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EVALUATION REPORT



TRANSTEC
PROJECT
MANAGEMENT

**UDF-KYR-08-257 Empowering communities to participate in local
governance (Kyrgyzstan)**

Date: 14 August 2012

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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of the evaluators. They do not represent those of UNDEF or of any of the institutions referred to in the report.

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

i. Project data

The project ran from 01 November 2009 to 30 April 2011, with a total grant of USD 300,000 (out of which UNDEF retained USD 25,000 for monitoring and evaluation). The project was designed by the Kyrgyz NGO Jarandyk Demilge Network (JDN) and implemented at the local level by its regional offices in Atbashi, Naryn, Chaek (Naryn oblast), Karakol (Issyk-Kul oblast), Belovodskoe (Chui oblast), Kyzyladyr (Talass oblast), Nookat (Osh oblast), Kyzyl-Kiya (Batken oblast), Kochkor-Ata and Tash-Kumyr (Jalal-Abad oblast). It aimed to strengthen public participation in local governance and policy-making by facilitating stakeholder dialogue and fostering civic engagement and activism in various towns located in the seven oblasts (provinces) of Kyrgyzstan. As defined in the Project Document, the overall project objective was to foster an engaged and informed citizenry in Kyrgyzstan, by promoting:

- greater citizen participation in local decision-making processes,
- capacity building of local community advocacy groups, and
- provision of access to alternative and independent sources of information on key development and policy issues

ii. Evaluation findings

Project design and objectives were **relevant**. Key data of the project holder's baseline survey provided evidence that exchange and cooperation between Kenesh deputies (i.e. members of village/city councils) and the local population was initially almost absent in the local areas covered by the project. Survey findings were reflected in adjustments to the curriculum of the project's training program for Local Action Groups (LAGs) and interested citizens. Most importantly, the training program was expanded to local Kenesh deputies, to better familiarise them with their roles and responsibilities in accordance with the Kyrgyz law on local government and local self administration. Promotional activities and training materials likewise met the needs identified in the survey.

With a 25% higher than planned turnout of developed LAGs and similarly higher than envisaged LAG membership the project proved **highly effective** in establishing an enabling environment for improved citizen participation in local decision-making processes. Typical LAG members included engaged citizens, business representatives, teachers, students, retired persons, NGO representatives and in a number of cases local Kenesh deputies. Aiming to resolve the most pressing issues, discussion clubs were used as the main vehicle to advance the LAGs' advocacy campaigns, thus bringing engaged citizens together with local stakeholders. In addition, the project's regional offices provided 77,369 visitors with access to relevant information sources.

The running of a comprehensive training program (i.e. training of trainers and end-beneficiaries) and the facilitation of a variety of meetings (e.g. round tables and discussion clubs) constituted the principal activities of JDN's field staff, which together absorbed 38% of the budget, thus representing the project's main expenditure. The resulting average cost per trainee (185 LAG members, 151 local Kenesh deputies and

1,705 citizens) is as low as USD 51. The project's **efficiency** is furthermore documented in its advocacy and outreach expenses, which also appear considerably low (5%) when compared to the number of project office visitors served. JDN's staff costs related to inputs for project coordination and M&E (9%) are acceptable, given that JDN oversaw and guided implementation activities of ten regional project offices throughout the duration of the project.

It was not possible to exactly determine the **direct impact** of the project's activities on citizen participation in local decision making, as project staff conducted survey interviews in their local areas without making a distinction between the general population and the actual beneficiaries of the project's LAG formation and training activities.

However, evaluators assume that the project had positive and **sustainable** effects, as they found numerous examples of success stories that have brought change to local communities. They show that the establishment of LAGs offers a new mode of cooperation between local Kenesh deputies, other relevant stakeholders and the local population.

iii. Conclusions

- **The project achieved its objective to provide local communities with the capacities and skills required** to mobilize citizens and grass-roots civil society groups in a sustained and effective manner. Success stories collected by the evaluators provide evidence that **a new form of dialogue between citizens and representatives of local self-governance and other key institutions has been developed** in most of the local areas covered by the project, and that public input and participation is now effectively considered in decision-making processes relevant to these local communities.

- However, evaluators noted in some other cases an **absence of a clear separation between proper LAG initiative and technical assistance provided by regional JDN offices**. This points to a lack of strategic orientation within JDN and **potentially undermines the sustainability** of these LAGs, as they already display signs of resignation over the loss of supporting field staff and reduced access to alternative information and consultation.

iv. Recommendations

- For the sake of sustainability and in order to establish itself as a credible and continued partner for the future needs of LAGs we therefore **recommend that JDN, in close collaboration with its former field staff, revisits and further develops its mission statement**, by pooling experience and **exchanging the lessons learned** from the present project.

- **We also suggest that JDN organise additional surveys**. These should be conducted by region and separately among former (a) LAG members, (b) training beneficiaries and (c) users of the project offices' facilities, in order **to obtain precise**

information about remaining and new needs among the LAGs. Survey results will enable JDN to identify new project ideas and will support the NGO in developing more detailed strategic objectives for the future.

II. INTRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

i. The project and evaluation objectives

This report contains the evaluation of the project UDF-KYR-08-257 entitled “Empowering communities to participate in local governance”. The project ran from 01 November 2009 to 30 April 2011, with a total grant of USD 300,000 (out of which UNDEF retained USD 25,000 for monitoring and evaluation). The project was designed by the NGO Jarandyk Demilge Network (JDN) and implemented at the local level by its regional offices in Atbashi, Naryn, Chaek (Naryn oblast), Karakol (Issyk-Kul oblast), Belovodskoe (Chui oblast), Kyzyladyr (Talass oblast), Nookat (Osh oblast), Kyzyl-Kiya (Batken oblast), Kochkor-Ata and Tash-Kumyr

(Jalal-Abad oblast). It aimed to strengthen public participation in local governance and policy-making by facilitating stakeholder dialogue and fostering civic engagement and activism in various towns located in the seven oblasts (provinces) of Kyrgyzstan. According to the project document, the overall project

objective was to foster an engaged and informed citizenry in Kyrgyzstan, by promoting:

- greater citizen participation in local decision-making processes,
- capacity building of local community advocacy groups, and
- provision of access to alternative and independent sources of information on key development and policy issues.

JDN maintains an ongoing partnership with the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), one of its founding members, which provided technical inputs (research and training component design) at no cost to the project.

