



USAID | **KAZAKHSTAN**
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT: SEPTEMBER 1, 2007 – FEBRUARY 29, 2008

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**Kazakhstan Judicial Assistance Project (KJAP)
Contract No. DFD-I-02-04-00171-00
USAID/CAR Regional Mission**

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A. Executive Summary

Chemonics signed the Kazakhstan Judicial Assistance Project (KJAP) task order on October 1, 2005. The task order was originally envisioned to last until October 1, 2007 and was designed to build and sustain a more democratic culture among citizens and target institutions by supporting the Kazakh judiciary's modernization efforts and building public demand for a fair and transparent judiciary.

KJAP's interventions were divided into four areas: (i) Video Court Recording; (ii) Judicial Independence, Transparency, and Accountability; (iii) Judicial Training; and (iv) Public Education and Media Training. These program areas were mutually reinforcing and contributed to the realization of USAID/CAR Strategic Objective (SO) 2.1 "Strengthened Democratic Culture among Citizens and Target Institutions."

In August 2007, USAID modified the KJAP task order to extend the contract end date to August 31, 2009 and modify the scope of work. This new "Phase II" scope of work includes one main area: expanding KJAP's video court recording project into at least 27 courts around the country. The program includes a considerable cost-share from the Supreme Court toward the purchase of video recording systems. The cost-share is a testament to the political will for reform in Kazakhstan and the partnerships that USAID has developed with the Kazakh judiciary.

As stipulated by the KJAP task order, this semi-annual report presents KJAP's progress towards the targets established in USAID/CAR Strategic Objective (SO) 2.1 "Strengthened Democratic Culture Among Citizens and Target Institutions." The reporting period covers six months: September 1, 2007 – February 29, 2008.

Project activities in this reporting period focused primarily on transitioning from Phase I to Phase II, and working with the Kazakh judiciary and USAID to finalize the numerous logistical, contractual, and procedural arrangements to expand the use of courtroom video recording systems into at least 27 courts across the country. This vital preparatory work was performed throughout the reporting period, and the project expects the first phase of equipment installation to occur early in the next reporting period (approximately April 2008). This report describes this preparatory work in more detail.

Once they are installed and functional, the video recording systems will improve the transparency and accountability of the Kazakh judiciary, reduce opportunities for corruption, and bolster public support for the judiciary. Cumulatively, they will contribute to a reformed and improved Kazakh judiciary and the strengthened rule of law in Kazakhstan.

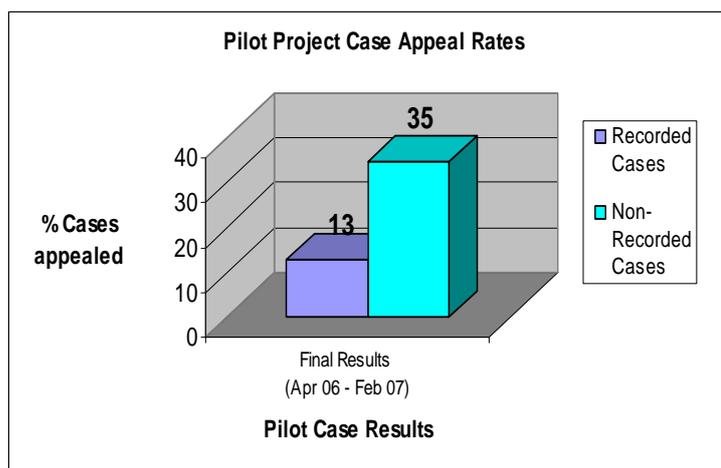
B. Video Recording Background

Video court recording was one of the original activities contained in the KJAP task order (awarded in 2005). Specifically, KJAP's mandate was to implement a 12-month pilot project at a district court in Almaty to test video recording systems that had been installed in four courtrooms. These four systems were procured and installed towards the end of the previous USAID judicial reform project and had not yet entered use when KJAP started work in October 2005. KJAP's initial steps were therefore to inventory the equipment, repair some small technical defects, develop technical and procedural guidelines, and train the court staff. The recording equipment entered use in April 2006.

