

**FY 2003 QUARTERLY REPORT (1st QUARTER)
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**Civic Education
On-Site Technical Assistance**

**Submitted to the
U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
by the International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES)**

October 1, 2002 – December 31, 2002

KYRGYZSTAN

I. PROGRAMMATIC ACTIVITIES

Secondary Education Project in Kyrgyzstan

IFES' Secondary Education Project in Kyrgyzstan saw much activity in the first quarter of fiscal year 2003. October, November and December are favorable months to make progress with school related projects; students and teachers are energized and focused in the months following commencement of the new school year and prior to the winter holiday. IFES used the opportunity to implement many activities that would prepare teachers and students for a successful and full year of civics education.

Part II of the civics textbook has been completed, and the Russian edition was printed in November. The Kyrgyz edition is now at the printers, and the distribution is timed to commence following the Russian textbook. The Uzbek version will be ready in the following months. Since the Uzbek schools only started piloting the textbook in September 2002, the translation and preparation of part II (in Uzbek) will not be required for this academic year. The second part of the textbook includes specific chapters on democratic development, women in politics, local government in Kyrgyzstan, the nature of state corruption and process and methodology of conflict resolution. The office continued to call and visit the 167 schools implementing part I of the IFES civic education textbook in order to identify those ready for part II and to assess implementation of part I.

With the Russian version of part II of the textbook printed and ready for use two teacher training events took place in December, one in Bishkek for pilot schools located in the North, and another training for those in the South. The two teacher trainings were attended by teachers from 31 pilot schools. The trainings highlighted classroom management techniques, evaluation mechanism in civic education, curriculum design, and a review of the teacher's guide. Additionally, in order to assist the pilot teachers with background information and academic articles each teacher was issued a copy of a CD-Rom and supplementary reading materials (about 270 pages) containing secondary and tertiary level civics education articles at the end of the training.

IFES Bishkek staff also provided teacher training for IFES-Tajikistan. The successful training for 25 pilot schools located around Dushanbe was based on the first part of the Tajik civics education textbook.

IFES Civics Education teachers' newsletter continued being published monthly in the three languages during the first quarter. In comparison to the previous months teachers are getting more actively involved in the newsletter sending their responses.

Student Activities

The Student Action Committee (SAC) program aims to achieve the following objectives:

- SACs build bridges of partnerships with different organizations, such as local governmental bodies, NGOs, public organizations.
- Students realize the importance of socially active positions, while participating in socially important decision making.
- Establishing SAC, students learn and put into practice the basics of democracy.
- SACs help students to research their local community and its problems.
- Having gaining practical skills in joint team activities, SAC participants work on community problems.

IFES conducted two SAC training for senior students from secondary schools during the first quarter. Both were held in the South of Kyrgyzstan, one in the town of Kerben in the Akshy district and one in the city of Osh. A total of 37 students and 8 teachers from 13 schools attended the Kerben program. SAC trainees included this summer's Democracy Camp's participants, new students and students from IFES pilot schools in the Kerben area.

Training in specific topics such as fundraising, PR and information collection and analysis was provided. Participants of the Kerben SAC training identified the following list of topics or rather, a list of issues that students consider to be urgent and more importantly, which the students think they will be able to tackle themselves:

- Extortion at schools
- Fights between students in schools
- Poor academic preparation of teachers who teach lessons
- Lack of academic materials and supplies in schools

Kerben SAC trainees will set up Student Action Committees on return to their respective schools.

In November IFES conducted a second SAC training in the southern city of Osh. A total of 60 participants attended the training. Participants were drawn from the Batken, Jalal-Abad and Osh provinces. At the end of the training program, students developed the following topics they wanted to see resolved by their own efforts:

- Identify a list of local issues that existed in the "Mamakaeva" sanatorium and in their respective schools
- Select two urgent issues (with regard to the life of the sanatorium) and two more issues (with regard to the life in the students' respective schools) from that list;
- Develop an action plan so these issues could be tackled.

Osh SAC trainees will also set up Student Action Committees on return to their respective schools.

