

# ICCO D&P Research Project

## NETWORKING RELATIONS OF ACT DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS IN KYRGYZSTAN WORKING AROUND DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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## Abbreviations Used in the Report

ABS – Access to Basic Services program priority (currently promoted in Kyrgyzstan by DCA)  
ACT – D - ACT Development Consortium of ICCO, DCA, CA and NA (formerly ECCA)  
ACSSC – Association of Civil Society Support Centres (initiated by Counterpart Consortium)  
ADB – Asian Development Bank  
CA – Christian Aid  
CAP – Central Asian Platform (on Lobbying the European Union supported by WCC and APRODEV)  
CAAW – Central Asian Alliance on Water (Network facilitated by Novib)  
CBO – Community Based Organisation  
CIB – Centre InterBilim  
CPC – Centre for Protection of Children  
CSO – Civil Society Organisation (used often interchangeably with 'NGO' term)  
DCA – Danish Church Aid  
DCCA – Development and Cooperation in Central Asia  
D&P – ICCO Democracy and Peacebuilding programme  
FEVAC – Ferghana Valley Consortium (supported by ICCO)  
HIPC - Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt initiative launched by the WB and IMF  
ICCO - InterChurch Organization for Development Cooperation (Netherlands)  
ICNL – International Center for Non-Profit Law (think tank supported by Counterpart Consortium)  
KR – Kyrgyz Republic  
LMD – Local Market Development (also the platform for LMD)  
NA – Norwegian Aid  
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation  
PDCC - Public Department on Capital Construction at Mayor's office of Bishkek (social infrastructure)  
RCE – Resource Centre for Elderly (Umut)  
SDC - Swiss Development and Cooperation  
SHG – Self Help Group  
TDPC - Territorial district public councils (on the municipal level)  
WB – World Bank  
WECF – Women in Europe for Common Future

## Terminology used in the report

- Network : “a network can be defined as a cooperative or formalised relationship between autonomous entities that are working toward a common goal, or whose individual interest are better served within a collective structure”<sup>1</sup>.
- Networking: “networking can be understood as an accumulation of, in principle, voluntary interactions that produce social contracts of an informal use. It is the voluntary interaction between two or more people, in which, all participants intent to gain something. Networking produces networks, networks are conditions to make further networking possible”<sup>2</sup>.
- Programmatic approach ICCO Democratisation & Peace Building program intends to adopt is an “integrated set of activities designed to achieve a related set of outcomes in a relatively comprehensive way. A program is a way of engaging in development cooperation based on the principle of coordinated support for a locally owned program of development”. (CIDA definition)

<sup>1</sup> Fulco van Deventer 2003: “understanding networks”, I/C Consult.

<sup>2</sup> Fulco van Deventer 2006: “Understanding Networking”, I/C Consult.

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Background of work.**

ICCO has been working in Central Asia and Kyrgyzstan since 1994 coordinating its activities with other international Agencies – DCA, CA and NA in the framework of ECCA/ACT-Development Consortium (further ACT-D). ICCO and DCA are operating in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, whereas CA is working primarily in Tajikistan. Two themes represent the main ICCO focus in the region: Fair Economic Development (FED), micro finance and local market development, and Democratisation & Peace Building (D&P). Access to basic services (ABS) for vulnerable groups is currently being implemented within ACT-D by DCA.

In line with its emerging programmatic way of working, ICCO intends to develop and implement a focused and coherent Democratisation & Peace Building program in Kyrgyzstan complementary to the other programs of ACT-D together with its partners. It is important to achieve local ownership and coordinated support within the program.

This survey of the networking relations of the ACT-D partners working around democratization and human rights (further ‘networking survey’) along with context analysis has been conducted as a first step towards program development. The main purpose is to provide ICCO program staff with information and insights, allowing local partner organizations to participate and contribute to joint development of a three-year D&P program with.

ICCO believes that existing networks of partner organisations will form an important basis for cooperation and it is promoting networking principles in the current ECCA/ACT-D three year programme currently being the main framework for ACT-D agencies in the region. By improving the networking capacities of Central Asian civil society actors, working with marginalized groups to expand political space, and improving their inter-sectoral cooperation and abilities to work with authorities, the programme therefore will seek to bring in more networking opportunities and tackle weak networking NGO capacities and limited participation of CSOs in decision-making processes.

### **1.2. Structure of the report**

The report is structured in such a way that it

- gives background, goals and an overview of the methodology for the survey,
- outlines the networking context and trends in Kyrgyzstan to understand in what environment NGOs operate, and
- provides primary findings on the networking of ACT-D partners surveyed.

The Annexes with necessary contact and detailed information supplementing the findings concludes the report.

## 2. Survey Goals, Scope and Methodology

### 2.1 Survey goals.

Under programmatic approach the D&P seeks to design a comprehensive programme based on the principle of coordinated support for a locally owned development engagement.

In order to be effective, partner organisations working around democratisation & human rights in Kyrgyzstan act together with other institutions. Some organisations have stronger links or a wider network than others. The networking survey has therefore been carried out to explore what networking and social relations these organisations have – how, with whom and around what subjects they network within the scope of their missions. Their networks including all kinds of institutions are not limited to the NGO or Civil Society sector.

Thus, *the goals* for the survey were set as follows:

- Identify and explore existing formal and informal networking relationships that partner NGOs maintain both with other NGOs and with other institutions.
- Identify the indirect relations and further explore the ones that are significant for the ACT-D partners (networking priorities of partners).
- Get better insight as to what subjects the CA partners network around.

*The survey therefore attempted to address the following issues:*

- Identify formal and informal network relations of the NGO as entity and of the key persons within the organisations (listing partner structures and key individuals, with which NGOs or their leaders are in contact, including stakeholders- beneficiaries and other parties).
- Typology of the network relation (kind of interest both partners have in networking with each other, what the network is about, the frequency and closeness of contacts, level of activity, geographical level, who initiated the relation, what information is exchanged)
- How many and what people within the partner NGOs "own" the networking relations and in what ways they are involved in informational exchange, participation in each others' activities (strength of institutional links, political affiliations, composition of the networks).

### 2.2. Scope of the survey.

Within its program entitled "Democratisation in Central Asia" ICCO has established and maintained a long term relationship with partner NGOs primarily targeting poverty reduction in rural communities, work with settlers-migrants and elderly people, applying the self-help group method, also some NGOs involved in advocacy and community mobilization. Over the years the self-help groups have become more clustered in federations and local NGOs. ICCO partner NGOs have turned more into resource organisations with an increasing focus on these federations' development and advocacy with local state institutions on their behalf.

In total there are 8 partner organisations operating in Kyrgyzstan allocated to the D&P department (with which D&P has now a financial relationship). The survey however covers the following organisations ascribed as to the ICCO D&P and FED departments, so also currently working on DCA ABS: Arysh, CIB, CPC, DCCA, JR, Mehr Shavkat, RCE, Shoola.

To understand better the Networking Context in Kyrgyzstan where the NGOs are operating, the general trends and tendencies of the networking in civil society has been firstly touched upon by the survey, scrutinizing the interrelations between CSOs (including ICCO partner NGOs) within the sector, with government, and the general population in particular.

### **2.3. Methodology**

*Primary research methods* were predominant in the survey, as being the most effective for obtaining first-hand information for analysis. Overall ten open interviews with the leaders and key managers of 8 NGOs in three geographical areas (in Bishkek, Issyk-Kul and Southern region) were held. Leading representatives of branches were interviewed along with NGO leaders for getting relevant geographical networking insights and diversity. Links with partners were surveyed by means of open discussions with NGO managers without a specific agenda of revealing weaknesses in these relations. One brief expert interview was held for supplementing information on the networking context in Kyrgyzstan.

*Secondary research method as literature review* covering NGO and survey reports, websites etc. played a supportive and supplementary role to the primary methods and constituted about 20% of the survey. Special tribute in this respect is paid to donor programmatic documents, the research study 'Central Asia and Global Civil Society' carried out by Intrac in December 2006, the web resources of Social Research Centre at American University of Central Asia ([www.src.auca.kg](http://www.src.auca.kg)) and the Institute for Public Policy ([www.ipp.kg](http://www.ipp.kg))

## **3. Networking Context in Kyrgyzstan**

### **3.1. The external environment for CSO networking**

Kyrgyzstan, mountainous country in the heart of Central Asia with a population of 5 million is one of the least economically developed former Soviet Republics, with only \$718 GDP income per capita, \$34 average monthly pension and 11,5% of the population officially unemployed (WB, 2007). However, the period from the break-up of the Soviet Union showed some progress towards a market economy, political and civic liberation. But this was insufficient to overcome severe corruption, poverty and inefficiency in public governance, problems which finally exploded in the so called 'Tulip revolution' in March 2005 after blatantly falsified Parliamentary elections which deprived former President Akaev of presidential power.

**Major Civil Society trends in KR.** At the same time many researchers recognize the years from 1995 to 2005 as the most favorable for Kyrgyz NGO sector development characterized by the highest level of social and political activity, establishing democratic mechanisms and abundant donor funding and capacity building support programs. Such civil movements as 'Citizens against corruption', the Coalition 'for Democracy', Interbilim, etc. played a significant democratization role, so even several political parties emerged out of them. As Nur Omarov, professor of Kyrgyz-Slavic University stated, 8 000 public organizations of different kinds and directions were registered by 2005 giving the first President a reason to call Kyrgyzstan 'the country of NGOs'. Still, the 2007 report by ACSSC discovered that only about 500 out of them were actually viable and active (1 NGO per 10 000 people) revealing the low organizational potential and lack of sustainability in NGO sector. The year 2005 was marked by the political polarization of the civil society and radicalization of many NGOs and leaders. Since then, newly elected President Bakiev, promising to give more authority to Parliament and civil society, has been on the contrary strengthening presidential control over all branches of power, shrinking the space for opposition and putting pressure against activists engaged in human rights protection and democracy promotion. Still, the civil sector showed the consolidation signs having conducted the first Civil Forum and successfully counteracted the HIPC debt initiative which promised to become a new burden for the country.

In the opinion of Nogoybaeva E., Soros Kyrgyzstan program director (Soros, 2008), NGOs have now mainly gone through the period of self-identification starting to professionalize and get ranged by sectoral, representational forms and positioning towards government and within the sector. Since the communication between the authorities and the population is still weak, NGOs and their leaders voluntary or not are playing intermediary and often political roles as is usual for the countries in transit. However, according to her, NGOs are sometimes ineffective in advocating beneficiaries' rights, often misunderstood by people and authorities and not duly performing important NGO function – provision of the social services to the population (however not effectively conducted by the state or business either). The following main weaknesses of CSOs in Kyrgyzstan may also be marked – *paternalistic psychology from the Soviet past reflecting in constant appealing to the state and exceeding expectations, inertia in looking for resources beyond donor's projects (financial and program dependence on donors), weak management and communication with their stakeholders.*

Zhakupova C. (advocacy clinic 'Adilet') insists it is important to seriously reconsider the place, functions and role of NGOs in the society in complex with all interrelations, reviewing the following critical factors and challenges for NGO sector development and networking in Kyrgyzstan dividing CSO communication channels into:

1) Relations between CSOs (within the sector), 2) Relations between CSOs and the authorities and 3) Relations between CSOs and the population.

### **Relations between CSOs (within the sector)**

Relationships within civil society are complex and occur between various stakeholders at varying degrees of intensity and mutual dependency.

