary care, reproductive health, mental health and education in such topics as domestic violence and substance abuse) for women of all ages.

SAMARKAND, UZBEKISTAN - AID TO ARTISANS

USAID funded Aid to Artisans (ATA) has helped MEROS (Heritage) grow to serve a diverse membership of more than 90 artisan entrepreneurs, including master craftsmen, female home producers, fashion designers, teachers, apprentices and unemployed professionals from other fields. Services include assistance with product design and marketing, business training, international networking and advocacy. One focus of attention has been the revival of ancient crafts such as paper making and the adaptation of traditional crafts to modern usage.

Located in the Samarkand Art and History Museum across the street from the Registan, MEROS displays the works of over sixty members of the Association. MEROS is a democratically governed, non-governmental organization formed in 1996 by a group of artisans who believed that by working together, they could begin to solve many of the problems facing them during the time of transition to a market economy.

YEKATERINBURG, RUSSIA - URAL WOMEN'S BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

The Business Development Program funded by USAID was directly responsible for the creation of the Ural Women's Business Association. This Association was founded in 1993. The Association was founded to help address the problem of high unemployment among women in the Ural region. The activities of the Association focus on developing entrepreneurial skills, business opportunities and improving the business environment.

In 1995, the Ural Women's Association and the Yekaterinburg Business Support Center (BSC) organized a national conference that resulted in 27 Chapters of Women's business associations being established throughout the country. With over 5000 members the confederation now has the strength to influence policy makers' and federal bodies' business strategy decisions. The Confederation also promotes inter-regional ties and impacts international decisions on women's business support.

MEROSCHA – CHILD OF MEROS

The Meros Craft Center of the Samarkand Artisans Association was established a year ago. Its first anniversary was marked by the foundation of the Meroscha Center for Children's Creativity.

One of the first classes in the Center, located in School #16 in the Baghishamal Region, was attended by a guest from Italy. Jovanna Pyerra Viale represented the Association for the Development of International Cooperation, which is supported by the Italian government and European Council. Ms. Viale expressed her interest in Uzbek crafts and cooperation in that sphere. She enjoyed visiting the school, and got acquainted with the children and their products. Thanks to the favorable impressions about the Center and the general idea of teaching children traditional crafts that she took back to Italy, the Italian Embassy in Uzbekistan became interested in the Meroscha Center.

Here is how and why Meroscha emerged. The idea has a long history. Samarkand is well-known for its crafts, although not all of them have managed to survive. Ceramists, embroiderers, and ganch carvers participate in many exhibitions, but old master craftsmen pass away and teenagers are not willing to dedicate their lives to traditional crafts because they take years to learn. Everything is changing, and we should change our attitude towards crafts. It is not just about reviving crafts, it is about bringing the next generation up with a different perception about of cultural heritage. That is why when Zarif Mukhtarov, Chairman of the Craft Center and famous ceramist, shared his idea with Zubaydulloh Bazarov, Principal of School #16, the latter immediately agreed.

There are 3500 pupils and 3 schools in the chemists' village; School #16 is the biggest. These children have fewer opportunities and chances compared to those living in a city. Several Meros members living in this village encouraged the foundation of the Meroscha Center. N. Zhookov, L. Otchenashenko, L. Zotova, A. Sherbakov teach in the Center, headed by Ludmila Romanova.

The school donated the premises for the classes, and school staff participated in the creation of the work plan. The very first class was an exciting experience for Islam Mukhtarov and Fozil Azimov. They even brought their own special well-mixed clay for pottery and toys to demonstrate how it can be turned into beautiful pieces.

Another class, conducted by L. Karayeva, introduced children to fine art. During the next class, attended by the Italian guest, designer Ludmila Otchenashenko demonstrated her contemporary clothes based on traditional designs. The children have many interesting things to see.

It should be pointed out that all of the teachers donate their time. Gifted children, such as Oybek Khudaykulov, Katya and Lena Dadayeva and many others encourage them spiritually. Quoting Zarif: "We are grateful to everybody working in the center, all these people care about making children's lives interesting and about their future. We acknowledge the support of the Baghishamal Mayor A. Tukhtamuradov; he has even promised to provide us with a ceramic kiln."