In December it became clear that newly trained active students are organizing their own SACs in schools of southern Kyrgyzstan. Since the end of the last SAC training on December 3rd, four students have contacted IFES specialists requesting a form for proposal writing for the application of funding for school-based activities. All students were given information about possible methods of funding their particular activities through application to AED and Mercy Corps along with contact information.

Democracy Summer Camps

In October work on the final Summer Camp 2002 report was completed. Participants of the Summer Camps were required to undertake entry and exit exams in order to allow IFES to evaluate whether the Summer Camps' program has been implemented successfully. Results of the exams were then carefully analyzed and we can conclude that the improvement of results was evident basically in all of the summer camps conducted in the year 2002, i.e. in many cases the number of students who had difficulty answering questions on the entry exam before commencement of the Summer Camp was significantly reduced by the end of the Camp. It is also worthwhile mentioning that students' knowledge on such issues like NGO, gender issues and the state structure has improved significantly. In addition, most of the participants indicated that they had a positive opinion on the issue of participating in the electoral process. This means that by the end of the program many of the Summer Camp participants had adopted an active civic position and came to believe that they also can exert influence and make things in their state better.

This year IFES conducted seven Summer Camps around the country compared with only two camps conducted last year, and in the end one can say with firm confidence that the need to conduct Summer Camps and the huge number of students from all over the country who were eager to participate in the program and the high value attached to the importance of the program

indicate that continuation of the program is necessary and vital. It is also crucial to extend the Summer Camp project to more areas in the country and thus conduct more Camps in the future.

Elections in Kyrgyzstan

On October 20 by-elections to the Kyrgyz Parliament were held in the four electoral districts: Ala-Buka #15, Leilek #23, Kara-Kuldja #33, and “Osh-3000” #35. By-elections were scheduled in order to fill vacant seats in the Legislation Assembly after four parliamentarians (K. Osmonov, S. Chyrmashev, A. Shadiev, and B. Alymbekov) were appointed government officials and had to leave their seats last May.

IFES coordinated nineteen international observers to attend the by-elections on October 20. Twelve NGOs, associated members of the Coalition “For Democracy and Civil Society”, sent more than 140 independent observers to 110 precincts of the following three election districts: Osh-3000, Ala-Buka, and Leilek. IFES specialists ran two-day trainings for members of the Territorial Election Commission (TEC). Then the newly trained TEC members split up into three teams and ran three-hour trainings for Precinct Election Commission (PEC) members in three constituencies: Kara-Kulja, Uzgen, and Osh-3000. The TEC member teams conducted seventeen trainings. In addition to the trainings, IFES and the CEC developed a leaflet for observers and voters and an instructional placemat for PEC members.

According to the observers there were some cases of violations registered in the election districts, most of which took place in Osh-3000. These violations included multiple voting, false documents, family voting, and bribery.

IFES received the following recognition in a report from AKI Press:

“With the purpose of ensuring the legality of actions of election commissions the CEC together with the International Fund for Elections Systems has held trainings for a local election commission as well as produced and distributed leaflets for the observers and voters, which explained in detail the rights and duties of these participants of election process. In order to realize transparent elections of the deputies of Legislative Assembly in four constituencies, Osh, Jalal-Abad and Leilek regions, the members of the Central Election commission of Kyrgyzstan, and also 19 foreign observers directed by the International Fund for Election Systems and accredited by CEC were present.”

Constitutional Reform

In December IFES staff prepared a program and coordinated the first meeting of a “pros and cons” public committee. This committee was organized by IFES as a means to educate the citizenry on the issues to be voted on in the forthcoming referendum. Following consideration of political, procedural and legal matters pertaining to the committee’s work, the members were in full agreement to pursue the project as suggested by IFES, including media interviews, a public survey, and possible TV ‘talkback show’ to inform voters. A press release was prepared and approved by the committee followed by a press conference at Kabar News Agency with three of the public committee members supporting IFES.