Though when necessary NGOs form temporary and even long standing formal and informal coalitions for achieving common goals (for example, when it is urgent to hold an advocacy campaign or appeal against oppressive legislative initiatives– HIPC, right of assembly campaign) the following main networking barriers in the sector are usually noted by experts:

- different organizational capacity levels of counterparts (expert potential, technical, financial resources etc.)
- lack of common understanding of problems and commitment to solving them
- personal ambitions and often conflicting positions of the NGO leaders
- politicization of NGOs (which affects their image and hinders others from participation)
- lack of funding for networking activities (except those directly linked with NGO projects)

At the same time, the extent of success of any development intervention often depends on how strong the networking and relationships are between the partners involved.

Therefore exploring the issues emerging from these relationships in civil society is crucial. The context within which partnerships occur is a vibrant and fluid one, where equality and expectations are constantly changing. This brings in the changes in power dynamics and cultural behavior.

There is also a challenge of a completely different type to the integrity of the third sector - the threat of centralized and top down networking initiatives. There are constant attempts both from the authorities and from some NGOs to create a subordination hierarchy within NGO sector. Forums, Councils and other collective structures are very often intended as a kind of 'Politbureau' of the third sector to establish control and leadership over the majority of NGOs in the Republic (and indeed to control or ensure the continuation of the donor resources). Sometimes donors, too, are so interested in the aggregate effect or continuity of project efforts that in fact they push their partners into unviable coalitions.

### **Relations of CSOs and authorities**

It is true to say that Kyrgyzstan has the most 'advanced' relationship between a government and the NGO sector in Central Asia. Certain conditions for the emergence and development of NGOs has been really created by the government: it is now quite easy to register and carry out NGO activities. Furthermore, government institutions at all levels have been often successfully collaborating with NGOs over the last decade on such issues as gender, poverty, environment etc. (Berk et al., 2007). However, the number of these cases is limited and dispersed over the country, they are more frequent on the local than on national level and often depend on personal relations with certain officials than on formal level. On the local

level many experts also underline the high level of CSOs' administrative dependence on local authorities (regional or rural district administrations, akimiat and ayil okmotu) often influencing or affecting as project so organizational developments.

In Kyrgyzstan, in 'Government-NGOs' tandem historically the government was the first and authorities were initially held responsible for establishing civil society. At the same time Kyrgyz society had outlived very intensive process of the civil society institutions development, NGOs first of all, artificially infused by donors. (Tretyakov, 2007) Initially CSOs and the state declared their 'democratic' development, but their common development is more formal than real,- partners by 'democratic logic' are living more in parallel than interrelated worlds. It brings in serious problem in the NGO-state interrelations intensifying only in critical moments to the country sustainability such as economical or political crises.

NGO-government relations in Kyrgyzstan still encounter a number of barriers, which hinder them from having a more productive relationship. The third sector is not usually seen by the state as a privileged and equal partner, NGOs are often excessively critical to the government initiatives breeding mutual confrontation and lack of trust. By current KR legislation there is no obligatory inclusion of civil society organizations in the state decision making, and the authorities so far accept only business as possible and necessary partner in policy decisions. This situation is seen to be caused by three main reasons:

- The government has always been suspicious about the political activity of NGOs often perceiving 'non' as 'anti'-governmental. Because of financial dependency on foreign finances, NGOs are often seen as the channels for external influence on general population;
- NGOs as a sector have usually been disorganized and fragmented without a common 'voice', failing to establish regular effective cooperation with the state, uniting only in crises;
- When NGOs fail to demonstrate their potential, popular support and visible outcomes of their activities, the authorities (especially on the national level) do not consider them as a significant social force and view only few organizations and leaders as professional partners able to participate in state decision-making and the development process.

At present the government does not yet have a unified and coherent policy on cooperation with NGOs, so government-NGO relationship is developing chaotically and fragmentarily. So far, donor-funded projects are the main factor bringing these actors together. In May 2007 with the help of major donors (WB, DFID and Swiss Development Cooperation etc.) Kyrgyzstan adopted the Country Development Strategy, outlining main directions of the country's social and economical development and frameworking international aid (major funds for its implementation are directed though state institutions). In such a way NGOs are encouraged to take part in developing or implementing the strategy. Meanwhile, ACSSC has already started the process of setting up an evaluation association intended to compete for the state and donor funds for the strategy monitoring and implementation of state programs.

One positive step important to mention is the adoption of the State social tender/procurement law allowing NGOs to compete for the state funding, opening a financial opportunity. Still, basing on Kazakhstan's experience some NGOs are suspicious of this mechanism as one aiming more the government control over NGOs rather than partnership.

At the same time, previous experience of government NGO support programs suggests that the authorities need more commitment to and control over the implementation of its initiatives on working with NGOs, especially in the reform period.

**Relations between CSOs and the population.** There are various problems in CSO-population relationships but beneficiaries are certainly the most important (though often neglected) CSO stakeholder group. Still, the questions currently posed by some NGO leaders and the authorities are tough– why are NGOs needed at all and to what extent do they represent people's needs? What is the sector's role, does it influence the country policy?

Unfortunately surveys show that majority of common people in Kyrgyzstan are still not aware of NGO activities or do not understand why NGOs were created and for doing what. It is explained also by the way of establishing NGOs, informally divided into two main groups – indigenous organisations set up on the community demand and those registered around grant funding. The latter are only now looking for their identity and beneficiaries. That's why along with number of NGOs or quality of their services the level of membership and accountability of NGOs is one of the main indicators to measure the CSO development.

Those who are aware of NGOs are also divided into two main groups by types of view– first consider NGOs as some 'alien', imported democracy element; and second, as an embodiment of liberal values, performing a socializing, democratizing role. So the question to what extent NGOs are organic in Central Asia and what forms and functions they should take is still relevant. However, NGOs have certainly taken their place in the society - on the community level they have established as highly important actors advocating real people's needs or creating opportunities and on the national level launching advocacy campaigns and networking active leaders for common results.

*The following main challenges can now be seen in CSO collaboration with population in KR:*

- Slow local communities' transformation lagging behind those proposed by the government and international organizations breeding paternalistic expectations and passiveness
- Restrictions of ineffective NGO communicational technologies formerly implemented
- Low public awareness and lack of formal people's participation in decision making or NGO management undermining the ownership and community interest in NGO activity.

### 3.2. CSO networking and leadership

NGO leaders, their formal and informal networking relations are important both for the NGO's development and partnerships and for the subject they are working on. Nowadays there is a circle of NGO leaders directly or indirectly already influencing state policy on such issues as migration, ethnical challenges, problems of the disabled or elderly, gender etc. Mass media is also an important element of civil society providing mostly political leadership, but also creating or undermining the image of the leaders or NGOs.

Research 'Leadership in transition – developing civil society leaders in Kyrgyzstan' conducted by Intrac in 2007 revealed certain challenges of leadership quite important for the networking:

- **Keeping internal and external roles of leaders right.** The leaders have actually the dual role pursuing mission – they manage the organization and staff inside (internal leadership) and build external relations (representational leadership). When some leaders work primarily within the organization without effective publicity or networking that aggravates their external support, the others vice versa pay much more attention to the representation function neglecting internal management and capacity building which can even push them to disintegration (for ex. NGO 'Coalition for the democracy and civil society'). It is therefore important to keep the balance right or delegate some management functions to the subordinates or a collegial Board.
- **Leader is founder, manager and the only communication channel.** For Kyrgyz civil society leadership is of critical importance. A successful NGO is managed by an active and effective leader who is usually one of its founders. The leader usually *keeps strong personal relations with donors and government agencies* on whom the NGO depends.
- **One man decision-making.** Many leaders aware of the democratic leadership style, having considerable management skills and promoting democratic values, far often themselves exercise a traditional authoritarian leadership within their organization. It means that all key decisions including relationships or networking links are not delegated to the managers or a board but are controlled and authorized often by the leader alone.
- **Competition and ambitions.** Competition for the donor funds NGOs are dependent on, different views, political positions or individual ambitions of the leaders often may affect the long-lasting relations between NGOs or their leaders. Many leaders admit themselves they are not good at seeking compromise or working with others effectively.

### 3.3. Informal public institutions, public capital and associational activity.

The co-existence of formal and informal political institutions is characteristic for Central Asia and for Kyrgyzstan in particular. Indeed, informal links such as clan, family, tribal, regional or religious ones sometimes have more significance for people than formal. Locality, eastern (Asian) and transitional character are the main parameters of contemporary Kyrgyz civil

society. Clan and family links should not be excluded from civil society as they form a space where various and even contradicting interests can collide (for example class or gender aspects). It is common for the community based organizations that NGOs to be based around one or two families, ensuring the trust and informal networking between members is crucial for common business in Asian society. Clan-collective traditional communications remaining from the past such as the Mahallya, the principle of ashar (common support to the people in need) or Aksakal courts are still the mechanisms for solving day-to-day problems in rural Kyrgyz communities - and sometimes used by NGOs too. At the same time, many researchers consider such links and institutions more as an obstacle not a value for democratic state development.

This is what Putnam (2002) called public capital - a set of informal values and norms shared by the members of a public group and helping them to cooperate. Social capital is said to be the cement of society and a criterion of its health, obligatory condition for social integration, economic efficiency and democratic stability (Newton, 2001). Trust between people and common norms is the basic element of social capital which promotes democracy and growth of political participation. However, according to F.Fukuyama, such phenomena as civil society and informal public groups are only the derivatives, not obligatory elements of the social capital which also might not be positive for democracy (Ku-Klux-Klan or mafia structures).

What we can now observe in Kyrgyzstan is a very low level of social and political trust in society, undermining positive influence of the social capital on social development.

A survey on the level of public trust in different institutions carried out by IPP in 2006 showed that the majority of people do not expect any help from anybody. This can be seen as a serious withdrawing from paternalistic expectations from the government and an indicator of a lack of trust in any other associations or clans.

It might also be an alarming symptom on this background with high level of corruption, low trust in state institutions and between people that the society is atomizing and individualizing, whereas the spirit of public integrity and solidarity is vanishing. It also vividly demonstrates that the mobilizing potential of the state with its old methods is practically over and citizens will be hardly inspired for nation-building by them. At the same time, despite a myriad of informal rules enveloping all social relations (nepotism, clanism etc.) the findings reveal that people in Kyrgyzstan would prefer strong law and effective formal institutions giving a credit of trust to the democratic principles, positive expectations and belief in democratic perspectives.