The motivation for the video recording pilot project stemmed from the judiciary’s desire to increase court transparency, reduce corruption, and build public support for the judicial system. Despite implementing an impressive array of judicial reforms, public distrust in the Kazakh judicial system is still prevalent. Court procedures are often perceived as corrupt, and the judicial staff are frequently viewed as incompetent. Cases are frequently appealed, and without detailed and accurate records, judicial independence is compromised, and judges fear being accused of (and disciplined for) bias or corruption. While a verbatim court record is typical in many Western countries, in Kazakhstan the court secretary typically writes the court records by hand. These records are not verbatim transcripts but essentially only summaries of the case. Some courts also use audio recording, but this system produces transcripts of imperfect quality, and is itself easily subject to manipulation, leaving room for incorrect allegations or complaints.

During the 12-month pilot project at the Bostandyk District Court of Almaty, KJAP introduced into Kazakhstan’s judicial procedure the novel concept of digital video court recording — a system that was proven to increase judicial transparency and accountability and provided an accurate case record to be used on appeal. Increased transparency and accountability was accomplished through many fronts during the trial: limiting the enormous and improper influence of the prosecutor; limiting or removing opportunities for blatant legal and procedural violations; improving the behavior of all trial participants, including the prosecutor and judge; and increasing the preparation of the trial participants, resulting in a more efficient and professional trial.

KJAP utilized a high-tech digital recording system that used a combination of four cameras and up to six microphones to thoroughly and accurately capture all aspects of a court case and provide a verbatim record. A vital feature was the system’s use of separate channels for each microphone, which produced a clear, high-quality audio record and enabled the system to clearly distinguish between different speakers during a trial. Other systems in use in Kazakhstan use one combined channel for multiple microphones and often produce garbled audio recordings due to overlapping speakers, which makes differentiating between speakers challenging. Four courtrooms — two criminal and two civil — at the pilot court were equipped with the video recording equipment, and four were not. This setup enabled KJAP to monitor and objectively compare case statistics.



The pilot project demonstrated that the video recording equipment had a significant positive impact on the judicial process. Non-recorded cases were nearly three times more likely to be appealed than recorded cases. Trial participants were also significantly less likely to file complaints on the protocol [trial record] if the case was recorded. Judges and lawyers attribute these results to the fact that when the video recording system is used, the trial progresses according to the procedural legislation, resulting in fewer, if any, violations. Judges and lawyers also reported that all trial participants were generally

better prepared for trial — and acted more appropriately during trial — when they knew the video recording system would be used.

The lower appeal rates also showed that trial participants had more confidence that their trials were conducted properly and impartially. There is strong support among the general public, the court staff themselves, and the Kazakh government for installing and using a court video recording system in all of Kazakhstan's courts to promote transparency of the judicial system, protect judges against false accusations in cases of unfavorable judgments, and fight corruption in the judiciary. Surveys of citizens who participated in a recorded trial indicate that 73 percent would have more trust in courts that use videorecording than those that do not, and 80 percent support the use of videorecording in all courts of Kazakhstan. Surveys given to pilot court staff (judges, court secretaries, court specialists, and bailiffs) indicated



The videorecording equipment installed in a criminal courtroom.

Note the multiple cameras and microphones, including in the defendant's enclosure. (KJAP 2007)

that 93 percent of them support the use of videorecording in all courts of Kazakhstan. An added benefit of decreased appeal rates is a reduction of the court backlog, especially at the appellate level. Significant backlogs lead to delays in the case processing time, further eroding public support for the judiciary. Reduced backlogs thus lead to a more efficient administration of justice.