The Meroscha Center will ensure the establishment of new contacts between School #16 and other local and foreign organizations. We are already working on that. It does not matter whether these children will become artisans or not, their spirituality will be enriched.

Classes in the Meroscha Center are not obligatory; children attend them on a voluntary basis. They say they like the Center. S. Redkin, A. Isayev, T. Sharapov, M. Samatov, N. Nikitina, Sh. Ganiyeva, A. Aliyev, Kh. Jalilov and many others presented Meroscha with their products which are now displayed in classrooms in order to create an atmosphere of beauty and art.

Good examples are necessary in the process of education. We wish all the best to the Meroscha Children's Center – the first child of Meros.

-- Svetlana Bereznyakova

«Меросча» — дитя «Мероса»

Год назад родился и начал работать «Мерос» — центр развития ремесел Ассоциации ремесленников Самарканда. А свою первую годовщину он отметил созданием центра детского творчества «Меросча».

На одном из первых занятий юного центра, что действует в 16-й средней школе Багшамальского района, побывала гостья из Италии. Да непростая гостья — Джованна Пьера Вигале представляла Ассоциацию по участию, развитию и поддержке работы в сфере международной кооперации (АИРС) организацию, поддерживаемую итальянским правительством и Европейским сообществом. Гже Вигале, интересовавшейся развитием ремесел в Узбекистане и сотрудничестве на этом поприще, в школе понравилась. Она познакомилась с детьми, увидела их первые работы и задалась целью помочь этому новому центру детского творчества. Как узнали потом, видимо, уже с подачи Джованны, уехавшей с хорошими впечатлениями от начатого в Самарканде дела по приобщению детей к миру искусства, к познанию местных традиционных ремесел, программой «Меросча» заинтересовались и в посольстве Италии в Узбекистане.

А теперь о том, как и почему появилось это дитя «Мероса». Идея — плод проблемы — зрела давно.

Самарканд, как известно, всегда был славен ремеслами. Не все удалось сохранить до наших дней. Но и сейчас наши керамисты, вышивальщицы, ганчисты — участники многих выставок. Но уходят старые мастера, а молодежь не очень охотно идет в ученики. Мастерству надо учиться годами. Сейчас время перемел, нового осмысленной традиции, народного наследия. И в этом свете встает вопрос не только о возрождении ремесел, а, пожалуй, больше о воспитании у тех, кто идет нам на смену, много, чем прежде, отношения к культурному наследию предков, к приобщению их к творчеству, искусству с детства, со школьной скамьи. И благо, когда директор Самаркандской ассоциации ремесленников «Мерос» Зариф Мухтаров, сам известный мастер-керамист, предложил воплотить идею создания детского центра директору 16-й школы Зубайдулло Базарову, тот ее подхватил сразу.

В поселке хмичков — примерно 3,5 тысячи школьников, три школы, из которых самая крупная именно 16-я. Здесь у девочек меньше возможностей,

чем у городских ребят, заняться интересным и полезным делом после уроков. А еще, именно в поселке хмичков живет целая группа членов ассоциации «Мерос» — мастеров, художников, поддерживавших идею создания центра детского творчества «Меросча». К этой работе подключились Н. Жукон, Л. Отченашенко, Л. Зотона, А. Щербаков, не говоря уже о школьных работниках. С их стороны возглавляет центр Людмила Федоровна Романова.

Школа предоставила помещение для занятий с детьми. Разработали совместную программу действий.

С интересом ехали в школу на первое занятие с детьми мастера-керамисты Ислом Мухтаров и Фазыл Азимов. Даже глину — особую, хорошо вымешанную, из которой сами делают народные игрушки, посуду, привезли с собой. Показали, как с ней работать, как из бесформенной массы получают интересные вещи.

Другое занятие было уже знакомством ребят с жанрами изобразительного искусства, в этот новый мир их вводила Л. Караева. Еще на одном, том самом,

на котором присутствовали гостья из Италии, школьники увидели работы художницы Людмилы Отченашенко. Она показывала созданные ею модели одежды в национальном стиле. Впереди ребят ждет еще много интересного.

