

National Human Development Report

THE INFLUENCE OF CIVIL SOCIETY  
ON THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
PROCESS IN KYRGYZSTAN

Kyrgyz Republic 2005

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## The map of the Kyrgyz Republic



### List of Abbreviations:

<b>CDF</b>	Comprehensive Development Framework	<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>CS</b>	Civil Society	<b>NDN</b>	National Development Network
<b>DFID</b>	Department for International Development of the United Kingdom	<b>NGOs</b>	Non-governmental Organizations
<b>EPC</b>	Economic Policy Council	<b>NHDR</b>	National Human Development Report
<b>FGP</b>	Family Group Physicians	<b>NAP</b>	National Action Plan for Gender Equality
<b>GDI</b>	Gender-related Development Index	<b>NPRS</b>	National Poverty Reduction Strategy
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product	<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
<b>GEM</b>	Gender Empowerment Measure	<b>PA</b>	Public Association
<b>HDI</b>	Human Development Index	<b>PAK</b>	People's Assembly of Kyrgyzstan
<b>HPI</b>	Human Poverty Index	<b>PPP</b>	Purchasing Power Parity
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technologies	<b>TFP</b>	Total Factor Productivity
<b>KR</b>	Kyrgyz Republic	<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>LSG</b>	Local Self-Governance	<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>MC</b>	Midwifery Center	<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>MM</b>	Mass media	<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development

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## Foreword

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UNDP Kyrgyzstan has published National Human Development Reports since 1997. The Reports have proved to be one of the most successful analytical tools for policy choices, providing instrumental analysis of human development at the national and sub-national levels – the means for assessing human development situations, trends and gaps. They provide independent analysis of the situation and a range of policy options to accelerate achievements in human development. Although UNDP organizes the process of NHDR preparation, the findings and recommendations of the report may not necessarily reflect the opinion of UNDP.

In the past decade, the Kyrgyz Republic faced various development challenges. Parliamentary elections in early 2005 resulted in civil unrest and political upheaval leading to the election of a new President in July and the formation of a new Government in September of the same year. Civil society has taken an active part in solution of many development challenges over the last decade and in the political processes of 2005. Kyrgyzstan has a well-deserved reputation as a country where NGOs have a conspicuous place in the political, economic and social landscape.

This National Human Development Report was prepared at a very important stage of the country's development. UNDP Kyrgyzstan selected civil society as the theme for this year's report in order to provide a platform for independent researchers and experts to analyze thoroughly the role of civil society in economic, political and social spheres, and to illustrate the scope and impact of civil society on processes in these spheres. The Report shows that civil society in Kyrgyzstan now has sufficient maturity to raise its voice. It also shows that full participation of civil society as a whole - and the poor in particular - in planning, decision making and implementation processes are a major pre-requisite for democratization and for achieving sustainable human development. Neglect of such efforts hinder the state's ability to formulate policies and strategies that are relevant and appropriate to all sectors of the population.

I hope that the analysis and recommendations of the report will stimulate discussions and policy dialogue to encourage an enabling environment for civil society development in all spheres. UNDP is committed to cooperate with government and civil society to support the development of Kyrgyzstan and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

*Jerzy Skuratowicz,*  
*UNDP Resident Representative*

## Glossary

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**Business associations** – public organizations created by entrepreneurs based on free will and common interests to coordinate business activities and to represent and advocate their property interests. Business associations are created to organize interaction between entrepreneurs and the government and to participate in the decision-making process that determines the frameworks for business.

**Civil expertise** – a way of identifying and legalizing a defined position of a social group regarding a problem of interest to this group. The main methods are public hearings and presentations of the opinions of independent experts.

**Civil society** – a set of non-government institutions and self-organized groups capable of performing organized and collective actions to advocate social interests within established civil or legal rules and procedures.

**Community-based organizations** – organizations created by local communities to solve social and economic problems of the local region and/or of certain groups populating the region.

**Gender empowerment measure (GEM)** is focused on women's opportunities and participation in the decision making process. It measures gender inequality in the following key areas: participation in political decision-making, as measured by the percentages of women and men in legislatures; participation in economic decision-making as measured by, first, percentages of women and men as legislators, senior officials and managers, and, second, percentages in professional and technical positions; and control of economic resources, as measured by estimated income of women and men (PPP USD).

**Gender-related development index (GDI)** adjusts the average achievements of a country in human development, taking account of inequalities between men and women. GDI

is determined by the following indicators: life expectancy at birth; male and female adult literacy rate, the combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio for men and women; and estimated income (PPP USD).

**Human development index (HDI)** is a measure of human development. It measures the average achievements in a country in three basic dimensions of human development: a long and healthy life, as measured by life expectancy at birth; knowledge, as measured by the adult literacy rate (with a two-thirds weighting) and the combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio (with a one-third weighting); and a decent standard of living, as measured by GDP per capita (PPP USD).<sup>1</sup>

**Human poverty index (HPI)** measures deprivations in the same three basic dimensions as the HDI. The Human poverty index for developing countries (HPI-1) is used in Kyrgyzstan. It measures vulnerability to death at a relatively early age, as measured by the probability at birth of not surviving to age 40, exclusion from the world of reading and communications, as measured by adult illiteracy, and lack of access to overall economic provision, as measured by the average of two indicators: the percentage of the population without sustainable access to an improved water source and the percentage of children under weight for their age.<sup>2</sup>

**Human rights organizations** – civil society institutions controlling observance of people's civil and political rights and preventing their violation by the state.

**Institutionalization** – the process of creating and legalizing institutions responsible for implementing certain functions.

**Network organizations** – groups of NGOs with horizontal links, cooperation, information exchange and mutual use of assets. A limited number of carefully selected partners join a

<sup>1</sup> The main indices of human development, HDI, GDI, GEM, vary from 0 to 1, where 0 is the worst and 1 is the best result.

<sup>2</sup> HPI varies from 0 to 100 and essentially shows the percentage of the population living in extreme poverty

network around a central core organization in pursuit of the same goals. The basis for this interaction is a uniform chain of contracts integrating the efforts of the partners to attain a common final outcome.

**Oblast** – one of the seven administrative regions into which Kyrgyzstan is divided (sometimes referred to in the Report as “Regions”)

**Political parties** – permanent independent unions with clear structures expressing the political will of their members and supporters. The key goals of political parties are forming the government, executing authority through their representatives elected to the legislature and influencing the political course of the state.

**Public associations** – voluntary, self-governed non-profit units created by popular initiative based on common interests to satisfy spiritual and other non-material demands and to achieve common goals according to the bylaws of a united people.

**Public policy** is a decision-making process that provides opportunities to take into account the interests of different social groups based on public participation. Public policy

is implemented through clear procedural standards and document formats.

**Self-regulatory organizations** are public organizations, associations and unions governing certain areas of markets without government involvement. The main functions of these organizations are to develop detailed rules and standards of business activities and to supervise their observance by economic entities.

**Sustainable human development** is development that has people as its central and ultimate goal. Sustainable human development is orientated towards overcoming poverty, ensuring a healthy environment, social integration, preservation and augmentation of cultural and moral values, protection of civil rights, equal support for men and women, and effective democratic governance.

**Think tanks** are independent institutions established to conduct research and create objective knowledge applicable to public policy. As intermediaries between academic fields and government structures, think tanks link ideas and actions and produce knowledge in the form of public goods, which can be transferred to society.

## Brief Overview

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The National Human Development Report (NHDR) 2005 is devoted to analysis of how civil society mechanisms influence human capacity development in Kyrgyzstan.

The NHDR 2005 is based on a functional approach, the idea being that activities of civil society as an independent and important element for society as a whole are best identified through its actual, specific and exclusive functions. The authors of the NHDR have endeavored to show how civil society, by implementing its functions (protecting the rights and liberties of individuals, enabling individuals to participate in public/social life, integrating society and shaping public policy), creates the necessary prerequisites for multi-faceted development of human beings.

What is civil society? What are the structures and characteristic features of civil society? What are the basic functions of the non-governmental sector in the modern world? Answers to these questions are provided in the Introduction.

Kyrgyzstan has already moved along the path towards a free, democratic society, based on the principles of respect for the rights and freedoms of people and a competitive market. Transitional changes have had an inevitable impact on the level and dynamics of the basic elements of human development – personal incomes and accessibility to and quality of basic social benefits and services. The dynamics of the human development indices (HDI) for the entire period of independence and market reforms (1992-2004) are presented in Chapter 1. Special attention is paid to the diverse human costs of the transition process, the most notable of which is poverty. This Report argues that the state is incapable of overcoming the negative consequences of the transition period independently, and that civil society has a key role to play in overcoming poverty.

