



**Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA)  
IIE/Emerging Markets Development Advisers Program (EMDAP)**

**Leader with Associate Agreement (LWA)  
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**Final Report  
for**

**USAID/CAR LONG TERM BUSINESS VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM**

**PREPARED BY LEAD IMPLEMENTER:**

**THE INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION (IIE)  
WASHINGTON, DC**



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**FINAL REPORT FOR  
USAID/CAR'S LONG TERM BUSINESS VOLUNTEERS PROGRAM**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Under the USAID/Central Asian Republics-administered Long Term Business Volunteers Program to support USAID/Kazakhstan's Public-Private Economic Partnership program in Kazakhstan and USAID/CAR/Uzbekistan Country Office's Business Enabling Environment programs in Uzbekistan (Leader with Associate Agreement (LWA) EEM-A-00-04-00002-00, Associate Cooperative Agreement No. 115-A-00-08-00003-00), the Institute of International Education's (IIE) Emerging Markets Development Advisers Program (EMDAP), in association with Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA), was responsible for identifying, training and supporting U.S. graduate student volunteers to support American Chambers of Commerce (AMCHAM) and other entities in both Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. The objective of the program was to foster economic growth in the region through partnership and collaborative development. The period of performance for the contract was January 30, 2008 – August 31, 2016.

This Final Report was prepared as a deliverable under the project to document performance and achievements. It has the following content: Background of Activity in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, Period of Activity/Service, Summary of EMDAP Adviser Activities and Accomplishments, Lessons Learned/Observations and Recommendations, Program Overview, and Photo Highlights.

## **II. BACKGROUND OF ACTIVITY IN KAZAKHSTAN AND UZBEKISTAN**

USAID/CAR's Long Term Business Volunteers Program was a nine-year effort, launched on January 30, 2008. Initially, the scope of work for the project was to support the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) – Kazakhstan, by providing a long-term Business Adviser who could augment the chamber's efforts to increase the opportunity for partnership and collaborative development through focus on rule-of-law, tax reform, transparency and reduced tolerance for corruption. In Kazakhstan, the EMDAP Adviser held the role of Public Private Economic Partnership Specialist, and worked to identify efforts to develop public-private economic partnerships.

In 2011, the program was extended to Uzbekistan. Under the Business Enabling Environment (BEE) Advisor to Support BEE improvements, long-term Business Advisers assisted USAID/CAR/Uzbekistan Country Office (UCO), the American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in Uzbekistan, and other private sector partners and donors to advance a public-private dialogue with relevant agencies of the Government of Uzbekistan (GOU), including the Uzbek Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UCCI). The objective of the program was to improve the business enabling environment in Uzbekistan in order to spur increased trade and investment

Over the life of the program, USAID/CAR granted seven extensions, bringing the period of performance from one year initially to nine in total. The initial Award amount was \$74,368; through extensions, this increased to \$567,242 by the end of the performance period. Under the Kazakhstan program, IIE recruited, trained and managed two EMDAP Advisers, who were both placed with the American Chamber of Commerce in Almaty from 2008-2011. Following an extension of the program in 2011, IIE recruited, trained and managed three Advisers for the Business Enabling Environment (BEE) program in Uzbekistan from 2011-2015. All three advisers were placed with the American Chamber of Commerce in Tashkent. -

In January 2008, one adviser was placed by EMDAP at AMCHAM Kazakhstan for a ten-month assignment. Due to the success of his assignment, the program was extended for one year. In 2009 the scope of work for the project shifted, and the EMDAP Adviser was named the Public-Private Economic Partner Initiative (PPEPI) Program Manager. The PPEPI was an initiative developed by the U.S. Department of State and the Office of the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan and implemented by the American Chamber of Commerce, initially for a one-year pilot test. In 2010, the scope of work again shifted slightly. The EMDAP Adviser continued to act as the PPEPI Program Manager, but began to work directly under the supervision of USAID/CAR's Office of Economic Growth, particularly with the USAID PPEPI Activity Manager/AOTR. The purpose of this addition to the scope of work was for the EMDAP Adviser to initiate activities in support of PPEPI and conduct outreach to strengthen PPEPI's Implementation Role.

Following the decision of USAID not to continue to independently fund the PPEPI in Kazakhstan, USAID/CAR granted an extension of the program and shifted the scope of work from Kazakhstan to Uzbekistan,

requesting an Adviser to be placed with the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. The first of three advisers recruited for the project in Uzbekistan arrived in Tashkent in December 2011. The title for the new role in Uzbekistan was Business Enabling Environment (BEE) Business Adviser to Support BEE Improvements in Uzbekistan. The Adviser was tasked with facilitating new, and supporting existing, public private dialogue to improve the business environment in support of increased trade and investment, and economic development.