The pilot project generated substantial positive media coverage across Kazakhstan. This coverage served to educate Kazakh citizens on their judicial system and the many ways the judiciary is striving to better serve the public. For instance, a weekly Kazakh television program devoted almost an entire program to the pilot. News of the videorecording success even reached other countries. In June 2007, a delegation of Ukrainian Supreme Court judges visited Kazakhstan to learn more about videorecording and received a personal demonstration at KJAP's pilot court. As a testament to the sustainability of the pilot project, pilot court staff led the demonstration for the Ukrainian delegation.

At the conclusion of the pilot project on February 2, 2007, USAID officially transferred ownership of the video recording equipment to the Kazakh judiciary.

As Kazakhstan seeks to reduce public corruption and increase public confidence in the administration of justice, rigorous internal recordkeeping, which places constraints on the opportunities to manipulate the judicial system, will remain central to government efforts. And as Kazakhstan prepares for its further integration into the global legal community, concrete improvements in judicial system operations — such as those provided by the video recording systems — will provide a crucial foundation for local courts to embrace the larger challenges of operating in compliance with the full range of international legal obligations.

Recognizing the potential of the technology to support increased transparency, accountability, and independence, USAID subsequently extended KJAP in August 2007 to expand KJAP's video court recording project nationwide. This Phase II program includes a considerable cost-share from the Supreme Court toward the purchase of additional video recording systems. The cost-share is a testament to the political will for reform in Kazakhstan and the partnerships that USAID has developed with the Kazakh judiciary.

C. Project Organization

KJAP has two project components:

1. Court Video Recording Equipment Installation
2. Court Video Recording Monitoring

These two components are divided into distinct "tasks," each of which contributes to the realization of the component.

KJAP's Kazakhstan project team consists of a two person technical team: the Chief of Party (COP), and the Deputy Chief of Party (DCOP). This staff is supported by an Office Manager/Accountant. The Kazakh team is composed entirely of Kazakh nationals; there are no expatriates. This configuration contributes to the local ownership and long-term sustainability of the project's work. The project office is in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

The Washington, DC-based home office management team consists of a director, manager and associate. This team of development professionals provides daily support to the field offices at no direct cost to the contract, being covered out of HO overhead.

D. Relation to USAID/CAR Objectives

KJAP is aligned with USAID/CAR Strategic Objective (SO) 2.1 "Strengthened Democratic Culture Among Citizens and Target Institutions." KJAP activities are intended to directly contribute to the achievement of three Intermediate Results (IRs):

- 1.3.3 "Increased Implementation of Laws and Regulations"
- 2.1.3 "Enhanced Opportunities for Citizen Participation in Governance"
- 2.1.4 "More Effective, Responsive, and Accountable Public Institutions"

It is important to note the inherent meaning in SO 2.1, particularly in terms of *strengthening democratic culture*. As elaborated in *USAID's Assistance Strategy for Central Asia 2001-2005*:

The Central Asian states diverge from those in Eastern Europe in that, in the latter countries there was an evident consensus and commitment among citizens and governing elites to reform. In Central Asia, there has been no such consensus. Less than a decade ago, the Soviet Republics of Central Asia became all of a sudden and, for the most part, unwillingly independent. Independence did not emerge from a popular movement for change or from a cadre of enlightened reformist politicians.....In short, Central Asia has had very little experience with modern democratic values and norms.

This difference in where the existence of the problem stems from warrants an approach to democracy assistance in Central Asia that differs from that employed in Eastern Europe and much of the European NIS. Democracy assistance requires more than facilitating simple political transition that replaces forcibly supplanted authoritarianism with earlier held values....The long-term establishment of democracy in the region requires first and foremost more fundamental changes. Assistance must make people aware of the possibilities available to them and increase the popular demand for change by fostering political will and commitment for reform among both citizens and governing elites. In other words, the situation does not call for assistance facilitating political transition; it calls for assistance *strengthening democratic culture*....

The emphasis on strengthening democratic culture is a constituent element of KJAP's activity, and presents a metric by which KJAP progress can be measured.