Chapter 2 describes the birth and development of civil society in Kyrgyzstan. In a surprisingly short time the country has established a well-defined civil

society with all the necessary attributes: institutional structure, performance of real functions being and involvement of significant human resources. This chapter analyzes the qualitative and quantitative parameters of civil society and its basic characteristics – both positive and negative. The authors justify the hypothesis of positive influence of civil society on development of human potential.

Historically the basic function of civil society has been securing the rights and liberties of members of society and social groups. Chapter 3 shows some of the actions that have so far been undertaken by public organizations in Kyrgyzstan to protect the individual rights and liberties of citizens, develop ethnic diversity and gender equality and secure the right to entrepreneurship, which is crucial in a market economy.

The NHDR 2005 leans to a great degree on previous reports, particularly on NHDR 2001. Analysis of data shows the significant changes, which have taken place in civil society over such a short period. Whereas in 2001 partnerships and interactions between the state and the civil sector were incomplete, unique partnership mechanisms have now been created, particularly in the economic and social sectors, as shown in Chapter 4. This progress has significantly changed public policy in Kyrgyzstan and produced tangible results.

In Chapter 5 the authors show that by neglecting the need for political dialogue in recent years the government encouraged growth of political tension, and this neglect, in a context of negative trends in the state machinery, was one of the factors behind the change of political regime in Kyrgyzstan. This chapter gives a brief analysis of the events of spring 2005. What does civil society expect of the state? How does the state view the mechanisms of interaction with civil society? What positive aspects have emerged in the relationship between these two actors, and what are the areas of concern? The authors offer their own views on these questions, to which the future will provide answers.



## Introduction

The goal of any society is to provide sustainable human development, i.e. development, whose *focus and ultimate goal is people*. **The point of such development is to overcome poverty, provide a healthy environment and social integration, preserve and nurture people's cultural and moral values, protect civil rights, support women, and ensure effective democratic governance.**<sup>3</sup>

In May 1997 the recently independent country of Kyrgyzstan adopted a long-term *National Strategy for Sustainable Human Development (up to 2015)*. The Strategy represented a philosophy and new development model for the country, identifying major priorities and guidelines for social and economic development.

The human development priorities, set out in the Strategy, were: ensuring that people could lead their normal lives in safety; social and political integration; balanced and environmentally sound economic growth; cultural and spiritual development; and efficient management of public resources.

Social integration was highlighted as the key to obtaining sustainable human development in Kyrgyzstan. Construction of a non-polarized and tolerant civil society therefore emerged as the major long-term strategic goal. Strengthening civil society institutions and promoting gender equality, pluralism and civil consent are crucial for successful development of both *human capital* (a person's ability to make effective decisions) and *social capital* (society's ability to make decisions and participate in policy dialogue). The idea of a meaningful partnership between government and civil society institutions is taking root and developing in Kyrgyzstan for the first time in the country's history.

The *Comprehensive Development Framework of the Kyrgyz Republic* – another long-term national strategy of economic development and society in general, which was adopted in 2001 – calls for a *systematic and integrated approach* to providing sustainable economic growth and overcoming poverty. This should be achieved by setting priorities and taking account of interdependence of all the major development elements: social, structural, human, managerial, environmental, economic, and financial. Kyrgyzstan became one of 13 pilot countries developing and implementing new approaches to providing sustainable economic and humanitarian development, and establishing a wide range of prerequisites for alleviating and finally eradicating poverty.

Signing by Kyrgyzstan of the Millennium Declaration in 2000 demonstrated once again the country's

commitment to tackling major human development challenges. The Millennium Development Goals chime with the goals and expectations of the people of Kyrgyzstan, defining specific targets for human progress, whose attainment will require concerted efforts by all relevant parties. *Close cooperation and partnership between all of the main forces*, which are capable of encouraging economic and humanitarian development becomes the key principle. Economic growth and alleviation of poverty is not only the responsibility of government and its various branches, but also of the private sector and the non-governmental sector, i.e. of *civil society*. International organizations and donor states can provide financial support and technical assistance to help achieve these goals.

Experience in other countries and the significant, albeit short, experience of our country, shows that civil society is, undoubtedly, the most significant factor in development, because it unites the potent forces of human values, traditions and experience, civil initiative, and responsibility. Intense and constructive partnership and collaboration between civil society, government institutions, the private sector and international organizations, is essential for implementing any economic or political strategy at national level. The most important general and specific areas, where positive outcomes cannot be achieved in Kyrgyzstan without involvement of civil society, can be listed as follows:

- Establishing and developing institutions to protect human rights.
- Providing sustainable prerequisites for poverty reduction.
- Enabling comprehensive development of human capital in Kyrgyzstan.
- Developing small towns, villages, and remote and mountain areas of the country.
- Developing effective systems of local self-governance.
- Reforming the public administration.

The importance of all these goals is quite sufficient to justify intense interest in creation, operation and development of civil society in Kyrgyzstan.

The 2005 National Human Development Report aims to show that civil society is crucial for ensuring sustainable human development in Kyrgyzstan and highlights the major trends in civil society development as an inextricable part of human development. This report does not attempt to describe all aspects of the formation and development of civil society or the entirety of the non-governmental sector in Kyrgyzstan.

<sup>3</sup> National Strategy for Sustainable Human Development of the Kyrgyz Republic. Documents from the National Forum on Sustainable Human Development. Bishkek, 1997

Its main goal is to show the crucial role of civil society in social and economic life.

The practical tasks of the Report are:

- to research civil society formation and development in Kyrgyzstan, focusing on the interaction between civil society formation and human development trends;
- to study specific features of the non-governmental sector in Kyrgyzstan, conditioned by the nature of the transition economy and democratic reforms;
- to highlight the major functions of civil society and describe its impact on development of human and social capital;
- to study obstacles to development of the civil sector in Kyrgyzstan;
- to identify future development trends and key factors contributing to formation of civil society as the main driving force for economic, political, and humanitarian progress.

Before going further it is worth addressing some fundamental questions: What is *civil society*? How is it built? What are the bases and mechanisms of its development? What are its functions? How is civil society related to human development? How does it help satisfy main human development needs?

Modern civil society develops and functions as a defined *social space*, the basis of which is the human being – a *civilized, active, fully-fledged individual* with his/her goals, needs, values and interests. In any country *civil society* – the totality of interpersonal relations and public institutions independent of the state – does much of the work to ensure that individual and collective needs are met.

The structure and subordination of spheres and institutions of civil society are initially determined by the structure and hierarchy of human needs – from

basic needs, such as personal security in day-to-day life, to needs for recognition, self-assurance, self-expression and authority.

Civil society is not just about “...separate individuals and groups interacting in social, political, and economic areas ... and (providing) ...a dynamic and multiple range of perspectives and values that seek expression in the public area.”<sup>4</sup>

In a modern state, civil society is a real structural element with specific functions. One can even offer an alternative definition of civil society, by which it is a special social organism filling the space that exists between government, the private sector, households and individuals, and serving as a link between these components of the state, the economy and the social fabric.

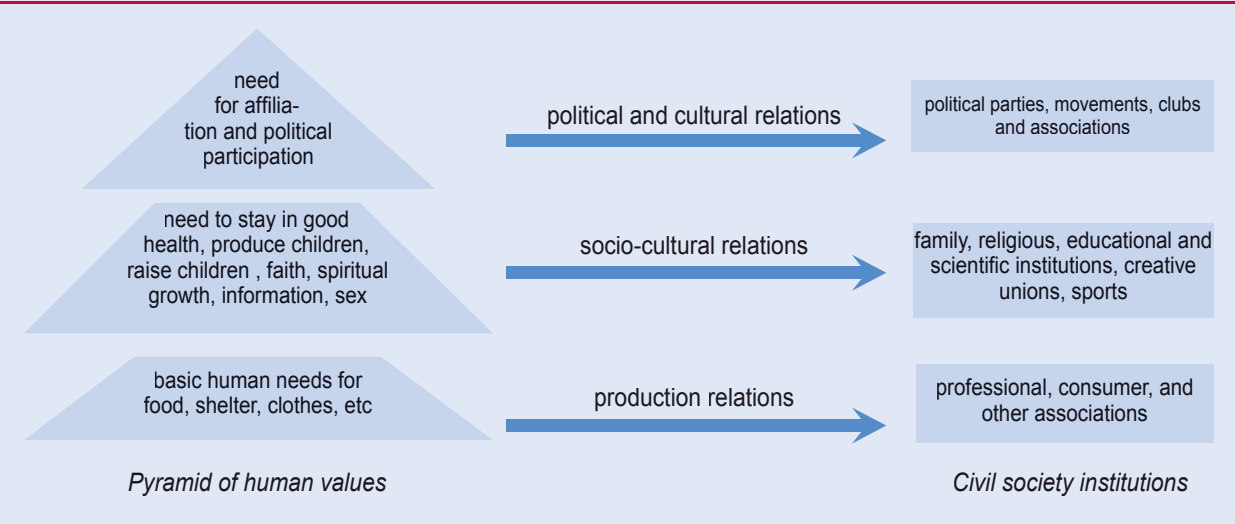
In today’s world civil society, as the entirety of unions, parties, cooperatives, associations, groups, etc., which bring together a country’s citizens, plays a crucial role in regulating public life, mediating between the individual and government, and preventing the latter from misusing its authority and power to the detriment of individual development. When civil society is active, government no longer has a monopoly in shaping social development.