In September 2013 the program received a final extension until August 2016. Under the VEGA/IIE Program, USAID/CAR obligated \$541,232.28 for a total of five EMDAP Advisers. Below is a table of the EMDAP Adviser's under the alliance in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Host Organization</b>	<b>Year</b>
Sanja Srikantiah	Johns Hopkins University – SAIS	Kazakhstan	American Chamber of Commerce	2008-2009
Jennifer Schneider	Monterey Institute of International Studies	Kazakhstan	American Chamber of Commerce – USAID CAR (Office of Economic Growth)	2009-2011
Fabian Olarte	Tufts University	Uzbekistan	American Chamber of Commerce	2011-2012
Micah Lund	Monterey Institute of International Studies	Uzbekistan	American Chamber of Commerce	2012-2014
Joshua Bartlett	University of Texas @ Austin	Uzbekistan	American Chamber of Commerce	2015

### **III. PERIOD OF ACTIVITY/SERVICE**

The official dates of activity for this project were January 30, 2008 to August 31, 2016. However, the final EMDAP Adviser recruited and placed under the project with AMCHAM Uzbekistan departed on April 30, 2015, after unexpectedly resigning from the position. VEGA and IIE submitted a memo to USAID/CAR proposing a replacement adviser, but it was determined that USAID would not obligate additional funds to support a new adviser. VEGA and IIE then submitted a memo to USAID requesting a modification to the end date of the award to avoid unnecessary reporting on an award that has no activities. The OAA office recommended that no modification be made.

#### **IV. SUMMARY OF EMDAP ADVISER ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**1. SANJAY SRIKANTIAH**

**AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (AMCHAM) – ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN**

**ASSIGNMENT PERIOD: MARCH 15, 2008 – JANUARY 15, 2009**

**EXTENSION PERIOD: JANUARY 16, 2009 – DECEMBER 31, 2009**

**Mr. Sanjay Srikantiah**, a graduate from Johns Hopkins University, worked as the Public Private Economic Partnership Specialist at the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) in Almaty, Kazakhstan. AMCHAM is a non-profit organization that boasts the largest membership of any business association in Central Asia. The organization represents the interests of U.S., Kazakh, and multinational member companies conducting business in Kazakhstan. Mr. Sanjay was originally tasked with supporting the Kazakhstan Public-Private Economic Partnership Initiative (PPEPI), a joint effort between AMCHAM and the U.S. and Kazakh governments to foster improved commercial dialogue and business relationships. The PPEPI sought to bring more transparency, predictability and openness to the U.S. – Kazakhstan economic relationship. Mr. Sanjay supported the PPEPI by identifying areas where public private economic partnerships could be developed.

As a result of the success of his work, Mr. Srikantiah's assignment was extended for an additional year to assist AMCHAM in developing a one-year pilot program that would transfer responsibility for PPEPI implementation solely to AMCHAM. Mr. Srikantiah was assigned the new role of PPEPI Program Manager, ensuring a professional level of organization, adherence to schedules, and financial responsibility for the PPEPI.

Mr. Srikantiah resigned from his position early for personal reasons, and departed Kazakhstan at the end of July 2009.

Mr. Srikantiah's primary responsibilities during his original assignment period consisted of the following tasks:

- Active involvement in the Chamber's Working Groups on Foreign Investment, Taxation, Information Technology, Trade, Customs and Corporate Social Responsibility;
- Attendance at bimonthly Chamber Business Roundtables with prominent speakers on economic and investment issues;
- Participation in relevant conferences and business forums to discover avenues for public-private cooperation. Targeted events included the Caspian Investment Forum in Aktau, the Eurasia Media Forum in Almaty, and the Asia Society Business Roundtable in Astana;
- Publication of articles in *Investors' Voice* to highlight issues relevant to Kazakhstan's economic development;
- Development of an AmCham Kazakhstan Investment Overview focusing on investment sectors relevant to PPEPI;
- Launch and support of the Public-Private Economic Partnership Initiative (PPEPI)

Mr. Srikantiah's expanded responsibilities during his second assignment period consisted of the following tasks:

- Managing all PPEPI operations
  - Scheduling meetings for Working Groups and Coordinating Committees
  - Attending all working groups whose operational instructions he will perform
  - Preparing financial reports and bi-monthly narratives for USAID on the progress of the PPEPI
- Managing additional staff
  - Oversee Professional Placement and Corporate Internship Program
- Report to AmCham Executive Director and President on policy issues

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Designed and submitted bi-monthly narrative and quarterly financial reports for USAID in consultation with the AMCHAM Chief Accountant.
- Drafted position papers for the PPEPI launch event.
- Prepared briefing and policy papers, official letters, press statements, presentations, articles and other communication on issues related to the PPEPI Initiative.
- Liaised with private sector representatives (Kazakh and AMCHAM member companies), NGOs, relevant USAID implementing partners, the diplomatic community, government and donor organizations to develop background/position papers for the launch event, identify issues for inclusion in the PPEPI and explore common areas between the Government and the private sector.
- Assisted AMCHAM in its on-going public-private dialogue on trade, energy, WTO and other private sector development issues.
- Published articles in AMCHAM magazine, *Investors' Voice*, to highlight issues relevant to Kazakhstan's economic development.
- Developed an AMCHAM Kazakhstan Investment Overview focusing on investment sectors relevant to PPEPI.

