



---

## Youth Theater for Peace Tajikistan (YTP)

---

**USAID Agreement No. 119-A-00-10-00004-00**

**Final Program Report**

**March 1, 2012 – February 29, 2012**

**IREX/DC Contact:**  
Susan Armitage  
Senior Program Officer  
sarmitage@irex.org

# **YOUTH THEATER FOR PEACE – TAJIKISTAN (YTP)**

**USAID Agreement No. 119-A-00-10-00004-00**

## **FINAL PROGRAM REPORT**

**March 1, 2010-February 29, 2012**

### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

<b>A. Program Overview</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>B. Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>C. Objective 1 Activities and Results</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>D. Objective 2 Activities and Results</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>E. Objective 3 Activities and Results</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>F. Activities Related to Performance Monitoring and Evaluation</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>G. Challenges, Lessons Learned and Recommendations</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>H. Budget Analysis</b>	<b>21</b>

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1. Indicator Results – Objective 1**
- 2. Indicator Results – Objective 2**
- 3. Indicator Results – Objective 3**
- 4. USG Indicator Data**
- 5. List of Grants Awarded**
- 6. YTP Press Clippings**
- 7. DCT Curriculum Manual**
- 8. Final Evaluation Report**

## A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) is pleased to present to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) the final program report for the Youth Theater for Peace Program in Tajikistan (YTP), Cooperative Agreement No. 119-A-00-10-00004-00. YTP is designed **to promote sustainable conflict prevention at the community level through Drama for Conflict Transformation**. In pursuit of this goal, IREX will achieve the following three objectives:

Objective 1: To facilitate lasting attitudinal and behavioral change among young people and mentors from adversarial groups;

Objective 2: To engage the wider community in drama for conflict transformation activities; and

Objective 3: To promote long-term sustainability through investments in community institutions.

### LIST OF ACRONYMS USED

YTP	Youth Theater for Peace
DCT	Drama for Conflict Transformation
IREX	International Research & Exchanges Board
ICA EHIO (EHIO)	Institute of Cultural Affairs Empowerment for Human Involvement Organization
PMEP	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
USG	U.S. Government

### PROGRAM APPROACH

*“Theater is a form of knowledge; it should and can also be a means of transforming society. Theater can help us build our future, instead of just waiting for it.” – Augusto Boal, Games for Actors and Non-Actors*

The Youth Theater for Peace Program is based on **Drama for Conflict Transformation (DCT)**. DCT is a flexible set of tools that encourage improvisation, self-reflection, dialogue, and play to allow members of antagonistic communities develop new views and behaviors around conflict. In situations of entrenched conflict, where debate and historical analysis rarely serve to change minds, DCT unlocks the creative power of individuals and communities to adopt new perspectives and develop novel solutions. IREX’s DCT approach draws on the work of Dr. Augusto Boal, a Brazilian director, activist, and educator, who was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for his invention of “dialogic theater” as a means for oppressed groups to overcome the sources of their oppression. To Boal’s techniques, IREX’s approach adds elements of Playback Theater, as elaborated by Jonathon Fox, and the Hope is Vital methodology developed by Michael Rohd. DCT has been applied in conflict situations around the world, from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Rwanda, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. DCT methodologies are flexible: they set up a framework for exploration, but the content depends entirely on the life experience of participants—so DCT can address many types of conflict, from ethnic and religious to resource-based.

DCT differs from traditional approaches to conflict prevention, such as roundtable meetings and sports camps, while capturing their benefits. Like roundtable meetings of adversarial groups, DCT creates a context for participants to address their conflict issues directly. Like sports camps, DCT appeals to young people, introduces an element of fun, and establishes rules of fair play. But DCT transcends these typical models, by unlocking participants’ creative powers, opening avenues for discussion that are unreachable through debate, and encouraging behavior change as sports camps cannot. DCT accomplishes conflict transformation by:

► **Creating a safe space for dialogue and the emergence of trust.** DCT first establishes a safe space by minimizing power differentials between individuals and between groups. Since the theater games are unfamiliar, everyone takes part on an equal footing. Initial games are primarily non-verbal, so members of a dominant language group, or particularly articulate individuals, have no advantage over their peers. Participants trade the roles of “director” and “actor” and experiment with scenarios in which no one is truly in charge. Second, DCT establishes clear ground rules for participation, developed and acknowledged by all participants. Finally, DCT creates a world of possibility—a fictional space where youth can cast off their usual social roles to experiment “with the potential to learn rather than fail.”

► **Providing empowering tools for self-expression and action.** In the context of DCT, marginalized youth have the opportunity to constructively express their beliefs, frustrations, values, fears, and dreams—to a group of peers who have pledged to listen actively. As participants act out scenarios based on their life experience, they can improvise a new outcome. They effectively rewrite their story, emerging as the protagonist in their own life—a profoundly empowering opportunity for youth who feel like victims of their circumstances.

► **Developing empathy and an appreciation for other points of view.** As participants express their own experience, they are also listening actively to others. As games progress, participants begin playing the role of their adversary in improvised scenarios—“stepping into their shoes,” embodying their experience, and imagining their feelings. DCT helps break the deadlock of singular narratives in opposition, and teases out the multiple narratives that together make up the story of a community. Rather than resolve debates over “who is right” or boil down opposing views to a lowest common denominator of “things we have in common,” DCT encourages participants to embrace the multiple perspectives that together make up a community’s story—building trust, mutual respect, and reconciliation in the process.

► **Promoting analysis of conflict cycles and triggers.** DCT encourages participants to recognize how a situation escalates toward violence, at the level of a disagreement between neighbors, a community rift, or a civil war. DCT invites participants to act out conflict scenarios and then dismantle them, noting each decision point—moments when a person’s action could escalate or defuse the tension. Through this process, participants develop an awareness of the cycle of conflict and begin to recognize their own contributions.

► **Encouraging lasting behavioral change.** As DCT promotes internal changes—a greater empathy for the “other,” a sense of one’s role in a conflict, the potential positive impact of one’s decisions—it provides an arena for participants to experiment with peace-promoting behaviors. Participants act out newly-discovered positive resolutions—and in acting them out, they strengthen their skills for seeking positive outcomes in real-life confrontations. In this way, DCT functions as the “scrimmage before the big game” of life in the community.

## PROGRAM DESIGN

IREX has designed the Youth Theater for Peace- Tajikistan (YTP) model in response to USAID’s request for people-to-people approaches that create opportunities for contact and exchange between adversarial groups. YTP is based on the theories of change associated with **Family 3: Healthy Relationships**<sup>1</sup> and consists of two phases:

► Intensive camps will bring young people from antagonistic groups to the neutral territory of a training facility to engage in Drama for Conflict Transformation (DCT) activities. Facilitated theater exercises will help **youth build bridges (theory 6)**<sup>2</sup>, engage with the “other” and explore nonviolent resolutions to conflict.

► Youth trained at the intensive camps will present interactive DCT plays to their communities, promoting **community-based reconciliation (theory 5)**<sup>3</sup>, creating opportunities for community members to examine conflict situations and rehearse resolution strategies.

The Youth Theater for Peace Program aims to promote sustainable conflict prevention at the community level through Drama for Conflict Transformation. In pursuit of this goal, IREX will achieve the following three objectives:

**Objective 1:** To facilitate lasting attitudinal and behavioral change among young people and mentors from adversarial groups;

**Objective 2:** To engage the wider community in drama for conflict transformation activities; and

**Objective 3:** To promote long-term sustainability through investments in community institutions.

YTP is designed to support US Government Peace and Security indicators within Program Area Conflict Mitigation and Reconciliation, Element 6.1: Conflict Mitigation, specifically:

► Number of people trained in conflict mitigation/ resolution skills with USG assistance.

► Number of people from “at-risk groups reached through USG conflict mitigation activities.

► Number of USG-assisted facilitated events geared toward strengthening understanding and mitigating conflict between groups.

► Number of people attending USG-assisted facilitated events that are geared toward strengthening understanding and mitigating conflict between groups.

---

<sup>1</sup> As outlined in USAID/DCHA/CMM’s APS Solicitation #M/OAA/DCHA/DOFDA-09-857, Attachment II, “Table of Illustrative Theories of Change for Conflict Mitigation and Reconciliation,” page 30.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

## B. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Implemented from March 1, 2010-February 29, 2012, the Youth Theater for Peace (YTP) program successfully achieved its objectives: **Objective 1: To facilitate lasting attitudinal and behavioral change among young people and mentors from adversarial groups;** **Objective 2: To engage the wider community in drama for conflict transformation activities;** and **Objective 3: To promote long-term sustainability through investments in community institutions.**

YTP participants reached over **36,000 indirect beneficiaries** through Forum Theater performances, Sustainability Grant projects, roundtables and youth-led DCT workshops, **nearly triple the original target** in the PMP.

In Year 1, YTP trained 147 youth and adults in Drama for Conflict Transformation (DCT) at the Training of Trainers and Summer Camps, fostering a transformative experience that prompted participants to develop new attitudes and behaviors around conflict. These trained participants, newly motivated to serve as peace promoters and share their newfound skills and attitudes with others, formed theater groups to engage the wider

community through performances and trainings. In Year 2, YTP leveraged and continued to build the capacity of these youth theater groups and supported them to involve over 36,000 indirect beneficiaries in conflict prevention activities through Forum Theater Tours, Sustainability Grant projects, and youth-led DCT workshops. Year 3 focused on solidifying the theater groups' capacity for long-term sustainability through tailored monitoring and coaching and an End of Program Workshop for participants to celebrate their achievements, share best practices and strategize for future activity. IREX focused on building the capacity of local partners Fidokor and ICA EHIO throughout all program activities.