The IFES sponsored public committee members are:

1. Tursunbai Bakir Uulu. He is the recently elected first ombudsman of the Kyrgyz Republic. Previously a deputy, Mr. Tursunbai Bakir Uulu is from southern Kyrgyzstan.
2. Sabirov Alisher. He is a deputy of the Legislative Assembly of the JK. He is also from southern Kyrgyzstan and a representative of the Uzbek community.
3. Marat Sultanov. He is a deputy of the Legislative Assembly of the JK. Previously he had been a minister of finance but resigned in 1999.
4. Karabaev Ednan. He is a deputy rector of the Kyrgyz-Russian Slavonic University (KRSU). In 1993-1995 he served as a head of the presidential administration. Later, he was appointed minister of foreign affairs.
5. Iskakova Gulnara. Current professor of Constitutional Law and chair of the legal department at the American University of Central Asia. Previously she taught at the Kyrgyz State National University and was an independent consultant to the Central

Election Commission. In addition Ms. Iskakova is a director of the NGO entitled "Development of a Human Space".

6. Kurmanov Zainidin. He is a current deputy of the Legislative Assembly and head of the "Ak-Ordo" parliamentary faction. He is a renowned professor of history and previously taught at the history department of the Kyrgyz-Russian Slavic University, and
7. Nikolai Bailo, Deputy Chairman of the Party of Communists of Kyrgyzstan.

The actual date for the referendum is unclear at this time. While public discussion on the proposed constitutional reforms has been officially closed, President Akaev has recently ordered by decree that a new expert group is to be established. The expert group will hold "analysis of proposals and remarks to the Constitution of Kyrgyzstan, as well as to work out new version of the Constitution of Kyrgyzstan". This means there could be many changes made to the constitutional reform process before it is concluded. Consequently while the IFES "pros and cons" public committee is prepared, much of the work will have to wait until the official proposed reforms are announced. It is IFES' hope that the announcement will be made in time for the committee to complete the original project: invitation of public opinion, selection and production of a "pros and cons" leaflet as well as media interviews and possible "talkback show" to inform the public.

Media Attention

IFES has received considerable media attention for its programmatic initiatives relating to the constitutional reform process. Following are some examples:

Kabar reported:

A booklet with public opinion to be issued in Kyrgyzstan 24.12.02

Bishkek, December 24. (KABAR). A booklet with public opinion will be issued in Kyrgyzstan for forthcoming referendum on discussion of amendments. It will include "for and against" concerning the amendments into normative and legal acts, regulating the activity of all branches of the power and the President. The opinions would be collected through a poll by the International Foundation for Election System (IFES) in Kyrgyzstan. According to Director of the IFES project Chedomir Flego at a briefing at the "Kabar" Agency, the poll will be conducted on the whole territory of Kyrgyzstan. Its results will be handed over to recently set up public committee, which include deputies of the Legislative Assembly of the Kyrgyz Parliament, professors and the Ombudsman.

IFES has worked in Kyrgyzstan under USAID funding since 1994, conducting projects in civil society development, technical election assistance, and civic education. In 1995, 1996 and 2001 IFES conducted national public opinion polls designed to gauge perceptions of democracy and the future of the country. This data has proven integral to the development of IFES' ongoing programmatic strategy.

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Here is how "The word of Kyrgyzstan" reported the event:



Официальная хроника
Навстречу референдуму

В агентстве “Кабар” прошел брифинг, организованный Международным фондом избирательных систем (МФИС).

Поводом стало создание на основе фонда общественного комитета, цель которого - выявить мнение общественности о предлагаемых изменениях и дополнениях в Конституцию Кыргызстана. В состав комитета вошли представители парламента и общественных организаций. Итог его работы будет подведен в своеобразном отчете. Документ, содержащий мнения “за” и “против” по вопросам, имеющим наибольший общественный спрос, организаторы проекта собираются распространить среди избирателей.

С. ЛЕОНИДОВА.

Moving toward referendum

The ‘Kabar’ press agency hosted a briefing organized by the International Foundation for Election Systems.

The briefing was devoted to creation of a public committee whose main purpose is to identify public’s opinion on proposed changes and amendments to the current constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic. The committee is composed of representatives from the Parliament and public organizations. The final result of the committee’s work will be summarized in a unique report presented in the form of a document containing arguments “For” and “Against” with regard to the proposed constitutional changes that are of paramount public demand. The photocopies of this document will be then distributed to the voters of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Vecherny Bishkek reported:



**Лауреат премии "Выбор года - 2002"
Газета № 1 в Кыргызстане**

№249 (8173)

Среда, 25 декабря 2002 года

Узнай и голосуй

Международный фонд избирательных систем (МФИС) в Кыргызстане займется информированием населения о предстоящих изменениях в Конституции республики. Об этом сообщил вчера в “Кабаре” директор МФИС КР Чедомир Флего.

