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KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

SNAPSHOT

Supported by USAID, civil society organizations push forward a concept to reform a key government institution.



Photo: USAID/OTI

In October and November 2012, some 10,000 citizens of different ethnicities, genders, and age groups supported the civic initiative for reform.

“NGOs must be involved in the reform and continue cooperating with the working group on the final version of the reform concept.”

-- Jantoro Satybaldiev,
Prime Minister of the
Kyrgyz Republic

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Civic Actions Lead to State Reform

October 2013 - For more than three years, civil society organizations (CSOs) in the Kyrgyz Republic have been working to bring about critical reforms within the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). Their persistence paid off when, in early 2013, the MIA began considering a number of key reform measures.

In mid-2011, an opinion poll by the International Republican Institute revealed that 63% of respondents perceived the MIA as being corrupt, politicized, repressive, and ineffective. Shortly after the release of this poll, Transitional President Roza Otunbaeva established an interdepartmental committee, including representatives from CSOs, to demonstrate its commitment to government reform. This committee was tasked with drafting a MIA reform policy and an implementation plan.

Civil society members felt excluded from these discussions. Not willing to be sidelined, civil society representatives created the Civil Alliance for Reforms and Results to develop an alternative reform concept. Two CSOs led the initiative: Liberal Youth Alliance (LYA) and International Center “Interbilim.”

USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) supported the creation of the Alliance, LYA and Interbilim’s efforts to finalize key components of the alternative reform concept, and the push to collect 10,000 endorsement signatures from citizens throughout the country prior to the official review of reforms in late 2012. Following a series of community meetings and a nationwide broadcast of key public service announcements, the Alliance formally submitted an alternative MIA reform concept along with the 10,000 signatures to the President, the Prime-Minister, and the Parliament Speaker.

On February 13, 2013, the Kyrgyz Prime Minister, Jantoro Satybaldiyev, met with representatives of the Alliance and assured them that their recommendations would be considered, while also [praising the work that they’ve done so far](#). On March 18, the Alliance received an official letter from the MIA stating that several articles from their alternative reform concept were adopted into MIA’s own reform concept.

Maintaining their commitment to promoting further reforms within MIA and other ministries, members of the Alliance are now working with British Saferworld on a two-year project that encourages CSOs to participate in on-going discussions on security policies and police reform in Kyrgyzstan.

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