The structure of civil society is fairly complex, consisting of many organizations and formations that have substantially different *functions, development strategies, and forms of interaction with the state*.

There are three major types of civil structures, which can be distinguished by their functions:

*Interest-based associations* – groups, in which amateurs and enthusiasts of various kinds can come together. These can be totally independent of the state, since people do not need any special relationship with government in order to collect stamps or coins, to swim in ice holes, etc.

**Box 1**  
**Human needs as a basic element of modern civil society**



<sup>4</sup> Kyrgyzstan National Human Development Report, 2000. UNDP, Bishkek.

## Box 2

**A developed civil society is a society where:**

- *individual and joint ownership and use of property* allows people to be socially independent of the state and to exercise their human and civil rights, freedoms, and duties;
- *there is actual freedom of speech, information, and communication* with the rest of the world, so that the society can develop in an open fashion, with free establishment of a transparent information space and public opinion;
- *various public formations (associations, clubs, etc)*, which reflect the diverse needs and interests of all groups and social strata, *combine organically*;
- *civil initiative is strongly expressed, and members of society have high levels of intellectual and psychological development* (crucial for conscious and proactive activities within various civil society institutions);
- *the basic principle of social organization is coordination*, which emphasizes horizontal relationships and develops democratic relationships, enabling self-governance and self-development to occur as efficiently as possible;
- *a legal, democratic arena* has been set up and dynamically developed, allowing recognition, respect and protection of natural and acquired human and civil rights.

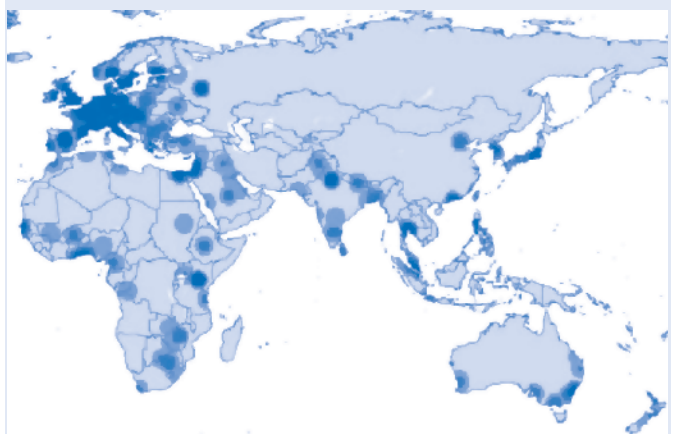
*Socio-economic associations* – all kinds of business associations, professional unions, consumer organizations and environmental movements. They play a major role in integrating economic and social activities in civil society in order to meet important needs.

*Political associations, parties, and civil movements* – these are the so-called “watchdog” organizations. Their primary activity is to protect members of society against political and administrative arbitrariness, psychological pressure, and environmental threats. The practical goal of these organizations is to achieve certain public and political positions, which allow them to carry out their functions effectively.

At different levels and in different forms, civil society exists today in virtually all countries. Experts from the London School of Economics regularly make a map showing the *extent and concentration of global civil society*. This map is based on indices that measure the *prevalence and density of NGOs* in particular regions. These indices are not accurate measures of global civil society, since they do not reflect the effectiveness of the non-government sector, but they are practically the only measures of civil society development on a global scale, which are available today.

Is Kyrgyzstan indeed a blank spot on the map of global civil society? The answer is no. The existence of civil society in Kyrgyzstan is undeniable. That being the case, the key questions are: how effective are non-governmental institutions in Kyrgyzstan, can they carry out their functions properly, and is civil society a significant human development factor in Kyrgyzstan? This report tries to give answers to these questions.

Figure 1

**Extent and concentration of global civil society (extract)**

Source: Global Civil Society, 2003

## Box 3

**Is Kyrgyzstan a blank spot on the map of global civil society?**

As is clear from the map, there are two centres of civil society in the world. Europe, particularly Western Europe, and North America, particularly the Montreal-New York-Washington axis.

Other regions with high prevalence and density of NGOs are found on the west coast of the United States, in Central America (centered on Mexico), in South America (on a Buenos Aires–Rio de Janeiro axis, in New Delhi in India, in North-East Asia around Bangkok and Singapore, and along the Osaka-Tokyo axis in Japan, and the Sydney-Canberra axis in Australia.

The map also shows the regions with fewest NGOs. They are Central Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia. These results express the view of the researchers, who prepared the map, that civil society is underdeveloped in these regions.

## Chapter I. Human Development in Kyrgyzstan: Achievements and Challenges of Transformation (1992 – 2004)

People are the greatest wealth and asset of any state and any economic system. The ultimate goal of economic development is not to achieve high productivity or increase public efficiency, but to give all members of society an adequate level and quality of life, to expand human freedom, and to create conditions for people to live full and creative lives. Human development parameters are what ultimately determine the success or failure of national economic development. The National Strategy for Sustainable Human Development and National Human Development Reports for Kyrgyzstan are based on this approach to human development, and focus on elements, which are foundational for development of human potential. These elements are the right to a *long and healthy life, to knowledge acquisition, to the necessary resources for decent existence, and to participation in social life.*<sup>5</sup>

### 1.1. Dynamics of human development indicators

Economic growth is not the only important factor for sustainable human development, but it is an important factor. The experience of many countries, including Kyrgyzstan, has shown that it is extremely difficult to promote human development

when there is protracted economic stagnation. However, several countries have shown that well designed social and economic policy can enable government, local communities, and civil society to jointly formulate a model that answers to human development criteria, even without high incomes or rapid economic growth.<sup>6</sup>

Human development trends in Kyrgyzstan since independence have been determined by specific conditions of the transition period and the quality of economic, social, and political reforms implemented by government. Throughout the transition period, well-being and human development indicators have moved in step with key macroeconomic indices and trends in the economy (Box 1.1).

### Human Development Index

The structural crisis and significant transformational decline in the early 1990s had inevitable negative impact on the country's human development indicators. As Graph 1.1 shows, fall in the Human Development Index (HDI) was mainly due to a sharp decline in per capita GDP. In 1995, GDP in Kyrgyzstan was 50.7 % of its level in 1990 and actual per capita GDP (based on PPP) had fallen by almost a third compared with 1992 (Table 1.2.). This led to a significant fall in the income index during the period of reforms (Table 1.1).

#### Box 1.1

#### The Kyrgyz economy in transition: major stages

**1991 – 1995:** transition decline and structural crisis. The most challenging years for both the economy and society: significant decline in GDP, widespread bankruptcy of industrial enterprises, and difficulties in adapting production to the new conditions of aggregate demand and internal and external competition. The government focused its efforts on achieving macroeconomic stability and preventing a critical decline in living conditions that threatened the country's social stability.

**1996 – 1999:** recovery growth and economic revival as a result of structural reforms. During this period, there was a certain degree of progress in macroeconomic stabilization: positive (and fairly high) economic growth, declining rates of inflation, and revival of investment. The main task of government was structural reform, i.e. providing conditions in which the Kyrgyz economy could function successfully. However, this came at the cost of increasing levels of poverty, wealth disparities and declining levels of human development.