### 2. JENNIFER SCHNEIDER

**AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (AMCHAM) – ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN**

**ASSIGNMENT PERIOD: SEPTEMBER 2, 2009 – APRIL 1, 2010**

**EXTENSION PERIOD: APRIL 2, 2010 – AUGUST 31, 2011**

**Ms. Jennifer Schneider**, a graduate from the Monterey Institute of International Studies, took over for Mr. Srikantiah as the Public-Private Enterprise Partnership Initiative (PPEPI) Program Manager at AMCHAM Kazakhstan. As PPEPI entered its second year, the focus continued to remain on promoting improvement of Kazakhstan's business environment and increasing the country's competitiveness through facilitation of public-private dialogue on such issues as anti-corruption and rule of law, transparency and economic efficiency, economic diversification/SME development, and cooperation in science and technology. Ms. Schneider's assignment involved extensive research and writing on policy issues related to investment. She worked under the direct supervision of the AMCHAM Executive Director and President, and the general guidance of the PPEPI Cooperative Technical Officer, and USAID's Director of the Office for Economic Growth.

One of the essential components of the PPEPI was the establishment of five Working Groups on topics critical to business and economic diversification in Kazakhstan. Each group was tasked with producing a White Paper of recommendations for the Kazakh government twice per year. Ms. Schneider was the primary outreach liaison with the PPEPI Working Group members.

Ms. Schneider's assignment was eventually extended until November 30, 2010. During the period of this first extension she oversaw the completion of the White Papers for the PPEPI Pilot Year, and the presentation of those papers to the Prime Minister's Office. She also wrapped up reporting to USAID on the PPEPI Pilot Year.

Ms. Schneider's primary responsibilities during the first period of her assignment and the first period of her extension consisted of the following tasks:

- Solidify membership for PPEPI Working Groups, schedule working group meetings, arrange meeting space and ensure presence of translators for each meeting.
- Prepare minutes from all working group meetings and disseminate them to participants in a timely manner.
- Prepare quarterly financial and narrative reports on PPEPI activities for USAID.
- Prepare briefing and policy papers, official letters, press statements, presentations, articles and other communication on issues related to the PPEPI Initiative.
- Liaise with private sector representatives (Kazakh and AMCHAM member companies), NGOs, relevant USAID implementing partners, and the diplomatic community in order to identify issues for inclusion in the PPEPI and explore common areas between the Government and the private sector.
- Develop an outreach plan for PPEPI to encourage greater AMCHAM member participation.
- Research and writing on policy issues related to investment.
- Other activities in furtherance of AMCHAM's overall mission and objectives.



Ms. Schneider's assignment was further extended another eight months, until August 31, 2011. During the second extension period, she continued to support her original assignment as the PPEPI Program Manager in implementing the U.S. - Kazakhstan Public Private Economic Partnership Initiative (PPEPI), but shifted to working directly with USAID/CAR in Almaty, Kazakhstan, rather than working through AMCHAM. USAID's priorities for PPEPI shifted during Ms. Schneider's original assignment, and the new focus was on collaboration with the U.S. - Kazakhstan Program for Economic Development and, to the extent possible, initiating new private sector alliances in Kazakhstan. Ms. Schneider's priorities shifted accordingly to liaising and working effectively with USAID, the U.S. Foreign and Commercial Service (FCS), the Government of Kazakhstan, business associations, and members of the private sector. Ms. Schneider worked under the direct supervision of USAID's Deputy Director of the Economic Growth Office, Erin Cole, who was also the PPEPI Activity Manager/VEGA AOTR within USAID's Office for Economic Growth in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Ms. Schneider's primary responsibilities during the second extension period of her assignment consisted of the following tasks:

- Develop, with assistance from the USG (FCS, USAID, Embassy) and through consultations with the Government of Kazakhstan's Point of Contact for PPEPI, an annual program for public-private dialogue that will identify key concerns of the business community (PPEPI Program);
- Be responsible for all PPEPI meeting arrangements (monthly meetings, committees, conferences, roundtables) and associated logistical coordination;
- Be responsible for periodic reporting on the PPEPI Program to PPEPI partners;
- Coordinate with USAID to ensure that the Program for Economic Development (PED) supports the PPEPI Program and vice versa;
- Cooperate and coordinate with the Government of Kazakhstan on PPEPI issues (e.g. meeting planning, budget coordination, invitation distribution);
- Submit PPEPI Program annual and quarterly work plans for approval by the PPEPI Coordinating Council;
- Serve as the secretary for PPEPI Steering Committee meetings (note taker, admin, etc.);
- Liaise with private sector representatives from the U.S. and Kazakhstan, AmCham members, NGOs, USAID and its project implementers, and Government of Kazakhstan officials to implement the PPEPI Program and to identify potential private sector alliances;
- Work closely with FCS on outreach to U.S. and Kazakh companies regarding the PPEPI Program;
- Prepare briefing and policy papers, official letters, press statements, presentations, articles and other communication on PPEPI issues and initiatives;
- Research and write about policy issues related to investment and trade in Kazakhstan for USAID - and/or Government-requested information;
- Travel periodically throughout Kazakhstan to participate in PPEPI-related meetings and/or to participate in PPEPI-organized events;
- Oversee the application process for the Development Grants Proposal on behalf of USAID.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Oversaw the completion of two sets of White Papers by the PPEPI Working Groups and significant increase in both private sector and government participation in the PPEPI.
- Organized Banking and Financial Conference, June 2010—attended by upwards of 100 participants from the business and diplomatic communities. The event also received substantial media coverage.
- Organized the Regional Economic Integration Forum, November 2010.
- Launched five new Working Groups to address member needs in regions outside of Almaty. Groups were attended by both senior and junior-level employees in member companies.
- Prepared series of recommendations on Intellectual Property Law to be presented to the Government of Kazakhstan in Winter 2010.
- Held monthly Working Group meetings, addressing topics such as the Customs Union, Tax Code Changes and Transfer Price Law, Intellectual Property Rights, CSR activities in Kazakhstan, among others.
- Prepared three articles for *Investors' Voice*—AMCHAM's bi-monthly business magazine with a readership of approximately 3,000 worldwide—on key AMCHAM events, in addition to a full-length feature article on the global financial crisis, and several ghost-written articles for members.
- Oversaw the Development Grants Program on behalf of USAID, securing \$1.8 million in additional funding for USAID Kazakhstan's mission. Requests for funding were received from 40 organizations totaling \$35 million. Organized and conducted two capacity building seminars for local NGOs, training 44 people from 32 organizations.