As noted in the final evaluation, **YTP achieved measurable outcomes in facilitating attitudinal and behavioral change around conflict in youth and adult program participants (Objective 1).** In contrast with a comparison group of demographically similar non-participants, in an externally-led evaluation at the end of the program (October-November 2011) YTP participants reported significantly higher levels of confidence in their own abilities to resolve interpersonal conflict peacefully and to positively affect conflict situations in their communities. Participants also reported significantly higher levels of empathy for peers from other ethnic, national or religious backgrounds, as well as greater confidence speaking in front of large groups and with government officials or community leaders, than did non-participants. Nearly all participants cited their YTP experiences, which began with the Training of Trainers for adult participants and the DCT Summer Camps for youth participants, as the key catalyst for their changed attitudes and behaviors.

**"YTP participants differ greatly from other youth.** They are different in their attitudes, behaviors, and even in their studies. Even by listening to them talk, one can distinguish YTP participants from other children."  
-School Director, Guliston Jamoat



The program's effects on participants resonated deeply throughout tight-knit rural communities as YTP participants embraced a new sense of civic responsibility as ambassadors of peace. Youth and adult participants alike became leaders within their schools, communities, districts, and regions. For example, when youth participant Bibirokia Bahmatova from Khatlon region arrived at the

DCT Summer Camp, she was a shy girl who had trouble saying her lines without laughing. As her confidence grew, Bibirokia eventually went on to help found an Uzbek-speaking Forum Theater group that addressed issues of interest to the local Uzbek community and helped improve relations between the different ethnic groups living in the area. Over the two years of the program, Bibirokia developed as a leader not only of her own theater group, but also became a role model for ethnic Uzbek youth within her own and neighboring communities. In the last year, over 50 high school students – primarily Uzbeks - from villages in the area transferred to Bibirokia's school, a testament to her leadership and the positive influence of YTP on the school and community.

A Khatlon girl who was to be married recorded a Forum Theater play she saw at school on her mobile phone. The play depicted the negative consequences of early marriage. She showed the video to her parents at home, using it to **persuade her parents to delay her marriage and allow her to continue studying.**

**YTP participants successfully engaged the wider community in drama for conflict transformation activities (Objective 2),** nearly tripling the original 12,600 target for the indicator *Number of people from at-risk groups reached through USG conflict mitigation activities (PS 6.1)* to reach over 36,000 indirect beneficiaries through Forum Theater performances, Sustainability Grant projects and youth-led DCT workshops. Communities in Khatlon and Sughd embraced the participant-led DCT activities, with over 315 community leaders attending performances. Participants were also motivated to go far and above the scope of activities in their grants from YTP, holding an additional 84

performances (reaching 15,630 audience members) and 39 youth-led workshops (reaching 646 youth participants) at no direct cost to the program.

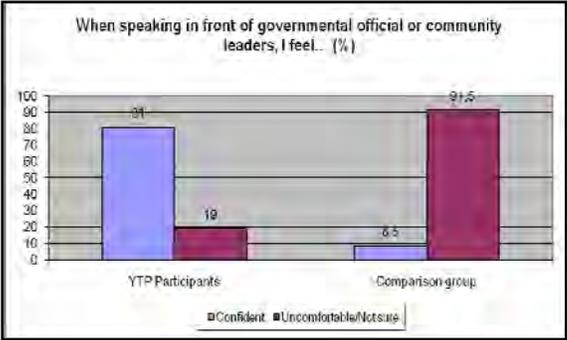
Communities starved of opportunities for dialogue as well as cultural entertainment welcomed YTP Theater Tours. Plays on land rights, gender-based violence, early marriage and girls' education, migration, ethnic tension and other issues generated passionate discussion and analysis of the root causes of the dramatized conflicts, as well as individual, family, community and government-level solutions. YTP partner Fidokor reported on a particularly impactful performance on land distribution that was held in a village in Sarband, Khatlon region, reflecting, "Raising this topic for public discussion can be considered an act of heroism by the theater group. Most memorable for us, the discussion on land issues continued through the post-performance focus group we facilitated. During the focus group, we felt the importance of this issue and realized for ourselves that especially in rural areas, the authorities are violating the rights of average citizens."

The 12 Drama Clubs formed in Year 1 established an **additional 15 Drama Clubs** in neighboring schools and communities through their Sustainability Grants, engaging **263 secondary beneficiaries**.

Participants' use of DCT to address sensitive issues had a noticeable impact on community attitudes towards conflict. In 12 out of 12 focus groups conducted during the final evaluation, respondents shared a belief that the DCT methodology can have a positive effect on community relations around conflict. A majority of focus group respondents also reported that Forum Theater plays had an effect on their attitudes towards conflict issues and towards other individuals. Respondents noted that the performances provide an opportunity for local youth and adults to see their own problematic issues and attitudes from an outside perspective, thus unlocking new ways to resolve conflict peacefully.

The dialogue and strategies generated during performances resulted in concrete action that impacted community members' lives. For example, after witnessing a performance on land issues, officials in Puloton, Sughd region sped up the process of distributing presidential land grants to poor families. At a school in Madaniyat village, Jabbar Rasulov district, Sughd region, teachers reported that relations improved between students of different ethnic groups following Forum Theater performances on the topic. Perhaps most strikingly, dozens of girls in conservative areas of Khatlon and Sughd, where female dropout from upper secondary school and early marriage are common, continued their studies after seeing performances on these topics. In the Isfara district villages of Chorku and Surkh, teachers, administrators and officials reported that 86 girls decided to continue their education past the 9<sup>th</sup> grade as a result of YTP activities, prompting the schools to open new classes to accommodate the demand.

In the final phase of the program, the Sustainability Grants component leveraged YTP participants' motivation, skills and connections to **promote long-term sustainability of the DCT methodology in community institutions (Objective 3)**. Almost all grantees opted to help establish new theater groups in the schools and youth centers of communities they had visited during their theater tours, transferring their skills to new beneficiaries and institutions that can serve as sustainable bases for DCT activities. The Forum Theater Tour groups formed in Year 1 were chartered as Drama Clubs within their schools and home institutions, a best practice incorporated from the YTP program in Kyrgyzstan. The original 12 Drama Clubs formed then established an additional 15 Drama Clubs in neighboring schools and communities through their Sustainability Grants, engaging 263 secondary beneficiaries.



Demand for DCT training was extremely high as communities observed the dramatic changes in YTP participants. During the final evaluation, the evaluator noted that many schools were willing to become involved in DCT even without funding: "The only support they ask for is to provide seminars and trainings about the DCT methodology. Some schools even try to establish Drama Clubs without support from the program."

"More and more schools expressed their strong wish to establish Drama Clubs and Forum Theater groups in their institutions... some schools even try to establish Drama Clubs without support from the program. As several respondents mentioned, **'One seed planted by YTP gave many flowers.'**"  
-Vadim Nigmatov, Final Evaluator

"The only support they ask for is to provide seminars and trainings about the DCT methodology. Some schools even try to establish Drama Clubs without support from the program."

YTP partners report that participants and theater groups have remained active even after the close of USAID funding. "We've kept a really good relationship with the YTP participants," Muzaffar Avazov, YTP Program Manager for Fidokor, commented in an email in May 2012. "They call us and come to the office when they can. The youth

participants who are now studying in Kurgan-Tube identify as Fidokor volunteers and help out with conducting various events we organize in the city. Dilafruz Sattorova and her 'Dusti' group from Sarband are still active, putting together new plays and performing in communities. Even more students have become involved in the group and have been trained. They are doing all this work on a volunteer basis, without financial support, only some assistance from the

school administration. They have organized three performances in the city and in their village [since the close of the program in February].”

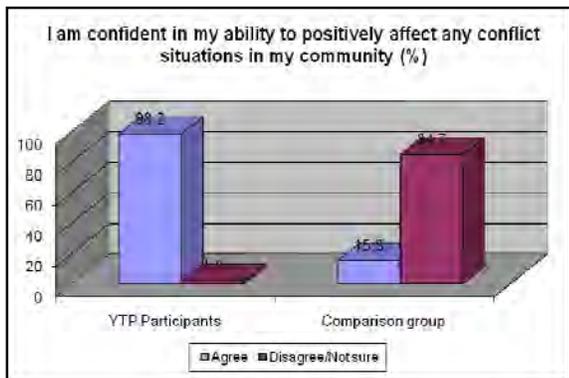
The ‘Andesha’ group in Panj is now using Forum Theater in a youth HIV/AIDS prevention program implemented with support from the UN Global Fund and the Committee for Youth Affairs; the group has already performed in more than 10 communities in Panj district. Local NGO Bonuboni Panj, which hosts a theater group formed under the Sustainability Grants, is also continuing to work with the public using Forum Theater and includes DCT in all the proposals they write to donors.

In Sughd, the ‘Orzu’ group in Jabbar Rasulov district continues to receive invitations from the Khukumat (district-level government) to perform at Khukumat events. Their most recent performance was for the Day of Family on May 15. Orzu has also found local sponsors to support performances in their jamoat. Orzu Drama Club participants continue to train new beneficiaries and have opened a new Drama Club at School #32 in Gulakandoz jamoat. Parvina Jabbarova, a member of the ‘Akhtar’ group in Isfara district, has also opened a new Drama Club in her school since the close of the program. The Drama Clubs continue to perform at events, such as those organized for the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, Navruz, the Day of Laughter, Day of Family, Day of Youth, and school graduations.

YTP partners Fidokor and EHIO have also embraced the DCT methodology as an effective new tool to engage youth and communities and mitigate conflict. “It goes without saying that Youth Theater for Peace was a new innovation for Fidokor,” Mr. Avazov commented in a report. “Beyond the new knowledge, skills and experience gained by our staff, the DCT methodology itself became one of our organizational assets.” Fidokor has since trained more than 30 employees of its own partner organizations on a GIZ-funded program to use DCT. “In the course of our work, we’ve observed that the four organizations we trained are using elements of Forum Theater and Image Theater in their events at the city and regional levels,” Avazov reported.

YTP partner Fidokor has trained more than 30 employees of 4 local NGOs to use DCT through its GIZ-funded project.