E. KJAP Progress Towards the Targets Established in SO 2.1

The project emphasis during this reporting period was on making the numerous preparations necessary to expand the video recording systems across Kazakhstan. This required a great deal of coordination and collaboration with the Kazakh judiciary (particularly the Supreme Court and the Court Administration Committee). This work will begin to bear fruit in the coming months as the video recording equipment is installed and made functional in each court. Below we present the progress made during this reporting period, by component and task, and describe the impacts on the realization of the targets established in SO 2.1. The components and tasks are based on the KJAP work plan, as approved by USAID. Given the sequential nature of this expansion, several tasks have not yet begun. For these tasks we have provided a brief description of the work to be performed, along with an estimate of when it is likely to commence.

EI. Component 1: Court Video Recording Equipment Installation

Increasing the use of courtroom video recording equipment in Kazakh courts will promote transparency and accountability, reduce corruption, and increase public confidence in the judiciary. During its 22-month extension, KJAP will install video recording equipment in at least 27 Kazakh court rooms, train court staff in its usage, and oversee its operation. This will be accomplished in two phases. In Phase I, KJAP will procure and install the hardware and software to equip six courtrooms. After this equipment is made functional and the staff trained, KJAP will procure at least 21 sets of video recording hardware, and the Kazakh judiciary will procure the necessary software. KJAP will then lead a training session for the judiciary to enable it to perform the installation in the remaining 21 courts; an approach that will build the judiciary's capacity to manage the recording system and bolster its sustainability. KJAP will perform monitoring of all courts to measure its effectiveness and impact.

Task 1: Finalize the subcontract with SRS

In January 2008, after receiving USAID consent to subcontract with Special Recording Systems LTD (SRS), the Ukrainian vendor of the video recording system, Chemonics/KJAP

signed the fixed price subcontract with SRS for the purchase of the hardware and software for the six courts that will be equipped in the first phase of the expansion. The contract with SRS for the first year of Phase I covers (i) the purchase of the video recording systems, (ii) installation, (iii) training, and (iv) support service.

SRS was initially selected by the USAID Central Asia Judicial Systems Development Project (KJAP's predecessor) through a competitive selection process due to SRS's ability to provide and service high-quality video recording equipment. This equipment was subsequently installed at the Bostandyk Court in Almaty, where KJAP implemented a 12-month pilot project to thoroughly test the system. KJAP and the Kazakh judiciary have become intimately familiar with SRS's "Femida" system through the pilot project and KJAP has prepared detailed technical, training, and procedural recommendations to support the expanded use of the system in more Kazakh courts. KJAP and USAID thus selected SRS to provide the equipment for this new expansion. Choosing another vendor would also have introduced unnecessary complexity into the use of video recording systems in Kazakhstan by adding another type of equipment, new training protocols, unique servicing requirements, etc. The Kazakh judiciary will be best served by having a unified and compatible national system because it will make training, using, and servicing the systems uniform across the country.

Task 2: Coordinate with the Kazakh judiciary

At the end of December 2007, USAID and the Court Administration Committee of the Supreme Court of Kazakhstan signed the Memorandum of Understanding that clarifies the roles and responsibilities of each party regarding the video recording expansion. Under the MOU, USAID will provide technical assistance, training and equipment for the expansion of the court recording program through an implementing partner (KJAP). In the first year, KJAP will provide and install the required equipment and software to video record trials, as well as software to disguise the voices of witnesses, in six courts. Following the installation of the video recording systems, KJAP will train the court staff in the system's usage and management. In the second year of the program, KJAP will provide the necessary video recording and voice disguising software to support the operation of the video recording system in at least 21 additional courts.

According to the agreement, the Court Administration Committee is responsible for providing and installing the necessary server for each court that will receive a recording system, hardware to support the voice disguising system, and all computer hardware and equipment for the additional 21 courts in the second year. The judiciary will also allow KJAP to use the Bostandyk District Court in Almaty as a training venue, and actively cooperate with USAID and KJAP for the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the program.