**4. FABIAN OLARTE**

**AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (AMCHAM) – TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN**

**ASSIGNMENT PERIOD: DECEMBER 26, 2011 – AUGUST 31, 2012**

**Mr. Fabian Olarte**, a graduate of Tufts University, worked as the Business Enabling Environment (BEE) Program Manager, assisting USAID/CAR/Uzbekistan Country Office (UCO), the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) in Uzbekistan, and other private sector partners and donors to advance a public-private dialogue with relevant agencies of the Government of Uzbekistan (GOU), including the Uzbek Chamber of Commerce and Industry (UCCI), to improve the business enabling environment in order to spur increased trade and investment. The objective of his assignment was to increase Uzbekistan's competitiveness through facilitating greater public-private dialogue on such issues as anti-corruption and rule of law, transparency and economic efficiency, agricultural development, economic diversification/SME development, and cooperation in science. Mr. Olarte was also responsible for initiating activities in support of the BEE Program, and reporting on program progress, especially related to implementation efforts. His assignment involved extensive research and writing on policy issues related to trade investment, and overall economic development in Uzbekistan. Mr. Olarte reported directly to the Director of AMCHAM, but was in close coordination with the USAID/CAR/UCO AOTR and spent a significant portion of his time at the Embassy.

Mr. Olarte's primary responsibilities consisted of the following tasks:

- Develop, with assistance from the USG (USAID, U.S. Embassy), AmCham and through consultations with the GOU, an annual program for public-private dialogue that will identify key concerns of the business community;
- Be responsible for all meeting arrangements (monthly meetings, committees, conferences, roundtables) and associated logistical coordination related to this program;
- Be responsible for monthly reporting on the program to partners (including USAID implementing partners, the private sector and/or other donors);
- Coordinate with USAID to ensure that this program complements other related USAID and USG programs (e.g., US Departments of Commerce and Agriculture) and vice versa;
- Cooperate and coordinate with the GOU on program issues (e.g. meeting planning, invitation distribution);
- Submit program annual and quarterly work plans for approval by the program's coordinating council (structure and membership TBD);
- Serve as the secretary for program's steering committee meetings (note taker, admin, etc.).
- As needed, participate in and support relevant AMCHAM committees (e.g., Trade & Investment, Tourism and Agribusiness) and help prepare briefing papers on select topics to be decided.
- Liaise with private sector representatives from the U.S. and Uzbekistan, AMCHAM members, NGOs, USAID and its project implementers, and GOU officials to implement the program and to identify potential private sector alliances;
- Prepare briefing and policy papers, official letters, press statements, presentations, articles and other communication on program issues and initiatives;

- In close coordination with UCCI and/or other GOU organizations, research and write about policy issues related to investment and trade in Uzbekistan for USAID, AMCHAM and/or GOU-requested information;
- Travel periodically throughout Uzbekistan to participate in program-related meetings and/or to participate in program-organized events.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Taught a four-hour seminar on business strategy to business executives to showcase business techniques and consulting.
- Coordinated the Central Asia Development Institute Roundtable, which aimed to analyze the current institutional practices in the transport sector (road construction/maintenance and usage) with subsequent policy-related recommendations for the government of Uzbekistan and multilateral organizations.
- Conducted six successful roundtables on important topics facing the business community through AMCHAM.
- Provided guidance on the business and investment climate in Uzbekistan for visiting companies from the U.S. and acted as a consultant for many of AMCHAM's members who sought to gain insight on business strategy.