EHIO staff also noted the influence of DCT on their organization and the new opportunities involvement in YTP has fostered. During YTP, EHIO applied for and implemented two additional projects with coaching from IREX: a US Embassy Democracy Commission grant to document further achievements of YTP on film, and a grant from the British Embassy in Dushanbe supporting cross-border performances in Kyrgyzstan. These opportunities helped EHIO further develop its proposal writing and grant management skills and widened the organization’s circle of contacts. In



part because of her work with YTP, EHIO staff member Nargis Nabieva was selected as an International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) delegate and traveled to the US to observe youth programming and learn more about the role of community service.

Both organizations have developed long-term plans to use the methodology post-program. As a result of Ms. Nabieva’s visit to the US, EHIO submitted an application to the US Embassy for a project to develop volunteerism in Sughd region using DCT. Fidokor is planning a Training of Trainers on DCT for its own staff of trainers in summer 2012, with the goal of incorporating DCT into more ongoing projects. Both organizations have added DCT components to their organizational catalogue of trainings

and are actively seeking opportunities to continue applying the methodology in both current and new projects.

On the whole, the YTP program has transformed individuals, institutions and communities. YTP created a cadre of engaged, motivated youth and adult participants who have proven to have an impressive multiplier effect in their communities. The participants are respected within their communities – in many cases achieving a greater level of authority due to their YTP activities – and have secured institutional support for their Drama Clubs. Participants and communities have seen and felt the impact of the DCT methodology and are eager to continue using it. Many of the Drama Clubs report ongoing activity post-program, and the outlook for long-term sustainability of DCT at the local level is good. Based on the high level of local interest in DCT and the results achieved over the last two years, IREX believes the YTP program model could be successfully replicated in other regions of Tajikistan or in other countries.

### C. OBJECTIVE 1 ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

Activities under **Objective 1: To facilitate lasting attitudinal and behavioral change among young people and mentors from adversarial groups** set the stage for the achievement of program results overall. These activities included assessment and start-up, followed by the Training of Trainers (TOT) and Summer Camps 1 and 2, which

trained 147 youth and adults in Drama for Conflict Transformation (DCT). The TOT served to introduce local youth-serving professionals to DCT and develop their capacity to facilitate the methodology. Summer Camp 1 introduced DCT to a group of 107 youth, while Summer Camp 2 targeted a smaller subset of these participants to prepare them to lead and organize Theater Tours in the community. The workshops fostered a transformative experience that prompted participants to develop new attitudes and behaviors around conflict, built their confidence, galvanized their sense of identity as peace builders, and prepared them to impact community members' attitudes around local conflict issues.

**Target Community Selection, Participatory Program Assessment and Outreach:**

The YTP team determined target communities and built support for the program through a Participatory Program Assessment conducted in April 2010 in selected districts in Sughd and Khatlon. To ensure local buy-in, culturally-sensitive project implementation and long-term project sustainability, an Advisory Committee composed of local community leaders was formed. Advisory Committee members included the head of the Education Department in Isfara, the deputy head of the Sarband district Khukumat, the head of the Women's Affairs Committee of Panj region, local school directors, heads and deputy heads of jamoats, and others.

The YTP team also gathered information about local conflict dynamics and cultural forms (such as dance, music, poetry, legend and folklore) in Sughd and Khatlon. IREX, Fidokor and ICA EHIO conducted outreach to recruit adult participants, selecting a diverse group of 40 trainees to participate in the Training of Trainers (TOT).

The selected target communities in Khatlon and Sughd regions were:

District	Region	Targeted Communities
Vakhsh	Khatlon	Kirov and Tojikobod
Sarband	Khatlon	Guliston and Vahdat
Pyanj	Khatlon	Mehvar, Pyanj and Namuna
Isfara	Sughd	Chorku and Kulkand
Jabbar Rasulov	Sughd	Gulhona and Gulakandoz
Konibodom	Sughd	Puloton, Lohuti and Sharipov

These communities were selected in consultation with USAID based on the following set of criteria: large youth populations, population density, unemployment levels, and tensions over distribution of resources, borders, or multiethnic friction.

Both the program and the Drama for Conflict Transformation methodology were very well received in the targeted communities during the assessment. Youth, adults and leaders in all the districts lamented the lack of positive activities for young people in their communities and expressed interest in the opportunities presented by YTP.

Through conversations with community members, the YTP team also explored how conflict materializes at the local level—lines of social fracture, recent incidences of violence, disputed territories and resources, and perceived triggers—generating baseline data for the M&E strategy.

***Key Assessment Findings:***

- There are few opportunities for youth recreation and youth leadership in the targeted communities.
- The majority of local authorities are unwilling to acknowledge conflict issues within their jamoats and districts.
- Family-based violence is a common problem in all the target communities. Images of violence (husbands beating wives, mothers-in-law beating daughters-in-law, brothers beating sisters, etc.) were raised in each DCT workshop conducted during the assessment.
- Labor migration affects nearly all families in the target communities.
- Opportunities for girls are limited — in both Khatlon and Sughd many girls are pressured by parents to stop attending school after 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Those who do receive a complete secondary education are pressured not to continue on to higher education. Early marriage is common, particularly in Isfara.
- Other conflict issues include land and water distribution, tensions between Tajikistan and Uzbekistan over electricity, and regional and ethnic tensions.

**Advisory Committee:**

The Advisory Committee established early in the program proved to be crucial to YTP's success. Made up of local officials, school directors, and representatives of youth, education and cultural departments, the Committee provided input on implementation throughout YTP and ensured that program met community needs and worked in harmony with community values and local initiatives.

YTP used the following criteria to select Advisory Committee Members:

- Members are religious, civic, or local leaders
- Members have good relationships within the community
- Members are interested in serving on the Advisory Committee

The Statement of Work for Advisory Committee Members included:

- Publicizing the program formally to the public (at press conferences or by giving introductory remarks at program events) and among their professional contacts;
- Liaising with other local authorities as needed to secure planning permission for program events;
- Providing input on program implementation;
- Attending meetings to provide input before the TOT, before the youth camps, before the Theater Tours, and after the Theater Tours.

Advisory Committee members served as a core group of advocates for the program and played a key role in securing approval for and promoting Theater Tour and Sustainability Grant events. Their involvement increased the impact of performances and introduced participants to new supporters as they went on to design and implement their own DCT activities in Years 2 and 3.

#### **Development of DCT Curriculum for Tajikistan:**

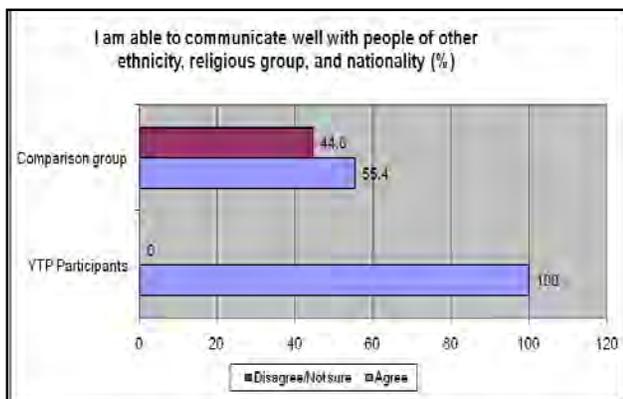
DCT consultant Ananda Breed finalized the development of a Tajikistan-specific DCT TOT, Camp 1 and Camp 2 curriculum, incorporating findings from the Participatory Program Assessment as well as feedback from IREX staff, partner organizations Fidokor and EHIO, DCT consultants Hjalmar Joffre-Eichhorn and Christine Cox, and the adult program participants. Along with familiar conflict situations, elements of Tajik culture (such as stories from Firdawsi's Book of Kings) were incorporated into the curriculum, helping participants connect with the activities as well as imbuing the process with the accumulated significance of traditional myths and characters.

The curriculum, translated into Tajik, Uzbek and Russian, was used throughout the YTP program and disseminated widely to educators, youth, cultural and education departments and local NGOs through the Sustainability Grants component of the program.

#### **Training of Trainers (TOT):**

IREX, Fidokor and ICA EHIO mobilized their local networks, consulted with local government officials and drew upon suggestions from the Advisory Committee to identify educators, NGO representatives, and theater-makers (actors, dancers, and singers) to participate in the Training of Trainers and serve as mentors to the youth participants throughout the program. Drawing from this pool, the YTP team conducted a competitive recruitment process, including an application and candidate interview, to select adults who had a strong rapport with young people, were open to a youth-empowering development model, and had ideas and real potential for integrating the DCT model into their ongoing work.

The Training of Trainers, conducted in May-June 2010, prepared participants from Sughd and Khatlon to engage youth through DCT, allowing them to experience the methodology as "players" together, examine the conflict cycle in their communities, and learn to use the methodology as facilitators. The TOT was facilitated by DCT consultants Hjalmar Joffre-Eichhorn and Christine Cox. By the end of the workshop, all trainees participated in developing and performing in short plays based on local conflict issues. A majority of the 40 trainees gained the skills to implement the DCT methodology with young people at the summer camps; of the original trainees, 29 remained active in the program throughout the entire implementation cycle (including 4 partner organization staff).



DCT consultants and IREX staff observed significant changes in participants' attitudes and behavior during the training. For example, early in the TOT, an Uzbek school director told the other trainees from Jabbar Rasulov in Sughd region not to discuss conflicts or problems in their district. He attempted to stifle others' expression of opinion and dominated inappropriately in group work. However, by the fourth day of experiencing the DCT methodology, he relaxed and allowed his colleagues to freely discuss community issues. Rather than using his position to influence others negatively, he became a positive force within the group and actively participated in DCT exercises, playing the role of a difficult local official in a short Forum Theater play. Following the TOT, he became an ardent

supporter of the program in his community, served as a facilitator at the youth camps, and led the implementation of Theater Tours and Sustainability Grants in his community, illustrating the attitudinal change that can be achieved through DCT.