UNDEF and Transtec have agreed on a framework governing the evaluation process, set out in the Operational Manual. According to the manual, the objective of the evaluation is to “undertake in-depth analysis of UNDEF-funded projects to gain a better understanding of what constitutes a successful project which will in turn help UNDEF devise future project strategies. Evaluations also assist stakeholders to determine whether projects have been implemented in accordance with the project document and whether anticipated project outputs have been achieved”.



ii. Evaluation methodology

The methodology of the evaluation is set out in the Operational Manual governing the UNDEF–Transtec framework agreement, with brief additions in the evaluation Launch Note. In accordance with the agreed process, the evaluation aimed to answer questions across the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria of *relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability*. The evaluations are qualitative in nature and follow a standard set of evaluation questions that focus on the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and any value added from UNDEF funding (See Annex 1).

The evaluation took place from February – March 2012 with the field work conducted from 26 February to 02 March 2012. The evaluation was conducted by one international and one national expert.

The evaluators reviewed available documentation on the project and on local self-government (LSG) in Kyrgyzstan (Annex 2). Initial and final interviews were held with the Executive Director and the Administrative Assistant of JDN's Coordination Office in Bishkek. Field work then focused on meetings and exchanges with former Regional Project Directors (trainers), members of Local Action Groups (LAGs) and Local Kenesh deputies. The goal was to confirm the project beneficiaries' experiences and to obtain insight into their most important achievements. These took place in Karakol (Karakol and Tup LAGs) and Naryn (Naryn and Naryn rayon LAGs; Kenesh deputies). Additional meetings in Bishkek involved the project's former regional directors from Kyzyl-Adyr (for Kyzyl-Adyr and Koksai LAGs), Tash-Kumyr (for Tash-Kumyr and Kyzyl-Ajar LAGs) and At-Bashi (for At-Bashi and Akmus LAGs). Altogether, evaluators interviewed 5 regional JDN representatives/trainers, 13 LAG members and 7 Kenesh deputies (Annex 3).

iii. Development context

Despite governmental attempts lasting for the past decade, Kyrgyzstan still displays weak levels of responsive and accountable local governance. Measures proposed during this period¹ include “local development centers”, which were meant to function as platforms to address strategies for local communities and territorial development. The concept was that these platforms would support interested citizens to cooperate at the local level with the central administration, local authorities, civil society organizations, the business community and action groups. This idea seems to correspond closely to the enabling environment aimed for by the JDN project.

Following the latest reforms, local governance in administrative and budgetary terms is ensured at intermediate (oblast and rayon) and local (city and village) levels. The intermediate level fulfils the function of a local state administration, which is run by 7 oblast governors and 40 rayon akims (elected by the members of 40 local councils)². At the local level, 27 cities include the capital of Bishkek, the city of Osh, and a number of

1 E.g. in 'Kyrgyzstan - 2025. Strategies and development scenarios', International Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (2005), or the Kyrgyz government's Country Development Strategy (CDS) documents for 2007-2010, <http://webapps01.un.org/vawdatabase/uploads/Kyrgyzstan%20-%20National%20Development%20Strategy%202007-2010.pdf> and for 2009-2011, <http://www.carecprogram.org/uploads/docs/KGZ-Country-Development-Strategy-2009-2011-en.pdf>.

2 Since 2012 rayon akims are elected by local council members. Before, rayon akims were appointed by the President.

cities of oblast/rayon significance. Local government in villages (aiyl-okmotu) is run by 472 LSG heads and 6,818 elected village council members (also referred to as local kenesh deputies)³. Before adoption of the new constitution in 2010 mayors were mainly appointed by the President and confirmed by the local councils⁴. Confirmation by the local council in turn required formal agreement by the governor and akims.

A member of the parliament's committee for agrarian policy, water resources and LSG, believes that Kyrgyzstan has made more progress than its neighbors, underlining the importance of citizens' participation in local governance. Another stakeholder, a former member of the National Agency for LSG, highlights that Kyrgyzstan's local governance reform process is inspired by the Council of Europe's Charter on Local Self-Government⁵, with 10 of its 14 principles being implemented to date⁶.

Local governance reform has been in accordance with the "National Strategy for the Decentralization of Public Management and LSG Development until 2010," which was adopted by presidential decree in 2002⁷. The resulting legal framework, which has also been found compliant with the "Road Map for LSG"⁸, establishes the principle of direct election of mayors and council members by, and their accountability to, the population. Public service priorities to be ensured by municipalities include the rational use of land, housing and utilities by the local community; the improvement of territorial development, public transport and roads; consumer and retail services; the creation of conditions adequate for the development of local pre-school, secondary school and vocational education services; waste management; and the maintenance of public order⁹.

The extent to which legal provisions have effectively made their way into LSG practice today remains limited. A representative of the Municipal Services section of the Prime Minister's office admits that only 10-15% of LSG staff and local council members have obtained targeted training¹⁰. While statistics of the impact of training measures on LSG performance are not available, there is little doubt that capacity building, paired with the establishment of an enabling environment for citizen participation, remain the principal challenges effective LSG faces.

3 "LSG in Kyrgyzstan – myth or reality?", Nuripa Mukanova, NISPACee annual conference, Bratislava (2008).

4 Direct election of mayors and local council members was piloted in cities of oblast significance (Osh and Karakol) very recently (March 4th, 2012). Seven political parties nominated their candidates for direct election by the local population. Before, direct election of a mayor was tested in Bishkek once (1995).

5 See <http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/treaties/html/122.htm>

6 'Representatives of State Agencies share their opinion on the current state of local governance and its role in conflict prevention', Institute for Public Policy in Bishkek, <http://www.ipk.kg/ru/news/2238/> (February 13th, 2012).

7 http://www.citykr.kg/decentralis_rash.php?ify_id=4

8 Developed by the EU Tacis project "Support to the Strengthening of Local Self-Government in the Kyrgyz Republic"

9 Article 15 of the 'Law on Local Self Government and Local State Administration' refers to 'affairs of local significance', which LSGs should manage and service.