**5. MICAH LUND**

**AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (AMCHAM) – TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN**

**ASSIGNMENT PERIOD: SEPTEMBER 1, 2012 – AUGUST 31, 2013**

**EXTENSION PERIOD: SEPTEMBER 1, 2013 – AUGUST 31, 2014**

**Mr. Micah Lund**, a graduate from Monterey Institute of International Studies, worked as the Business Enabling Environment Program Adviser at the American Chamber of Commerce in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. His initial assignment followed very closely the scope of work created for the previous EMDAP Adviser in Uzbekistan, Mr. Fabian Olarte. Mr. Lund's primary objectives were to assist UASID/CAR/Uzbekistan Country Office (UCO) and the American Chamber of Commerce (AMCHAM) in Uzbekistan to facilitate new, and support existing, public-private dialogue to improve the business environment in support of increased trade and investment and economic development. Mr. Lund was under the direct supervision of the USAID/CAR/UCO Project Manager, and worked in close coordination with the Director of the AMCHAM Board.

Mr. Lund's primary responsibilities during his original assignment also consisted of the following tasks:

- Coordinate with USAID to ensure the program complements other related USAID and USG programs.
- Take initiative in coordinating or initiating AMCHAM special conferences, roundtables, or joint events with other partners in addition to regular AMCHAM meetings/events.
- Submit monthly programs reports to USAID and partners (USAID implementing partners, the relevant private sector and/or other donors if USAID/AMCHAM deems so).
- As needed, participate in and support relevant AMCHAM committees (e.g., Trade and Investment, Agribusiness and Tourism) and help prepare briefing papers on select topics to be decided in consultation with AMCHAM Director and USAID.
- Contribute to the quarterly AMCHAM publication (e.g. sharing research, obtaining interviews and writing articles).
- Serve as note taker for AMCHAM's monthly Board of Directors' meeting and other relevant working committee meetings and identify and conduct follow-up activities.
- Cooperate and coordinate with the CCIU and other similar partners on program issues (e.g. meeting planning, invitation distribution).
- Liaise with private-sector representatives from the U.S. and Uzbekistan, AMCHAM members, think tanks, NGOs such as Business Women's Association, USAID and its project implementers, and the CCIU to implement the program and to identify potential private-sector alliances.
- Prepare briefing and policy papers, official letters, press statements, presentations, articles and other communication on program issues and initiatives.
- In close coordination with program partners, research and write on policy issues related to investment and trade in Uzbekistan.
- Travel periodically throughout Uzbekistan to participate in program-related meetings and/or to participate in program-organized events.

Mr. Lund extended his assignment for one additional year. During his assignment extension, he continued with his role of Business Enabling Environment Program Adviser, and the scope of work was not significantly altered. His primary responsibilities during his extension also consisted of the following tasks:

- Develop - with assistance from the USG (USAID, U.S. Embassy), AMCHAM and through consultations with the GOU - an annual program for public-private dialogue that will identify key concerns of the business community;
- Work with AMCHAM to strengthen its ability to become a sustained leader in public-private dialogue in Uzbekistan;
- In close coordination with UCCI and/or other GOU organizations, research and draft policy issues papers related to investment and trade in Uzbekistan for USAID, AMCHAM and/or GOU-requested information

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Wrote a briefing document for new market entrants and potential investors to understand the practical business environment in Uzbekistan.
- Organized an AMCHAM Board Retreat for board members, in order to further a collective vision for AMCHAM, and aid in the production of an AMCHAM Vision 2020 document. Better positioned AMCHAM for public/private dialogue by updating bylaws, revitalizing committees, introducing new member categories, drafting articles for publication, developing/revising website content.
- Headed up the Trade & Investment Committee under AMCHAM; organized multiple Trade and Investment round-table discussions.
- Organized and hosted round-tables on Agriculture and Food Processing, and Tourism and Hospitality.
- Integrated AgLinks Plus and Regional Economic Cooperation materials with Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan's (CCIU) business portal website, giving access to USAID educational materials to farmers and entrepreneurs across Uzbekistan.

**5. JOSHUA BARTLETT**

**AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (AMCHAM) – TASHKENT, UZBEKISTAN**

**ASSIGNMENT PERIOD: JANUARY 19, 2015 – JANUARY 18, 2016**

**AMENDED ASSIGNMENT PERIOD: JANUARY 19, 2015 TO MARCH 30, 2015**

**Mr. Joshua Bartlett**, a graduate from University of Texas - Austin, was assigned to support USAID, the American Chamber of Commerce in Uzbekistan (AMCHAM), the Association of International Business and Technologies (AMBiT) and the Government of Uzbekistan (GOU) to advance public-private dialogue in Tashkent, Uzbekistan on improving the business enabling environment. Mr. Bartlett was to communicate regularly with USAID, AMCHAM, AMBiT, U.S. Embassy Political/Economic (POL/ECON) Section and the GOU and was hosted by AMCHAM Uzbekistan.