**Youth Summer Camp 1:**

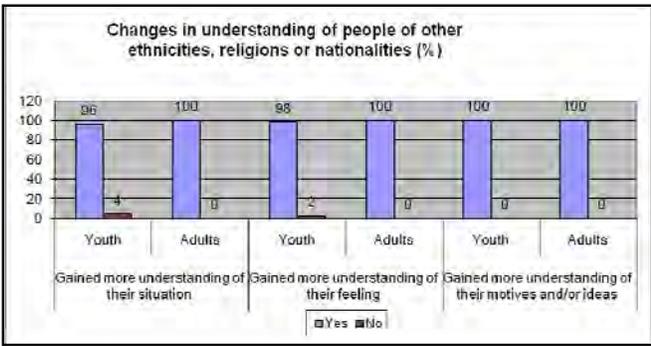
With supportive adults ready to train the youth, YTP began to engage the diverse group of young people who would emerge as peace promoters in their communities. To minimize differences in status and development, YTP focused on youth ages 15-16. To engage a diverse cadre of youth—representing multiple ethnic/national identities, economic positions, and family backgrounds—the YTP team conducted a culturally-sensitive, community-based recruitment effort, led by Fidokor and ICA EHIO and with the active backing of the Advisory Committee. As local “ambassadors” for the YTP program, the TOT participants also played a role in identifying youth from their schools to participate and explaining the methodology and goals of the camps to parents.

Youth participants for the summer camps were selected on a competitive basis through two-hour interactive workshops, clustered by community. In each community, there was more interest from youth than could be accommodated by the program. At each workshop, DCT consultant Christine Cox led youth through a series of DCT activities, assisted by adults trained during the TOT. Advisory Committee members were invited to observe the workshops, ask questions, and provide recommendations for youth recruitment and implementation of the summer camps. With support from the Advisory Committee, the YTP team conducted follow-up outreach in the targeted communities to identify additional girls, out-of-school youth, and ethnic minorities to participate in the camps. Following selection, the YTP team worked closely with participants and their families to prepare for the camp experience.

During the Camp 1 events conducted in July and August 2010, groups of 50-60 young people gathered in neutral camp facilities at Kayrakkum and Romit for an intensive experience of self-discovery and bridge-building. Adult mentors from their communities applied the skills they had learned at the TOT as assistant facilitators, under the guidance of DCT consultants Hjalmar Joffre-Eichhorn, Christine Cox, and IREX and partner organization staff. Despite the need to condense Camp 1 workshops to 15 days in Sughd and 14 days in Khatlon, the camp experience was overwhelmingly positive and empowering for the majority of youth participants.

Before the camp, Faroiz had been promised in marriage by her parents and was to drop out of school after finishing 9<sup>th</sup> grade. **Her participation in a performance about early marriage helped her understand her rights and change her future.** She is now finishing 11<sup>th</sup> grade and preparing to apply to university.

In consultation with USAID, IREX made the decision to cut short the first Camp 1 workshop for Sughd participants in Kayrakkum, due to increased scrutiny from the Ministry of Education. This scrutiny was largely related to security concerns around President Rakhmon’s visit to the resort area, which coincided almost exactly with the camp dates. Citing Rakhmon’s visit, the original Kayrakkum camp venue administration unexpectedly canceled IREX’s contract with the site. After IREX requested the return of program funds paid as an advance to this venue, the Kayrakkum local authorities took a heightened interest in YTP activities, setting off a chain of requests for additional permission letters that reached the Ministry level.



IREX worked closely with USAID and the Government of Tajikistan to secure the additional permissions needed to conduct the summer camps, meeting personally with the Minister of Education to assuage any concerns about the program goals and DCT methodology. In consultation with USAID, IREX revised the DCT curriculum and invited a representative from the Ministry of Education to observe the camps, which continued on an adjusted schedule. Despite these challenges, participants,

particularly those from more rural communities, were excited to engage in a positive extracurricular activity and work to address conflict at the local level.

Using the Tajikistan-specific DCT curriculum tailored by DCT consultant Ananda Breed, the facilitators led youth participants through a theater process to build trust, create a positive group dynamic, establish a spirit of fun and exploration, provide positive tools for self-expression, and build new awareness around conflict. Facilitators began with introductory theater games to acclimate youth to the process—using their bodies as instruments for self-expression, noticing, sharing, and listening. Once an atmosphere of trust had been established, youth engaged more challenging topics, sharing sensitive personal stories about conflict. YTP staff, consultants and the local trainers observed participants’ responses and emotional well-being throughout the camps, referring any youth experiencing difficulties to speak with a trusted adult trainer.

Land and water conflicts, suicide, drug abuse, family violence, early marriage, ethnic discrimination, corruption in the education system and obstacles to education for girls were issues prioritized by the youth at the Sughd and Khatlon camps. Participants shared personal stories relating to these issues and selected specific stories to dramatize in Forum Theater plays. At the end of the camp, youth performed the pieces for their peers, who served as "spect-actors."

One play developed by Khatlon participants depicted a school conflict in which ethnic Uzbeks were openly discriminated against by ethnic Tajik students. The causes of discrimination portrayed in the play were the Uzbek students' imperfect Tajik language skills, as well as ethnic Tajik teachers and students exhibiting a one-sided interpretation of events in the civil war. During the performance, several audience interventions addressed the problem and sparked a rich discussion on ethnic tolerance. For instance, one spect-actor politely but firmly criticized the teacher's view of history, stressing that both sides committed and suffered crimes during the war. In another intervention, a spect-actor defended the right to freedom of expression in the Uzbek language and the teacher had to admit that this right is enshrined in the Tajik constitution.

DCT consultants and YTP staff observed a marked increase in many participants' levels of confidence, particularly among girls from more conservative areas. At the beginning of the Sughd camp, Faroiz, a girl from Chorku in Isfara district, was visibly uncomfortable around the other youth and had to be constantly encouraged by the trainers to share her views. Gradually through her immersion in DCT activities, she began to participate more assertively, finally yelling "stop!" during a Forum Theater scene which depicted unchecked corruption by students from wealthy families, and coming on stage to very self-assuredly defend the need to respect human rights and the rule of law.



Based on her active participation, Faroiz was selected to attend the second DCT Summer Camp, where she continued developing her confidence and DCT skills, eventually playing the protagonist in a play about a girl who was married against her will. Before the camp, Faroiz herself had already been promised in marriage by her parents, but she developed a strong desire to finish her education after her performance experience. "If my fiancé doesn't like that I am educated, he doesn't have to marry me," she said. Faroiz held her ground and was able to convince her parents to allow her to stay in school. She became a leader in her theater group and is now finishing the 11<sup>th</sup> grade and preparing to apply to university. Faroiz says she is very happy that the YTP program helped her understand her rights. "After I attended YTP camp, I now can sit together with my father and talk, which we hardly did before," Faroiz reflected. "We discuss my participation at the performances and the issues that we present, and he's has become interested in my achievements in school and my interest in studies."

The camp experience had a significant positive impact on participants. In the end-of-camp survey, nearly 90% of youth participants reported they were better able to communicate with people from other nationalities and backgrounds following the camp experience. 95% of youth participants reported an increase in their ability to positively affect conflict situations, exceeding the 75% target set for this indicator. 92% of youth participants also reported that participation in the program taught them what it was like to become a leader. These results were triangulated with the data collected in the final evaluation, which is reflected in boxes throughout this report.

### **Youth Summer Camp 2:**

Due to the contracted period of time between Camp 1 and Camp 2, youth and adult participants for Camp 2 were identified by the DCT consultants and YTP staff based on their participation during the camps and taking geographic, ethnic and gender considerations into account to ensure diversity. Camp 1 participants showed overwhelming interest in continuing for Camp 2, confirming a high level of engagement with the program and methodology. Participants from Sughd and Khatlon were combined at Camp 2, allowing for the sharing of diverse perspectives and the development of inter-regional friendships.

During the 8-day Camp 2, held in August 2010, DCT consultant Hjalmar Joffre-Elchhorn and YTP staff led youth and adults through a process to deepen their understanding of the DCT model and prepare to apply it in their communities through Theater Tours. Due to the program delay in July, Camp 2 coincided with Ramadan, which many participants observe. The camp was held on a modified daily schedule to accommodate increased prayer time and reduce the physical strain on those fasting. Despite the summer heat and the high proportion of participants who chose to fast, energy levels remained high. The Camp 2 training focused on developing the following skills:

► **Facilitating Audience Participation.** Given the sensitivities around conflict within and across communities, facilitators worked closely with participants on the nuances of audience interaction. Youth learned the role of the Joker-Facilitator to draw in audience members, inviting them to try their hand at resolving a scene without conflict. In addition, youth and adults learned basic facilitation skills for defusing tension—should it arise during or after a performance—while still respecting people’s authentic viewpoints.

► **Framing the Performance.** Participants also learned how to introduce and close a performance. Participants learned how to prepare audiences before performances through advertising and promotional materials, and by establishing ground rules during the introduction. Through role play, youth learned how to deal with an audience that doesn’t ask questions right away, individuals who dominate, and those who ask inappropriate or inflammatory questions.

► **Tour Planning.** After further tailoring their plays and learning techniques for managing audience participation, youth began planning for their tour performances, taking part in a Community Mapping Exercise to identify appropriate nearby communities (not areas with active conflict), venues (schools, town halls), timing for performances, and key allies in the community. Participants received a Tour Planning Template during the camps and completed it as much as possible during Camp 2. IREX staff explained the Tour Grant process to youth and adults, including monitoring and reporting requirements.

## D. OBJECTIVE 2 ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

Under **Objective 2: to engage the wider community in drama for conflict transformation activities**, participants applied the skills gained in Objective 1 activities to conduct Theater Tours, which, in combination with Sustainability Grant performances (Objective 3) and independent events, introduced DCT to 74 communities, garnered wide support from community officials, and provided new outlets for community dialogue around conflict.

### Theater Tours:

Communities starved of opportunities for dialogue as well as cultural entertainment welcomed YTP Theater Tours, with over 315 community leaders attending performances (exceeding the target of 144). While several community leaders had initially been skeptical of DCT, nearly all were convinced of the potential for impact after viewing a performance. Advisory Committee members, EHIO and Fidokor were instrumental in supporting the tours, helping to secure permissions, invite important guests, and coordinate logistics.