10 Statement made at the National Conference on 'LSG Capacity: legislation and reality', Bishkek (December 21, 2011).

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

i. Project strategy and approach

Four key objectives constituted the strategic approach of the project¹¹:

- Improved citizen participation in local decision-making processes: Under this key objective, JDN provided support to the development of LAGs, an instrument enabling the integration of citizens' concerns in the decision-making process of LSGs. Once established, LAGs received guidance during the identification of local issues requiring action and obtained continued technical assistance thereafter.
- Citizens and grass-roots civil society groups with capacity and skills to mobilize their community in a sustained, effective manner: this involved a focused civic advocacy training programme, targeting prospective members of future LAGs and other representatives of local communities, including local council members¹². The capacity building measure aimed to raise awareness and to enable professional use of advocacy and fundraising tools, as well as local community budgeting mechanisms.
- LSG institutions effectively incorporate public input and participation in their decision-making processes: to launch and develop dialogue between citizens and local self-governance institutions LAGs received guidance in the effective organisation and implementation of issue-based advocacy campaigns.
- Access to alternative and independent sources of information on key development and policy issues, ensured by the regional project offices of JDN.

The above approach was based on JDN's overall assessment that decision-making processes of local self-governance institutions, i.e. local government administrative structures and local councils (hereafter referred to as 'local kenesh'), did not sufficiently consider input and participation of the local population. JDN detected the underlying causes to be the lack of knowledge and skills to organize local communities, build and maintain coalitions, plan effective actions and mobilize civic activism in a sustained, effective manner. At the same time JDN reportedly came across an important number of local kenesh deputies that proved unaware of their mission objectives, specific tasks and responsibilities vis-à-vis the local population. JDN therefore sought, through the present initiative, to strengthen civil society groups, improve interaction between local government and civil society, and improve access to representative local government bodies, thus making them transparent to the public.

The project's strategic approach results from work JDN started as early as 2002. The organization sees its mission in contributing to the establishment of an enabling environment for democracy at grassroots level. In line with its philosophy that small initiatives are the long-term drivers of policy change, JDN therefore invests its resources in supporting NGOs and citizens interested in participating in local democracy. From

¹¹ Project Document UDF-KYR-08-257, October 2009

¹² The Project Document did not explicitly refer to village council members (i.e.local Kenesh deputies) as training beneficiaries. C.f. section on effectiveness for further details.

2002 to 2009, JDN, through its regional presence across Kyrgyzstan, has established relationships with local communities and local government officials, with support and guidance provided by the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) under the framework of the project 'Information Centres to Support Democracy'. Following this seven-year period, the present project, in terms of scale and coverage, was the first JDN implemented on its own.

The commonality of local development issues JDN identified throughout the country - linked to topics such as land management, water, housing, education, social services, health services, waste management and tax collection/management - and JDN's growing network of civil activists with capacity development needs provided the basis for the project idea. Consequently, JDN's strategic approach was to address local development issues through a nationally coordinated, but locally steered concept of discussion clubs, formalised LAGs and round tables. Training and information dissemination needs were also addressed locally, with the regional project offices obtaining guidance from the national coordination office in the form of training of trainers and the sourcing of news for local information dissemination activities.

JDN managed the project from a small coordination office in Bishkek, with its Executive Director, Mr. Umar Madjun, carrying overall implementation responsibility, supported by Mr. Manas Toktombaev, who at the time was in charge of the project's overall coordination¹³. The actual division of roles among the staff of the project coordination office corresponded to the description in the project document. JDN's Executive Director monitored performance for compliance with the project's objectives with the support of the project coordinator, who was in charge of daily guidance and oversight of activities by the ten field offices. For the purposes of budget control the coordinator collaborated closely with the project accountant.

The project's field offices were ran as foreseen by regional project directors, whose daily operations relied on the support of a local project assistant each. Narrative activity reports and visitor/trainee statistics information were submitted to the Bishkek coordination office on a weekly basis for monitoring and reporting purposes. The coordination office offered guidance and feedback in return and conducted occasional site visits. The Executive Director highlighted that it was considered unnecessary to impose additional or rigorous control measures on the regional project offices, given the collaborative relationship established since 2002. As a matter of JDN's policy, interference with detailed aspects of the work conducted by the field offices was avoided, as these were trusted to know best how to ensure project implementation in line with local needs. Therefore, regional directors had the authority, for example, to autonomously assign priorities among the project's nine training modules provided by the coordination office.

¹³ Mr. Manas Toktombaev has left JDN after the project's completion for personal reasons. Mr Majdun, who accompanied evaluators during the field visits, was aware of most of the project's technical aspects.

ii. Logical framework

The Project Document translates JDN's project approach into a structured and detailed plan of project activities and intended outcomes, which are geared towards the achievement of the project's four key objectives. The framework below aims to capture the project logic systematically, also attempting to eliminate confusion between outcomes and impacts the evaluators at times observed in the Final Narrative report.

Project Activities	Intended outcomes	Medium term impacts	Long term development objectives
Identify issues of local concern in community discussions; identify local leaders/activists in discussion club meetings; develop LAGs	At least 20 LAGs (2 per regional project office location) established	Specific issues of local concern are being addressed	Improved citizen participation in local decision-making processes
Develop training materials, train trainers; train LAGs, consult LAGs on action plan development and progress	20 focused civic advocacy trainings organized and monthly consultations held for at least 20 LAGs	Local communities organized, coalitions built, effective actions planned	Citizens and grass-roots civil society groups with capacity and skills mobilize their community in a sustained, effective manner
LAGs initiate and implement advocacy campaigns, hold Round Tables with stakeholders	20 LAG advocacy campaigns conducted, including: MoUs signed, local Kenesh deputies monitored and rated.	Dialogue between citizens and local self-governance institutions is developed	LSG institutions effectively incorporate public input and participation in their decision-making processes
Compile/distribute news digests; subscribe to regional/national newspapers, electronic legal database, internet	Regular access to resources, periodicals and legal materials	Better informed project office visitors, project participants, NGO and LAG members	Access to alternative and independent sources of information on key development and policy issues

IV. EVALUATION FINDINGS

i. Relevance

Baseline situation

Key data of JDN's baseline survey, which considered responses of 3,741 residents, provides evidence that exchange and cooperation between Kenesh deputies and the population was initially almost absent in the local areas covered by the project¹⁴.

The survey was conducted among visitors of the regional project offices' resource centres and by project staff visiting citizens at their homes. Survey questions were jointly formulated by the coordination and the regional offices during the Training of Trainers session and via electronic communication. Five core questions were consistently applied by all offices (see above list of key findings), to which locally relevant questions could optionally be added¹⁵. Answers to optional questions aiming to identify pressing local issues also revealed that the specific responsibilities of local Keneshes were widely unknown, as citizens chose topics over which LSG has no authority (among those most frequently mentioned: teacher salaries, law enforcement and corruption).