Mr. Bartlett resigned unexpectedly from the position on March 30, 2015 and departed Tashkent, Uzbekistan on April 1, 2015. Mr. Bartlett was accepted as a finalist for a Presidential Management Fellowship, and notified of his acceptance on March 27<sup>th</sup>. He initially requested a leave of absence to travel to Washington, D.C. to interview for full-time positions. However, based on the justification that he did not have sufficient personal funds to cover a round-trip ticket from Uzbekistan to Washington, D.C., as well as the expenses he would incur while in D.C., Mr. Bartlett stated that he could not miss the opportunity to search for full-time employment through the Presidential Management Fellowship, and therefore felt it necessary to resign his EMDAP assignment.

Mr. Bartlett's visa expired on April 1<sup>st</sup>, and without guarantee that a visa extension was forthcoming, IIE staff arranged for Mr. Bartlett to travel to the United States on Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> in order to avoid incurring additional visa fees or a fine for overstaying the visa.

Mr. Bartlett had not informed IIE or USAID of his pending application to the Presidential Management Fellowship prior to departing the U.S. to begin his assignment in Uzbekistan.

## **V. LESSONS LEARNED/OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

EMDAP, through its implementation, responded to a need for increased partnership and dialogue between public and private enterprises in the Central Asian Republics of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. EMDAP Advisers in both countries were able to contribute to a key priority area for USAID by assisting host organizations to improve the business environment, thereby increasing economic growth through increased trade and investment. EMDAP Advisers were able to form linkages between different stakeholders as representatives of many different interests, and were able to interact with business owners on a more personal level, thereby facilitating the introduction of western business practices.

### **A. LESSONS LEARNED/OBSERVATIONS**

The EMDAP experience afforded each Adviser the opportunity to develop new skills, find alternative uses for previous abilities, gain experience in an overseas setting, and obtain new language skills. However, the assignments were not without challenges.

One of the major challenges that the advisers in Uzbekistan met with was the difficulty in securing a valid visa for a sustainable length of time. Only one adviser out of the three was granted a visa for longer than 3 months, and the process to obtain the long-term visa was quite lengthy and relied on heavy cooperation by the AMCHAM Uzbekistan Board Director. The other two advisers were only able to obtain three-month visas, but the process of extending those visas turned out to be very difficult to navigate, leading to frustration by the advisers, and time spent on visa processes and trips outside of the country in order to renew visas. Even though a budget for travel in and out of the country to renew visas was provided, the time and investment required from the advisers to renew their visas took time away from their EMDAP assignments.

Another challenge that the advisers in both countries reported was changes in their original Scope of Work during their assignment. While the Advisers were able to adapt to these changes, it did impact the Advisers' morale, as the assignment they had prepared for and accepted were changed, often without warning. EMDAP recognizes that Advisers must be trained to be proactive and adaptable in order to account for changes in scope of work, due to uncommitted or unengaged host organizations, or the closing/pivoting of initiatives and programs. However, ensuring that a scope is broad enough to absorb changes to specific components in the event that one component of the agreed-upon scope of work does not come to fruition would be helpful in taking some of the responsibility off the EMDAP Adviser in identifying a substitute for that component.

For the Advisers in Uzbekistan, the business environment was by far the biggest challenge they faced in achieving the goals and objectives laid out in their scope of work. All Advisers working Uzbekistan reported finding the business environment to be more difficult to navigate than anticipated. In general, there was skepticism within the business community about the Advisers' role and intent, and ability to affect change. Many leaders within the business community were disappointed with the current state of affairs of the business environment, particularly pertaining to private enterprise, and were pessimistic about the chances of improving the environment and facilitating private sector development. This resulted in a general lack of



enthusiasm from stakeholders within the business community for any new initiative, round table discussion, seminar, or program that sought to improve the environment of business. Secondly, the weak or non-existent relationships with Government of Uzbekistan made it very difficult for Advisers to engage with the GOU. Until Advisers established relationships of trust with appropriate government officials, they were not able to effectively engage with government. The role of the government in the business environment also meant that the goals of the EMDAP project were at times at odds with the desires of the AMCHAM board members, as there was a general feeling of fear that the project could be seen as too critical towards the local administration. This was resolved by the decision that in cases of conflicts of interest, the Advisers would side with AMCHAM's recommendations and the needs of the board members. This was to avoid jeopardizing the reputation of the organization.

While the Advisers experienced challenges, overall each adviser reported being satisfied with the opportunity and achieving the goals that he or she set at the start of the assignment.

### **B. RECOMMENDATIONS**

EMDAP's leading recommendation is to more fully investigate the option and logistics of obtaining a long-term visa that would enable the Advisers to devote their time and skills towards fulfilling the scope of work for the project, instead of navigating a difficult immigration system. This will help in alleviating the insecurity of potential immigration problems, and will allow the adviser to integrate more quickly into his or her new surroundings.

Another recommendation is to ensure that the Advisor assignments are created by, or have buy-in from, the partner organizations that will host the adviser. This will help to avoid changes in scope of work by ensuring that host organizations are engaged and committed, or staff working on initiatives or other programs are prepared to absorb the adviser. Having the Adviser speak to staff at their host organizations and receive updates before they arrive is vital in providing them with correct information to create a good working relationship and realistic expectations.