The YTP team provided support and monitoring oversight to the Theater Tour groups as they implemented performances under the two sets of tour grants awarded in December 2010 and March 2011. With USAID concurrence, 18 Tour



Grants totaling \$12,370 were awarded, representing all 6 targeted districts and including youth from all 14 targeted jamoats. To quantify audience attendance and participation at the tours in each community, IREX developed monitoring tools to be used by staff, partners and grantees at each performance and conducted training on their use. In all, the Tour Grants funded 62 performances reaching 6169 audience members, though participants went far and above the scope of their grants, holding an additional 84 performances (reaching 15,630 audience members) at no direct cost to the program over the two years

of implementation. These performances included locally-supported events as well as 12 performances funded through a grant from the British Embassy to EHIO. Additional performances were also funded as part of the Sustainability Grants (Objective 3), including 3 cross-border performances held in Kyrgyzstan to strengthen connections between cross-border communities and network with YTP Kyrgyzstan participants.

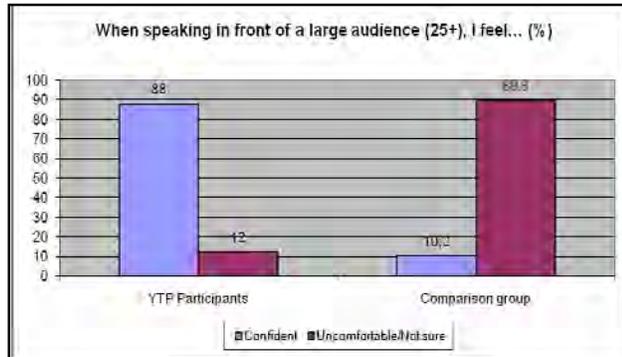
YTP participants gained confidence during their tours and developed the capacity to assess community conflict issues, implement events in coordination with local authorities, and manage and report on small grants. Plays on land rights, gender-based violence, early marriage and girls’ education, migration, ethnic tension and other issues generated passionate discussion and analysis of the root causes of the dramatized conflicts, as well as individual, family, community and government-level solutions.

“This program opened people’s eyes in the communities we visited. **People realized that waiting for somebody to solve their problems doesn’t make sense anymore.** They should think about and find solutions to their problems on their own.”  
-Adult Theater Group Leader

Participants went far and above the scope of their grants, holding an additional 84 performances that **reached 15,630 audience members at no direct cost to the program.**

Youth and adults alike were inspired by the visibility of young participants on stage and in the community. Adults warmed to the possibility that youth can contribute to community development, while youth audience members were eager to join YTP troupes themselves. Many of the tour visits sparked further collaboration for Sustainability Grant projects, with YTP participants eventually going on to train and mentor youth and adult leaders in the tour communities to establish their own theater groups. Many YTP theater groups also conducted extra performances in addition to those funded by their grants, often at the request of local Khukumats, Departments of Youth and Culture, and schools. Notably, the Youth Department in Panj awarded YTP participants \$10,000 for performance tours to Rasht and Badakshan regions, which are not targeted by YTP. This widespread community support continues to spur YTP participants to engage more youth and adult mentors in their activities and promote the DCT methodology.

Audience sizes were approximately 100 on average, with some performances drawing as few as 30 and others as many as 250 people. Rather than target an ideal audience size, IREX believes both large and small events have



unique benefits. Large gatherings can draw the attention of a wide range of community members to conflict issues, including community leaders, while more intimate performances encourage in-depth discussion and participation from marginalized community members who may be more comfortable in smaller settings.

Many youth audience members were impressed by the abilities of their peers on stage, and several approached YTP participants after performances and requested to join the theater groups. For example, after attending a Forum Theater performance in Sarband district, Khatlon region, a boy named Alimuhammad Salimzod was inspired to join the local YTP group, a choice that would profoundly affect

his life. Previously, Alimuhammad frequently skipped school and often made trouble with friends while looking for something to do. "When I joined the program, my relationship changed with people around me. I began to treat my parents better, understood what my parents went through and more importantly, I started to attend classes at my school," says Alimuhammad.

His teachers and parents noticed this change as well. "They were very supportive to me and allowed me to participate in performances, which they also attended and enjoyed. I gained lots of confidence and people around me became confident in my ability to widen my knowledge and share it with my peers," states Alimuhammad. "I started to be a goal oriented person and I see that I am capable to achieve my goals that I set up for myself. I am now so proud that I met people who helped me develop a ladder for my future." Alimuhammad has started volunteering with Fidokor and frequently assists other theater groups in the Khatlon region.

**"When I joined the program, my relationship changed with people around me. I gained lots of confidence and people around me became confidence in my ability to widen my knowledge and share it with my peers."**  
-Alimuhammad, youth participant

Theater tours also proved to be a powerful venue for YTP participants to speak out about issues that matter to them, having an especially significant impact on women and girls. According to the Tajikistan Department of Education, only 42% of girls in Isfara district stay in school after 9<sup>th</sup> grade, but female YTP participant Robiyai Amirullo set a different example and changed minds in her community. After attending a YTP performance and asking to join the local theater group in Chorku, a conservative jamoat in Isfara, Robiyai quickly became a leader in her group and gained respect among her peers. "[My parents] started to believe in my capability to learn new things. Now they want me to continue my studies," she reported.

**"To my surprise, most of the audience agreed that girls should continue school after 9<sup>th</sup> grade and acknowledged that girls' education impacts the whole development of our society."**  
-Robiyai, youth participant

Knowing that not all girls in their community are so lucky, Robiyai and her group staged a play on girls' education that inspired lively discussion among the audience. "To my surprise, most of the audience agreed that girls should continue school after 9<sup>th</sup> grade and acknowledged that girls' education impacts the whole development of our society," Robiyai noted. Teachers and administrators in Isfara district have noticed visible impact from these conversations. In the jamoats of Chorku and Surkh (targeted by the Chorku

group in their Sustainability Grant), teachers, administrators and officials reported that 86 girls decided to continue their education past the 9<sup>th</sup> grade as a result of YTP activities, prompting the schools to open new classes to accommodate the demand.

The school director also took special notice of Robiyai's leadership and that of her classmate and fellow YTP participant, Aliya. The two young women are about to graduate and have been offered jobs teaching primary grade

classes at their school for the 2012-2013 academic year. They are currently preparing their documents for employment and will be able to instill the skills and attitudes they developed through YTP to a new generation of boys and girls.

**Community Reactions to Performances:**

Theater Tour performances had a noticeable impact on community attitudes towards conflict, and the dialogue and strategies generated during performances resulted in concrete action that impacted community members' lives. For example, after witnessing a performance on land issues, officials in Puloton, Sughd region sped up the process of distributing presidential land grants to poor families. At a school in Madaniyat village, Jabbar Rasulov district, Sughd region, teachers reported that relations improved between students of different ethnic groups following Forum Theater performances on the topic. Perhaps most strikingly, as discussed earlier in this report, dozens of girls in conservative areas of Khatlon and Sughd, where female dropout from upper secondary school and early marriage are common, continued their studies after seeing performances on these issues.

Seeking community perspectives on YTP performances, IREX designed and piloted a focus group guide and trained EHIO and Fidokor staff in conducting focus group discussions with audience members following performances. Across the board, school leaders and general audience members were glad to see local youth involved in positive activities, and praised the increased confidence, leadership ability, and acting skills of the young performers.

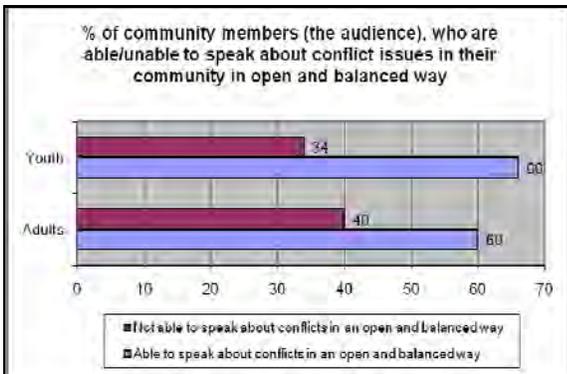


While audiences were unfamiliar with Forum Theater, many recognized the advantages of using this method to shed light on community perspectives. "Reviewing a problem from different sides is more effective than usual way of discussing conflicts," stated a female audience member in Khatlon. "When you see that there is a conflict between you and somebody else, you can use this method to look for the way to the solution."

Many also voiced appreciation that the performances portrayed realistic scenes from villages like their own. "At this performance, you raised issues of land and house ownership," related another Khatlon focus group discussant. "The performance portrayed the real difficulties of peoples' lives, and it was truly great. You should give more performances on the problems of people living in the districts." A community official in Sughd stated that the theater groups' performances helped to reinforce jamoat-level conflict resolution efforts, and some audiences invited the performing groups to return regularly or to help local youth set up their own theater groups. Several community leaders also pledged their support to help the groups advertise or find performance venues.

**After witnessing a performance on land issues, officials in Puloton jamoat, Sughd region, sped up the process of distributing presidential land grants to local families.**

In October-November 2011, the final evaluation team also conducted focus groups with audience members to learn more about the effects of the tour performances on communities. In 12 out of 12 focus groups conducted during the final evaluation, respondents shared a belief that the DCT methodology can have a positive effect on community relations around conflict. A majority of focus group respondents also reported that Forum Theater plays had an effect on their attitudes towards conflict issues and towards other individuals. Respondents noted that the performances provide an opportunity for local youth and adults to see their own problematic issues and attitudes from an outside perspective, thus unlocking new ways to resolve conflict peacefully.