**2000 to date:** stabilization of economic growth. Economic stabilization has created necessary, but not adequate, conditions for realizing the declared goal of government policy: "Sustainable economic and human development through structure building and adaptation of people to the market." Negative features, such as corruption and wealth disparity, have increased. However, understanding has emerged that success depends on government cooperation with public institutions, effective interaction between the branches of government and a proper balance between state and private economic interests.

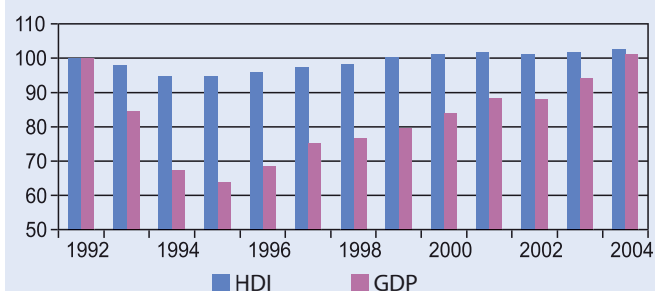
<sup>5</sup> To measure and assess the parameters of human development, the UN has recommended a system of human development indices: the human development index (HDI), human poverty index (HPI), gender development index (GDI) and gender empowerment measure (GEM).

<sup>6</sup> Human Development Report, 2004, Cultural Liberty in Today's World.

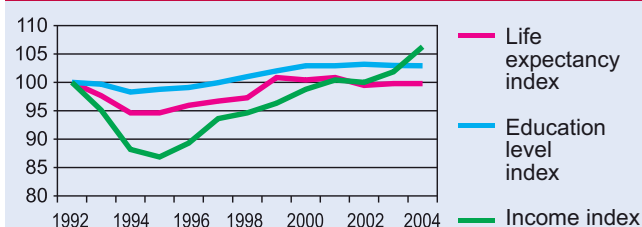
However, trends in health and education indicators within the HDI were not totally depressing despite sharp decline of the income index (Table 1.1, Graph 1.2). Even in the most challenging years, Kyrgyzstan managed to maintain the literacy level achieved during the Soviet era and to prevent a sharp fall of educational standards. This is reflected in the high numbers of students in elementary, secondary, and higher education institutions. Life expectancy dropped from 68.3 to 66.0 years during the economic decline, but this was a temporary trend: life expectancy has been steadily increasing since 1996. Reassuring trends in life expectancy and education were thanks to government efforts to maintain the Soviet level of health care and education provision, preventing a dangerous deterioration of basic social facilities in the first years of transition. Table 1.3 shows that government managed to maintain a fairly stable level of overall expenditure on health care and education during the first, most challenging, years of reforms, thanks to budget spending and foreign borrowings (Table 1.2.).

Revival of the economy in the late 1990s and creation of conditions for increased economic efficiency after 2000 stabilized and gradually improved HDI components. Two human development indices are now higher than in 1992: the education level (since 1998) and income (2002). However, a significant part of the Kyrgyz population still endures a lower

Graph 1.1  
GDP and Human Development Index dynamics compared with 1992



Graph 1.2  
Human Development Index Components



level and quality of life compared with the pre-reform period, when the Soviet system provided many all-encompassing social guarantees and public goods.

Table 1.1

Dynamics of the HDI and HDI elements in the Kyrgyz Republic

Index	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Life expectancy index	0.722	0.705	0.683	0.683	0.693	0.698	0.702	0.728	0.725	0.728	0.718	0.720	0.720
Education level index	0.870	0.867	0.855	0.859	0.862	0.869	0.879	0.888	0.895	0.895	0.898	0.896	0.895
Income index	0.465	0.442	0.410	0.404	0.415	0.435	0.440	0.448	0.459	0.467	0.465	0.474	0.494
Human development index	0.685	0.671	0.650	0.649	0.657	0.667	0.673	0.688	0.693	0.697	0.694	0.697	0.703

Source: National Statistics Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, World Bank Data

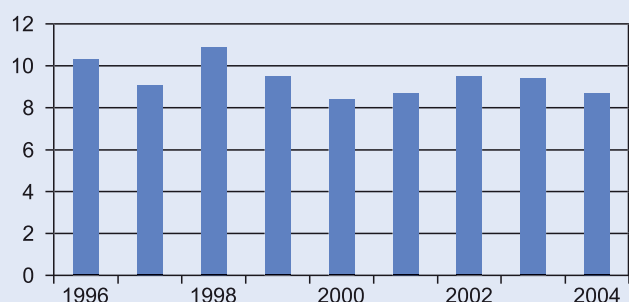
Table 1.2

Dynamics of some socio-economic indicators

Index	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Actual GDP per capita (PPP, USD) <sup>7</sup>	1620 2730	1411 2330	1169 1890	1122 1850	1204 2101	1351 2264	1392 2299	1461 2377	1560 2521	1637 2634	1622 2875	1714 3048	1928 3363
Life expectancy at birth (years)	68.3	67.3	66.0	66.0	66.6	66.9	67.1	68.7	68.5	68.7	68.1	68.2	68.2
Total spending on education (% GDP)	5.4	4.8	6.3	7.1	5.4	5.2	5.2	4.4	3.7	4.2	5.0	5.3	5.2
State spending on education (% GDP)	-	4.2	6.1	6.6	5.2	4.9	4.9	4.1	3.5	3.9	4.4	4.5	4.6
Total spending on health care (% GDP)	3.4	3.0	3.9	4.3	3.4	3.5	3.2	2.6	2.2	2.3	2.6	2.4	2.3
State spending on health care (% GDP)	2.9	2.6	3.5	3.9	3.1	3.2	2.8	2.3	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.0

<sup>7</sup> Upper row – International comparisons for 2000 (World Bank estimates); lower row – NSC data based on 1996 international comparisons

Graph 1.3  
HPI dynamics in the Kyrgyz Republic



### Human Poverty Index

Unlike the HDI, which measure the average level of progress in human development, the Human Poverty Index (HPI-1)<sup>8</sup> focuses on the ratio of people below the poverty line. HPI indicators do not just identify the proportion of people below the poverty line. The HPI operates as a sort of “mirror image” of the HDI: it is an index of extreme poverty, picking out aspects, which make it impossible for people to enjoy the benefits, which the HDI measures. The HPI illustrates the effects of poverty on people – malnutrition, premature death, lack of opportunities to receive high quality (or any) education, and lack of access to vital resources and basic services, such as fresh water, sewage systems and health care.

Analysis of HPI-1 elements reveals some improvements in the period since 2002,<sup>9</sup> which has been a time of sustained economic growth and poverty reduction. There has been a large reduction in numbers of chronically underweight children, and health reforms implemented since 2000, particularly in rural areas, have increased the numbers of people with access to health care services.

However, overall dynamics of HPI-1 and several of its elements have caused some anxiety since 2000. An upsurge in 2002 and 2003 gave particular cause for concern.

Table 1.3  
Dynamics of HPI elements (HPI-1)

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Children aged 1-6 chronically underweight, %	9.3	5.7	8.9	7.3	6.6	7.2	12.4	7.8	6.7
People with no access to fresh water, %	18.7	17.4	18.3	14.1	14	16	15.8	21.4*	19.5
People with no access to health care services, %	11.8	8.3	15.9	14.4	11.4	9.3	9.8	8.6	7.8
Human poverty index	10.3	9.1	10.9	9.5	8.4	8.7	9.5	9.4	8.7

The sudden surge in 2003 in numbers of people with no access to fresh water, shown in Table 1.3, is mainly due to change of the research methodology, with use of a larger sample of 5,016 households (a smaller sample of 1,100 households gave a lower figure of 13.2% in 2003). It should also be noted that since 2000, people’s access to fresh drinking water has been assessed using internationally accepted standards, according to which spring water is not viewed as a source of fresh water. It is also important to note that introduction of self-financing for water supplies could lead to further deterioration in this indicator, because some people, particularly those far from urban centers, will choose to do without fresh water rather than pay for it. Clearly, government and grassroots civil society institutions can and should focus on this issue. There are some good examples of construction and repair of water supply systems with help from public organizations. To date, roughly 300 water-users associations (WUAs) have been established in the Republic, and have gradually gained property rights to irrigation networks.

An overall analysis of HPI dynamics and poverty levels reveals what appears to be a paradox. Sustainable and obvious poverty reduction is not being matched by reduction of HPI-1 indicators. There was a significant decline in the HPI in 2004 (Table 1.4), but its level remained worse than in 2000.