### **3.4. Main general challenges and threats of the networking in Kyrgyzstan**

Summarizing the above mentioned the following main networking challenges and barriers in Kyrgyzstan are usually marked by the experts and identified from the secondary sources:

#### **within the sector (between CSOs)**

- different organizational capacity levels (expert potential, technical resources etc.)
- lack of common understanding of the problems and commitments to solving them
- personal ambitions of the leaders
- politicization of NGOs or issues spoiling image and distracting others from participation
- lack of funding for the networking activities (not directly stipulated in NGO projects)

#### **between CSOs and the authorities**

- lack of legislative mechanisms and dialogue platforms for regular communication with authorities for the policy discussions and implementations (country development strategy, state social order/procurement procedures) on the national level
- NGO administrative dependence on local authorities (regional administration or district (akimiat) and rural district (ayil okmotu) authorities etc.)
- Persistent advocacy and elections NGO campaigning can be mistaken for power pursuit irritating authorities (danger of pure lobbying vs. positive social partnership technologies)

#### **between CSOs and the population**

- neglect to the participatory approaches in meeting people's needs
- miscommunication to different community groups including informal (clan, family, religious) groups and leaders
- poor public NGO activities' awareness and neglect to accountability concern

#### **other challenges:**

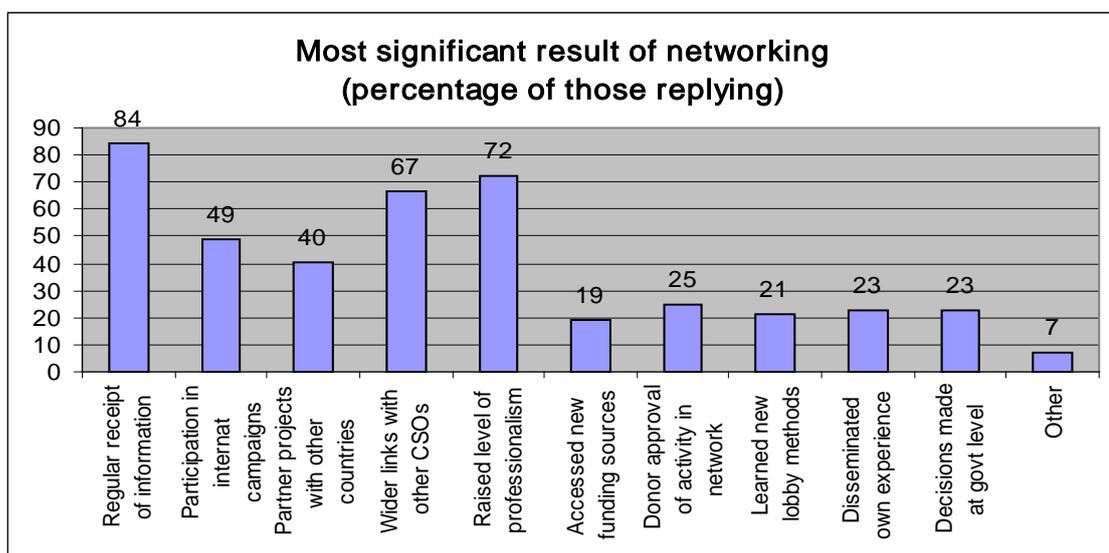
- some donors' top down approach pushing coalitions and making them unviable
- threat of top-down 'centralized' or 'forced' networking from authorities or other NGOs
- personal NGO leaders' ambitions

### **3.5. Overview of the active national, regional and subregional networks in KR**

In 2006 Intrac launched the research studying the level of participation of CSOs of Central Asian countries in global/transnational and regional civil society networks. It identified a great variety of the NGO networks trying to establish relations with other actors on different levels. Some findings of the research are relevant for this survey in Kyrgyz context:

- More liberal political regime and more favourable institutional environment for NGOs in Kyrgyzstan means that the country currently enjoys a kind of «leader» status in the CS sector in Central Asia often acting as a «center of gravity» for donor resources available for the development of regional projects, including those of a network type.

- The most developed contacts of local NGOs with global civil society can be seen in the environmental, women's and human rights movements. Advocacy networks are increasingly important but agenda is often dominated by international partners.
- Organizations protecting the interests of persons with disabilities, the elderly and children, working in conditions of poor national standards are not often formalized and focused on external support from global organizations - Help Age intl., Save the Children Intl. etc.
- A large number of contacts between local NGOs and global civil society have developed within UN structures and institutions also attracting attention of international community to CA agenda. For example, one of the key springboards for women's organizations is CEDAW and the Beijing Platform of Actions. NGOs apply UN sustainable development policies such as Millennium Development Goals not only attending in conferences, but also taking part in development of national plans of actions or UN reports.
- The following two main sets of networking problems the survey identified - issues around the strategic aims and character of the relations established and lack of technical skills and resources. Many NGOs could not clearly define why they work with others or what forms of co-operation suits them best. Some of them in fact had joined networks being just encouraged to by their donors. Lack of procedural knowledge and traditions of the networking at different level accompanied by poor access to internet and limited skills in defining networking partners is the second main reason of failure identified .
- Still the majority of NGOs surveyed mentioned the following networking benefits



- Membership is crucial to networks but varies according to the type of association – formal or informal, paid or free;
- It is found vital to establish equal relations and with clear aims, transparency and trust
- While donor support to government (e.g. via aid harmonisation) is reasonable, this shifts the focus from empowering well-networked civil society which is vital for development.

Based on the data collected in previous surveys it can be concluded that regional and national CSO networks are predominant in Kyrgyzstan, though there are several subregional (Central Asia, Ferghana Valey) and international networks. Out of the formal national and subregional networks primarily uniting NGOs, the following could be mentioned: Alliance of Mountainous Communities of Central Asia, AgeNet Central Asia Without Borders (AgeNet), Association of Civil Society Support Centers (ACSSC), Central Asian Platform (CAP), Central Asia Alliance for Water (CAAW), Forum of Women's NGOs, Ishenim, Central Asia Crafts Support Association (CASCA) etc. Global networks are not particularly widespread and are usually represented by one or two regional NGO. So, Coalition "For Democracy and Civil Society" is a part of CIVICUS network, Rural Women NGO Alga is a member of Womens Rights in Development Association etc.

It is also clear that within this survey scope it is not realistic to identify all the formal and informal NGO networking links in KR (among NGOs and with other institutions or individuals).

#### **4. Survey Findings (Primary Data)**

The interviews with leaders and key managers from the NGO partners had an open character and therefore were not structured in a strict way. However, every individual interview contained 3 informational blocks corresponding to the goals of the survey, investigating:

1. Existing network relations (formal and informal) of the NGO and its leaders, including listing partner organizations and key individuals which the NGO relates with, how network links are prioritized, and the people dealing with and "owning" NGO network relations.
2. Typology of the prioritized network relations - aim and composition of the networks, kind of partner interest in networking, strength of institutional relations and regulation of the networks, geographical coverage, type of information exchanged etc.
3. Supplementary notes reflecting partners' opinions on networking, namely on risks, benefits and opportunities of networking, the choice of actors or issues in local networking, the influence of informal factors on NGO programmes and networking.

General findings were identified by summarizing the results of all the interviews, and these weresupplemented with individual organizational findings.

To give a better geographical spread, two organizations with large local branches (CIB and DCCA) were represented by both the NGO leader and the branch manager.

##### **4.1. Existing network relations (formal and informal) of the NGO and its leaders**

- ***Do they network at all?*** The survey shows that all NGOs are to various extents involved in networking activities, enumerating quite a number of formal and informal

network links in various spheres and of different value and intensity. These can be divided into links between organizations and links between individuals. The organizational links are also divided into several main blocks: *relations with beneficiaries, with NGO networks, with state bodies, with international and other structures*.

- ***What kinds of networking are mentioned most often?*** When asked about networking, most NGO leaders began by telling about networks uniting NGOs. However, when asked to prioritize their networking relations, they quickly began to differentiate between real or useful networks and the more formal membership of network. Cooperation with state structures is increasingly important for NGOs. Interrelations with beneficiaries and donors were usually perceived by the respondents as important - but they seemed to be more vertical in character (see below). NGOs maintained a variety of contacts with other structures, for example – research institutions (MISI – RCE), religious organizations and leaders (noted by JR, Mehr Shavkat, DCCA Osh), mass media and independent journalists (by JR, DCCA, CIB), and even business structures (Shoola, RCE). Details are described below. For more detailed and visual representation of network links, please see the Tables in **ATTACHMENT 2**.
- ***What networking links are prioritized by NGOs?*** Among NGO networks, the most frequently mentioned were Ishenim, AgeNet, FEVAC, Child protection network, temporary advocacy and election coalitions with ACSSC, and even the informal NGO networking promoted by ACT-D for over 10 years (mentioned by 2 NGO leaders). However, the networks mentioned most often are not always accorded the greatest importance (e.g. examples of priority networks not so often mentioned included AgeNet and LMD). Networking with state structures on different levels (especially on local level) is becoming the second networking priority for the majority of interviewed NGOs (Arysh, Shoola, JR, DCCA, CPC, CIB Osh) and even the first with some (Mehr Shavkat). As main international links as traditional donors - of ICCO (with Helvetas in case with LMD platform), DCA and ACT CA were mentioned, so such agencies as EU and ACTED (by Emergency projects), ADB (along with the quasi-government agency ARIS), WB, Soros (and OSI). Only one leader interviewed (CIB Osh) prioritized networking with such international actors as ACTED and OSCE, paying tribute to their funding and development role in the South of Kyrgyzstan. Among other actors mentioned were SDC, PACT, Eurasia Foundation, UNDP, UNICEF, WECF, Peace Corps, INTRAC (in capacity building), International Organization for Migration (IOM), CHAP.

- **Who own and coordinate the relations?** NGO leaders maintain the majority of network links and perform the ongoing representational function on behalf of their NGOs; they are naturally the first to 'own' the relations. Still, in all the organizations there are at least two people dealing with networking – along with the director, this is a deputy director or senior manager (or a project coordinator as with Shoola or DCCA Osh) or specially appointed people – an external relations coordinator (Mehr Shavkat) or PR manager (AgeNet).

#### 4.2. Typology of the prioritized networking links.

This section summarizes information on the quality rather than quantity of relations. The more technical parameters and description of networks prioritized by the NGO partners (e.g. date of initiation, aims, network composition, geographical coverage, regulation/coordination details) are presented in **ATTACHMENT 3**. The Tables also contain the risks, opportunities and contact information on a particular network.

- **How are relations maintained with beneficiaries?** Comments on relations with beneficiaries demonstrated how, in majority of cases, NGOs no longer work with individuals, but instead provide facilitation and advocacy services to groups and federations. This finding corresponds with the results of earlier surveys describing advanced NGOs as moving from personalized service provision to facilitation and advocacy work on behalf of their target groups. Thus, NGO beneficiaries are already clustered in various kinds of groups (Rural, Investment or Water Committees, groups of young leaders, women entrepreneurs or farmers), forming Federations, NGOs and even NGO networks on lower levels coordinated by the partner NGOs. The latter act increasingly as resource organizations; thus, Saturn Yug is facilitated by DCCA, Kemenger - by Shoola, Erep - by Arysh. By contrast, CIB does not have institutional beneficiaries in the same way, but has developed informal networks made up of graduates of its training programmes: youth groups in the South, and or individual experts in each oblast recruited during election or advocacy campaigns.
- **What relations are kept among ACT-D partners and what topics they network about?** As mentioned by the majority of respondents, NGOs supported by the same donors (ACT-D agencies- ICCO, and formerly DIA, DCA or CA) are already forming up an informal network existing for many years and therefore they communicate to each other quite often. Aggregating the responses from the partners it can be concluded that the level of communication between the partners is different and some partners communicate with each other more often than with others. Contacts of Arysh, Shoola, Mehr Shavkat and DCCA networking around SHG concept and community mobilization are organically more frequent - they have been participating for many years in the same networks and

events devoted to the issues. Apart from the joint events and coordination of activities within the institutional programs they whether participate in each others' interrelated projects (Poultry project under FEVAC) or even sitting on the same Councils like EU and ACT CA supported Council at the state department of Emergency situations (Mehr Shavkat, DCCA Osh). Interest in the specific topics brings together different organizations more frequently: CIB and CPC, for example, are working closer on the children's rights protection within the network of the same name, while RCE-Umut is mainly uniting forces with Adra Kyrgyzstan and other NGOs interested in the promotion of the rights of elderly within AgeNet. The networking and cooperation level as admitted is actually supported by the leaders and the core managers of the organizations in individual capacity more than by the organization as an entity. So the NGOs with the least key staff turnover for the last years (practically all except for JR and partly RCE-Umut and DCCA Osh) benefit from the staff retention also ensuring the networking continuity.