Baseline Survey (December 2009 – January 2010): Key Findings

- ▲ 91.5% were not satisfied with the performance of their local Kenesh (village council).
- ▲ 76.7% were unaware of activities in which their local Kenesh deputy was involved.
- ▲ 86.0 % had never participated in meetings with their local Kenesh deputy.
- ▲ 89.1% claimed their local Kenesh deputy had never reported his/her activities to the citizens.
- ▲ 95.1% had never requested support from their local Kenesh deputy.

With most of the core questions indicating tasks and obligations of local Kenesh deputies, the baseline survey actually represented the project's first awareness-raising effort among the local population, while at the same time confirming the relevance of measures supporting citizens' capacity building, enabling participatory action and disseminating policy and development information.

The project response

Survey findings were taken into consideration as foreseen¹⁶ for the planning of the training of LAGs, the advocacy campaigns and the development of information material for the wider public: Survey results did not constitute a direct input to the development of the content of training materials, but led to adjustments in the training curriculum¹⁷. Regional project directors were encouraged to assign priorities in accordance with the specific local needs expressed by the survey results, when exploiting the resulting pool of nine training modules made available by the coordination office.

¹⁴ Neither the mid-term nor the final narrative report provided baseline survey data. During the field visit evaluators were able to obtain aggregated (country-wide) information only.

¹⁵ Two regional offices made additions (Chayek/Naryn and Karakol).

¹⁶ Project Document UDF-KYR-08-257, October 2009

¹⁷ C.f. section on effectiveness for further details.

Following their participation in the Training of Trainers, regional project directors for the subsequent conduct of the training of future LAG members had a comprehensive set of materials at their disposal, which according to JDN's Executive Director was previously not available in such depth in Kyrgyzstan. Survey findings were also the subject of discussions with local Kenesh deputies held in the context of the advocacy campaigns' round tables/discussion clubs, mainly with the objective to agree on ways to improve the relationship between local community members and their Kenesh deputies and to raise awareness about citizen's interest and right to participate in the decision-making process.

Each of the ten project offices then also launched an information campaign addressing the wider public. Taking into account the citizens' low levels of awareness about activities and duties of local Kenesh deputies reported by the baseline survey, this included most importantly the production and dissemination of two information leaflets, which in most cases were developed in close collaboration between the regional project directors and the local Keneshes. The first leaflet contained detailed descriptions of the budget structure and services to be provided by the local Kenesh and the second leaflet contained an overview of the responsibilities and full contact details of individuals at each local Kenesh.

The action plan of the MoU signed between LAG and local Kenesh of Karakol is consistent with many of the key findings of the baseline survey. It foresees, among others, the joint identification of local issues and solutions; the timely provision of information by the city Kenesh about regional normative acts it adopted and about decisions made by its regular and ad hoc committees; advance communication by the city Kenesh of time and agenda of its own and of its committee meetings; provision of support to the implementation of the project through LAG member and Kenesh deputy participation in Round Tables and the conduct of public meetings. In addition, the joint drafting of recommendations for the Karakol City Kenesh Development Strategy was agreed.

ii. Effectiveness

The project produced the outputs foreseen in the Project Document. The following focuses on information not covered by the project holder's reporting and/or where evaluators established that outputs surpassed the initial plan, providing their assessment from a quantitative and/or qualitative point of view.

Establishment of Local Action Groups

Altogether, 25 LAGs with a membership of about 185 persons were established throughout the lifetime of the project. The 25% higher actual than intended turnout can be explained with the fact that LAGs in some cases were established to address an individual issue rather than on the basis of a territorial definition. The LAG membership range varied between 4 and 18 (planned: 5 to 15), with the largest groups being Naryn (18), Kyzyl-Adyr (18), Kyzylkiya (16), Tashkumyr (16) and Nookat (14)¹⁸.

¹⁸ Source: JDN. These figures were obtained during the field visit and include all local areas covered by the project with the exception of Chaek, for which specific LAG data was unavailable.

Typical LAG members included engaged citizens, business representatives, teachers, students, retired persons, NGO representatives and others. Local Kenesh deputies have been noted among the membership of 11 Local Action Groups¹⁹.

Training Activities

In quantitative terms, the number of training beneficiaries clearly exceeded the original plan: project statistics reveal that training was also open to individuals not directly involved but interested in the mission of LAGs (made available to altogether 1,705 of such beneficiaries). In qualitative terms it has been noted that the project holder expanded the project's target group by offering local Kenesh deputies training on their roles and responsibilities: during discussion club meetings many local Kenesh deputies had openly admitted to never having read the legislation governing their work (a total of 151 local Kenesh deputies were trained on this subject).

A LAG member who teaches Law students in Karakol, introduced the survey results and information materials produced by the project into the curriculum of the courses she holds at the Technical College. She highlighted the importance of the project's campaign material and the value they add to the training of her students in the context of their research about the relationship between citizens' fundamental/social rights and local self governance.

More topics were added to the initially planned four subjects²⁰ of the project's training curriculum, partially in direct response to the needs identified by the baseline survey and partially to complement the contents of the initially planned advocacy training offer. These included most notably two training series on the above mentioned subject of roles and responsibilities of local Kenesh deputies, which were held for LAGs (including citizens interested in the work of LAGs) and separately for local Kenesh deputies. The training module for local Kenesh deputies focused on the law on local self government, about which a considerable number of village council members were unaware (see above).

Other additional training modules, which contributed to the 164 training sessions JDN regional offices delivered within the frame of the project, covered the following topics:

- Fundraising for the implementation of advocacy campaigns;
- Development and submission of petitions to competent authorities;
- Budget hearings (monitoring budget execution by the local Kenesh).

Advocacy Campaigns

Throughout the project JDN facilitated a wide range of advocacy campaigns to address numerous local issues identified during the LAG formation process. Aiming to resolve pressing problems, discussion clubs were used as the main vehicle in advocacy campaigns, thus bringing engaged citizens together with local stakeholders. Among the typical discussion club participants were interested local citizens, LAG members, NGOs, local Kenesh deputies and other relevant officials.

¹⁹ In most cases one individual member per LAG, in other cases between approx. 20% and 30% of a LAG's total membership.

²⁰ As per Project Document, these were: (a) local issues definition, (b) advocacy planning, (c) supporter recruitment methods and (d) public participation and oversight mechanisms.

While it was impossible to exactly establish how many of such campaigns were carried out, the below overview²¹ of round tables/discussion clubs held in each of the supported regions leaves little doubt that the planned minimum of twenty campaigns was exceeded.