Failure of the HPI to respond to economic improvements and to government efforts to involve the poor in the national economy are due, in our view, to level and structure of poverty in Kyrgyzstan: the changes for the better have not yet reached those living in extreme poverty. Economic recovery has enabled many of those, who were living just below the poverty line, to move above it. But those who were already some way below the poverty line seem to have slipped further down.

<sup>8</sup> The Human Poverty Index for developing countries is used in Kyrgyzstan

<sup>9</sup> Regional differences in the HDI and its elements are still very evident (Annexes. Regional profiles)

Destitution and poverty have their own inertia, and greater efforts will be needed to overcome them.

### Gender Development Index

As a country, which claims to respect human rights, Kyrgyzstan should take care to respect gender equality and prevent gender discrimination, as prescribed in the human development concept. Two standard indices reflecting human development in terms of gender differences have been developed within the concept – the Gender Development Index (GDI)<sup>10</sup> and Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM).

GDI indicators in Kyrgyzstan are traditionally very close to the HDI (Graph 1.3), due to a large measure of gender equality in the education and life expectancy indicators. Also, no significant differences between men and women's incomes are observed when calculating the per capita income indicator within the HDI.

We should, however, mention some increases in the gender imbalance in favor of women. As regards life expectancy, there is now a difference of 7.5 years in favor of women, which is fairly high compared with countries that have a high HDI level. Apart from natural factors, there are certain cultural reasons for this difference. Men take less care of their health and are more prone to smoking, and alcohol and drug abuse. Importantly, many women examined during pregnancy have updated information about their health, and become more used to seeing a doctor. Men tend to see a doctor only when they are seriously ill. There were some positive changes in this situation in 2002-2003 and UNFPA together with several NGOs are currently implementing a project to improve reproductive health among men. Local NGOs and Village Health Committees are addressing this issue as well.

**Table 1.4**  
**HPI and poverty dynamics in Kyrgyzstan**

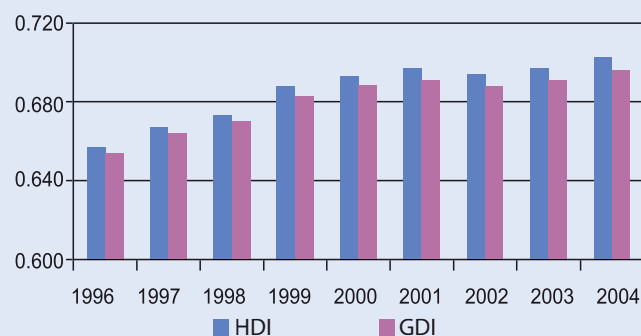
	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003*	2004
Poverty indicator based on spending per capita, %	43.5	42.9	54.9	55.3	52.0	47.6	44.4	47.9	42.9
Human Poverty Index	10.3	9.1	10.9	9.5	8.4	8.7	9.5	9.4	8.7

\* Before 2003 the poverty level was defined based on a survey of 3000 households (old poverty level – the bottom row). Since 2003 the NSC has used a new method based on an integrated survey of 5016 households to define the new poverty level (upper row in the table)

<sup>10</sup> Gender Development Index (GDI) enables adjustments to be made to the average level of a country's achievements by considering possible inequalities between men and women based on the key elements of human development. In this case, differences in men and women's achievements are viewed as a negative human development factor. GDI indicators are compared with the HDI and the fewer the differences between the two indices, the more favourable the gender balance is.

<sup>11</sup> Kyrgyzstan National Human Development Report. UNDP 2002

**Graph 1.4**  
**HDI and GDI in the Kyrgyz Republic**

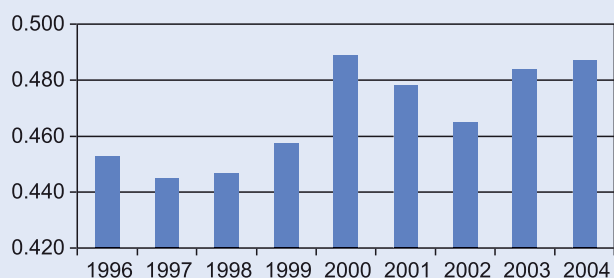


Another disturbing fact (also mentioned in NHDR 2002) is decline in the number of boys, particularly in rural areas, who obtain a full eleven-grade education, with negative effect on their further education opportunities. This happens mainly because boys from poor families have to leave school early and help provide for their family. In 2002 there were 51.5% and 48.5 % boys and girls in primary schools respectively, as opposed to 46.5% and 53.5% in secondary school. In remote and rural areas this gap is much wider, particularly in poor families.<sup>11</sup> Negative effects of this trend for human development could be magnified by increasing difficulty of obtaining vocational training or special secondary education in rural areas.

### Gender Empowerment Measure

The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) focuses on women's opportunities rather than abilities, and aims to establish whether or not women are active in economic and political life and decision-making. Attention to gender problems has reached new levels since independence and many such problems are now considered at government

Graph 1.5  
GEM dynamics in Kyrgyzstan



level with direct participation of civil society. A new government unit, The Women, Family and Youth Secretariat, which reports to the Presidential Office, has been set up and works closely with civil society. A National Action Plan (NAP) for gender equality in the period 2002-2006 has been adopted and all branches of the executive have been made responsible for its implementation. Monitoring of NAP implementation in 2004 showed the importance of joint work by government and civil society for attainment of gender goals.

This index shows a steady rise of women's involvement in national life (Graph 1.5).<sup>12</sup> However, the improvement have been uneven. Analysis of this index year by year reveals that women are seriously under-represented in legislative institutions and in wealth creating roles. So, in 2003-2004 the percentage of women in the general population stood at 50.6%, while their representation in legislative bodies was 13.6% and 30.5% in administrative and managerial positions. The percentage of women working as specialists and technical staff is significantly higher (57-59%). However, the salary level of women in Kyrgyzstan is still significantly lower than that of men (women have earned roughly 66% of what men earn in recent years). High levels of poverty make it difficult for women to make independent decisions because they are to a large extent dependent on men or on living conditions.

## 1.2. Human cost of transition

Transition from a planned to a market economy is bound to involve significant social costs for a number of reasons:

- Unlike a socialist economy, a market economy is *not aimed at providing people with universal social guarantees*. Most of the responsibility for personal welfare (health, higher and further education, etc) is passed to individuals.
- *The budget deficit* resulting from insufficient revenue and structural imbalances and an *overall fall* in government expenditure as a percentage of GDP leads to reduced social services.
- As a result of the transition to a market economy, most enterprises and organizations have to *give up the burden of maintaining social infrastructure units* and focus on economic efficiency and competition.
- Establishing and developing new economic relationships requires *changes in people's mindsets*. Many people find it hard to accept that "I alone am responsible for myself, my relatives, my personal well-being and prosperity."
- Transition from the Soviet totalitarian regime to democracy involves the emergence of *social stratification*. Differences in people's assets, income and consumption levels can be significant.<sup>13</sup>

Kyrgyzstan has had to face all the social challenges and human costs of transition. The unprecedented increase in poverty to a critical level of 55% of the population in 1999 is the most striking proof of this.

Poverty in Kyrgyzstan has the following characteristics:

- Despite a sustained decrease, it still exists on a tremendous scale. Poverty levels in Kyrgyzstan significantly exceed poverty levels in many developed and developing countries.

<sup>12</sup> However, the significant regional variations in this index should be noted: the highest values of the GEM are observed in Chui region and the city of Bishkek, whereas in Batken, Osh and Jalal-Abad regions this index is significantly lower than the average across the country. (Annexes. Regional profiles)

<sup>13</sup> Kyrgyzstan National Human Development Report 2000. UNDP, Bishkek

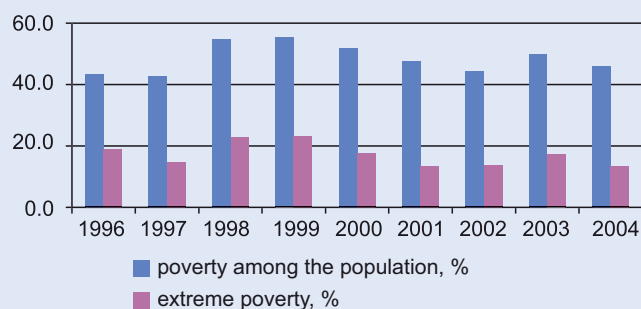


- Being able-bodied and well educated is no insurance against poverty in Kyrgyzstan.
- Poverty has clearly defined regional differences and is most widespread in rural and particularly mountain areas.
- In many rural areas and small towns poverty is chronic.<sup>14</sup>
- Poverty is inextricably linked to social distortions such as limited access to social benefits, social diseases (“diseases of the poor”), rampant crime, violations of labour rights (human traffic), uncivilized attitude to the environment and abuse of power (corruption)<sup>16</sup>.
- As elsewhere in the world, poverty is self-perpetuating, in the sense that individuals are unable to escape from it and it tends to be transmitted from generation to generation.