- ***Is there a geographical variation in networking?*** The survey shows that networking priorities also vary according to region and geographical proximity matters for the frequency of contacts. So, RCE-Umut and Shoola (being in Issik Kul region) are attracting each other on the projects when supplementing efforts, experience or geographical expansion is needed. Local issues are the key topics in the regional network FEVAC uniting three NGOs working on solving particular issues in Osh and Ferghana Valley. Whereas in Bishkek NGO leaders note the importance of cooperation on the national or subregional levels (mainly Central Asia), or even wider (AgeNet uniting 35 members of 7 countries); in the provinces (Osh, Batken, Issyk Kul) leaders value local links and relations more. The difference in networking priorities was particularly visible when comparing networking preferences in the branch and head office of the same organization (CIB, DCCA). In the provinces links with local authorities (for instance, the Council on Emergency situations at the relevant department in the South) or self-governing bodies (Aiyl Okmotus) are of bigger importance to NGOs. In Bishkek NGOs devote more effort and resources to relations with Ministries (of Labor, of Emergency situations etc.) and departments at the Mayor's office (Social and TDPC - Territorial district public councils or Public Department on Capital Construction - PDCC).
- ***How are relations maintained with state structures?*** Here attention may be drawn to the difference in approaches: while some NGOs choose one-off advocacy campaigns and direct lobbying technologies (CIB), other, more socially oriented NGOs stick to a smoother social partnership approach, for example, taking regular part in councils set up by state structures, Round Tables and even monitoring of some state programs mainly funded by donors. (These programmes as a rule stipulate participation of CSOs, for instance, Shoola in EU funded national Emergency program.)

The biggest challenge of NGO-state interrelations is not ubiquitously accepted but frequently mentioned – NGOs cannot directly influence the real policy makers - President on the national level and the officials appointed by him in all other levels (ministers, governors, mayors and even heads of departments). The executive state structures traditionally (from Soviet times) predominate in the governance of KR and are not accountable to the population while representational authorities (Parliament, Keneshes) are honestly more technical structures approving the decisions of executive authorities. Good relations of NGOs and state structures in reality (when there are no legislative or election obligations and levers of influence) depend primarily on the good will of single officials and on personal relations established individually by an NGO manager. CIB Osh and Arysh provide practical examples, when the first is not given the requested budget information (though cooperation agreement with Mayor's office was concluded) and the second is doubtful as to further cooperation with public department on capital construction (PDCC) at Mayor's office where the head was changed but fruitful cooperation was built also on the personal relations of Arysh director Zhumagazy S. with its former head.

- ***What kind of interest do partners have in networking with each other?*** While campaigning NGOs aim at achieving quick policy changes, those oriented on social partnership aim rather for long-term improvements in the socio-political environment and better access to information and decision-making. According to one of the interviewees, there is a perception that NGOs can be divided into two groups: first, advocacy/human rights organizations (located primarily in Bishkek), second, social and community based organizations (located mainly in rural areas). The first group are considered as over-politicized by the authorities and by the latter; while 'the advocacy' NGOs are blame 'social' NGOs for targeting only their specific narrow group and adopting a low or invisible public profile on important national issues. These ideological differences hinder effective collaboration between the two groups, whereas collaboration on practical issues 'on the ground' helps to bring them together. The situation has somewhat changed since 2005, however, for even formerly 'social' NGOs like 'Shoola', 'Mehr Shavkat' or 'Arysh' now regularly participate along with advocacy NGOs such as CIB or ASCCS in election monitoring and national advocacy campaigns, directly or through their beneficiary groups; and some even prioritize election networking (eg Arysh with the Taza Shailoo election network) supplementing their practical focus with advocacy for wider change.
- ***What is the degree of interest?*** The degree of interest is always different and hard to measure. However, if in NGO-state inter-relations the authorities are looking mostly for public support, 'legitimizing' decisions with CSO involvement, extra resources and expertise from NGOs; by contrast, NGOs' main reason to network is for access to information and the administrative support to projects that state structures can provide. In

networks active in a common location or issue with a smaller number of members (e.g. Children's protection network, FEVAC), the relations are closer and the level of interest and activity is higher than in big networks with looser aims.

- **Who initiated the relation?** Some networks were initiated or facilitated by donors (Ishenim, CAAW, LMD) or state structures with donor support (Council for Emergency Situations) so they are vulnerable to changes in the level of support available from the the initiators; while others networks mentioned by respondents (FEVAC, MAG or AgeNet) were initiated by the NGOs themselves and are supported and based on the interests of one or several members for quite a long time.
- **What information or experience is exchanged?** Partners exchange various inds of information (mainly news, activity and projects plans) and with differing intensity - from every day (ASCCS to CIB) to once every two months or every quarter (Ishenim). Partners have mainly common interests in the networking. Among the main types of information respondents mentioned: experience exchange and gaining new knowledge (FEVAC, AgeNet, Ishenim), project cooperation (CAAW, LMD, FEVAC), advocating rights improvements or legislative amendments (MAG, Children Protection, AgeNet). FEVAC, for example, was set up to tackle common problems in the Fergana Valley region (electricity, transborder cooperation) and is now intensively used for gaining more experience by less experienced members (JR from MehrShavkat and DCCA), though the advice goes in all directions now - JR is good on border cooperation, DCCA has good relations with other NGOs, Mehr Shavkat is knowledgeable on SHG development and working with state structures. In terms of experience exchange, networks like Ishenim and AgeNet have a subregional character and so a vast potential to organise sharing of experience between different countries. AgeNet in this regard is somehow a unique network being the first one initiated by NGOs where state structures (Ministry of Labor of KR and soon of Tajikistan) have official membership, obviously valuing the benefits of participation in NGO activities or experience.
- **How the relations are communicated?** Internet is becoming more important as a network communication channel, helping not only to maintain relations between NGO members but as a way of regularly receiving different kinds of information – analytical articles and legislative initiatives (think tanks like ICNL, IPP, SRC or 'Perspective'), online and printed bulletins on civil society (*ONTRAC* from Intrac or *Third Sector* from ACSSC) etc. A quite interesting communication finding was that while NGOs communicate with each other primarily through e-mail or at training workshops or network meetings, communication channels with state structures are limited to the telephone and personal meetings in formal gatherings such as Council meetings or Round Tables.

- ***What is the strength of institutional relations?*** Some leaders admit that institutional relations are strong when NGOs and leaders have the same aims, level of interests and are simply comfortable with each other and with the commitments made between them. It implies frequency and closeness of networking contacts the partners want to have and the result of the network after all. All NGOs have better relations with one individual organisation than with any others (and this organisation is not necessarily a NGO) or within the networks. They do not always see this special as networking, but value the experience and project links that it gives. Thus, Shoola keeps fruitful relations with TES centre (a business organization) on the LMD platform, JR with Tajik Public Foundation 'Intellect' on the transborder cooperation, CIB works ever more closely with ICNL (a legislative think tank) and with PACT on advocacy programmes.
- ***What examples were found of networking with other structures?*** Makaeva V. of Shoola mentioned a good example of cooperation with entrepreneurs when a seed cooperative helped the NGO in establishing farmer groups by providing seeds at lower prices to their members. This was seen as mutually beneficial project, giving the business a wider market\$ and farmers - more accessible seeding material; while also helping the consolidation of Shoola's self-help groups. AgeNet (coordinated by RCE-Umut) has targeted networking with socially responsible business, achieving good results in resource mobilization through social marketing technology. They managed to install Agenet charity donation boxes in 'Narodniy' - the biggest supermarket network in Kyrgyzstan. The International Social Research Institute is another partner of RCE-Umut. This body is linked to the Presidential administration and responsible for demographic research and recommendations. Bashtovenko S. developed a good working relationship with the Institute and eventually was accredited with it as an expert. She can now use this channel to introduce amendments to state policies towards the aged.
- ***What are the examples of the networking with key individuals?*** The survey results show that NGO leaders in their individual capacity work primarily with particular categories of people: top officials, key community leaders (including Religious and youth leaders or representatives of self-governing bodies') or experts. They are seen as the channels of influence (lobbying) on certain levels and the sources of local or specialist expertise. If NGOs do not have institutional relations with this or that body (primarily government authorities), this may not mean that they do not have individual relations with particular officials. For example, while CIB accept that they do not have stable relationships with any government institution (though they are often involved in advocacy campaigns and perceived as "the opposition"), they do have relations with key individuals — regional Kenesh deputies (in Osh), officials from the Mayor's office (Bishkek) and the Governor's office (Osh), Ministry Department heads or Parliament deputies (eg

G.Derbisheva) who often share their concerns and may support them individually. Alliances formed years ago, in another capacity, may provide a good basis for collaboration today. Thus, Zhumagazy S. of Arysh attributes his good relations with the Ombudsman of KR and with the former chair of public dept. on capital construction at Bishkek Mayor's office (PDCC) to his former public activity.. Arysh mentioned good relations with local consultant Utyusheva L. They have worked with her regularly over the past 8 years, as she moved from DCCA to DFID project and now to PACT, inviting her to assist the development of Arysh as a facilitator or an evaluator.

- ***How do leaders influence networking?*** Some leaders attempt to gain more results for their NGOs or beneficiaries by consciously devoting more time and attention to a more active external role. As members of various national, local and regional Councils and Boards (Tilavoldieva M. of Mehr Shavkat, Bashtovenko S. of RCE) such leaders gain more recognition and are often invited to Parliament to discuss critical issues or to help develop new laws and policies of the national level (such as the country development strategy). Some leaders are well known but treated with suspicion by the authorities due to their oppositional affiliations (Sasikbayeva A. of CIB), while other leaders do less in public due to their more intensive internal management role or because they simply avoid wider attention. In their personal capacity, some leaders may also have own political affiliations – to a political party (eg, Atameken – Sasykbayeva A.), or within a debating club (eg the club uniting political and business ladies – Bashtovenko S.). This activity may help or sometimes hinder the NGO's work (eg oppositional party membership) but it certainly gives an important platform for exercising leadership, discussing topical issues and recruiting advocates and supporters for campaigning if needed. Several leaders mentioned they intentionally contribute some of their time (up to 10%) to networking efforts, including establishing new relations and representing NGOs in various organizations and events.

#### 4.3. Other findings and notes on the partner networking

A further block of questions gained the interviewees' opinions on the risks (difficulties) and opportunities of networking, factors that, according to respondents, promote networking on the local level, how informal norms matter and what relations partners would like to have.

The main difficulty facing NGOs in networking and threatening the continuity of their relationships noted by the majority of leaders is the difference in the level of the organizations (various understanding of the problems and different capacities). For example, according to the 'old' members of Ishenim (Shoola, Mehr Shavkat, RCE) it is mainly because of the different levels of the members attending (old and new) that they gradually lost interest in participation in the network. New members get interested in issues about SHGs discussed

long ago by the original members and of no more interest to them. Now some are questioning the viability of the network and suggesting that members reconsider its mission or find other ways to revitalize it.

*Other difficulties and risks of the networking mentioned* were the lack of financial resources for networking, weak coordination, different geography, lack of trust, changes of priorities and leaders' ambitions, conflicts of interest, competition for resources, limited continuity of the efforts, excessive formalization of network relations.

To the question *what do they value or seek in network relations*, the majority of the leaders mentioned the following benefits of networking

- informational and experience exchange helps to be effective and keep regular communication
- Networking enhances capacity of their organization and enriches its experience
- Joint efforts give bigger impact (though, as the leader of Shoola confessed, it is true so far there are not many results from joint actions, but still there have been attempts).