The focus groups also assessed community members' ability to speak in an open and balanced way about conflict. (See findings in the graphic, above left.) As the evaluator concluded, even though audience members noted Forum Theater's effect on their attitudes, "there are still significant numbers of the target community who are not able to speak about conflict issues in their community in an open and balanced way. Obviously, the changes in attitudes and behaviors, particularly among adults, require longer and continuous efforts. It can be anticipated that the positive effect of events organized by YTP participants for wider community members will increase progressively." Adult community members also mentioned that serious conflict issues such as interethnic tensions have "very deep roots" and require additional

efforts to find peaceful solutions. Focus group respondents recommended the more specific targeting of adult audiences to work on solutions to these problems.

## **E. OBJECTIVE 3 ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS**

Under **Objective 3: to promote sustainable conflict prevention at the community level through Drama for Conflict Transformation**, participants applied the attitudes, skills, experiences and connections gained through Objective 1 and 2 activities to work towards long-term sustainability of DCT. The Sustainability Workshop prepared participants to implement youth-led workshops and Sustainability Grant projects, and the End-of-Program Workshop allowed participants to celebrate their achievements, share best practices, meet potential donors, and strategize for sustainability.

### **Sustainability Workshop:**

The Sustainability Workshop held in March 2011 introduced the next phase of grants for the program and developed YTP participants' capacity to design and apply for follow-on projects. 39 youth participants and 16 adult theater group leaders gathered in Varzob to share successes and challenges they experienced applying DCT in their communities, refresh their DCT facilitation skills, and discuss options for the sustainability of their theater groups and the DCT methodology. Adult participants were invited based on their roles as group leaders, while youth participants completed an application and were selected based on recommendations from both the YTP team and the adult participants.

Through the \$20,000 Sustainability Grants pool, participants organized **20 DCT workshops that trained 287 additional youth and adults.**

EHIO and Fidokor staff introduced participants to Sustainability Grants, a form of seed funding for establishing long-term sustainability, and presented a range of options for sustainability models. Facilitated brainstorming and community mapping exercises helped participants identify models that meet their needs and interests. This approach allows for local players to be the primary drivers for sustainability and achieves authentic buy-in.

Sustainability Grant applications were distributed and discussed in detail at the workshop. IREX, EHIO and Fidokor worked closely with participants to refine their grant ideas and encouraged creativity to help workshop attendees design projects that require little or no funding after the initial investment. IREX, Fidokor and EHIO provided consultations and extensive feedback to participants on draft project proposals, work plans and budgets, with the goal of developing grant-writing skills that YTP participants can use to garner support in the long term. IREX and its partners noted that the individual attention, supplemented by ongoing consultation from Fidokor and EHIO, resulted in stronger grant applications overall compared to the previous Tour Grants.

Youth and adult participants' DCT facilitation capacity was also strengthened through 'refresher' workshops with DCT expert Christine Cox, who mentored the participants in the skills needed to effectively train others during the Sustainability Grant projects. On the final day of the Sustainability Workshop, teams of youth participants led their own DCT workshops and received feedback from their adult leaders, YTP staff and Cox, preparing for their role as peer trainers.

**Like most boys in Isfara, Anvarhon and Khadishon planned to migrate to Russia after finishing 9<sup>th</sup> grade to work.** However, after participating in plays on migration, the boys have new goals and now aim to follow the example of fellow YTP participant Ismoilhon, who has started university in Khujand.

The Sustainability Workshop also provided a platform for participants to reflect on their achievements during the Theater Tours, share best practices in community engagement and fostering dialogue, and network with an active participant of the YTP program from Kyrgyzstan, who shared practical advice on organizing school-based Drama Clubs.

### **Youth-Led DCT Workshops:**

Immediately following the Sustainability Workshop, youth participants began applying their facilitation and planning skills through independently organized youth-led workshops, a new and unfunded program component that developed organically from the workshop. These activities were similar in aim and scope to the training activities that would be funded under the YTP Sustainability Grants. The YTP team encouraged participants to take part in these activities, monitored the number of youth reached through these workshops, and provided methodological and organizational guidance to the youth facilitators. Through the 39 workshops conducted, YTP participants trained 646 of their peers in the DCT methodology at no direct cost to the program. These leadership experiences proved useful to youth participants as they prepared their Sustainability Grant proposals and IREX provided USAID-branded YTP bags and hats to honor the youth who implemented the workshops.

### **Sustainability Grants:**

The 12 Sustainability Grants awarded in June 2011 and implemented December 2011 leveraged YTP participants' motivation, skills and connections to promote long-term sustainability of the DCT methodology in community institutions. Almost all grantees opted to help establish new theater groups in the schools and youth centers of

communities they had visited during their theater tours. Grants of up to \$2000 supported 5 roundtable discussions on YTP, 20 summer DCT workshops for youth and adults that trained 287 people, and funded 69 additional community performances. IREX, Fidokor and EHIO continued to provide ongoing implementation coaching as participants worked towards a long-term vision for sharing DCT with their own and nearby communities.

IREX issued modifications to EHIO and Fidokor's subgrants, expanding the Scopes of Work and budgets to cover the partner organizations' direct administration of the Sustainability Grants. The program management team assisted YTP participants in designing Sustainability Grant proposals aimed at transferring their knowledge of DCT techniques to a wide array of local groups and institutions. IREX oversaw the grant application, selection and award processes, working closely with partners EHIO and Fidokor to build their capacity to administer future competitions.

While many groups initially struggled to differentiate between the Sustainability Grants and the Theater Tour Grants awarded in Year 1 of the program, both ICA EHIO and Fidokor followed up with each applicant group to coach them



on developing long term projects, emphasizing the significance of participants' own continuing leadership of community conflict prevention and resolution activities. "Thanks to the experience participants gained during their Theater Tours, the problems that they had in the first months of the project did not arise with the Sustainability Grant proposals," commented Muzaffar Avazov, YTP program coordinator for Fidokor. "The groups appeared to have gained significant confidence in their abilities."

"In the beginning, groups really struggled to perceive the meaning of 'sustainability,'" stated Nargis Nabieva, YTP program coordinator for EHIO. "At the Sustainability Workshop in Dushanbe, we teamed up with adult group leaders and helped them brainstorm ideas about sustainability. As it turned

out, they had plenty of ideas about sustainability and enthusiastically started writing their proposals. The results were really positive; youth and adults have become even more interested in the program now that they've acquired the skills to continue their work into the future."

With concurrence from USAID and close monitoring oversight from IREX, Fidokor and ICA EHIO awarded 12 sustainability grants totaling \$20,000 in June 2011. IREX, EHIO and Fidokor reviewed and awarded grants according to the following selection criteria:

- *Active involvement of young people in program planning, implementation, and evaluation*
- *Technically sound incorporation of interactive theater principles and activities*
- *Number and type of new beneficiaries to be reached*
- *Support of school director or NGO director*
- *Project impact and sustainability*
- *Realism of project budget*

Awardees proposed diverse progressions of DCT activities, such as establishing new theater groups, carrying out additional performances in new communities, organizing TOTs and summer camps for new beneficiaries, holding targeted meetings with officials to expand and institutionalize support for DCT activities, and broadcasting performances on local TV stations. Almost all grantees opted to help establish new theater groups and Drama Clubs in the schools and youth centers of communities they had visited during their theater tours. For example, in Konibodom District, adult participant Nozim Ergashev was awarded \$1595 to support youth leaders in planning, organizing and conducting a Training of Trainers for 20 students and teachers, to establish and support two new theater groups, and to organize a Forum Theater performance festival.

Under the grants, 27 Drama Clubs – including the 12 original Theater Tour groups plus an additional 15 new Drama Clubs formed specifically through the Sustainability Grants - were established as bases for sustainable DCT activities, engaging 263 new youth as members. 20 of these Drama Clubs are based in schools, with 6 based in local youth and sport departments in Pyanj, one in the local Culture Center in Isfara, and one in the local Activity Center in Vakhsh. Grantee-organized activities were covered in the local Tajik and Uzbek-language media, including an article by the major news outlet Asia Plus.

The YTP team mentored participants throughout implementation, attended and provided feedback on select events, and helped them cooperate with district, jamoat and school leaders to gain permission for grant activities. YTP team members also reviewed training plans that participants have designed for their events to build participant capacity in

workshop curriculum development. In addition, IREX, Fidokor and ICA EHIO coached grantees in general DCT practices, youth-led community engagement, conflict prevention and project management in order to build capacity for the institutionalization and long-term sustainability of the DCT model.

While implementing Sustainability Grants, participants continued to grow in their capacity to facilitate DCT activities, and many began to utilize the skills they gained through YTP program in other arenas. For example, youth participant Ruhshona Abduvali quickly rose as a leader of her theater group in Panj, and began to organize theater performances independently. Through her participation in YTP, she has gained respect as a youth leader in her school and throughout the surrounding region. After graduating from high school this spring, Ruhshona is beginning her university studies but has also taken on a part time job with the Youth and Sport Department in Panj district. She plans to continue to utilize her DCT skills in this capacity.



Dilafuz Sattorova, an adult YTP leader from Sarband district, Khatlon region, was recently promoted to Deputy Director of her school, giving her the ability to promote conflict prevention to a much larger group of youth, teachers, and parents in her community. "Being involved in YTP made me believe that I can work with people of different nationalities and I can undertake bigger responsibility," Ms. Sattorova commented. "Since we live in a community where two different nationalities reside [Tajiks and Uzbeks], I thought we can contribute to friendship between these two nationalities through the efforts of our theater group. We decided to name the group 'Dusti' to strive for unity in our community, as 'Dusti' means 'friendship' in Tajik."

Ms. Sattorova expressed confidence about the sustainability of DCT activities. "Our school will serve as a base to retain the methodology of Forum Theater, as we have established two Drama Clubs there," she said. "One Drama Club works with communities where ethnic tensions between Uzbeks and Tajiks exist, which we try to address through our performances. We believe that the youth involved in YTP will transfer their knowledge each year from one to another and teachers will use the methodology, especially the games, which are directed to development of youth. Now I have different attitude towards my job. I feel that I am a real teacher, I know that students need me and I can deliver my knowledge and help navigate youth to follow the right track."