A high degree of wealth inequality remains the main obstacle to development opportunities for most people in Kyrgyzstan and represents a threat to social cohesion in the Republic. Data supplied by the National Statistics Committee suggest that income concentration in Kyrgyzstan is 1.5-2 times greater than in developed countries (the gap between incomes of the poor and incomes of the wealthy is presented in Attachments, Table 18). Shortcomings of official statistics make it likely that the actual disparity is even bigger. Clearly, the benefits of economic growth are distributed very unevenly in the Republic.

Poverty reduction programmes and other projects (micro-credit, credit union development and business incubator programmes) have brought some positive results in the last few years.

Graph 1.6

**Poverty and Extreme poverty, % of population<sup>15</sup>**

However, the scale of poverty and accompanying phenomena and factors restraining human capacity development is still significant.

Irreversible overcoming of poverty and creation of conditions for sustainable human development cannot be left entirely to government. The non-governmental sector has already partially compensated withdrawal by the state from provision of some social functions (as a result of financial limitations and requirements of market reforms). Grant assistance from international organizations has helped this process. But the efforts of civil society and social mobilization, although efficient at the micro-level, may not be enough to solve the problems of human development. That will also require professional and honest government, and an efficient private sector.

We are convinced that positive results depend on productive and effective partnership between government, business and civil society.

<sup>14</sup> Problems of inequality and widespread poverty in the country's regions have been researched in details in the 2002 NHDR "Human Development in Mountainous Regions of the Kyrgyz Republic".

<sup>15</sup> Data from multi-target poverty research by a WB project (1993 data – collected during the first research in the autumn of 1993; 1995 data – collected in the spring of 1996; 1996-1999 data – collected in the autumn of 1999; 2000-2001 data have been estimated based on a survey of 3000 households).

<sup>16</sup> High levels of corruption in Kyrgyzstan are apparent both to people living in the Republic and to international organizations. The Corruption Perception Index, calculated by Transparency International (Corruption Perception Index, Transparency International, 2005), rates Kyrgyzstan 130th among 157 countries (lower ranking implies higher levels of corruption).

## Chapter II. Independent Kyrgyzstan: Creating and Developing Civil Society

### 2.1. Stages of civil society development in Kyrgyzstan

Study of the evolution and development of civil society in various areas of public life in Kyrgyzstan – political, economic, and social – reveals certain common trends, phases and stages. Two stages, or phases, clearly stand out in the evolution of civil society in the country. They can be qualified as “passive” and “active”.

The “*passive phase*” (it might also be termed a “*survival and adaptation phase*”) occurred in the first half of the 1990s and comprised two major stages:

**1992 – 1993:** demise and intense transformation of the “old” civil society and efforts to adapt to the new conditions.

There were some rudiments of civil society in the Soviet Union. Civil society institutions were generally focused on satisfying the basic social needs of individuals. Various cultural societies, labour unions, and analytical institutions were quite well developed, but activities by other independent public institutions working in the fields of human rights and freedoms, social integration, and policy making, as well as non-Communist political parties and movements, were prohibited. *Perestroika* helped to create civil society in Kyrgyzstan, especially in the political sphere. The first NGOs, such as the Women’s Congress and National Cultural Centres, were created from the debris of socialist civil society, and the first socio-political movements emerged, based on democratic, anticommunist and nationalistic feelings.<sup>17</sup> These movements provide the context for inauguration of the (then at least) democratically-oriented first President of the Kyrgyz Republic. During the first years of independence pro-communist organizations practically ceased to exist, and the first democratic movements started to emerge.

**1993 – 1995:** the second stage in the development of civil society was characterized by creation of new institutions.

During this period a small number of new non-government organizations worked energetically to develop mechanisms that could offer an alternative to government decision-making, and the first non-government procedures were put in place for implementing development programmes.

Accreditation of representative offices of a number of large international organizations and foundations was very important. The United Nations Development Programme lent its support to democratisation processes via the first Kyrgyzstan Country Programme (1993-1996). In 1993 the Soros Foundation for Kyrgyzstan was established, with the mission of supporting civil society. The Counterpart Consortium organizations, working as part of the NGO Support Initiative for Central Asia, funded by USAID, helped a wide range of NGOs primarily involved in social and agrarian development. This initiative included a generous training element for adults and an extensive grant programme. The grant portfolio included seed grants for new NGOs, corporate grants (through which the American government matched each dollar invested by Kyrgyz businesses), and partnership grants for projects jointly implemented by Kyrgyz and international NGOs. The first civil society activists were trained in the role played by civil society in a democracy and in comprehensive project management for NGOs.

The “*active phase*”, or the “*construction and development phase*”, in evolution of Kyrgyzstan’s civil society can be divided into three major stages:

**1996 – 1998:** important legislative documents were adopted, laying foundations for civil society, including the Civil Code of the Kyrgyz Republic, Part I (8th May 1996), the laws “On State Registration of Legal Entities” (12th July 1996) and “On Economic Partnerships and Associations” (15th November 1996). A number of major international organizations and foundations gained accreditation in the Kyrgyz Republic, which was also significant.

Creation of non-government organizations – public associations, trade unions and religious organizations – significantly increased during this period (Table 2.1). These new associations and foundations were primarily focused on *human rights*, which mirrored the needs of transition, and reflected the beginning of democratic reforms. Lack of a systematic approach and a considerable measure of spontaneity in creation of civil society institutions were also typical of this stage.

**1998-2000:** this period saw the launch of several national programmes, which depended on wider participation and civil society support. The National

<sup>17</sup> By the end of 1993 four political parties: Erkin Kyrgyzstan, Asaba, Republic People’s Party, and Agrarian Party had been created.

Strategy for Sustainable Human Development and the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) were catalysts for the development of the civil sector in Kyrgyzstan. These programmes created opportunities for civil society to apply its energies and emphasized the importance of developing mechanisms, such as self-support, mutual assistance, social mobilization and micro credits. The need to institutionalise these mechanisms produced a sudden increase in the number of non-governmental organizations that were not politically oriented. The total number of non-governmental organizations more than doubled during this period, mainly due to growth of multi-objective public organizations, classified by the NSC as “other organizations”. There were also major qualitative changes: differentiation by types of activity; gradual regional expansion (civil society organizations, which had previously been limited to the capital, branched out to Osh and Jalalabat in the south of Kyrgyzstan), and start of development by non-commercial, social and community-based organizations.

Major financial support (grants) from international foundations and organizations was an important factor in expansion of the non-government sector during this period, and the missions of NGOs in the Republic was largely shaped by international donor organizations. These grants primarily supported seminars, round tables, and training, and this assistance had an organizational, technical, educational, and instructional focus, with positive impact on operations and efficiency of NGOs.

During this stage, non-government initiatives served as highly focused instruments for cultural intervention by international organizations and development agencies and created opportunities for efficient implementation of personal and group interests within NGO frameworks. An analysis of

this stage in the development of civil society shows a significant correlation between the strategic goals of international donor organizations and the objectives and missions chosen by NGOs. Despite rapid growth of the non-governmental sector, the overwhelming majority of NGOs were focused on providing social services to society, exerting little influence over the political agenda and decision-making. The government favored this situation, which allowed it to promote an image of Kyrgyzstan as an “island of democracy” in the traditionally authoritarian Central Asia region.

However, a dangerous trend towards weakening of the democratization process also emerged during this period. There was a tendency to strengthening of presidential power, weakening of Parliament and conversion of the government into a technocratic continuation of the Presidency. This was reflected in the changes to the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic. Thus, for example, amendments and addenda to the Constitution passed in 1996 have substantially increased the powers of the President in appointment of officials. Parliament lost its right to approve the government’s structure and its consent was no longer needed for appointment of members of the government. Amendments and addenda to the Constitution passed in 1998 forbade Parliament to pass laws, which increase state budget expenditures or reduce revenues without consent from the government.