Throughout the period of performance for this project, EMDAP Advisers emerged as well acclimated and a good fit for their positions. Additionally, the advisers contributed to the success of not only the initiatives they were working on, but also the organizations by which they were hosted. Providing opportunities for recent graduates to gain valuable experience and to contribute to the success of their host organizations through long-term volunteering is what sets EMDAP apart from other projects. Recommendations for USAID/CAR are to continue accepting advisers to work on their initiatives to ensure that USAID projects and host organizations benefit from our volunteers' technical assistance and that recent graduates in the U.S. benefit from the opportunity to gain invaluable experience in their chosen fields.

## **VI. PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The Institute of International Education is in its 24<sup>th</sup> year of administering the Emerging Markets Development Advisers Program (EMDAP) in partnership with USAID and other international development partners. Since the program's inception in 1992, IIE has provided over 250 Advisers to 50 USAID assisted countries and some 200 partner organizations globally.

EMDAP is designed to place recent graduates from Master's level business and international affairs programs in overseas organizations to provide technical support in management practices to help develop and transition the organizations, and hence the countries, to compete in the global market. By targeting assistance to the requirements of micro-, small-, and medium-sized businesses and organizations that serve them, EMDAP supports USAID's strategy of human resource capacity building as an essential element in broad-based, sustainable economic growth.

EMDAP Advisers use their knowledge of business management practices to identify solutions in business/business-serving organizations in an overseas environment. They help build capacity and create mechanisms to sustain their efforts after the end of their assignments. Each Adviser develops, in consultation with the host organization, and the Mission as desired, a plan that focuses on long-term needs of their host organization. Advisers also work with the host organization supervisor in setting priorities during the assignment period to most effectively meet USAID's needs.

### **A. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

Founded in 1919, the Institute of International Education (IIE) partners with universities, governments, multi-lateral institutions, and corporations to develop and implement scholarship and exchange programs. These include the Fulbright and Humphrey Fellowships, administered on behalf of the U.S. Department of State in partnership with other countries, as well as more than 250 other initiatives that benefit over 25,000 men and women from 175 countries each year. With annual revenue of \$446 million, IIE employs a staff of over 700 and has 19 Offices and Affiliates and 1,200 Member Institutions around the world. IIE also manages USAID participant training/scholar programs for Cambodia, Egypt, Indonesia, Vietnam, Tanzania, and Timor-Leste.

IIE has extensive experience managing scholarship and fellowship programs that identify students, researchers, and professionals with strong leadership potential and a commitment to international collaboration. IIE works closely with sponsors that include the U.S. Department of State; U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); World Bank; major philanthropic foundations; private and public corporations; foreign governments; and individuals, to foster economic growth and sustainable development through training and leadership programs.

IIE’s liaison office for EMDAP and VEGA, based in Washington, DC, coordinates with and draws on the resources of IIE’s offices worldwide to support placement and monitoring of the Advisers. As an organization whose core mission is to bring people together with opportunities for learning and service, IIE’s systems and infrastructures are tailored to field and support expatriate professionals in all parts of the world with safety, security, efficiency and professionalism.

Over the course of managing EMDAP for 24 years, IIE has developed a professional, hands-on approach so that the program meets the goals of USAID and the in-country partner/host organization as well as provides an opportunity for U.S. MBA/MA graduates in international affairs to use their skills to build the capacity of organizations.

The following is the Annual Work Plan for IIE under the USAID/CAR Long Term Business Volunteers Program:

<b>IIE’s Annual Work Plan</b>			
<b>Task Description</b>	<b>Task Components</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Review Dates/ Criteria</b>
<b>CANDIDATE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Outreach and recruitment at U.S. universities</li> <li>2. Application submissions</li> <li>3. Selection Committee</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Conduct oral presentations at U.S. universities to increase application submissions.</li> <li>b) Collect applications from candidates.</li> <li>c) Form selection committees.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Ongoing, as needed</li> <li>II. Ongoing, as needed</li> <li>III. Ongoing, as needed</li> </ol>
<b>MATCHING SCOPE OF WORK WITH VOLUNTEER EXPERTISE</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evaluate Scope of Work</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Match qualified candidates with host institutions.</li> <li>b) Facilitate Interviews and offer assignment to selected candidates.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Ongoing, as needed</li> </ol>
<b>PRE-DEPARTURE PREPARATION AND ORIENTATION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organize and deliver pre-departure orientation to prepare participants to work and live in developing countries</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Conduct cross-cultural trainings and discuss program logistics, security, health/wellness, as well as settling-in issues.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Ongoing, as needed</li> </ol>
<b>ADVISER</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Departure for Assignment</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Organize and deliver orientation.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I. Ongoing, as needed</li> </ol>

<b>DEPLOYMENT</b>		b) Facilitate Airfare and logistical arrangements.	
<b>REPORTING</b>	1. Submit reports to VEGA/USAID	a) Present timelines, results and accomplishments of EMDAP Advisers.	I. Entry, quarterly and final/as requested
<b>SITE VISIT</b>	1. Conduct Annual Site Visit	a) Evaluate each Adviser’s professional contribution to the host organization and USAID in-country.	I. Mid-term of each assignment
<b>DEBRIEFING</b>	1. Organize and deliver post-evaluation debriefing to capture Advisers experiences	a) Conduct event to discuss program impact and accomplishments.	II. Prior to or after Advisers assignments have ended (when available)

**B. CANDIDATE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

EMDAP recruits candidates from over 91 universities with top graduate programs in fields related to economic growth and international development. Recent graduates and current students enrolled in MBA or MA programs in International Management, Finance and Development, or International Affairs are eligible.