However, asked what network they would ideally like to join, several leaders honestly admitted they have enough viable networks for current NGO needs and the resources available. Not tending to expand networking very much, they would prefer to keep or intensify the existing links (say, AgeNet relations). Others reflected that it would be useful to:

- expand to the national level on social development (may be join some UN network) or get closer to decision-making (Parliament, Ministries) in Bishkek (Mehr Shavkat)
- gain international know-how and experience (of European, e.g. Irish NGOs) in interrelations with government, advocacy and lobbying, migration and SHG development. (Mehr Shavkat, Arysh)
- develop evaluation abilities by joining an international project evaluation network (CIB)
- consolidate institutional development with such centers as CTC (Georgia)

*Questioned as to what organizations or factors are promoting networking processes in the region, the following responses were received:*

- NGOs themselves united by the same problem (better bottom up network, for instance FEVAC, when members initiated and maintain the relations with their own resources)
- Donors and international organisations (ICCO, DCA, EU, ACTED etc.)
- Coordination, resource and training centres (INTRAC, ACSSC, CIB, Golden Goal in the South)

Also according to several respondents, networking is stimulated by the crisis situations (often happening on regional or national levels) or encouraged by leaders.

ECCA/ACT-D agencies by the aggregated respondents' opinion have always been supportive to their partners networking. DCA, for example now pays specific attention (with support and capacity building) to strategic development of the two newly established networks directed at childrens' rights and the rights of elderly. The networks analyze and promote different legal instruments available to protect the above mentioned groups (e.g. through Madrid Plan for the elderly, the Children's Code and Child Convention etc.) and argue for better implementation of existing laws, including international commitments, so that welfare levels can be improved. ICCO is facilitating in various ways to the development of the networks established by the NGO partners around such issues as sustainable livelihoods and self-help movement (Ishenim, FEVAC, SHG clusters and federations) and local market development (farmers and microcrediting associations, LMD platform).

Reflecting the situation with the informal links presented earlier in the context review, the survey showed that NGO leaders not easily confess they are sensible to such issues personally, though they admit that informal relations are very important in Central Asia (not only for NGO activity) and should be seriously taken into account. Family relations, past friendships, tribal links and countrymen's affiliations (the same place of birth) are of major importance and are often beneficial to NGO activity especially on the rural or district level.

It is not only the leader who promotes the values and mission of the organisation - most staff members have their own family and personal links (business, neighbors etc.) that often help to distribute information or enhance the project and NGO's influence.

As regards their role in the community, leaders have gradually become more supportive to the staff or beneficiaries wishing to gain election to self-governing (Ayil Okmotu) or representation (Kenesh) structures, thus giving NGOs an additional lever of influence onto the decision-making and budgetary process. So, in Mehr Shavkat 6 staff and several SHG members are now elected representatives in their districts or villages, while 9 people from the beneficiary SHGs are deputies on district Keneshes – lobbying the interests of their villages supported by the NGO. A similar situation can be seen in other organizations working with SHGs (Shoola, DCCA, Arysh, JR).

Some informal norms and practices peculiar to certain regions may also hinder networking and experience exchange. For example, in the South women mention that husbands often do not let wives go on business trips alone. The break-up of the Soviet Union and decrease in educational standards has now started making language a barrier. Thus, when people from rural areas where Kyrgyz and Uzbek is predominant go to Bishkek, they encounter problems because the language of seminars and trainings is generally Russian.

Religious affiliations are also becoming increasingly important. In the opinion of the leaders of Mehr Shavkat, DCCA Osh and JR (NGOs working in Ferghana Valley), religious movements

are gradually assuming a leadership role in the community in the South. This is a delicate issue handled very cautiously by NGOs, for their organizations have often developed chaotically in districts with highest level of poverty and unemployment and are often not accepted by the traditional confessions which still influence people's way of life and outlook. In this respect Bahramova I. (DCCA South) suggests working more closely not only with religious officials (mullahs, imams) but also with the village chieftains (Kazy) and the State Agency on religious issues on the national level.

### **Final note**

The majority of the NGOs interviewed admitted they have started to think about networking more pragmatically, as a development tool. The 'romantic' period is over and 'networking for networking's sake' is of no more interest to them. *Access to information, experience and enhancing the NGO's influence or impact through aggregation of efforts* are considered the main networking aims. The following facts support that NGO networking got certain maturity: formerly, NGOs participated in almost all the networks they were invited to or pushed into. Today they often refuse to join networks if they do not see the sense of it (Shoola, JR, CPC) and prefer to consolidate existing relations. All are able to prioritize network relations by judging their value for NGO development and sensibly compare the efforts with the results gained. They also prefer to feel comfortable within a network and try to avoiding extra pressure, the effect of people's personal ambitions, excessive formalization or unrealistic commitments. Personal relations, informal norms and affiliations are considered seriously and taken into account especially in the South. Some leaders (CIB, CPC) stressed the efficiency and potential of temporary vs. permanent coalitions, especially for urgent advocacy and democratization goals. Such coalitions mobilize and maintain members' activity for just a short time, saving resources and gaining more return on them.

State-NGO relations development in CA is of growing importance revealing the tendency for government influence on NGO activity, the efficiency of projects and the socio-economic situation on the local level in general. Therefore In terms of better local networking and sustainable social effect for beneficiaries, social partnership with state structures on a regular basis (especially on the rural, district and regional level) provides the highest potential. The Ayil Okmotu (local self-governing bodies) were described by one leader as potential 'agents of change' and the best target for networking at the local level through direct cooperation or lobbying and indirect methods (elections of members). Councils on specific issues at state structures are good though often insufficient entry point for NGOs (eg Councils at the Department and Ministry of Emergency). Some NGOs are interacting with state structures according to a mutually agreed plan or on the basis of Memorandums of Agreement (eg CIB with the National Election Committee or the Anti-Corruption Agency). In terms of developing

really effective relationships with local partners, some leaders (e.g. RCE-Umut) suggest that the donors (especially ACT-D after 10 years of collaboration) and in view of their programmatic approach, should establish communication channels on a regular basis engaging NGOs in donor program monitoring and development.

### **Afterword from INTRAC**

For INTRAC as a capacity-building organisation working closely with ACT Development partners for a number of years, the following points are also of importance.

First, the research study fully supports the findings of INTRAC's earlier Praxis study on CS leaders in Kyrgyzstan (see page 11): leaders of NGOs play a key role in setting up or joining networks. Their own previous educational, professional or political affiliations help to determine the nature of the networks joined, along with the aims and thematic focus of the NGO itself. Over time, the leader and senior staff of the NGO decide which networks are worth attending or supporting regularly: the chart given as Attachment 2 shows the results of this "weeding out" process. The leader himself / herself cannot always go to network meetings and it is natural that new or junior staff should be delegated to attend. This is part of the staff /organisational development process and should not be seen as a reflection of changing or downgraded priorities (though this may be the case sometimes too).

The survey backs up the results of INTRAC's survey of Central Asia NGO networks – local to global (see pages 13-15) as to the variety of associations joined. ACT's NGO partners are members of networks with very different types (ie character, structure, membership) and functions (eg experience exchange, advocacy). The analysis of geographical level at which they operate shows that both Bishkek-based and regional (oblast) based networks are used for widening contacts and influence. Attachment 2 shows how sectoral issues (eg SHG issues, childrens rights, elderly people's rights) bring organisations together in alliances and joint programmes. Several of the networks listed are now aspiring to national coverage, and three to regional coverage (including LMD), while two relate to international donor policy. This is an impressive result reflecting the fact that ACT's partners are among the most advanced NGOs in Kyrgyzstan today. However, the word "aspire" here is crucial: as the detailed descriptions provided in Annex 3 (Brief Profiles) make clear, there is a long way to go before most of the networks can claim active participation or proper representation of their target groups.

Within the ACT Development “family”, it was interesting (and not surprising) that the Ishenim network was mentioned so often. The informality of a “clubbish” association is always attractive, and for those involved in SHG development there needs to be a forum where important human, organisational and institutional development issues can be regularly raised among those who know the challenges well. The same probably goes for LMD and other emerging programme platforms. By contrast, the major efforts by ACT agencies to launch Central Asia Platform have not yet engaged NGO partners in the same way – despite the huge amount of time they have spent on EU applications and on the difficult work of delivering European projects. The responsibility for CAP has rested heavily on the shoulders of the single organisation that mentioned it in this survey – DCCA, and the responses suggest that the ACT Development partners need to take a new look at this situation.

Finally, what are the lessons for capacity-building support for networks themselves? There are several examples of donor-initiated organisations in the list of most valued networks, as indeed there are government agencies. INTRAC has a special interest in the independent, civil society actors. However, normal capacity building approaches will not always be a good option for supporting such networks. The key to their success is often their special identity, flexibility and responsiveness to their members’ needs. For these more open systems, a more distanced and open agenda is often appropriate. Certainly, they need encouragement, access to wider debates, national and regional events, information which can help them and their members further widen their horizons, or alternatively, fix on the specificity of what they want to do.

## ATTACHMENT I

### LIST of NGO partner informants within networking survey in Kyrgyzstan June-August 2008\*

№	NGO, place	Name of informant	Position	Contacts
<i>Leaders of NGOs (Open interview)</i>				
1.	Arysh Bishkek	<b>Sadyr Uulu Zhumagazy</b>	Director	T: +996 (312) 214835 E: <a href="mailto:arysh@saimanet.kg">arysh@saimanet.kg</a>
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		<b>Nuriya Temirova*</b>	Social department manager	M: +996 (0) 772 227061 E: <a href="mailto:nuru_2004@mail.ru">nuru_2004@mail.ru</a>
2.	Center Interbilim (CIB), Central Office Bishkek CIB Osh	<b>Asiya Sasykbayeva</b>	President	T: +996 (312) 660516; 667831 M: +996 (0) 555 077764 E: <a href="mailto:ccpub@infotel.kg">ccpub@infotel.kg</a> W: <a href="http://www.interbilim.org">www.interbilim.org</a>
		<b>Elena Voronina*</b>	Project manager Executive director	T: +996 (3222) 21534 M: +996 (0) 555 077764 E: <a href="mailto:interbilim@mail.ru">interbilim@mail.ru</a>
3.	Centre for Protection of Children (CPC), Bishkek	<b>Mira Itikeeva</b>	Director	T: +996 (312) 450634, 450762 M: +996 (0) 515 789049 E: <a href="mailto:cpc@elcat.kg">cpc@elcat.kg</a> ; <a href="mailto:strectch@mail.ru">strectch@mail.ru</a>
4.	Development & Cooperation in Central Asia (DCCA) Central Office Bishkek DCCA South	<b>Emil Sultanbaev</b>	Director	T: +996 (312) 666 268 E: <a href="mailto:dcca@dcca.org.kg">dcca@dcca.org.kg</a> E1: <a href="mailto:emil@dcca.org.kg">emil@dcca.org.kg</a> W: <a href="http://www.dcca.elcat.kg">www.dcca.elcat.kg</a>
		<b>Ikbol Bahramova</b>	DCCA chief manager in Osh	T: +996 (3222) 73553 M: +996 (0) 772 550091 E: <a href="mailto:dcca_osh@mail.ru">dcca_osh@mail.ru</a> E1: <a href="mailto:ikbola_dcca@mail.ru">ikbola_dcca@mail.ru</a>
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		<b>Imanbayev Iskenderbek*</b>	Programme manager on external relations	M: +996 (0) 772 021234 E: <a href="mailto:mehrshavkat@mail.ru">mehrshavkat@mail.ru</a>
7.	Resource centre for the Elderly (RCE) 'Umut' Central Office, Bishkek	<b>Svetlana Bashtovenko</b>	President	T: +996 (0) 901034 M: +996 (0) 772 534797 E: <a href="mailto:ymyt_bal@rambler.ru">ymyt_bal@rambler.ru</a> E: <a href="mailto:bashtovenko@rambler.ru">bashtovenko@rambler.ru</a>
8.	<b>Shoola</b> , Tonsky district Bokonbayevo village	<b>Venera Makaeva</b>	Director	T: +996 (312) 979258 T1: +996 (3947) 91602 E: <a href="mailto:shoola@elcat.kg">shoola@elcat.kg</a>