JDN Regional Office	Discussion Clubs held	Participants
Atbashy	87	430
Belovodskoe	48	320
Chaek	40	338
Karakol	40	935
Kochkor-Ata	27	92
Kyzyl-Adyr	100	591
Kyzyl-Kiya	30	242
Naryn	44	364
Nookat	60	227
Tash-Kumyr	40	164
<i>Total</i>	<i>516</i>	<i>3703</i>

Discussion clubs were held both at JDN regional office premises and in on the spot “mobile” discussion clubs. The latter gave citizens the opportunity to provide evidence of an issue, e.g. in the city of Karakol mobile discussion club considerations included: household equipment damaged by electricity supply cuts and variations; a conservation issue prompted by sale of parkland and the subsequent cutting of trees; and a bridge urgently requiring repair.

Meetings with LAGs and JDN's regional offices revealed that a variety of other advocacy campaign tools were exploited to promote the issues pursued by the LAGs:

In *Karakol* cooperation with the media led to the organisation of four press conferences, with the participation of the deputy head of the city Kenesh. Topics included the results of the baseline survey and a number of local issues including the significant increase of city bus fares. Participation in two radio programmes provided the opportunity to explain to citizens what they can expect from the local Kenesh and how they can follow and monitor the activities of individual local Kenesh deputies.

A number of issues identified by the youth is being taken care of by a LAG in *Naryn*. In order to confront *Naryn's* local Kenesh deputies and its mayor with pressing waste management issues the LAG's youth most remarkably produced a video and organised a clean city action day ('subotnik') on 29 May 2010, during which the local population and some city officials were collecting waste and swept the streets.

Access to information

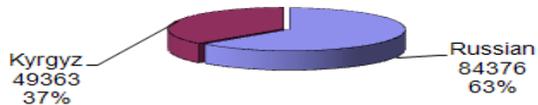
According to JDN's records, a total of 77,369 visitors made use of the information sources offered by its ten regional project offices, which included daily news digests

21 Source: JDN

prepared by project staff, ten local and national newspapers, the electronic legal database TOKTOM and the Internet. Among the most frequent service requests were the news digest (39,789), access to the office's library/newspapers (25,628) and other enquiries (7,806).

**Digest Distribution
in Russian and Kyrgyz languages**

2009 - 2011



Enquiries made by citizens about JDN's, information resources: Atbashi office log book

Project staff also maintained a log book of persons visiting the office to make use of its information services. In the summary of all regional offices below²² most user groups display a fairly balanced representation. The disproportionate share of the 'specialists and office workers' category was explained to be due to the interest in accessing the legal database TOKTOM.

Media representatives	1.1%
Non-governmental organizations	4.5%
Business community	6.2%
Civil servants	7.7%
Retired persons	8.4%
College students	8.7%
High school students	9.2%
Unemployed	13.1%
Specialists and office workers	30.3%

iii. Efficiency

Considering the project's outcome, its delivery involved modest levels of expenditure. Equipment expenses were solely committed for the purchase of thirteen sets of laptop computers and digital cameras for the coordination office and each of the regional project offices. Other office equipment was not budgeted for, as JDN managed to cut costs using its existing infrastructure previously acquired with NDI funding.

Costs associated with the (i) training of end-beneficiaries (i.e. delivery of nine modules in total) and (ii) the facilitation of a variety of meetings (e.g. round tables and discussion clubs) were actually reflected to a large extent as salary costs in the project budget

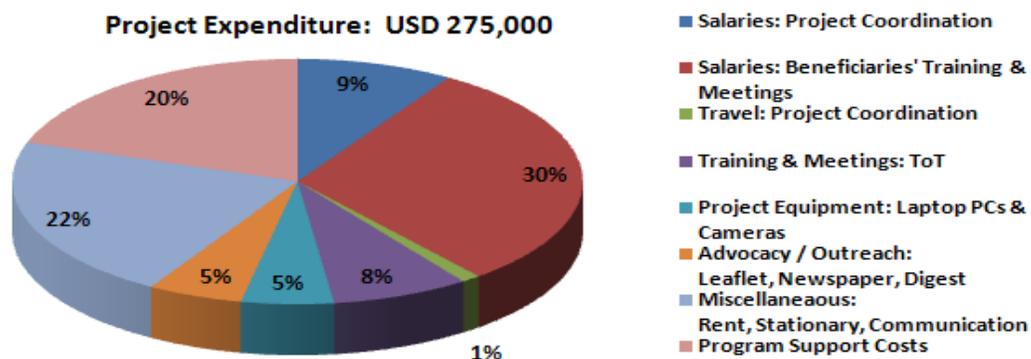
²² Source: JDN

(30%). With these constituting the principal activities of JDN's field staff (regional directors and assistants), the project's main expenditure (38% of the budget) was used for training and facilitation, including ToT. Breaking this amount (USD 104,395) over the total number of training beneficiaries (185 LAG members, 151 local Kenesh deputies and 1,705 citizens) provides an estimated average cost of USD 51 per trainee.

The methodology and supporting materials for six training modules were developed by, and at the expense of, JDN's founding member NDI; the remaining three were developed at very reasonable costs covered by the project's budget resources (e.g. an amount of USD 300 was spent for external expertise to develop the module on civil monitoring and control). Advocacy and outreach expenses covering campaign leaflets, newspaper subscriptions and news digest production correspond to an expenditure ratio of 5%.

JDN's staff costs related to inputs for project coordination and M&E represent 9% of project expenditure. This is acceptable, given that JDN oversaw and guided implementation activities of ten regional project offices throughout the duration of the project.

No diversion from the monitoring and reporting mechanism outlined in the Project Document, which required field offices to submit weekly narrative and statistical reports, was found. Evaluators also found the obligation to maintain visitor logs fulfilled (see above under effectiveness), which included demographic information. The coordination office undertook monthly reviews of these inputs and carried out occasional field visits to monitor progress (e.g. both the Executive Director and the project coordinator participated in 7 round tables).



No potential for overlap or duplication with similar activities was found within the targeted or neighbouring communities. Instead, evaluators heard about citizens from neighbouring villages who requested the project to extend its assistance to them (e.g. in Kyzyl-Adyr, Talass oblast). By the end of the project, citizens in Naryn were prompted by an issue-based LAG's success to establish their own Local Action Group, which aims for an improvement of the quality of public services.

iv. Impact

Fifteen months after the completion of the baseline survey all regional project offices conducted a second survey. Evaluators detected a number of factors that may have affected the extent to which survey results should be considered sufficiently reliable to determine the project's impact.