Надо сказать, все, кто задействован в этой программе приобщения детей к творчеству, работают с ними безвозмездно. А моральное вознаграждение — тот факт, что уже сейчас видно: среди тех, кто занимается в «Меросче», по словам Зарифа Мухтарова, есть очень способные ребята — Ойбек Худайкулов, Катя и Лена Дадаевы и другие.

Мы очень благодарны всем, кто сейчас занимается с ребятами, — говорит глава «Мероса», — этих людей объединяет общая работа о том, как через приобщение к творчеству и искусству сделать жизнь ребят интересной, как дать им знания и умения, которые в будущем сослужат им добрую службу. Поддержал нас и хоним Багшамальского района А. Тухтамурадов, даже пообещал помочь с муфельной печью для обжига керамических изделий.

И еще, что очень важно: создание центра «Меросча» при 16-й школе поможет школьникам жить интересней — иметь связи и обмен с другими подобными зарубежными детскими центрами и организациями. Мы над этим уже работаем. В принципе, не главное, какую профессию выберет потом школьник, важнее, что он станет богаче внутренне, духовно.

Занятия в «Меросче» проходят во внеурочное время. Дело это добровольное — приходит кто хочет. По отзывам, детям здесь интересно. Между прочим, чтобы и атмосфера в центре была творческой, чтоб приобщение к прекрасному было как бы органичным, в помещении, где они занимаются, выставлены произведения профессионалов. Свои работы искусствователю подарили художники мастера С. Родичин, А. Исмаилов, Т. Шарифов, М. Самитов, Ш. Никитина, Ш. Галиева, А. Алиев, Х. Джалилов.

Как говорил, если учиться, то на хороших примерах. Хочется, чтобы удачно сложилась судьба у детского центра «Меросча» — первенца «Мероса».

Светлана БЕРЕЗНЯКОВА.



AID TO ARTISANS NEWS

ON THE SILK ROAD IN UZBEKISTAN

In 1995 Aid to Artisans began a project in Uzbekistan under a US Agency for International Development (USAID) grant supporting democracy initiatives.

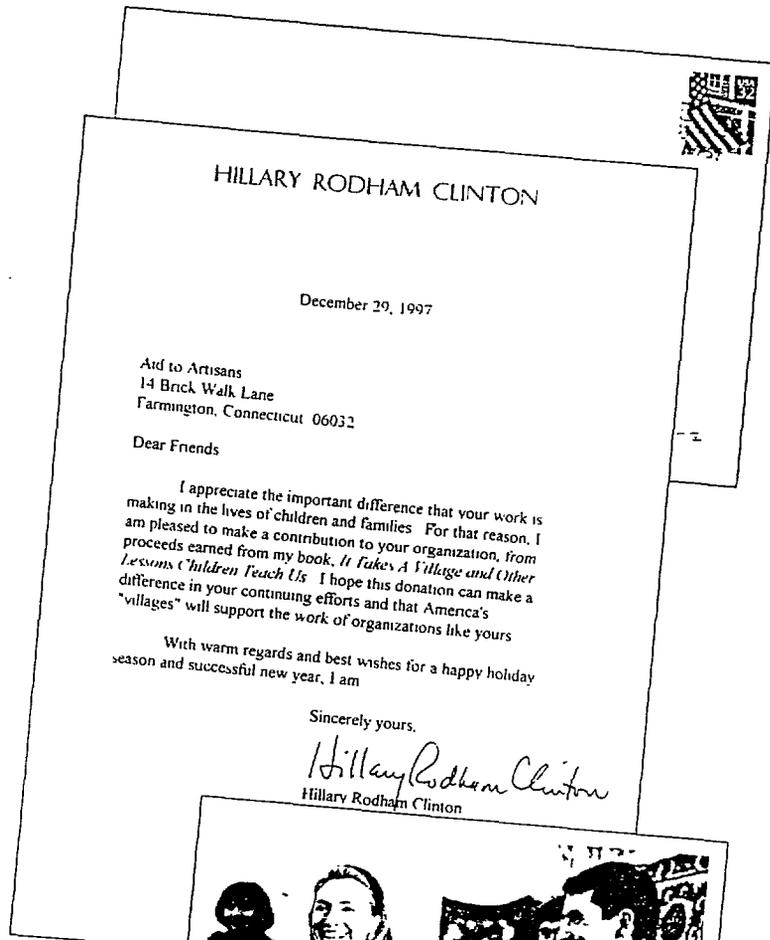
Hillary Rodham Clinton visited Central Asia in the fall of 1997 to promote democracy, human rights, and free markets. USAID staff, involved in planning Mrs. Clinton's itinerary, suggested visits to ATA projects in Uzbekistan — one in Bukhara, the other in Samarkand. Serendipitously, Clare Brett Smith's site visit coincided with Mrs. Clinton's schedule, so the two first ladies met for the first time some 7,000 miles from home.