Once the MOU was signed, KJAP started negotiations with and receive approval from the Court Administration Committee for several project implementation issues including the identification of the first six target courts, the installation schedule and the Supreme Court's approval of the monitoring forms KJAP will use to monitor the performance of the video recording systems. The first six courts that the Court Administration Committee identified are:

1. Court of Astana city;
2. Court of Almaty city;
3. East-Kazakhstan oblast court;

-
4. Karaganda oblast court;
 5. Shuchinsk rayon court of Akmola oblast;
 6. Saryarkinskyi rayon court #2 of Astana city.

After the Supreme Court selected the target courts, KJAP worked closely with the Court Administration Committee to ensure the target courts met the required technical specifications to support the video recording system. KJAP also received approval from the Supreme Court to use the Bostandyk rayon court in Almaty as a training center for the system administrators' trainings, which will instruct them on the proper usage of video recording systems. In January, KJAP negotiated with the system administrator of Bostandyk court about the current usage of the video recording system in their court, and SRS tested the video recording equipment to make sure that it is functioning properly and meets the required specifications.

A central feature of the KJAP expansion is a considerable cost-share from the Supreme Court, namely for hardware for Year 2. In February, KJAP learned that the Court Administration Committee had prepared a proposal for these funds and submitted it to the government agency preparing the upcoming state budget. KJAP will continue to monitor the progress of this funding request given its impact on project plans, and report any updates in future reports.

According to Kazakh law, the presiding judge has the authority to approve or deny the use of the video recording system in trials. To encourage more judges to use video recording in their court rooms during this expansion, KJAP sought and received the endorsement from the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to video record all trials in courtrooms equipped with video recording systems except in closed trials where video recording is prohibited by law. KJAP anticipates that this added incentive will encourage judges to allow more trials to be video recorded.

On the recommendation of KJAP, the Supreme Court instructed the chairmen of the selected courts and administrators of courts in oblasts to appoint system administrators for the video recording systems who will be responsible for overseeing the use of the video recording equipment in courts during the entire period of this activity. During the next reporting period, KJAP will work with the six courts to help them identify system administrators, and also ensure that the server which the Supreme Court will provide each court is compatible with the SRS Femida recording system.

In addition, KJAP assisted USAID in fulfilling Article 2.5 of the MOU by providing USAID the exact technical specifications of the required computer software and hardware and court recording equipment needed for the expansion, as well as approximate costs for expanding the project. USAID forwarded these to the appropriate officials in the Court Administration Committee.

During the next two months, KJAP will coordinate and finalize several additional procedural issues with the Supreme Court, including the duration of retaining video records, the procedure for purchasing CDs used to save recorded cases, the protocols for the preservation and long-term storage of CDs, the rights of parties to obtain a copy of the CD at the end of their case, and the protocol for resolving equipment malfunctions. This last item will also include establishing a permanent preventive maintenance program.



The court secretary's workstation, from where he/she operates the video recording system. (KJAP 2007)

Task 3: Prepare Training Materials for Staff of Target Courts

In February 2008, KJAP finalized the training materials that will be used to train staff of the target courts and forwarded them to SRS for their comment and review. The training materials include training manuals and other training tools on how to use the SRS Femida video recording system and equipment. SRS will provide these materials at the trainings in Kazakhstan.

Task 4: Ship Equipment to Almaty from Kiev

The bulk of the video recording equipment is being provided by SRS in Kiev, and shipped to Almaty. The remainder will be purchased locally. In early 2008, we learned of recent changes to Kazakh import regulations. KJAP and SRS discussed how to address these issues (which primarily deal with the delivery of equipment from abroad and the procedures for assessing and paying import taxes). These procedures are more onerous for foreign companies like SRS. As a result of the new procedures and learning how to apply them to our situation, the equipment shipment was delayed by approximately two weeks, and was scheduled to commence in March 2008, after which KJAP and SRS will immediately begin installation in the six courts.