\*The alternative candidatures interviewed in case of unavailability of the leaders

• **Unavailable** (due to illness or other reason)

## ATTACHMENT 2

Mapping of the and most valued networking links of the NGO partners, in consecution as prioritized by NGO partners (*Please also see Attachments 4 and 5*)

#	NGO	Networking priorities	Topic of the networking	Why this networking is valued	Reference
1.	Arysh	<b>Ishenim Network</b>	Promotion of SHG concept	SHG concept development is the main NGO instrument for community mobilization and poverty reduction	pp. 15, 16, 20, 22, 24
		<b>PDCC - Public department on capital construction at Bishkek Mayor's office (ОГУКК)</b>	Development of the social infrastructure in settlers' districts	Access of Arysh and migrants to the government funds for social infrastructure	pp. 18, 19, 22
		<b>Taza Shayloo (election network)</b>	Democratization and elections monitoring	Defending rights of migrants through monitoring of the election processes	p. 19
2.	CIB Bish /Osh	<b>MAG (Monitoring Advisory Group) informal network (CIB Bish)</b>	Public monitoring of the state and donor's programs in KR (initiative of 4 NGOs)	Promotion of public consultation procedures, transparency of the budgets in humanitarian sphere & extracting industry	pp. 19, 20
		<b>Child Protection Network</b>	Advocating children's rights	Lobbying and advocacy for the specific target group	pp. 16, 17, 20
		<b>Informal network with ACSSC (CIB Osh)</b>	Similar aims on community groups and CSO development	Formerly ACSSC NGO resource center. De facto still acts as RC and participates in advocacy campaigns w. ACSSC.	pp. 16, 19, 20
		<b>State structures on district and regional level (Osh Mayor's office and Oyil Okmotu)</b>	Ensuring public assess to governance and counteraction to corruption	Raising influence on policy and budget transparency on the local level (water, utilities etc.)	pp. 18, 19, 21, 25
		<b>Relations with OSCE and ACTED (in Osh)</b>	Capacity building & access to resources	Access to project funding, education, information	p.16
3.	CPC	<b>Child protection network</b>	Advocating children's rights	National legislative influence through aggregated efforts	pp. 16, 17, 20, 24
		<b>Department of child protection at Youth and Child Protection Agency</b>	Advocating children's rights	Participation in child policy decision making with local (Bishkek) authorities – Juvenile justice, fostering etc.	p.18
4.	DCCA Bish/ Osh	<b>CAP (Central Asian Platform)</b>	CA network on lobbying the EU policies	Increasing access to EU funds and CSO participation in programmes development	pp. 15, 20
		<b>FEVAC (Ferghana Valley Consortium)</b>	Uniting forces of 3 NGOs for lobbying & solving local problems	Lobbying of the regional problems, SHG and activities' coordination with Mehr Shavkat & JR, joint projects, actions	pp. 16, 18, 20, 24
		<b>Ishenim Network</b>	Promotion of SHG concept	Interests of founders and promoters of SHG concept	pp. 15, 16, 20, 22
		<b>Coordination Council on Emergency situations at the regional Department (DCCA Osh)</b>	Coordination of community mobilization with state & NGOs on emergency situations	Policy influence for local communities on regional level through information exchange and projects	pp.16, 18, 25
5.	JR	<b>Ishenim Network</b>	Promotion of SHG concept	Experience exchange on SHG concept (new member)	pp. 15, 16, 20, 22
		<b>FEVAC (Ferghana Valley Consortium)</b>	Lobbying local problems by 3 NGOs	Experience exchange, joining forces for local issues	pp. 16, 18, 20, 24
		<b>Local Market Development (LMD) Platform</b>	Improving market access via value chain (producers-processors-sellers)	Access to education and cost saving projects for local SHGs and entrepreneurs in agriculture	pp. 16, 20, 21, 24
6.	Mehr Shavkat	<b>State structures on district and regional level (Oyil Okmotu, Akimiats)</b>	Solving local problems: electricity, roads, trans border cooperation	Access to policy and budget decision making on the local level (limited progress without authorities)	pp. 16, 21, 22, 24
		<b>CAAW (Central Asian Alliance on Water)</b>	Community mobilization through water supply and sanitation issues	Promotion of water committees and lobbying (through them) of the local water infrastructure improvements	pp. 15, 20
		<b>FEVAC (Ferghana Valley Consortium)</b>	Joint lobbying and projects (by 3 NGOs) on the local level	Joint lobbying of the regional problems and SHG concept, coordination of actions with DCCA & JR	pp. 16, 18, 20, 24
7.	Shoola	<b>Ishenim Network</b>	Originally –partners of one donor, now SHG concept promotion	Experience exchange and joining forces for development and promotion of the SHG concept	pp. 15, 16, 20, 22, 24
		<b>Coordination Council on Emergency situations (national level)</b>	Emergency situations coordination and community mobilization	Policy influence for local communities on national level through joint projects & information exchange	pp.16, 18, 25
		<b>Local Market Development (LMD) Platform</b>	Improving market access to farmers through value chain	Access to education and costs saving projects for local SHGs, farmer associations & entrepreneurs	pp.16, 20, 21, 24
8.	RCE-Umut	<b>AgeNet Network</b>	Advocating rights of the elderly	Network initiator. Unites NGOs working with elderly in	pp.15, 16, 17, 18,

	<b>Bal./ Bish</b>		several countries. Promotion of Madrid Plan of Actions	20, 21, 24	
		<b>International Social Research Institute (ISRI)</b>	Development of the state policies towards the aged as accredited experts	Links to Presidential administration and access to the decision making on national level on the aged	pp.16, 21
		<b>Informal network of ECCA/ACT –D partners</b>	One donor partners for 10 years	Experience exchange, often common goals & projects	pp.16, 17, 24, 26

### ATTACHMENT 3

**Table of the examples of the NGOs' bilateral relations outside networks (not explicit list)**

#	NGO	Bilateral partner	Value of the relation	Level of importance
1.	<b>Arysh</b>	<i>Ombudsman of Kyrgyzstan</i>	Potential leverage on defending settler's rights personally known by the NGO leader	Important influence link
2.	<b>CIB Bishkek</b>	<i>ICNL (Kyrgyzstan), think tank</i>	Obtaining analytical domain in advocacy campaign periods, legislative expertise	Contacts upon necessity
	<b>CIB Osh</b>	<i>Corruption Prevention Agency</i>	Holding discussions on the government transparency and accountability procedures	cooperation Memo signed
3.	<b>CPC</b>	<i>Kyrgyz Education Academy</i>	Cooperation in developing the courses for social pedagogues on family& child issues	Quite regular contacts
4.	<b>DCCA Bish.</b>	<i>National Women Football League</i>	Holding regular football tournaments with children (mainly girls) from orphanages	Intensive in event period
	<b>DCCA Osh</b>	<i>State Agency on religious issues</i>	Access to traditional and religion leaders, influential in the community	On ACT CA project
5.	<b>JR</b>	<i>Intellect NGO (Tajikistan)</i>	Trans border cooperation, joint SHG development in the areas close to Tajikistan	Medium, regular contacts
6.	<b>Mehr Shavkat</b>	<i>WECF</i>	Project on the promotion of biotoilets strengthening sanitation part within CAAW	Medium, project based
7.	<b>Shoola</b>	<i>TES centre</i>	Removing lack of business education and approaches to agriculture in province	Rare, on LMD platform
8.	<b>RCE-Umut</b>	<i>Women's discussion political club</i>	Exercising leadership, consolidating support basis for RCE-Umut projects	More leader's contact

### ATTACHMENT 4

Map of the current Partner networking relations mentioned (beneficiaries, NGO networks, state and international structures, key individuals and other links)

BENEFICIARIES										
#	NGO	SHGs	Families, people united	SHG clusters	SHG Federations	Rural Committees	Investment Committees	NGOs	NGO networks facilitated	Individual Community leaders, individuals
1	Arysh	128							Erep	
2	CIB Bish /Osh		30 informal rural groups					Informal clusters of 5-8 NGOs in each region		50 resource people (CIB training graduates)
3	CPC	6	Only families with working children							200 street children a year
4	DCCA Bish/ Osh	170				89 rural public councils	30 farmers groups	30 partner NGOs	Saturn Yug uniting 20 NGOs and 46 SHGs	70 clubs of women entrepreneurs
5.	JR	42	277 people		2					4 religios leaders
6	Mehr Shavkat	139	2015 people	21		21 Lobbying bodies				
7.	Shoola	150	1500 families				ARIS ICs In 7 districts	7	Kemenger Unites 7 NGOs	
8.	Umut Bal./ Bish	101			3					

FORMAL AND INFORMAL NGO NETWORKS														
#	NGO	ACSSC	ACT-D <i>informal one donor network</i>	Agenet	CAP	CAAW	Children protection Network	FEVAC	Freedom House <i>HR experts network</i>	Ishenim	LMD	MAG – <i>Monitoring Advisory Group</i>	Sharket <i>(Association of labor migrants)</i>	Taza Shailoo
1	Arysh									√			√	√
2	CIB Bish	√			√		√					√		
	CIB Osh	√ (informal status)	√	√					√					
3	CPC						√							
4	DCCA Bish		√			√				√				
	DCCA Osh			√ not members		√ contacts		√		√				
5.	JR							√		√				
6	Mehr Shavkat			√		√		√		√	√			
7.	Shoola	√ (temporary on elections & democratization)								√	√			
8.	Umut Bal./ Bish	√ (temp. advocacy on social tendering and aged concept)	√	√						√				

\*   - the prioritized networking relations (according to the reporters' opinions)

Mapping of the partner interrelations with the state and self-governing structures

#	NGO	STATE AND SELF-GOVERNING STRUCTURES															
		Aiyl Okmotu Rural district	Akimiat District level	TDPC (territorial-district public councils)	City Mayor & District admin-ns	Social Dept. District or city	PDCC (public dept. on capital construction) Bishkek	Emergency Dept. Region	Regional administration	Central Election Committee	National Anti-Corruption Agency	Labor Ministry	Ministry of Education	Emergency Ministry	Ministry of Agriculture	Migration Ministry	Parliament
1	Arysh			√	√ Bishkek	√ 4 districts	√									√	
2	CIB Bish									√	√						
	CIB Osh	√	√		√ Osh not well	√			√	√	√						
3	CPC		√	√	√ Bishkek	√						√	√				
4	DCCA Bish		√						√					√		√	
	DCCA Osh	√						√									
5.	JR	√ 5	Women dept.		√												
6	Mehr Shavkat	√ 8	√		√ Osh				√						√		
7.	Shoola	√ 7							√	√				√	√		
8.	Umut Bal./Bish	√	√		√ Balykchy	√				√				√			√

Mapping of the partner interrelations with international structures and donors (financial and program support and cooperation)

#	NGO	INTERNATIONAL STRUCTURES AND DONORS																		
		ICCO	DCA	ACT CA	EU	ARIS/ ADB	WB	SDC	Eurasia Foundation	Soros Foundation OSI	INTRAC	ACTED	CHAP	US Embassy-Dem Commission	OSCE	Helvetas	UN structures	PACT	WE CF	IO M
1	Arysh	√	√								√						√ on gender			
2	CIB Bish	√	√										√				√ UNICEF	√		
	CIB Osh	√								√	√			√						
3	CPC	√	√				√			√							√ UNICEF			
4	DCCA Bish	√	√	√	√	√				√										
	DCCA Osh				√	√		√		√	√	√					√ UNDP		√	√
5.	JR	√	√				√	√	√	√										
6	Mehr Shavkat	√		√	√	√	√			√	√					√			√	
7.	Shoola	√		√	√	√	√	√		√										
8.	Umut Bal./Bish	√	√	√	√			√	√	√	√		√							