Специально созданный общественный комитет, в который вошли депутаты Жогорку Кенеша, представители НПО, а также различных слоев общества, будет собирать замечания и предложения граждан, связанные с поправками в Основной закон. Информация на местах будет передаваться через неправительственные организации. К середине января члены Ассоциации юристов Кыргызстана должны подготовить итоговый отчет, содержащий правовой анализ грядущей реформы и отзывы о ней жителей республики.

- Наша задача: рассказать людям, что же конкретно изменят поправки в Основной закон, - пояснил господин Флего. - Они также будут знать, что думают по этому поводу их сограждане. Таким образом, общественность сделает информированный выбор.

Алмаз РЫСАЛИЕВ

Vecherny Bishkek, Wednesday, December 25th, 2002.
“Learn and vote”

The International Foundation for Election Systems (IFES) in Kyrgyzstan will engage into informing the population about upcoming changes to the Kyrgyz Constitution. This news was reported at yesterday’s briefing by IFES director Mr. Chedomir Flego.

A specially established committee that consists of the deputies of Parliament, NGO representatives as well as representatives of various layers of society will collect citizens’ comments and suggestions in relation changes and amendments proposed to the main law of the country. Such comments will be transmitted through the non-governmental organizations. By the middle of January the lawyers’ association of Kyrgyzstan will also issue a legal commentary related to the upcoming constitutional reform and thus solicit voters’ opinion.

According to Mr. Flego, “our main task is to let the people know what the proposed changes mean for the people of the country”. “Through this process they will be able to know the opinion of other citizens on the proposed changes and amendments and thus be able to make an informed choice”.

II. MATERIALS PRODUCED

- Civics Education textbook part II (Russian)
- Supplementary Readings – hard copy and CD Rom (Russian)
- Teachers’ Newsletter in three languages (Kyrgyz, Russian, Uzbek), number # 3, 4, 5 and 6; that is 4 editions by 3 languages totaling 12 issues.
- Leaflet for observers and voters for the by-elections*
- Instructional placemat for PEC members for the by-election*
- Teachers Guide for part II in Russian
- Teacher Training Video
- SAC manual in Uzbek language
- Brochure of IFES programs
- Democracy summer camp report
- IFES web site upgrade

*document was designed in September, the last month of the fourth quarter 2002, but printed in October, the first month of the first quarter 2003.

III. ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

During the first quarter there has been a calming of the political situation by the government in offering constitutional reform to the opposition in an effort they described as conciliatory. A constitutional council was appointed with wide community representation; in addition a parallel community discussion process was eagerly set up and supported by the coalition for Democracy and Civil Society.

The protests in support of Beknazarov petered out although the opposition continued to call for the resignation of president Akayev. The government added to their activity of mainly sidelining the opposition deputies and banning street gatherings with a pernicious campaign against the main independent newspaper, ‘Moya Stolitza’ which is now facing a string of lawsuits, some of which are based on persons claiming to have had their ‘national dignity’ offended, while others are very serious charges of libel and misrepresentation.

IFES has met with CEC staff on many occasions to discuss procedural referendum activities and with the public committee on the 'pros and cons' with the intention to produce an information leaflet for distribution to the public before referendum day, now expected to be held on 2 February 2003.

IFES attended an end of year meeting with the Minister of Education and Culture, Ishengul Boljurova, who appealed to IFES and other grantees to bring students from diverse locations, together when holding meetings and conferences; ideally suited to the IFES student democracy summer camps. IFES will endeavor to meet the minister's request.

IFES organized teacher trainings in Osh and Bishkek for part II of the IFES civics education textbook and feedback form participating teachers and students appears to indicate they like part II even more than part I perhaps because it contains more local content and a higher level of challenging and interactive activities.

IFES has AED to thank for supporting many of these projects through training grants.