Outcome Survey (March 2011): Key Findings

- ▲ 29.5% were satisfied with the performance of their local Kenesh (baseline: 9.5%).
- ▲ 45.0% were aware of the activities in which their local Kenesh deputy was involved (baseline: 23.3%).
- ▲ 62.0 % had participated in meetings with their local Kenesh deputy (baseline: 14.0%).
- ▲ 66.0% confirmed their local Kenesh deputy reports activities to his/her citizens (baseline: 10.9%).
- ▲ 12.8% requested support from their local Kenesh deputy (baseline: 4.9%).

JDN admittedly provided no methodological guidance to surveyors. Only four of the project's ten regional offices had previously carried out survey interviews and analysis during the NDI-supported period. As a consequence, when asked, project staff assumed but was unable to confirm whether the population interviewed during both survey rounds had been identical. As stated before (see above under relevance) interviews were conducted among regional office facility users and households visited by project staff. While the baseline survey considered responses of 3,741 persons (of which 54% male, 46% female), the outcome survey obtained access to 4,189 persons (of which 47% male, 53% female). No distinction was made as to whether interviewees belonged to the project's direct beneficiary group of trainees or not.

Local service provision in Tup improved

Citizens complained to Nikolai Tagyrov, chairman of the LAG in Tup, about the rough attitude of the staff of the local agency that issues passports. They reportedly obtained no guidance with the application process and were asked to pay bribes to obtain application forms. The LAG's chairman advised the head of the agency that he was going to monitor its performance, but no changes occurred. The LAG continued its civic monitoring effort, filing two petitions (November 2010 and February 2011) to the regional authority's head of the department of registration. As a result, the agency's head of the rayon passport and visa service has been replaced. Household equipment damage caused by voltage variations and sudden interruptions of electricity supply were another issue frequently experienced by the local population. The issue was brought up by a round table, which the LAG of Tup organised in cooperation with four other neighboring rayons. Both a local Kenesh deputy and a representative of the state electricity provider attended. As a consequence, the state electricity company has introduced a client management position and will open a phone hotline for citizens. Future electricity bills will include the hotline's contacts details and indicate the maximum time periods for eligible damage compensation claims. In addition, a court ruling initiated by the LAG's complaint found the existing electricity connection not compliant with current technical standards and ordered the construction of a new electricity transmission line.

There is no doubt that the above survey results are representative enough to confirm that awareness levels among the local population have significantly increased in the local areas targeted by the project. However, it is not possible to determine the extent to which the project's capacity building activities have contributed to this improvement, as the survey made no distinction between the general population and the actual beneficiaries of the project's LAG formation and training activities.

Interesting examples of indirect effects of the baseline survey were reported to evaluators in the city of Karakol. According to the regional project director these were prompted by the publication of the survey results in press conferences and a local newspaper (July 2010):

- Public diaries for each local Kenesh deputy were introduced by the city council. All citizens can access these diaries to inform themselves about the most recent and current activities of their local Kenesh deputies.
- A number of formerly low-profile local Kenesh deputies displayed a significant increase in activity to address areas of previous concern, which included the provision of playgrounds for children, the purchase of school equipment and of a yurt for public events, the repair of roads, and the installation of public toilets.

On the basis of success stories relating to LAGs across Kyrgyzstan that have served as a well-functioning platform to address previously identified concrete local issues, evaluators assume the project had positive impacts. As shown in the examples below, the project brought change to local communities, thanks to the introduction of a new mode of cooperation between local Kenesh deputies, other relevant stakeholders and the local population – a finding which is fully consistent with the population's improved awareness levels reported in the outcome survey.

Stable electricity tariffs in Naryn secured

According to Cholpon Omurbay Kyzy, former JDN regional project director, two significant increases of to the electricity tariff (3 soms were added in total to the previous tariff of 0.77 som per person/kwH) prompted the formation of the first and most influential issue-based LAG in Naryn. Citizens were dissatisfied with local authorities, which did not oppose the change, although the region's remote location (mountainous area) justified a reduced tariff. Therefore LAG members collected signatures of 5,000 citizens, sent a petition to the president and invited regional and central government representatives to attend public meetings between January and April 2010 (*see images below*). Although LAG members throughout the campaign found themselves exposed to phone threats, prosecution and targeted electricity supply cuts, they successfully mobilised the local population's participation in public meetings with officials, which ultimately led to a reduction in price levels previously charged in 2010. A second issue-based LAG in Naryn rayon composed of three neighboring villages aimed to find out why an important number of families below the poverty line had lost state benefits they previously had been granted.



Public meetings in Naryn between January and April 2010

Waste management issues in Koksai solved

The LAG, supported by the project's regional director, Dilara Moldogazieva (Kyzyl-Adyr), identified waste management as an issue requiring urgent attention, as the site in use was close to the village's water management facility and kindergarten. Following a meeting with local Kenesh deputies the local government cleared the area within two months and leased it to a private person for farmland cultivation. However, garbage started to fill up a river bank adjacent to the newly designated waste disposal area outside the village (see *below left image*). Following six months of discussion clubs and round table meetings between LAG members, Kenesh deputies and other stakeholders, a definitive location was officially sanctioned through a spatial planning decision of the competent local authority. In addition, the LAG, in cooperation with a local NGO, successfully applied for support from a Dutch organization for cooperation with developing countries (PSO). Funds were used to plant trees along the river bank, once it had been cleared of garbage by LAG members and public service workers. According to Dilara Moldogazieva, the final site allocation as well as the protection and management of the river bank by the agency for environmental protection would have not happened without the continuous efforts of the members of the LAG.



Left: previous waste management issues in Koksai. Right: first revenue-based salaries paid out thanks to a successful local economic initiative of local farmers in Akmus.

Local economic development in Akmus launched

Musaeva Kalicha, former JDN regional director in Atbashi, reports with pride how members of the LAG in Akmus took the initiative to turn their skills and local traditions into sustainable income. Among the LAG members were small-scale farmers, who mainly produced milk. At round table meetings they presented local Kenesh deputies with their idea of running a milk processing facility to jointly sell a variety of dairy products. The LSG agreed to provide a building comprising two separate rooms and the LAG successfully applied for external funding (from the Kyrgyzstan-New Zealand Rural Trust Fund) for milk processing equipment. Locally sold products include ayran, butter, kurut and sour cream. The new facility is self-sustaining: previously a volunteer force, six women are now being paid a salary (*see above right image*). Given this success, parts of the proceeds are continuously put aside for future investment in an enlarged facility

v. Sustainability

Both the results of the outcome survey and the achievements of LAGs provide evidence that the project intervention helped numerous citizens to realize that they have the possibility to act upon or get involved in local decision making processes. During their interviews with LAG members and JDN project staff evaluators witnessed that the impact of this involvement has encouraged continued mobilization and generation of new ideas for the future, in particular in areas affecting the quality of life of local communities (e.g. local services, local infrastructure and local economic development). Furthermore, the project's effects have prompted citizens from neighboring communities not covered by UNDEF support to voice their expectations.