## ATTACHMENT 5

### Brief profiles of the current main NGO Partner networks (also using Intrac data)

#### 1. "Ishenim" Network

1.	Year of foundation	founded in April 1999
2.	Direction	Democratization, sustainable Livelihoods and poverty reduction through self-mobilization. Originally was created more as one donor partners network (ACT)
3.	Geographical activity coverage and number of members	Subregional (covers 3 countries of Central Asia) In total there are 11 members. Kyrgyzstan - 7, Kazakhstan - 3, Tajikistan - 1.
4.	Main aims of network activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To strengthen possibilities of the network partners; consolidating the network through lobbying, mobilization of resources, spreading and development of Self-Help Group (SHG) concept* and their federations on local and national levels.</li> </ul>
5.	Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NGOs in the area of poverty alleviation and sustainable livelihoods using the concept of SHG.</li> </ul>
6.	Who is the network Coordinator and how it is regulated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2007 the Coordinator of the network was NGO "JR" (Batken town, Kyrgyzstan), in 2008 NGO APPR Nau (Khudjand, Tajikistan)</li> <li>Coordinator system (network management) is based on yearly rotation.</li> <li>The network works on a flexible basis, but with rules, a system of entry and annual member fees**.</li> </ul>
7.	The main aspects and issues promoted by the network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dissemination of SHG Concept for comprehensive development, exchange of information, knowledge and experience between Network members.</li> <li>Providing financial and organizational sustainability of network members without the donor support</li> <li>Launching researches between the members. In 2004 research 'Influence of SHG' had been launched by the network' managed by its coordinator.</li> </ul>
8.	Cooperation with international agencies and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The network was created with the support of ACT CA (All Churches Together in Central Asia) and then facilitated by ECCA/ ACT D agencies.</li> <li>At present, network members cooperate with ICCO, DCA, with Central-Asian Platform, FEVAC and «AgeNet Central Asia No Borders».</li> </ul>
9.	Possibilities of the network development promotion and risks limiting that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rotation system of network coordinators every year increases the potential of members on network management.</li> <li>Network members can make their own contributions to network activity (for example, research, working group meetings, etc).</li> <li>«Ishenim» plans to create a multilevel network, through creation of mini networks. For instance, Arysh had set up a network NGO of self house builders «EREP», DCCA, created network of southern NGOs using SHG concept «Saturn Yug».</li> <li>Law «On micro credit agencies» in the Kyrgyz Republic enables application and development of SHG concept for uplifting the communities.</li> <li>The donors, network members may act as facilitators for developing potential of the «Ishenim» network.</li> <li>The network focuses on economic issues, leaving out the conceptual SHG ideological advocacy and lobbying issues.</li> <li>Aspects of Ishenim formalization remain unclear. There are problems such as within which country's legislation should the legal registration be done.</li> <li>Network members are concerned about the issues of financing the institutional development and capacity building of the network.</li> <li>Due to the different levels of the members (old and new) old members loose interest in the network and question viability of the current mission to revitalize it.</li> </ul>
10.	Contact information	E-mail: <a href="mailto:mehrshavkat@mail.ru">mehrshavkat@mail.ru</a> , Web: <a href="http://www.dcca.kg/?page_id=77&amp;lang=en">http://www.dcca.kg/?page_id=77&amp;lang=en</a>
*The SHG concept was adapted from the experience of India and it suggests work on conceptual level and develops social, economic, legal and cultural directions for sustainable livelihoods.		
** Each member organization is supposed to have a special budget for participation in Ishenim network activity.		

#### 2. Ferghana Valley Consortium (FEVAC)

1	Year of foundation	Founded in 2006
2	Direction	Democratization, sustainable Livelihoods and poverty reduction through self-mobilization in the South region (initiated by members) and supported by ICCO
3	Geographical coverage of the activity and members number	Regional (South Kyrgyzstan working in Ferghana Valley) In total 3 members– Mehr Shavkat, DCCA (esp.South), JR
4	Main aims and issues promoted by the network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>solving common regional problems (electricity, transborder cooperation) and promoting members' interests (lobbying state structures to relieve the tax payments for social projects and promoting social partnership)</li> <li>strengthening capacity of the network partners (primarily through experience exchange, joint projects and mobilization of resources);</li> <li>spreading and development of SHG concept on the regional level</li> </ul>

5	Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NGOs working on SHG concept in Ferghana Valley.</li> </ul>
6.	Who is the network Coordinator and how it is regulated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The network works on a flexible basis, but with meetings once a quarter.</li> <li>• The budget for 3 years is ICCO supported and contributed to by the members</li> <li>• Coordinator system (network management) is based on yearly rotation.</li> </ul>
7	Cooperation with international agencies and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACT D – funding (ICCO institutional, DCA – project)</li> <li>• Network members cooperate with Ishenim, Central-Asian Platform, AgeNet.</li> </ul>
8	Possibilities of the network development promotion and risks limiting that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through exchange of experience partners supplement each other expertise - DCCA has good relations with other NGOs, JR is good on border cooperation, Mehr Shavkat on working with the state structures</li> <li>• Easier to realize common projects in the region (poultry project funded by DCA).</li> <li>• May seem to duplicate 'Ishenim network' but has a clear regional emphasis with solving definite local issues (may be considered more as mini Ishenim network with peculiar focus).</li> </ul>
9	Contact information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E-mail: <a href="mailto:Jr2002@mail.ru">Jr2002@mail.ru</a></li> </ul>

### 3. «AgeNet Central Asia No Borders» Network (AgeNet)

1.	Year of foundation	Founded on March 1, 2005
2.	Direction	Access to basic services, advocating rights of the elderly
3.	Geographical activity coverage and number of members	Originally Subregional (CA) – 7 NGOs from Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan Now in total 35 network members from 7 countries (incl. Caucasus and Russia)
4.	Main aims and issues promoted by the network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute into the increase of state and civil society responsibility in improving life of the elderly people namely, uniting and empowering old people*.</li> <li>• Assistance in provision of a secure old age, adequate life for fulfillment of spiritual and material needs of citizens of the older generation</li> </ul>
5.	Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old people's, support and accompanying NGOs working with elderly persons in the network member countries. also via «Madrid Plan of Actions» realization.</li> </ul>
6.	Who is the network Coordinator and how it is regulated?	Entrance fee, membership fee, Charter and Ethical code. RCE (Kyrgyzstan) and personally Bashtovenko S. is coordinating network for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> year. Term of coordinator activity – 2 years, with the right of re-election. Strategically governed by Consultative Observation Council (consists of 7 people) Technical coordinator (newsletters, website) –PR manager of RCE
7.	Cooperation with international agencies and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HelpAge International (UK),</li> <li>• ACT CA, ECCA (ACT D) esp. DCA</li> <li>• Counterpart Kyrgyzstan</li> </ul>
8.	Possibilities of the network development promotion and risks limiting that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International donor agencies are interested in working through the «AgeNet» network in Central Asia (DCA, ACT CA).</li> <li>• The network is unique being the first to have state structures (Ministry of Labor of Kyrgyzstan and soon of Tajikistan) as interested official members</li> <li>• The activity of the network is being extended to Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan; moreover, Russian and Caucasian NGOs joined and several are likely to join in the near future having expressed interest; in Turkmenistan a research will be conducted on aged people's socio economic situation with local NGO.</li> <li>• «Madrid Plan of Action on improving life of the aged» signed by the CA countries provides a tool for AgeNet to cooperate with national governments.</li> <li>• Members of the network have various organizational aims, which do not have support of the aged as an issue of concern (for example, Mehr Shavkat).</li> <li>• The level of institutional development between members of «AgeNet» is unequal, and the network does not yet have a mechanisms for supporting potential members, forming equal responsibility for results of network activity.</li> <li>• At present «AgeNet» works actively with 3-4 strong members only. Other members and network committees do not initiate projects and are not actively involved in the network activities.</li> </ul>
9	Contact information	E-mail: <a href="mailto:agenet@mail.ru">agenet@mail.ru</a> , Web: <a href="http://www.agenet.org.kg">www.agenet.org.kg</a>

\*Many members of «AgeNet» network use the concept of Self Help Groups (SHG) in their work and manage micro credit agencies (MCA).

### 4. Central Asian Platform (CAP) -CA Network on Lobbying the European Union

1.	Year of foundation	Founded in June, 2005
2.	Direction	Democratisation, Lobbying the European Union policies
3.	Geographical activity coverage and number of members	Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan. The network includes around 20 member organizations
4.	Main aims and issues promoted by the network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lobbying Central Asian countries' interests on sustainable development in European Union policy, based on commonly agreed needs of the civil sector and national governments of Central Asian countries.</li> <li>• Increasing access to European Union funds for provision of financial sustainability of target groups in the regional network.</li> </ul>

5.	Target groups	Organizations working on alleviation of poverty, sustainable livelihoods, and society democratization in Central Asian countries.
6.	Who is the network Coordinator and how it is regulated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership fees, Provision on Network and working plan for the next year</li> <li>• Coordinated by DCCA, (Kyrgyzstan) Currently handed over to Baspana (KZ)</li> <li>• System of network management provides for rotation of coordinator role in the network for 1 year period.</li> </ul>
7.	Cooperation with international agencies and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Association of World Council of Churches related Development Organizations (WCC) in Europe and APRODEV * are the financial organizations of CAP. CAP cooperates closely European network CONCORD and Ecumenical Consortium ACT-D (former ECCA) esp. on education programs.</li> </ul>
8.	Possibilities of the network development promotion and risks limiting that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAP members are advanced NGOs with well-established contacts between them. CAP sets aims and directions to influence the EU institutions policies.</li> <li>• Members of CAP network have a big experience in creating and work with such networks as «Ishenim» and «AgeNet Central Asia No Borders».</li> <li>• In 2007 it was announced that Central Asia is considered as EU priority region &amp; it will allot 750 million euro to the CA countries for the next 6 years.</li> <li>• Agreement on Cooperation Plan (ACP) between EU and CA countries, according to which projects are carried out allows for CAP monitoring and project evaluation and Strategies of Countries Development (SCD) carried out by CA national governments countries, with the support of EU.</li> <li>• The EU does not have a formal mechanism for consultation with CSOs in Central Asia. Thus many of EU policies and programs for CA countries have been created without consultation with civil society.</li> <li>• EU works mainly on national government level, however is increasingly keen to work with non-state actors. The national policies and priorities of CAP member countries are very different from each other.</li> <li>• The CAP Network does not yet have a mechanism for motivating active participation of CAP members.</li> </ul>
9.	Contact information	E-mail: <a href="mailto:baspana-relations@yandex.ru">baspana-relations@yandex.ru</a> Web: <a href="http://www.cap.net.kg/">http://www.cap.net.kg/</a>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APRODEV is a network of European NGOs lobbying interests of the developing countries to the EU. It cooperates with other European networks such as CONCORD and TRIALOG</li> </ul>