Task 5: Establish and Operate a "Hotline" for Target Court Staff

In March, KJAP will set up a dedicated cell phone line as part of its tasks needed to establish a "Hotline" to enable staff of the target courts to quickly reach a KJAP staffer to report and/or troubleshoot any technical issues that may arise during implementation. Target court staff will be given this number – for a permanent KJAP cell phone to be carried continuously by the relevant KJAP staffer – and instructions on when they should call. A functioning "Hotline" will enable target court staff to quickly reach a KJAP staffer to report and/or troubleshoot any technical issues that may arise during implementation. We will track the frequency and types of calls received to enable us to develop any necessary training or procedural responses. The "Hotline" will be in operation throughout the project. KJAP is currently finalizing a business card-sized "Hotline" Card which includes all the necessary information and instructions for the court staff. It will be ready for distribution when KJAP activates the Hotline in March/April 2008.

Task 6: Install Equipment in Six Courts

Once the equipment arrives in Almaty and clears customs, the installation process can begin. Installing the video recording equipment in each target court is a three-step process. It begins with the actual installation of the equipment, which will be performed by SRS technicians. The installation will include mounting all cameras, microphones, and cables; installing the computers and servers; and testing the equipment.

Once the equipment is installed, SRS and KJAP will conduct a one-day training for all the court staff, including court secretaries, court bailiffs, judicial assistants, and court specialists. The training will cover such issues as staff training on court recording methods and management, including training on the policies and procedures for recording of proceedings; storage of recordings; transcription of recordings; security of equipment; security of software; security of recordings; access by parties, lawyers, judges, court personnel and others to recordings; issuance of copies of recordings; issuance of transcripts of recordings; use of recordings; troubleshooting; and maintenance of equipment. A KJAP staffer will remain at the court for an additional three days to provide support/mentorship to ensure the staff is comfortable using the new equipment.

While at the court the KJAP staffer will work with the court leadership to identify a court staff member to serve as the “System Administrator” for the recording system. This individual will serve as a first-level technical troubleshooter and oversee the daily usage of the equipment. They will also be the primary point-of-contact to and from KJAP on the operation of the system.

KJAP currently expects the equipment in the first six courts to be installed by the end of April 2008, and begin use immediately thereafter. KJAP and our Kazakh counterparts plan to inaugurate the expansion by holding a joint event, currently scheduled for May 14, 2008 at the Astana City Court. USAID Regional Mission Director William Frej, together with dignitaries from the Kazakh judiciary, will be in attendance. The Astana City court is one of the six initial target courts participating in the project. KJAP will hold smaller press conferences at each court once the installation and training are complete to publicize the recording system for local media.

Task 7: Deliver “Immersion” Training for System Administrators at the Bostandyk Court

To contribute to the project’s success and sustainability, KJAP will hold a three-day “immersion” training for the system administrators for each of the six target courts. The training will be held at the Bostandyk District Court of Almaty, site of KJAP’s Phase I Video recording Pilot Project. The training will allow the system administrators to see the video recording system being used, shadow Bostandyk court staff, and return to their courts thoroughly trained to assume their new responsibilities.

In February 2008, KJAP started preparations to ready the venue for the immersion training for system administrators. After the Supreme Court approved Bostandyk as the training center, KJAP held meetings with the chairman of the Bostandyk court where they discussed and created a plan for testing the video recording equipment and preparing the Bostandyk court for the immersion training.

Since KJAP’s pilot project at Bostandyk ended in February 2007, the court has experienced a complete turnover of court



Training for court secretaries in Bostandyk (KJAP February 2008)

secretaries. To contribute to the long-term sustainability of the video recording systems at Bostandyk, and to prepare the court to host the immersion training, the chairman of Bostandyk court requested that KJAP conduct training for nine court secretaries of Bostandyk court in February 2008 to thoroughly familiarize them with the equipment and ensure it is used correctly. KJAP will continue to work with Bostandyk staff to ensure that the four video-recording equipped courtrooms at the court are in good working order for the immersion training, which is currently scheduled for May 2008.