So far the project has initiated a process that is likely to be sustained where functioning cooperation mechanisms between citizens and local Keneshes are now in place, as they provide the necessary enabling environment for continued learning and sharing among all members of the community, including those not yet familiar with participatory processes. The likelihood of an autonomous expansion of this capacity-building process to other local areas not covered by the project, though, is unlikely, as learning and knowledge exchange between neighbouring communities will require additional time and resources for which no management or coordination and financing instruments are in place.

Since the LAGs of this project followed different approaches and objectives, it is assumed that it will be of little relevance whether all of them will continue to exist. They were formed for different reasons: some of them were launched spontaneously to solve a particular issue, while others had been established to implement long-term action plans on a rather institutionalized basis (e.g. registration as NGO). First and foremost, it is the empowered citizen on which continued participation in local governance will depend. However, the fact that LAGs in some cases (either independently or in association with NGOs) have been able to raise funds is a good sign for sustainability.

vi. UNDEF Value Added

Project staff in most cases proudly made use of UNDEF's full organizational name²³ to clarify the funding of project activities and materials. According to JDN the UNDEF grant support often facilitated the cooperation with local Kenesh deputies and local authorities (e.g. during the negotiations of Memoranda of Understanding), who preferred a neutral UN agency over previous support by NDI, which was often perceived as a 'political movement'.

V. CONCLUSIONS

i. JDN's implementation approach left each of its ten regional offices with the autonomy required to **organize the project's modular training and meeting program in accordance with specific local needs, which ensured relevance and impact** for the population living in the cities and villages supported by the project. In addition, access to alternative information sources and the availability of field staff for consultation, in particular to assist with the organization of joint activities and the formulation of action plans, petitions and complaints, were particularly appreciated by LAG members.

ii. Based on the findings related to effectiveness, the project's training program achieved the objective to provide local communities with the capacities and skills required to **mobilize citizens and grass-roots civil society groups in a sustained and effective manner**. The fact that JDN expanded its training offer to local Kenesh deputies was beneficial to the joint planning and progress of effective actions undertaken as part of the project's advocacy campaigns.

iii. The documented outputs lead evaluators to the conclusion that the collaboration between JDN's coordination office in Bishkek and the ten regional project directors locally implementing the project functioned well. As reported, **actual outputs in most cases exceeded the initial plan**. The fact that achievements and documentary evidence were not fully relayed by the project's reporting to UNDEF is most likely due to scarce resources in JDN's coordination office and its very limited English language capacity.

iv. Due to the unavailability of survey data measuring the effect of the project's LAG formation and training activities on its actual beneficiaries, evaluators collected numerous testimonials to document the impact of LAG members' cooperation with local Kenesh deputies and other stakeholders. These success stories provide

23 The actual use of UNDEF's logo and explanation of its mission was rarely observed.

evidence that a ***new form of dialogue between citizens and representatives of local self-governance and other key institutions has been developed***, and that public input and participation now is effectively considered in decision-making processes relevant to local communities.

v. The above conclusions demonstrate that citizens have become pro-active and have taken action to improve the quality of life of their local communities. *This development evaluators **consider irreversible, in particular as LAG members in various cases have continued to take initiative or have made new plans beyond the end of the UNDEF-supported project period.*** However, evaluators noted in some other cases an absence of a clear separation between proper LAG initiative and technical assistance provided by regional JDN offices. This points to a lack of strategic orientation within JDN and potentially undermines the sustainability of these LAGs, as they already display signs of resignation over the loss of supporting field staff and reduced access to alternative information and consultation.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

To strengthen the outcome and similar projects in the future, evaluators recommend to project holders and UNDEF:

i. With regards to the unavailability of survey data measuring the effect of the project and for baseline (and in particular outcome) surveys to become useful for measuring impact of UNDEF-funded interventions ***it is essential that interviews are conducted with the direct beneficiaries of the project's activities.*** We therefore suggest that JDN organises additional surveys. These should be conducted by region and separately among former (a) LAG members, (b) training beneficiaries and (c) users of the project offices' facilities, in order to obtain precise information about remaining and new needs. Survey results will enable JDN to identify new project ideas and will support the organisation in developing more detailed strategic objectives. This in turn may attract new support from donors and implementing partners, which the organization will need to take LAGs to the next level (e.g. from learning to knowledge sharing; from local democracy initiative to local economic development).

ii. Concerning our observation that there was sometimes no clear separation between LAG initiative and JDN technical assistance activity we recommend that ***JDN in close collaboration with its former field staff revisits and further develops its mission statement.*** This will require pooling of experience and an exchange of lessons learned from the present project, for JDN and its regional branches to establish themselves as a credible and continued partner for the future needs of

LAGs. JDN sees its mission in contributing to the establishment of an enabling environment for democracy at grassroots level, but we have not found any evidence of the project's embedding into JDN's long-term strategy. The project's local assistance offer through regional offices was entirely dependent on UNDEF funding and there is no concept on how to ensure or justify JDN's local presence in the future.

iii. Based on the above we recommend to **UNDEF to become more explicit vis-à-vis applicants about the benefits of generating and using comparative survey data** (baseline vs. outcome). We suggest UNDEF consider giving preference to applications that include solid survey approaches.

iv. We also believe that the **strategic aspect of project applications requires project promoters to clarify their “programmatically aspirations”**, i.e. applicants should be encouraged to explain to UNDEF the relationship between their project application and their organization's long-term approach in supporting the project's beneficiaries.