Clare Smith says, "I was impressed with Mrs. Clinton's grasp of the region, as well as her warm and genuine interest in the people. Beyond the prepared speeches, she was knowledgeable about health care, women's issues, micro-lending, and the challenges that have changed the face of Central Asia since the withdrawal of the Soviet Union. Her staff was extraordinary, each one making sure that Mrs. Clinton met and talked not only with the local officials, but that she stopped and spoke with the artisans and the people who had waited for hours and hours for this once-in-a-lifetime experience."

During a one-day stop in Samarkand local officials determined that Mrs. Clinton's safety would best be protected if she were kept from the public, including the craftspeople who had made a special effort to proudly display their products for her review. A Clinton aide discovered all of the artisans and guests, including Clare Brett Smith, under guard in a room above the

courtyard where the Clinton entourage was to pass. Moments later they were apologetically escorted downstairs and the event proceeded on schedule.

Far beyond the social amenities of these visits are the vital lessons being learned by artisans in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Through ATA they develop a strong voice with their governments, they learn how to market their wares abroad, and they have the opportunity to develop new and exciting designs under the tutelage of expert designers. Designer Gay Ellis line of holiday stockings has found instant popularity (contact Richard Lawrence Mediterranean Imports.



Ceramist Abdulla Narzullaev presents a special platter inscribed with Mrs. Clinton's name, to a delighted First Lady.



MRS. CLINTON'S GIFT
Aid to Artisans was honored recently with a generous contribution from the proceeds of *It Takes a Village and Other Lessons Children Teach Us* (see letter above). In November 1997, Mrs. Clinton met ATA's president and CEO Clare Brett Smith in Uzbekistan, and the two discussed the positive effect USAID's program has on artisans' lives.



From Maker To Market

AID TO ARTISANS, INC.

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 TEL: (860) 677-1649 FAX: (860) 676-2170
 e-mail: atausa@aol.com

Aid to Artisans, a non-profit organization, offers practical assistance to artisans world-wide, working in partnerships to foster artistic traditions, cultural vitality and community well-being. Through training and collaboration in product development, production and marketing, Aid to Artisans provides sustainable economic and social benefits for craftspeople in an environmentally sensitive and culturally respectful manner.

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AID TO ARTISANS invites you to: become an annual member; support artisans through the ATA grants program; introduce a friend with a Gift Membership; join the Founders' Society; arrange for a Matching Grant from your business; or consider a major grant for a specific ATA program. There are many opportunities for support, and we welcome the chance to discuss them with you. Call (860) 677-1649 for further information, or use the enclosed envelope to join today.

Editor Linda G. Harmon
 Design Harry Rich Assoc., Inc.
 Maps Adapted from The Christian Science Monitor

ON THE SILK ROAD IN UZBEKISTAN (continued)

212-625-1301). Jane Griffiths spent three weeks with Uzbek artisans working on new textile designs. ATA is beginning to work in Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, and a Founders' Society tour is planned for the fall of 1998 (see page 3).