Advisers under the USAID/CAR Long Term Business Volunteers Program were recruited from Johns Hopkins University, Monterey Institute of International Studies, Tufts University, and University of Texas at Austin.

As EMDAP assignments come up, applications are solicited from a variety of sources. Candidates send their applications and top candidates are interviewed by EMDAP’s Screening Panel (consisting of alumni, EMDAP Staff and international development professionals). Candidates are selected for interviews on the basis of three criteria: professional experience, leadership skills and educational background. Selected candidates are then proposed to USAID and host organizations (if appropriate). Telephone interviews are arranged between candidates and stakeholders. Interviews continue until all positions are filled. Selected Advisers are required to attend a Pre-departure before they depart for an assignment.

**C. MATCHING SCOPE OF SERVICES WITH VOLUNTEER EXPERTISE**

From the slate of selected candidates, the Institute matches the services required by USAID Missions with the most qualified candidates available, so that the Mission and host institutions receive a roster of candidates from which to select and interview finalists. If desired, designated Mission officers and the host organization participate in finalizing the selection of an Adviser to match the requirements of the identified assignments.

### **D. PRE-DEPARTURE PREPARATION AND ORIENTATION**

During the pre-departure EMDAP orientation, Advisers are introduced to USAID, its mission, partners and operations. They also participate in cross-cultural trainings and discuss program logistics, security, health/wellness, as well as settling-in issues. At this juncture, they also gather country and assignment-relevant information through research and meetings with USAID and other agency officials. Successful completion of the orientation is a prerequisite for participating in EMDAP.

### **E. LANGUAGE TRAINING**

EMDAP Advisers are offered pre-service or in-country language training as determined by requirements of the assignment and their current language proficiency.

### **F. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

EMDAP Advisers were required to submit quarterly reports to IIE to monitor their progress. IIE communicates with each Adviser weekly to monthly, at a minimum.

IIE/VEGA submits entry, quarterly and final reports to USAID to monitor each Advisers' progress. These reports collect the following information:

- Timelines and results the Adviser has completed - following the SMART methodology: specific, measurable, achievable, results-oriented, time-bound
- Changes, if any, in their scope of work/work plan
- Accomplishments and challenges for each period and what were the challenges
- What the Adviser will be working on for the remainder of the assignment

The Site Visit is an opportunity for both Advisers and host organizations to discuss the program frankly with IIE staff and provide information that is not necessarily captured in the official reports, e.g., whether or not the Adviser is performing to his/her full potential, and whether he/she is comfortable personally and professionally. IIE staff can then, in turn, suggest ways to strengthen each Adviser's contributions and reach mutual goals in the second half of the placement term. During the period of performance for this project, EMDAP Staff conducted five site visits to Almaty and Tashkent.

Before the end of his/her assignment, each Adviser conducts a formal presentation to USAID officials on his/her accomplishments and assesses the program to verify achievements of the intended outcomes and level of impact. IIE facilitates the event for USAID to view firsthand, the contributions of each Adviser to their project in a formal setting in addition to reading a final report. Each Adviser will also present his/her accomplishments again in Washington, DC to USAID/HQ officials managing the EMDAP/VEGA award. The EMDAP debriefing is also intended to help each Adviser synthesize his/her experience, formulate and realize long-term career goals through meetings and briefings with IIE, and to showcase their achievements and contributions to USAID/HQ.

**G. VEGA's Role**

VEGA served as both the award recipient and as a single point of contact as representative of the implementing organizations with respect to agreement actions and formal communications to USAID/CAR for the program. Over the life of the project, VEGA performed program monitoring and oversight role but did not duplicate the services of the Implementing Partner. This role included, providing quality assurance, financial management (review, approval and processing of budgets, disbursement requests, accounting record reconciliation, and liquidation), program support visits, and addressing issues or concerns in a timely fashion. VEGA has tailed its program involvement based on USAID/CAR needs.

VII. PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS



2012-2014 EMDAP Adviser Micah Lund on the panel of a Customs Committee Round Table (second from left).



2012-2014 EMDAP Adviser Micah Lund leading a discussion at the AMCHAM Uzbekistan Board Retreat.



2011-2012 EMDAP Adviser, Fabian Olarte (picture on right) during the first Microsoft Seminar on Intellectual Property (IPR) rights event that brought together leaders from the Uzbek government, Microsoft representative’s leaders of the business community together to discuss the development of IPR.



EMDAP Adviser, Fabian Olarte (right) pictured with Tatyana Bystrushkina, AmCham Executive Director (left) and Kamila Fazilova, AmCham Administrative Assistant (middle) during an AmCham sponsored event.