Task 8: Negotiate with Partners Regarding Second Stage of Implementation

KJAP will work closely with USAID and the Court Administration Committee to finalize any remaining issues involved prior to beginning the expansion to at least 21 new courts in Year 2 of Phase II. This may include revisiting the selection of the courts or updating the installation schedule.

III. Component 2: Court Video Recording Monitoring

Task 1: Develop Monitoring Forms

Monitoring of the video recording system is a key component of this expansion as it will enable KJAP, USAID, and the Kazakh judiciary to determine the effectiveness of the system. KJAP will monitor several indicators, including: the percentage of criminal and civil appeals in courtrooms equipped with the video recording system and in those without it, within the same court; the percentage of complaints filed on the protocol (trial record) in cases heard in courtrooms equipped with the video recording system and those without it, within the same court; the percentage change in appeals initiated by the prosecutor; the percentage change in appeals initiated by lawyers; conviction rates for cases heard in courtrooms equipped with the video recording system versus those for courtrooms without it, within the same court; increased citizen satisfaction with the legal process, based on surveys where court recording equipment exists; the number of court personnel trained with U.S. Government funds; and the number of U.S. Government-supported courts with improved case management.

While USAID and the Court Administration Committee negotiated the terms of the MoU, KJAP developed and finalized the one-page form which target court staff can use to record the statistics and send them to KJAP for analysis. In January 2008, after the two parties signed the MoU, KJAP received the Court Administration Committee's approval of the monitoring forms.

Task 2: Conduct a Baseline Survey in Each Court

Several of the indicators KJAP will monitor are intended to show a change over time. As such, KAJP requires baseline data to support accurate measurement. KJAP will also seek to collect comments and opinions from court staff and court users on their feelings about the judiciary and the legal process. KJAP will design, conduct, and analyze a baseline survey in each court to obtain the necessary data. KJAP anticipates starting this task in March 2008.

Task 3: Monitor Court Case Statistics

KJAP staff will monitor court case statistics for each court throughout the project. Using the monitoring forms previously developed by KJAP, court staff will send the data to KJAP monthly. KJAP will then analyze the data and report the findings to USAID and the Supreme Court regularly. Monitoring of the video recording system will enable KJAP, USAID, and the Kazakh judiciary to determine the effectiveness of the system. Monitoring will begin in a court as soon as the system becomes operational and will continue for the remainder of the project. KJAP anticipates starting this task in May 2008 after each courtroom installed with the video recording systems becomes functional.



The videorecording system installed in a civil courtroom. (KJAP 2007)

Task 4: Follow-up Visits to Each Court

Approximately four to six months after the installation in each court (or sooner if needed), a KJAP staffer will return to each court to provide follow-up training, support, and mentorship to target court staff. This visit will help reinforce best practices in the recording system's operation and contribute to project success and sustainability. Through these visits, KJAP anticipates strengthening each court's operation of the recording system and collecting qualitative data with which to assess the performance of the recording system in each court, as well as respondents' general feelings about the judiciary and legal process.

To bolster KJAP's monitoring efforts, KJAP will conduct a mid-term survey in each target court while the KJAP staffer is performing the follow-up visit. This survey will collect comments and opinions from court staff and court users on their feelings about the judiciary and the legal process. KJAP anticipates starting this task in October-November 2008.

Task 5: Analyze Mid-term Surveys and Make Corrective Recommendations as Needed

Once the mid-term surveys are completed KJAP will analyze them for trend information and report the findings to USAID and the Supreme Court. KJAP will use the qualitative data to assess the performance of the recording system in each court, as well as respondents' general feelings about the judiciary and legal process. KJAP anticipates starting this task in October 2008.