Focus group respondents of both Tajik and Uzbek ethnicity agreed that Ms. Sattorova's Sustainability Grant project, which formed two Drama Clubs, has fostered new behaviors in the community. "We have a bilingual school, with Tajik and Uzbek classes, but Tajik and Uzbek children rarely communicated with one another," one respondent said. "We even had different events and celebrations for Tajik and Uzbek community members. Thanks to Forum Theater, the situation has changed. Now we have two separate Drama Clubs for Uzbek and Tajik children, but we have a common venue and we have rehearsals and plays together. Now we are not only more patient and tolerant of each other, but we have also started to make friendships. Forum Theater unites us!"

**"Being involved in YTP made me believe I can work with people of different nationalities and I can undertake bigger responsibility. Our school will serve as a base to retain the methodology of Forum Theater."**  
*-Dilafuz Sattorova, Adult Leader*

The final evaluation concluded that overall, the majority of Sustainability Grant projects in Tajikistan reached new audiences with the DCT methodology. Interviews with principals of schools hosting projects showed that the school management is highly interested in institutionalizing Drama Clubs for the long term. "Most of the school principals are ready to provide support, but are limited in their financial resources," noted the evaluator, Vadim Nigmatov. "Most of the target schools in Tajikistan had no social activities or clubs for students prior to the DCT projects. Therefore, Drama Clubs/Forum Theater Groups are highly welcomed by the school management and teachers. Moreover, seeing the positive impact of DCT on youth, the school management in the target schools has started to open other kinds of clubs and social activities for youth with active support of the program participants."

Despite their limited budgets, school administrators offered in-kind support, such as use of school halls and classrooms, and provided their institutional blessing of DCT activities. School administrators quickly recognized the benefit Drama Clubs could bring to their institutions. In Surkh jamoat, Isfara district, the director of School #29 observed how participants used DCT to successfully engage female youth at risk of dropout and keep them in school. Parents in Surkh were also supportive of their daughters attending Drama Club activities.

#### **End of Program Workshop and Reception:**

The three-day End of Program Workshop, held in Varzob from November 29-December 1, 2011, provided a final opportunity for highly engaged participants to come together as a group, reflect on and share best practices from the

Sustainability Grants, celebrate participants' achievements throughout the program, and plan a course of action for sustainability.

Workshop sessions emphasized participant networking and teamwork to maximize post-program connections. Topics covered included fundraising, advocating for DCT within the community and with local officials, goal-setting, and action planning. During the session on fundraising IREX and partner staff noted that group leaders have grown professionally since the Sustainability Workshop. Group leaders are now more confident in talking about funding and in looking for funds with the aim to continue implementing the DCT methodology. Some of the groups have already



made some progress towards securing external funding from other donors. For example, the Gurdofarid group from Isfara district was awarded a year-long project grant from a local organization working on conflict mitigation issues. The group will receive 500 somoni each month to stage Forum Theater plays in Isfara communities.

The End of Program Workshop also included a reception open to outside guests, which aimed at celebrating and sharing participant and program achievements with donors, local government officials, the media, and other international and local NGOs operating in Tajikistan. Attendees from USAID, the US Embassy Public Affairs Section, the Ministry of Education, the British Embassy, OSCE, the Eurasia Foundation, HELVITAS, Radio Liberty, Vechernii Dushanbe,

TJ Club, TV Jahonamo, Women Without Borders, Save the Children and Asia Plus, among others, met with YTP participants from Sughd and Khatlon regions as they shared the successes of their theater activities and sustainability projects. The End of Program reception and the YTP program received coverage by several media outlets, including Didejest newspaper, Charhi Gardu, and Radio Liberty on their website and radio broadcast.

The YTP team also presented the results of the Final Evaluation (see section F) at the workshop.

### **Capacity Building:**

While capacity building was infused throughout YTP implementation, in Years 2 and 3, IREX transferred increasing responsibility to local partner NGOs EHIO and Fidokor with the goal of solidifying capacity to implement youth conflict prevention programming and incorporate DCT in their existing and new projects. In addition to DCT skills, targeted areas for capacity-building included small grant administration, event management, grant-writing, and monitoring and evaluation. IREX developed grant administration and M&E tools with partner input, trained partner organization staff to implement these tools, and involved them substantively in the final evaluation.

Fidokor and EHIO have embraced the DCT methodology as an effective new tool to engage youth and communities and mitigate conflict. "It goes without saying that Youth Theater for Peace was a new innovation for Fidokor," Mr. Avazov commented in a report. "Beyond the new knowledge, skills and experience gained by our staff, the DCT methodology itself became one of our organizational assets." Fidokor has since trained more than 30 employees of its own partner organizations on a GIZ-funded program to use DCT. "In the course of our work, we've observed that the four organizations we trained are using elements of Forum Theater and Image Theater in their events at the city and regional levels," Avazov reported.

"It goes without saying that YTP was a new innovation for Fidokor. **The DCT methodology itself has become one of our organizational assets.**  
-Muzaffar Avazov, Fidokor

EHIO staff also noted the influence of DCT on their organization and the new opportunities involvement in YTP has fostered. During YTP, EHIO applied for and implemented two additional projects with coaching from IREX: a US Embassy Democracy Commission grant to document further achievements of YTP on film, and a grant from the British Embassy in Dushanbe supporting cross-border performances in Kyrgyzstan. These opportunities helped EHIO further develop its proposal writing and grant management skills and widened the organization's circle of contacts. In part because of her work with YTP, EHIO staff member Nargis Nabieva was selected as an International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) delegate and traveled to the US to observe youth programming and learn more about the role of community service.

Both organizations have developed long-term plans to use the methodology post-program. As a result of Ms. Nabieva's visit to the US, EHIO submitted an application to the US Embassy for a project to develop volunteerism in Sughd region using DCT. Fidokor is planning a Training of Trainers on DCT for its own staff of trainers in summer 2012, with the goal of incorporating DCT into more ongoing projects. Both organizations have added DCT components to their organizational catalogue of trainings and are actively seeking opportunities to continue applying the methodology in both current and new projects.

## **F. ACTIVITIES RELATED TO PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

IREX designed a Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (PMEP) to ensure that project activities remained on task and on track to meet Program outcomes and objectives. The finalized PMEP was designed to ensure that program impact was measured with both quantitative and qualitative indicators, and that data on the US Government Peace and Security indicators within Program Area Conflict Mitigation and Reconciliation, Element 6.1: Conflict Mitigation, was collected and reported:

- ▶ Number of people trained in conflict mitigation/ resolution skills with USG assistance. Target: 126 people (26 adults, 100 youth). Result: 147 people (40 adults, 107 youth)
- ▶ Number of people from “at-risk groups reached through USG conflict mitigation activities. Target: 10,000 people. Result: 36,014 people (includes Theater Tours, Sustainability Grants, Youth-Led Workshops, and independently-funded events.)
- ▶ Number of USG-assisted facilitated events geared toward strengthening understanding and mitigating conflict between groups. Target: 160 events. Result: 282 events (includes Theater Tours, Sustainability Grants, Youth-Led Workshops, and independently-funded events.)
- ▶ Number of people attending USG-assisted facilitated events that are geared toward strengthening understanding and mitigating conflict between groups. Target: 10,000 people. Result: 36,089 people (includes Theater Tours, Sustainability Grants, Youth-Led Workshops, Round Tables, and independently-funded events.)

This data was disaggregated by sex and pre-set age categories.

IREX developed a wide range of M&E tools designed to gather real impact data against the indicators, including pre- and post-event surveys, focus group discussion guides, grantee and monitoring visit report forms. The tools measured not only demographic data and units of participation, but also focused on attitudinal and behavior change of participants. Results for program indicators are included in separate tables by objective as Attachments 1, 2 and 3.

In September 2011, IREX contracted an independent evaluation consultant based in Tajikistan, Vadim Nigmatov, to conduct the final program evaluation. Mr. Nigmatov was selected from a pool of independent consultants and private evaluation firms and found to have the requisite evaluation knowledge, skills and experience to design and implement the evaluation. Additionally, Mr. Nigmatov has knowledge of participatory assessment methods and proposed suggestions to structure the evaluation to maximize the capacity-building of local partners. IREX worked closely with Mr. Nigmatov to finalize the Statement of Work, evaluation design and research questions to be investigated. The user-focused, externally-led final evaluation of the program was implemented in October-November 2011. To build local capacity to the greatest extent possible, Mr. Nigmatov trained EHIO and Fidokor staff in M&E theory by and practiced data collection methods in the field, under close observation and with coaching by Mr. Nigmatov. The evaluation also included a self-assessment component for partners EHIO and Fidokor to reflect on the development of their organizational capacity throughout the program.

The final evaluation report can be found as Attachment 8.

## **G. CHALLENGES, LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Management and Administrative Issues:**

In July 2010, in consultation with USAID, IREX made the decision to cut short the first Camp 1 workshop for Sughd participants in Kayrakkum, due to increased scrutiny from the Ministry of Education. This scrutiny was largely related to security concerns around President Rakhmon’s visit to the resort area, which coincided almost exactly with the camp dates. Citing Rakhmon’s visit, the original Kayrakkum camp venue administration unexpectedly canceled IREX’s contract with the site. After IREX requested the return of program funds paid as an advance to this venue, the Kayrakkum local authorities took a heightened interest in YTP activities, setting off a chain of requests for additional permission letters that reached the Ministry level.