*2000-present:* during this period the number of non-governmental organizations in the country increased by two and a half times (Table 2.1). The fastest-growing organizations have been public associations, trade unions, religious organizations and some others. Many business associations achieved real power and their activities moved to a new qualitative level: from “interest-based clubs” they matured into organizations, which influence

Table 2.1

**Number of non-government organizations officially registered in the Kyrgyz Republic, as of 1st January 2005**

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Kyrgyz Republic	340	561	658	767	938	1487	1841	2325	3146	3850	4828	6120	7462	9076
Public associations*	34	70	95	119	142	516	543	604	690	767	890	987	1102	1187
Professional organizations	38	70	84	100	119	158	252	333	393	469	534	592	627	664
Trade unions	125	164	168	168	173	185	193	195	227	286	355	438	488	512
Religious organizations	10	29	33	50	74	91	131	177	189	205	235	265	371	399
Political organizations	15	25	33	40	53	64	72	76	88	91	94	102	107	113
Other non-governmental organizations	118	203	245	10	377	473	650	940	1559	2032	2720	3736	4767	6201

\* Public associations are defined as associations of profit-making and entrepreneurial organizations

Box 2.1

**Principles of interaction between non-governmental organizations and the state**

- *Rule of law* – obeying current legislation.
- *Partnership* – non-governmental organizations and state authorities jointly participate in addressing social issues and defining priorities in social policy.
- *Transparency* – openness of the parties and general availability of information for all non-governmental stakeholders in awarding public contracts of a social nature.
- *Consistency* – making coordinated decisions to achieve particular goals and pursue day-to-day activities.
- *Accountability* – strict adherence by the parties to approved public contracts for social provision.

formulation of economic policies. Importantly, civil society started to offer serious opposition to attempts by the state to discontinue democratic reforms and became more vocal in objecting to corruption. The main achievement of this stage was significant expansion of interaction between NGOs and ordinary people, and appearance of broad support for aspirations of non-governmental organizations to defend democratic gains. The state became aware of the threat to its unlimited power, posed by the civil sector, and tried to control it in various ways: encouraging “clones” and trusted NGOs, imposing rules of dialogue on civil society, manipulating opinions of the civil sector, etc. (see Chapter 5 of the Report). However, the Aksy events of 2002 showed that ordinary people shared the objections of NGOs to abandonment by the President and his Government of democratic values, and ultimately led to mass protests against the political regime of the first President of Kyrgyzstan.

Development of civil society in Kyrgyzstan has been largely determined by the content and needs of the transition process. At the start of reforms the non-governmental sector still had to learn the principles of democratic governance. But the sector has now become a source of democratic change. Civil society is now capable of creating effective mechanisms for interaction between the non-governmental sector and the state.

**Civil sector and the state: enemies or partners?**

To achieve their goals, civil society institutions have to interact with the government on a regular basis. There are two alternative strategies for such interaction: *cooperation* and *opposition*.<sup>18</sup>

Under a democratic regime, civil society interacts with government, whereas under an authoritarian regime it remains in either active or passive opposition. Importantly, modern democratic societies do not rule out the possibility of active opposition, within the law. Cooperation mainly involves partnerships, joint discussion and solution of public issues, and a proactive civil dialogue. This is the paradigm most often chosen by business associations, scientific, cultural, and educational institutions. However, “watchdog” organizations are often actively opposed to the government and in conflict with governmental institutions. In practice, relations between civil associations and the government may depend not only on goals of the associations, but also on the stage of their life cycle. Many public associations (environmental movements, professional unions, and even independent expert associations) start as clearly defined protesters, but as they develop, they gradually progress from truculent opposition to rational collaboration.

In discussing different strategies of interaction between civil society and the government, it is important to mention the weak points. Regular proactive cooperation with the government creates a risk that civil society will become part of the government. The non-governmental sector then loses its basic principles of autonomy and independence and becomes governmental. At the other extreme, constant opposition is also fraught with serious perils, since it can lead to marginalization of civil institutions, loss of links with the wide social arena, and their degradation into “sects”, creating a threat to social and political stability.

Mechanisms for the relationship between the non-governmental sector and other elements of the state and economy are taking shape in Kyrgyzstan parallel with the rise and development of civil society institutions.

*At the beginning of the 1990s* the state developed general approaches, priorities and legislation for the non-governmental sector. However these approaches were often abstract and contradictory, and were not always followed.

*By the end of the 1990s* the state had adopted a general, relatively consistent and focused position towards the non-governmental sector. However, there was still no unified comprehensive state policy for interaction with NGOs.

<sup>18</sup> The strategies described were presented during discussion of the project “Business, power and civil society”, implemented by the Liberal Mission (a Russian NGO).

In recent years there has been a completely new approach to relations between the state and civil society with a focus on interaction between the state and NGOs, as reflected in article 73. p.11 of the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic. This had enabled real cooperation between the non-governmental sector and state authorities, although scope of this cooperation has been limited.

In 2004 the government developed a Concept<sup>19</sup> for its work with the non-governmental sector (see Box 2.1). However, there has been a selective approach, where the government interacts with civil society institutions in some sectors and but goes no further than token cooperation with institutions in other sectors.

Despite these problems, what has been found is that any government policy has the effect of stimulating the appearance of civil institutions, which are authoritative and are capable of contributing to further democratisation of Kyrgyzstan. As will be shown in the rest of this Report.

## 2.2. Current state of civil society: strengths and weaknesses

The institutional framework of civil society in Kyrgyzstan features six extensively developed major sectors (Graph 2.1).

Analysis of the current state of civil society in Kyrgyzstan, or, essentially, a description of its main characteristics, should provide answers to questions concerning:

1. quantitative features of the civil sector;
2. qualitative features of civil society institutions

and results of their work;

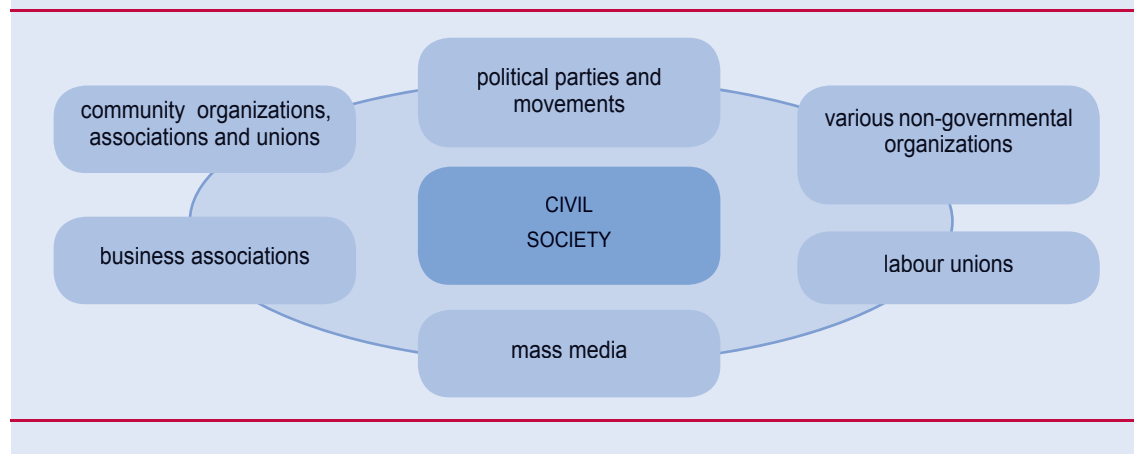
3. strengths and weaknesses of civil society in today's Kyrgyzstan;
4. any anomalies in the civil sector development.

Table 2.1 shows that quantitative growth of civil society in Kyrgyzstan has been rapid. According to official estimates,<sup>20</sup> in 2004 the non-governmental sector employed over 20,000 full-time workers, up to 10,000 part-time workers (consultants and experts), and over 8,000 volunteers. However, a study conducted for this Report indicates that the number of people employed in the non-governmental sector is considerably higher at 100,000. That is approximately 5% of the total number of people employed in Kyrgyzstan. This surge of employment in civil society organizations is due to short-term projects and programmes. Civil society in Kyrgyzstan today represents a wide variety of types and forms of institutions, as will be discussed in this report.

An important indicator in assessing the scale and dynamics of civil society is the total volume of financial resources allocated to the sector. The authors of this Report attempted to analyze dynamics of civil sector financing in the Kyrgyz Republic by international organizations based on information available on web sites of those organizations. For various reasons (absence or non-publication of such information by some donor organizations, and lack of information on internal sources of financing) it was not possible to gather exhaustive information, but data on financing levels by the biggest international organizations justify some conclusions.