F. Follow up on Phase I Activities

While KJAP completed its Phase I activities in September 2007, for this semi-annual report we followed up with our local counterparts to find out whether they are continuing these activities and in what ways. For the most part, the Supreme Court, the Institute of Justice and the Union of Judges of Kazakhstan (UJK) are either continuing with the activities that KJAP helped initiate or are following recommendations that came as a result of a KJAP activity.

For instance, the Bench-Media Forum continues to meet, court press secretaries are using the handbook that KJAP produced, the UJK is following the roadmap to revising the Code of Judicial Ethics, and its working group to reform the judicial disciplinary process is using the recommendations that KJAP provided. The table below provides an update on certain Phase I activities.

Activity	Status at Project End	Current Update
Distance Learning	KJAP delivered an initial training to staff of the IOJ and Supreme Court to help them begin to create a national distance learning program.	The Institute has not yet developed a functional distance learning program, but the Supreme Court has adopted an initial version and is using it.
Decision Drafting	KJAP delivered a training to current and future judges on decision drafting and delivered the training materials to the IOJ so they could incorporate it into their regular curriculum.	The training module was incorporated into the IOJ curriculum. The materials were also posted on the website of the Supreme Court.
Jury Trials	KJAP organized a study tour, prepared training materials, and produced a mock trial to help the judiciary prepare to implement jury trials.	Jury trials are being successfully implemented.
Court-Media Relations	KJAP provided training to judges and press secretaries, produced a "Media Relations and Public Outreach Handbook for Judges and Court Press Secretaries," and organized the first two meetings of a Bench-Media Forum.	The Bench-Media Forum is meeting. On March 18 they held follow-up meetings in Almaty. In April 2008, the Supreme Court is going to hold the Bench-Media Forum in Astana. Press secretaries are using the handbook.
Court Customer Satisfaction Survey	KJAP implemented a three-month court customer satisfaction survey pilot project in four courts.	The UJK has adopted several of the recommendations KJAP proposed.
Public Outreach Materials	KJAP implemented a large public education campaign including radio PSAs, newspaper articles, printed brochures, and a televised mock jury trial.	KJAP provided the judiciary with electronic copies of the brochure/articles. These were posted on the website of the Supreme Court.
Revising the Code of Judicial Ethics	KJAP drafted a revised code of ethics and helped the UJK prepare a roadmap for its implementation.	The UJK is working on the roadmap and meeting the deadlines set therein.
Reforming the Judicial Disciplinary Process	KJAP also provided the UJK with detailed recommendations on revising the judicial disciplinary process.	The UJK currently has a working group which is working on revising the disciplinary process and is using KJAP's recommendations.
Strengthen and Expand the Mentorship Program	KJAP expanded the judicial mentorship program to eight new oblasts.	The program is still working in all of the oblasts.

G. Conclusion

KJAP's two-year expansion represents a ground-breaking cooperative effort between the Governments of the United States and the Republic of Kazakhstan. KJAP's progress during this six month reporting period has contributed to furthering the project's overall goals, and thus to realizing USAID/CAR Strategic Objective (SO) 2.1 "Strengthened Democratic Culture among Citizens and Target Institutions."

The six months covered by this reporting period cover the initial months of KJAP's Phase II. In the first portion of the reporting period, much activity occurred behind the scenes to prepare KJAP to "hit the ground running" once USAID and the Court Administration Committee signed the Memorandum of Understanding which would govern the expansion. Once signed, KJAP was well positioned to immediately start implementing the tasks according to the work plan. The vital preparatory work will begin to bear fruit in the coming months as the video recording equipment is installed and made functional in each court.

The considerable cooperation and collaboration required to finalize the logistical, contractual, and procedural arrangements to expand the use of courtroom video recording systems into at least 27 courts across the country is evidence of the productive working relationships that KJAP enjoys with the judiciary and of the judiciary's continued support for judicial modernization.