#### 5. Central Asian Alliance on Water (CAAW)

1	Year of foundation	Founded in March, 2001
2	Direction	Access to basic services, water supply and community mobilisation
3	Geographical activity coverage and number of members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subregional (Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan)</li> <li>• 22 NGOs supported by Novib and other donors, 28 water committees and 2 Community Drinking Water Unions (CDWU)*</li> </ul>
4	Main aims and issues promoted by the of network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance to communities in sustainable water supply using an integrated approach and in managing water resources through opening and developing new Water Committees (WC), changing the behavior and involving village communities and youth in local strategies decision making.</li> <li>• Introduce international experience in sanitation and hygiene maintenance</li> <li>• Information and experience exchange between members.</li> <li>• Encouraging cooperation between CAAW members, state structures and local self government bodies – to lobby the Water Committees' interests.</li> </ul>
5	Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizations dealing with water management and community mobilization</li> <li>• Water Committees and Community Drinking Water Unions</li> </ul>
6	Who is the network Coordinator and how it is regulated?	Executive Body (CAAW is represented by secretariat and executive director - constant coordinator) Meet twice a year regularly and on the project developments Charter, Rules on Membership
7	Cooperation with international agencies and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Secretariat on Water</li> <li>• Network «AgeNet Central Asia No Borders»</li> <li>• International and donor organizations: Novib-Oxfam, SDC, CIDA and UNICEF, ADRA - Kyrgyzstan, Counterpart Consortium, UNDP, DFID.</li> </ul>
8	Possibilities of the network development promotion and risks limiting that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint lobbying of interests on creation and improving the legal foundation for organizations working on water is more effective</li> <li>• integrated approaches helps to solve village issues on water resources management and get local authorities motivated to cooperate</li> <li>• Membership allows to attract infrastructure resources through water committees establishment (Mehr Shavkat lobbied establishing 6 Water Committees in its target districts followed with infrastructural funding)</li> <li>• Unstable political situation in members countries of the Network, force major</li> <li>• Lack of competence or interest (cooperation agreements) with local authorities</li> <li>• Without institutional support network activities are problematical.</li> </ul>
9	Contact information	E-mail: <a href="mailto:caawosh@mail.ru">caawosh@mail.ru</a> , Web: <a href="http://www.caaw.net">www.caaw.net</a>

- Water Committees and Community Drinking Water Unions (public associations working on supply of pure drinking water in villages, also sanitation and hygiene for rural children)

### 6. Association of Civil Society Support Centers (ACSSC)

1	Year of foundation	(Founded in November 2002)
2	Direction	Resource support to the CSOs
3	Geographical activity coverage and number of members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National coverage. 10 current CSSC members in all oblasts of Kyrgyzstan</li> <li>• ACSSC is a national network organization founded with the support of Counterpart Consortium and USAID when implementing civil society support programs in Central Asia. That's why ACSSC has good links with similar national networks: ADCS in Kazakhstan, CSSC in Tajikistan, several individual CSSCs in Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.</li> </ul>
4	Main aims of network activity and issues promoted by the network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance in development of dynamic, effective and sustainable civil society in KR through organizational and financial strengthening of the resource organizations for CSOs, experience exchange with well known networks and experts, promoting success stories and advanced NGO methodologies.</li> <li>• Implementation of projects/programs on community mobilization, civil participation and promotion of CSO interests incl. institutional CSO support</li> <li>• Involved in the legislative expertise and conducting advocacy campaigns (often on temporary basis attracting such NGO partners as CIB, RCE, Shoola)</li> </ul>
5	Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Society Support Centers (CSSC),</li> <li>• NGO support organizations</li> </ul>
6.	Who is the network Coordinator and how it is regulated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officially registered, has a Charter, formalized structure of management and internal provisions. Board consists of the directors of CSSC members and several experts, appointing executive director. Central office is in Bishkek</li> </ul>
7.	Cooperation with international agencies and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AmCham – American Chamber and Industry Chamber</li> <li>• Counterpart Int., USAID, Soros-Kyrgyzstan Foundation, Aga-Khan Foundation, European Union</li> </ul>
8.	Possibilities of the network development promotion and risks limiting that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSSC s have rather strong potential for providing services on development and lobbying the interests of CSOs</li> <li>• Association has significant experience in holding inter regional (CA) events and researches, developing NGO and network organizations, (exchange visits and internships), holding advocacy campaigns.</li> <li>• Having positive image with local NGOs and international agencies for M&amp;E and managing social and grant programs with social tender law adoption ACSSC has good chances to monitor state programs esp. funded by donors.</li> <li>• Limited institutional funding along with the top down structure question the long lasting ACSSC sustainability and services provision to CSOs.</li> <li>• Different situations and tendencies in CA countries hamper the developing of links between country associations.</li> <li>• With lack of clear understanding of aims and objectives of associations and coalitions facilitated so far leads to conflicts and the collapse of the unions.</li> </ul>
9	Contact information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E-mail: <a href="mailto:erkina@acssc.org.kg">erkina@acssc.org.kg</a>, Web: <a href="http://www.acssc.org.kg">www.acssc.org.kg</a></li> </ul>

### 7. Local Market Development (LMD) Platform

1	Year of foundation	2007
2	Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fair economic development, sustainable livelihoods, community mobilization</li> </ul>
3	Geographical activity coverage and number of members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional (Osh, Jalal Abad, Batken, Issyk Kul)</li> <li>• Mehr Shavkat, Shoola, DCCA, , Consultation Educational Center (CEC)</li> </ul>
4	Main aims, aspects and issues of network activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote projects working on value chain (Improve market access linking better producers-processors-sellers of the products of agriculture)</li> <li>• Joint projects (mobilization and education of the farmers groups)</li> </ul>
5	Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Producers, processors and sellers of agriculture products (fruit, vegetable and diary sectors)</li> <li>• NGOs working on economical community mobilization</li> </ul>
6.	Who is the network Coordinator and how it is regulated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No formal registration or charter, coordinator - Helvetas and CEC (as subcontractor) , gathering meetings twice a year and regularly on the projects Members work in associational status, not on the fee or membership basis</li> </ul>
7	Cooperation with international agencies and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICCO (FED program),</li> <li>• SDC</li> </ul>
8	Possibilities of the network development promotion and risks limiting that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has clear advantages (access to education, saving costs) for the real sector of agriculture (farmers, entrepreneurs)</li> <li>• Good platform for business projects experience exchange for NGOs</li> <li>• May be a temporary union due to the short character of the project support.</li> </ul>
9	Contact information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E-mail: <a href="mailto:program@helvetas.kg">program@helvetas.kg</a>, <a href="mailto:imd@helvetas.kg">imd@helvetas.kg</a></li> </ul>

### 8. Association of the Legal Entities 'Taza Shayloo' (election network)

1	Year of foundation	2007
2	Direction	Democratisation and elections monitoring
3	Geographical activity coverage and number of members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National (Kyrgyzstan)</li> <li>26 NGO members</li> </ul>
4	Main aims of network activity and issues promoted by the network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defending elections rights of citizens through performing independent observation of the election processes</li> </ul>
5	Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NGOs and coalitions willing to indulge in the elections monitoring</li> <li>Independent observers</li> </ul>
6.	Who is the network Coordinator and how it is regulated?	Executive body headed by the Executive Director whose candidature according to the Charter and internal Association regulations Board of directors confirms
7	Cooperation with international agencies and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NDI, Democratic Commission at the US Embassy</li> <li>Alliance of civil organizations 'Time of my choice'</li> </ul>
8	Possibilities of the network development promotion and risks limiting that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening new democratization programmes working beyond election periods</li> <li>Financial opportunities for democratization are provided by various donors</li> <li>Duplication of the activities by other networks and NGOs, funding limitations</li> </ul>
9	Contact information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ainur Usupbekova – Executive director, e-mail: <a href="mailto:election@elcat.kg">election@elcat.kg</a> T: 624664</li> </ul>

### 9. PDCC (public department on capital construction) at Mayor's office of Bishkek (ОГУКС)

1	Year of foundation/setting up	1993
2	Direction	Access to social services, Development of the social infrastructure
3	Geographical activity coverage and number of members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local (Bishkek city)</li> </ul> No membership (was created as public-state partnership, now municipal body)
4	Main aims of network activity and issues promoted by the network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of the social infrastructure of the new districts (massifs) around Bishkek by implementing joint projects with other organizations</li> </ul>
5	Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dwellers of 42 новых жилмассивов вокруг Бишкека</li> <li>Organizations (including NGOs) working in the district-massifs</li> </ul>
6.	Who is the network Coordinator and how it is regulated?	Work with other structures according to the instructions and mandate or on the basis of the invitation to cooperation Managed by the department administration at Mayor's office as a state structure
7	Cooperation with international agencies and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently they are in tight cooperation with ARIS (progovernmental Agency for Infrastructural development). No direct relations to the international organizations being a state department (at Mayor's office)</li> </ul>
8	Possibilities of the network development promotion and risks limiting that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Considering its importance for Arysh NGO included an official-executive director of PDCC in the Board of directors for keeping networking relations</li> <li>When there is a project funding for social infrastructure suggested by NGOs PDCC is interested in working together and do a significant financial contribution (co –funding).</li> <li>Lack of the project resources is in its turn limiting such opportunity for NGOs</li> <li>Risk of the key official or state policy changes</li> </ul>
9	Contact information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mukhtar Aitkulov, director, T: 610190, Bekboev C. (executive), T: 610188</li> </ul>

### 10. Coordination Council on Emergency situations at the Regional Department of Emergency

1	Year of foundation	2005 (initiated by the state structures with EU support)
2	Direction	Security, community mobilization and intersectoral cooperation
3	Geographical activity coverage and number of members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National level (with South and Issik Kul as priority regions)</li> <li>8 members from the state, local NGO and international structures (out of local NGOs involved – DCCA Osh, Mehr Shavkat, ACSSC)</li> </ul>
4	Main aims, aspects and issues of network activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regular informational exchange, coordination of efforts and project cooperation with government on emergency situations</li> <li>Joint projects (under EU or ACT CA funding).</li> </ul>
5	Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NGO, state and international structures dealing with emergency work</li> </ul>
6.	Who is the network Coordinator and how it is regulated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links with state structures are regular. Meetings- once a quarter.</li> <li>Major communication is kept by telephone, e-mail distributions and personally. Relations are administered by the officials in the emergency department on the basis of the agreed activity plan</li> </ul>
7.	Cooperation with international agencies and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Projects funding agencies– EU, ACT CA</li> <li>International actors on the board – OSCE, UNDP, ACTED, IOM</li> </ul>
8.	Possibilities of the network development promotion and risks limiting that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shoola is the only NGO representing local civil society in the National Emergency Council which also includes 2 international NGOs and state structures dealing with emergency work (access to influence).</li> <li>Risk of the key official or state policy changes</li> <li>Lack of institutional support from donors</li> </ul>
9.	Contact information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="http://www.mecd.gov.kg">www.mecd.gov.kg</a></li> </ul>

### 11. MAG (Monitoring Advisory Group)

1	Year of foundation	1998 (informal network foundation)
2	Direction	Democratization and public monitoring of the state and donor's programmes
3	Geographical activity coverage and number of members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National (unites members of national coverage in KR)</li> <li>4 members (HR &amp; Law observance Bureau, CAREC, Tree of Life, CIB)</li> </ul>
4	Main aims, aspects and issues of network activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring of the humanitarian, technical, credit support spheres</li> <li>Promotion of the public consultations procedures</li> <li>Transparency of the extracting industry and budgets</li> </ul>
5	Target groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizations involved in advocacy work and monitoring of the donors' and state structures programs</li> </ul>
6.	Who is the network Coordinator and how it is regulated?	The network has no formal status and regularity of the meetings (but in constant contact by e-mail or informally) – gather on the project or advocacy activities The coordination is launched on the rotated basis – by project coordinators
7	Cooperation with international agencies and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soros Foundation</li> <li>Forum ADB (South Eastern Network monitoring ADB programmes)</li> <li>Bank Watch (Czech network working in Eastern and Central Europe)</li> </ul>
8	Possibilities of the network development promotion and risks limiting that	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transparency of the budgets and accountability procedures are actively supported by such donors as EU and Soros</li> <li>Temporary and not obligatory status of the network makes the contacts often loose and not sustainable</li> </ul>
9	Contact information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E-mail: <a href="mailto:ccpub@infotel.kg">ccpub@infotel.kg</a></li> </ul>

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