IREX worked closely with USAID and the Government of Tajikistan to secure the additional permissions needed to conduct the summer camps, meeting personally with the Minister of Education to assuage any concerns about the program goals and DCT methodology. In consultation with USAID, IREX revised the DCT curriculum and invited a representative from the Ministry of Education to observe the camps, which continued on an adjusted schedule. For all events in Years 2 and 3, YTP worked closely with the Ministry of Education and local government officials in Khatlon and Sughd to secure support for the program

YTP Program Director Mahmud Naimov resigned from the position in late July 2010. IREX DC Program Officer Susan Armitage was present in Tajikistan at the time of Mr. Naimov’s resignation on a program monitoring visit. In

consultation with USAID, Ms. Armitage extended her stay in the country to liaise with the Ministry of Education and oversee the transition of local management responsibilities to IREX Tajikistan Senior Program Officer Radik Nabiulin. Mr. Nabiulin served as acting Program Director, under the oversight of Ms. Armitage and IREX Tajikistan Head of Office Jarrett Basedow, to ensure effective implementation of program activities. IREX advertised the Program Director vacancy and interviewed several candidates, concluding that Nasima Nazrieva had the requisite management and partner capacity-building experience, and a passion for serving vulnerable youth. On October 18, 2010, Nasima Nazrieva began her duties as YTP Program Director. IREX DC Program Officer Susan Armitage and IREX Tajikistan



Head of Office Jarrett Basedow provided guidance and support to Ms. Nazrieva in her day-to-day management of the program and partners to ensure a smooth transition.

In November 2010, IREX raised concerns about staff motivation and commitment to the program with local partner Fidokor, which led to a conversation about the status of the organizational partnership on YTP. After continued discussion and a renewed commitment from Fidokor, IREX, in consultation with USAID, instituted additional measures to address motivation and performance issues. These measures included staffing changes within Fidokor as well as increased monitoring and oversight of the activities in Khatlon. Over the course of the year, Fidokor's performance and motivation improved as the organization's staff and leadership began to see the impact of YTP activities in Khatlon communities. The new Fidokor program team was committed to the project and did an excellent job of motivating and supporting the grantees. IREX also involved Fidokor more deeply in giving input to implementation, which resulted in a strengthened partnership.

#### Lessons Learned:

**Manage relationships with national-level and local-level officials:** Following the initial difficulties with Camp 1, YTP worked closely with the Ministry of Education and local government officials in Khatlon and Sughd to secure support for the program. As the Government of Tajikistan rarely officially acknowledges conflict, YTP

continued with a "soft" approach to conflict issues, emphasizing Theater Tour play topics that align with Ministry priorities. However, several YTP theater groups chose to dramatize more controversial topics, such as land distribution issues and ethnic conflict between Tajiks and Uzbeks. YTP groups developed strong relationships with local officials by conducting pre-performance assessment meetings and inviting local officials to events, and were able to gauge which officials would be more supportive of different issues. Emphasizing the creative, arts-based nature of the YTP approach was also instrumental in gaining local community support.

**Integrate DCT Activities into Broader Community Events:** Incorporating YTP performances into existing community events proved extremely successful in engaging officials and community members, and helped the YTP theater troupes build a positive reputation within their districts and even at the regional level. Several YTP groups also warmed up their audiences with music, dance and other cultural activities that functioned as a "sweetener" for the more serious Forum Theater performances and helped engage attendees. Seeing the benefits of an interactive approach, local officials and Khukumats requested and in some cases funded YTP groups' participation in their own events. School administrators have also engaged YTP groups to enliven the typical school holiday celebrations.

**Invest in Mentoring for Local Capacity Development:** IREX, Fidokor and EHIO's sustained mentoring of the adult theater group leaders over the year, including on-site monitoring visits, resulted in the leaders' increased capacity to facilitate discussion and DCT activities, liaise with local officials, manage grant funds, plan events, and design their own projects. The experience of implementing a smaller Theater Tour grant with close oversight from the YTP team built confidence and prepared adult leaders to design and implement the more complex Sustainability Grants.

**Avoid "Winners and Losers":** YTP's commitment to support all engaged project leaders who submitted proposals related to the program goals, rather than administer the grants programs competitively, avoided the sense of "winners and losers." Project and group leaders were given individual coaching to develop based on their own strengths and weaknesses. As a result, none of the original 12 groups formed in the first year of the program dropped out.

**Encourage Participant-Led Activities to Sustain Motivation:** The positive feedback and support from community members motivated adult and youth participants alike to share the DCT methodology widely. The introduction of youth-led workshops following the Sustainability Workshop proved extremely successful, with YTP youth participants eager to share their skills and facilitate activities for their peers. Organizing and facilitating their own TOTs and summer camps through the Sustainability Grants only one year after learning DCT also provided a boost to

participants' confidence. Individual participants also reported promotions or other professional recognition due to their DCT activities, further fueling their pride to continue working.

**Continue Outreach to Underserved Girls:** YTP had an unanticipated but significant positive impact on the enrollment of girls in the upper secondary grades in Isfara district and other conservative areas of Tajikistan. It seems that the two main contributing factors are the public discussion raised by YTP performances around the issues of education and early marriage, as well as the visible presence of girls in leadership roles on stage. After seeing YTP participants perform, youth who had not attended the YTP camps in Year 1 asked to be involved in the program. This was not a phenomenon unique to girls, but it can be argued that female YTP participants are viewed as leaders and role models by other girls in their communities. By working closely with local leaders and teachers in conservative communities, YTP has been able to engage girls that might not otherwise be permitted to participate.

**Share Best Practices between Programs:** The exchange of experience between YTP participants in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan at the Sustainability Workshop was also useful and sparked new ideas for YTP in Tajikistan. YTP participants in Tajikistan were able to see how the YTP Drama Clubs in Kyrgyzstan were institutionalized within schools, and the majority of Sustainability Grants from Tajikistan included a Drama Club component. A study tour supported by the UK Embassy in Dushanbe allowed select YTP Tajikistan participants to learn more about the model through a carefully structured visit to YTP Drama Clubs in Chui region, Kyrgyzstan.

**Engage Partners in M&E:** During the self-assessment portion of the evaluation, Fidokor and EHIO displayed a lack of understanding of the program's M&E system. While they had been collecting data using monitoring tools at their level, the organizations' staff had weak knowledge of the PMEP itself and did not understand why they were collecting certain information. The training provided by Vadim Nigmatov, the evaluator, helped Fidokor and EHIO staff to better understand the purpose and functions of the PMEP. However, it was recommended that IREX engage its partners more fully in the development of indicators and tools from the start of the program, something IREX is now doing in its YTP program in Kyrgyzstan. Involving the partners as enumerators and focus group facilitators in the final program evaluation served as a good capacity-building exercise and increased program ownership. Based on these results, IREX will strive to engage its partners more fully throughout M&E processes in its future programs.

### **Recommendations:**

Based on the results of the YTP program, IREX recommends that USAID and other implementing partners consider:

- **Invest further in rural and underserved youth in Tajikistan.** In the target communities, YTP was often one of the only productive extracurricular opportunities available to youth (and even more so as participants targeted underserved areas for their Sustainability Grants). Rural youth participants were thirsty for outlets in which to develop their leadership, communication, critical thinking, teamwork, and other key skills for conflict mitigation, civic engagement, and democracy. In rural areas, participants quickly rose to the challenge of leadership and were able to inspire thousands of additional youth. Tight networks formed between youth participants. Teachers, administrators, and participants themselves noted the program's positive effects on at-risk youth who had behavior problems or were planning to marry early, drop out of school, and migrate. As USAID's *Youth and Conflict Toolkit* notes, a large youth cohort in and of itself may be a risk factor for conflict, as well as situations in which youth lack opportunities to express themselves and engage productively in society. Programs such as YTP provide these empowering opportunities.
- **Consider flexible and broader youth development programming to address conflict in more restrictive environments.** As IREX noted during the initial months of YTP implementation, the prospect of any dialogue about conflict can threaten officials, from the Ministry down to the local level. By working closely with officials and stressing the youth development benefits of the program, YTP was able to secure permission to operate. The flexible framework introduced by YTP also allowed participants to address the issues they themselves saw as most urgent. Participants were able to choose which issues they felt they could address productively, and which they felt were too sensitive for the current political climate in their communities. Dialogue about any issue can develop the individual and social 'muscles' required to negotiate violent conflict.

## **H. BUDGET ANALYSIS**

A comparison of budget estimates with actual expenditures follows:

	TOTAL AUTHORIZED FUNDS	TOTAL CUMULATIVE EXPENSES	TOTAL UNLIQUIDATED OBLIGATION
Personnel	68,993	83,099	-14,106
Fringe Benefits	5,831	6,826	-995
Travel	180,378	182,973	-2,595
Supplies	17,685	8,720	8,965
Contractual	188,839	196,544	-7,705
Other	55,229	38,718	16,511
<b>Total Direct Charges</b>	<b>516,955</b>	<b>516,880</b>	<b>75</b>
Indirect Costs	83,045	77,660	5,385
<b>TOTAL USAID</b>	<b>600,000</b>	<b>594,540</b>	<b>5,460</b>

Throughout the program, IREX adjusted spending to provide maximum investments in partner and grantee capacity development and meet program objectives in a timely manner. These adjustments included:

Personnel: Additional staff time was dedicated to partner and grantee oversight in connection with the issues noted in Section G of this report. With the increased visibility of YTP events in communities and the need to liaise with Ministry and local government officials, IREX Tajikistan Country Director Jarrett Basedow also began to dedicate time to program oversight. Additional staff time from IREX DC was also dedicated to mentoring new Program Director Nasima Nazrieva, as Y2 was her first year of employment with IREX and the program.

Travel: To meet the needs for extensive in-person coaching and monitoring of the two partner organizations and 12 grantee theater groups, additional travel expenditures were incurred. DCT skill development is an ongoing process and thorough IREX staff monitoring of partner organizations and grantees is necessary to ensure the methodology can be adopted sustainably. IREX also opted to hold one Sustainability Workshop near Dushanbe for participants from Sughd and Khatlon to share best practices, rather than organize two smaller workshops in the separate regions. This increased travel costs to bring Sughd participants to Dushanbe. IREX also chose to include a larger number of participants than projected in the award budget.

Contractual: As the partner organizations took on additional responsibility, a larger portion of program expenses was disbursed directly through their subgrants. Payments to consultants were also increased in Y1, due to the programmatic delays discussed in Section G, which kept the consultants on the ground in Tajikistan longer.