Today artisans work through MEROS (which means Heritage), the Bukhara Artisans Center, and a newly-

formed group in Khiva, to create glorious crafts and forge new relationships with other artisan groups, local and regional governments, and US importers. Some of the crafts exported from Uzbekistan include ceramics (decorative and practical), and elaborately embroidered holiday stockings, tea and coffee cozys, and wine bottle covers. ☐

Success builds self-confidence, and as ATA helps artisans create and strengthen their businesses, the artisans learn how to speak up for their concerns. They are taught methods of lobbying on specific issues such as tax legislation and export regulations.

ATA's work with the Counterpart Consortium in Central Asia on the USAID-funded NGO Support Initiative provides a clear example: Under the Soviet regime, artisans were heavily subsidized by the government and had no need to understand the dynamics of a free market.

Aid to Artisans' maker-to-market methodology is designed to increase the artisans' understanding of the marketplace, develop new market-driven products, and to open new sales opportunities, which includes participation in regional craft fairs. Since ATA came to Central Asia, fairs are held in Almaty, Tashkent and Bishkek. The first few fairs were organized and planned with close ATA supervision. Today local craft NGOs take increasing responsibility for organizing the fairs, which have become financially sustainable as the artisans pay booth rental fees because they realize the economic benefits of participation.

Confidence-building is also a vital part of ATA's work. Ms. Dinara Chochumbaeva, co-director of the Talent Support Fund, ATA's partner NGO in Kyrgyzstan, recently met with Kyrgyz President Askar Akaev. During the meeting Ms. Chochumbaeva challenged President Akaev to do more for the artisans of Kyrgyzstan — in particular to eliminate the production tax on artisan products. In response, President Akaev agreed to have his cabinet review and reform the production tax.

As a direct result of USAID's grant, ATA conducted advocacy training with the artisans of Central Asia, and Ms. Chochumbaeva was equipped to present an informed position to her government. In addition, the confidence and knowledge of the artisans has been developed so that they can advocate on their own behalf.

In another example of confidence-building, women living in the Fergana Valley of Uzbekistan have become increasingly concerned about the push towards

fundamentalist Islam in the area and its potential impact on them. The women have specifically requested that ATA increase its activities in the area because ATA's work has provided them with ways to earn incomes and given them options which they previously lacked.

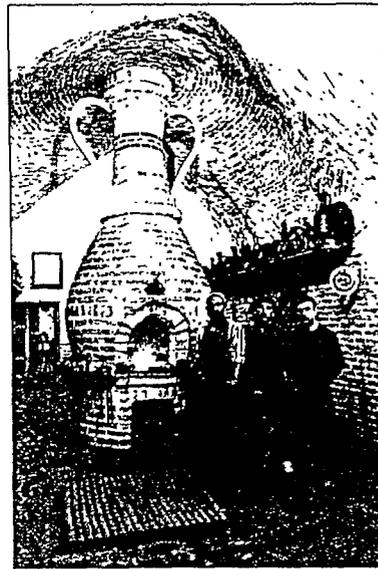
In this highly-charged political atmosphere, women are able to work as artisans to earn or supplement their households' income. The network created through the ATA project has provided the women with a forum for developing self- and group-confidence in their

ability to make their own choices and withstand outside threats.

Finally, in Uzbekistan, ATA together with the artisans has actively lobbied the government to eliminate export taxes on artisans' products. As a result of these efforts, the government provided for a five-year export tax exemption to qualifying artisans for specific product categories. While still somewhat restrictive, this provision represents a step toward a more comprehensive export tax exemption.

These actions together create a powerful force building democracy in Central Asia day by day. ☐

HOW DOES AID TO ARTISANS' WORK PROMOTE DEMOCRACY?



Master craftsman and scissors maker, Sahid and two colleagues stand beside the forge in their Bukhara, Uzbekistan workshop.

100



The ATA/TSF shop
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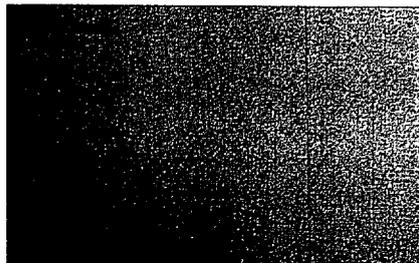
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