VII. ANNEXES

Annex 1: Evaluation questions

DAC criterion	Evaluation Question	Related sub-questions
Relevance	To what extent was the project, as designed and implemented, suited to context and needs at the beneficiary, local, and national levels?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⤴ Were the objectives of the project in line with the needs and priorities for democratic development, given the context? ⤴ Should another project strategy have been preferred rather than the one implemented to better reflect those needs, priorities, and context? Why? <p>Were risks appropriately identified by the projects? How appropriate are/were the strategies developed to deal with identified risks? Was the project overly risk-averse?</p>
Effectiveness	To what extent was the project, as implemented, able to achieve objectives and goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⤴ To what extent have the project's objectives been reached? ⤴ To what extent was the project implemented as envisaged by the project document? If not, why not? ⤴ Were the project activities adequate to make progress towards the project objectives? <p>What has the project achieved? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this?</p>
Efficiency	To what extent was there a reasonable relationship between resources expended and project impacts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⤴ Was there a reasonable relationship between project inputs and project outputs? ⤴ Did institutional arrangements promote cost-effectiveness and accountability? <p>Was the budget designed, and then implemented, in a way that enabled the project to meet its objectives?</p>
Impact	To what extent has the project put in place processes and procedures supporting the role of civil society in contributing to democratization, or to direct promotion of democracy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⤴ To what extent has/have the realization of the project objective(s) and project outcomes had an impact on the specific problem the project aimed to address? ⤴ Have the targeted beneficiaries experienced tangible impacts? Which were positive; which were negative? ⤴ To what extent has the project caused changes and effects, positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen, on democratization? <p>Is the project likely to have a catalytic effect? How? Why?</p>
Sustainability	To what extent has the project, as designed and implemented, created what is likely to be a continuing impetus towards democratic development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⤴ To what extent has the project established processes and systems that are likely to support continued impact? <p>Are the involved parties willing and able to continue the project activities on their own (where applicable)?</p>
UNDEF value-added	To what extent was UNDEF able to take advantage of its unique position and comparative advantage to achieve results that could not have been achieved had support come from other donors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⤴ What was UNDEF able to accomplish, through the project, that could not as well have been achieved by alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc). ⤴ Did project design and implementing modalities exploit UNDEF's comparative advantage in the form of an explicit mandate to focus on democratization issues?

Annex 2: Documents reviewed

UNDEF

- ⤴ Final Narrative Report
- ⤴ Mid-Term/Annual Progress Report
- ⤴ Project Document
- ⤴ 2 Milestone Verification Reports

JDN

- ⤴ Baseline and outcome survey reports and results
- ⤴ Project statistics
- ⤴ ToT material (civic monitoring and control)
- ⤴ Regional Project Offices' results presentations
- ⤴ Memoranda of Understanding
- ⤴ Leaflets budget structure and services to be provided by the local Kenesh
- ⤴ Leaflets: responsibilities and full contact details of individuals at local Kenesh
- ⤴ LAG flyer inviting to participate in the 'clean city day' (Naryn)
- ⤴ Short movie produced by LAG on waste management issues (Naryn)
- ⤴ Photographs of project activities
- ⤴ Print Media Coverage
- ⤴ Press releases

Other sources

- ⤴ Kyrgyzstan 2025 - strategies and development scenarios, International Institute for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (2005)
- ⤴ Local Self Government in Kyrgyzstan – myth or reality? Nuripa Mukanova, NISPAcee annual conference, Bratislava (2008)
- ⤴ Representatives of State Agencies share their opinion on the current state of local governance and its role in conflict prevention, Institute for Public Policy, Bishkek (2012)
- ⤴ Road Map for Local Self-Government in the Kyrgyz Republic, European Commission (Tacis programme)

National Legislative acts, policies

- ⤴ Country Development Strategy (CDS) 2007-2010 of the Kyrgyz government
- ⤴ Country Development Strategy (CDS) 2009-2011 of the Kyrgyz government
- ⤴ Law on Local Self Government and Local State Administration
- ⤴ National Strategy for the Decentralization of Public Management and LSG Development until 2010, presidential decree (2002)

International conventions

- ⤴ European Charter of Local Self-Government, Council of Europe (1985)

Annex 3: Persons interviewed

Jarandyk Demilge Network (JDN) staff members (Bishkek, February 27th and March 2nd, 2012)

- ✧ Madjun Umar, Executive Director
- ✧ Kuvat Kerez, Administrative Assistant

Former JDN staff members and project beneficiaries (Karakol, February 28th, 2012)

- ✧ Asanbaeva Baktegul, former Regional Project Director
- ✧ Hurova Galija, former Regional Project Office Assistant
- ✧ Alymova Aidai, NGO Ulukman
- ✧ Tagyrov Nikolai, NGO Adamzak Den Soluk
- ✧ Sabitova Guliya, Teacher
- ✧ Kyzaeva Gulzat, House of Journalists
- ✧ Imanbaev Askar, Chairman of Karakol City Kenesh

Former JDN staff members and project beneficiaries (Naryn, February 29th, 2012)

- ✧ Omurbay Kyzy Cholpon, former regional project director
- ✧ Okosheva Anarkul, NGO Tynchtyk
- ✧ Sayakbayova Svieta, NGO Tendem
- ✧ Jangasyva Begay, NGO Women Congress
- ✧ Jamanova Asylkul, NGO Lustracie
- ✧ Ibraeva Nurjamal, NGO Dubolu Demilge
- ✧ Kerembayev Toktobek, NGO
- ✧ Bokoyeva, Erkengul, NGO Naryn KG
- ✧ Orunbayeva Turgan, NGO Bakubat
- ✧ Toktosun Kyzy Aidai, Student
- ✧ Bokachyev Ulanbek, Deputy of Village Kenesh
- ✧ Kokotayev A. Sh., Chairman of Naryn City Kenesh
- ✧ Suranov A. C., First Vice-Mayor of the City of Naryn
- ✧ Balbayev M., Deputy of Naryn City Kenesh
- ✧ Baykubatov B., Deputy of Naryn City Kenesh
- ✧ Duyshenaliv A., Deputy of Naryn City Kenesh

Former JDN staff members (Bishkek, March 1st, 2012)

- ✧ Janara Ruskulova, former regional project director (Tashkumyr, Jalal-Abad region)
- ✧ Kalicha Musaeva, former regional project director (Atbashi, Naryn region)
- ✧ Moldogazieva Dilara, former regional project director (Kyzyl-Adyr, Talass region)

Annex 4: Acronyms

CDS	Country Development Strategy
JDN	Jarandyk Demilge Network
LAG	Local Action Group
LSG	Local Self-Government
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDI	National Democratic Institute for International Affairs
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
PSO	Personnel Cooperation in Developing Countries (Personele Samenwerking in Ontwikkelingslanden)
TOKTOM	Online database providing access to the legislation of Kyrgyzstan and the CIS countries
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
USD	United States Dollar