UNDP has also taken a prominent role in developing civil society, providing significant assistance to grassroots groups in the non-governmental sector

Figure 2.1  
Civil sector framework in the Kyrgyz Republic



<sup>19</sup> The Concept of Cooperation between Public Associations, Foundations (Non-governmental Institutions) and Government Authorities Approved by Government Resolution No. 200 of the Kyrgyz Republic dated 25th March 2004

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

(mutual support groups and community-based organizations) to help develop social mobilization as an instrument of poverty reduction. From 1998 to 2004 UNDP invested more than three million USD to support local initiatives.

So data from the three biggest donors show that financial support from international donor agencies supporting development was the main factor in growth of the non-governmental sector from 2001-2004 and expansion of its role as an active partner of the state. Some decline in levels of this support was apparent in 2004, when funding from the three chief donors was 0.62% of GDP compared with 1.07% in 2001. Taking into account growth in the number of NGOs and some other evidence, this decline suggests *increased effectiveness of grants* and an encouraging tendency of greater *financial support from the private sector*.

However, such quantitative indicators cannot give a full picture of the state and significance of the country's civil sector. The best way of assessing activities by NGOs is *qualitative*, using criteria of *work actually carried out* in society and the economy, and *ultimate results* of this work. Civil society work in Kyrgyzstan can be divided into four basic areas: protection of people's rights and freedoms, helping their assimilation in society, participation in policy making, and supporting processes of integration. The desirable outcomes of NGO activity are *new laws and rules*, approved with input from NGOs, *new ideology* in society and *new types of public and*

*individual behavior*, as well as delivery of *specific services* (educational, consulting, social, economic, etc.) to society and individuals.

When discussing civil society, it is important to remember that the state of civil society, both past and present, depends largely on so-called background factors, i.e. environment factors. Such factors or variables are not directly related to the functioning of civil society but have a significant direct and indirect effect on its development and determine its strengths and weaknesses. The background to civil society is shaped by *demography*, *institutions*, by *social factors* and by *mentality* (Graph 2.2).

These factors have both positive and negative impact on the state of civil society, particularly on structural changes in its framework, and the nature of the functions that are performed.

The *demographic structure* of Kyrgyzstan, where children and young people represent a consistently high share of the total population, is reflected by large numbers of NGOs focused on rights of mothers and children and on implementing programmes for all-round development of the young generation. The youth segment is an increasingly important part of the NGO sector and of the political sector of civil society.

*Social factors*, including gender and ethno-cultural factors, have even greater impact both on the structure of civil society and on the nature of activities by civil society institutions. It is generally

**Table 2.2**  
**Soros Kyrgyzstan Foundation: funding for civil society programmes, thousands of USD**

Nature of programmes	2001	2002	2003	2004
NGO support	201.9	226.8	205.2	182.6
Ethnic development	82.8	87.9	87.5	107.2
Legal programme	479.1	457.7	417.3	163.3
Women's programme	105.8	156.5	173.0	186.1
Support for mass media	216.7	128.6	175.3	234.8
Conferences, seminars, internships	133.7	108.5	76.0	97.4
Total:	1220	1166	1134	971.5

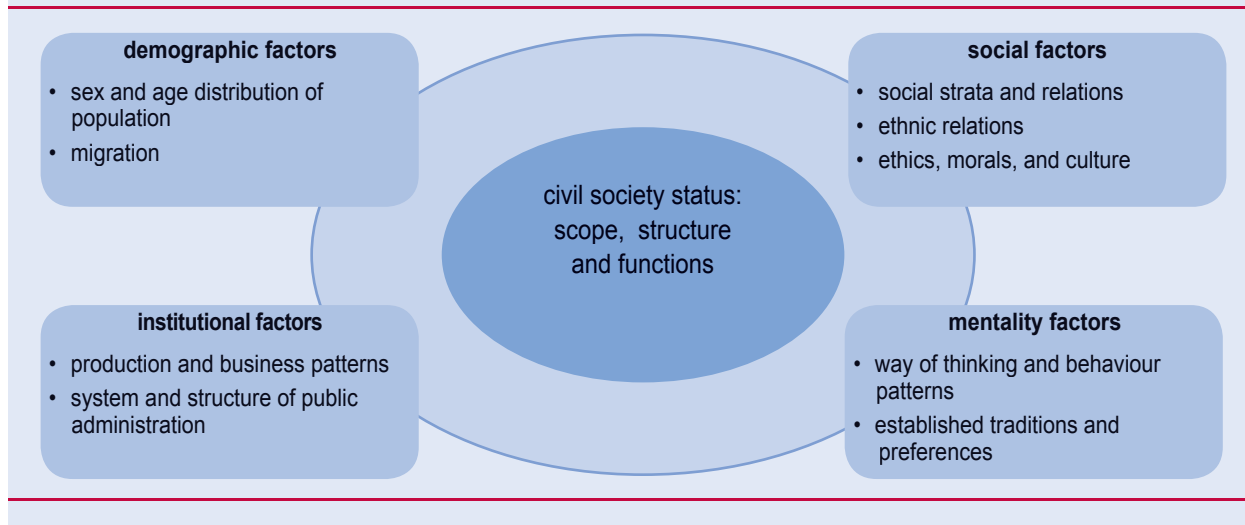
**Table 2.3**  
**USAID: funding for programmes, related to civil society development, thousands of USD**

USAID <sup>21</sup>	2001	2002	2003	2004
Funding, total	14786	13550	14500	12350.6
Multi-purpose education programmes, including Eurasia Foundation programmes	5268	4350	5500	2850.6
Population and health programmes	3618	3000	3600	3000
Programmes to develop democratic culture and civil society institutions	3200	4700	5400	6500

<sup>21</sup> These calculations were based on information available at [www.usaid.gov](http://www.usaid.gov)

Figure 2.2

## Background to civil society functioning and development in Kyrgyzstan



recognized that NGOs with a “gender” profile have been key instruments in solving many socio-economic problems in Kyrgyzstan, particularly in more remote areas of the country.

Background *institutional features*, namely the structure of business and the system of public administration, have also influenced civil society in Kyrgyzstan. For example, extensive development of small and medium business and virtual absence of large industrial enterprises in Kyrgyzstan has encouraged appearance of civil society groups and business associations, which aim to represent entrepreneurs, protect their interests, and create adequate mechanisms for interaction between the state and private business. Poor quality of public administration, which was to some extent inevitable during the first years of transition, resulted in a number of NGOs (by tacit agreement with the state) trying to perform the functions of central regulatory bodies and high-level experts, which in developed societies are performed by a competent and professional government. State policy towards civil society should also be viewed as an institutional factor.

Finally, the specific *mentality* of the ethnic groups living in Kyrgyzstan has undoubtedly influenced the activities of civil society and will continue to do so in the future. Practice shows that this influence can be both positive and negative. For example, traditional commitment of the Kyrgyz to the “extended family” (clan) cements functions and links between civil society segments (this is especially typical of primary civil society segments in the provinces). This is an example of the positive influence of clan relations on social behaviour. On the other hand, the

supremacy of group interests often forcibly adapts the needs and behaviour of individuals and restricts their freedom in decision-making, which tends to distort functioning of civil society institutions. It also happens that a public organization may in fact represent the interests of its leader rather than of the group as a whole.

#### Associations in various areas of public life

The efforts and support of donor organizations, which have been able to secure cooperation by the state, has led to emergence of many public organizations, both at national and local level. Diverse and sustainable public organizations have appeared in many fields: ecology, children and youth, women (gender), medicine, culture, art, science, education, human rights, support for public initiatives, help for the disabled, rehabilitation of disabled children, promotion of economic and democratic reforms, etc.

Types and methods of self-organization reflect the different projects implemented in Kyrgyzstan by various players. There have been two main approaches to creation and development of NGOs in the Republic.

The first is a *demand-driven approach* or *impulse from inside*, by which public organizations are set up based on real interests and needs of citizens and various social groups. Most NGOs have emerged from this paradigm. Example are groups set up by parents of disabled children or pensioners. Such organizations have real impact in the field, delivering specific assistance to those in need of it. The same paradigm underlies NGOs, which were set up to promote and protect the interests

of business, such as the Congress of Business Associations, International Business Council, Union of Businessmen. Public organizations (and business associations) of this type are created by businessmen as an important component of business infrastructure. They can protect the rights of businessmen and lobby their interests by participation in economic policy making.

The second group of public associations is represented by NGOs created in the framework of grant programs or individual projects of donor organizations. This group, unlike the first, has tended to work less on real problems of particular groups and more on promotion of donors' understanding of "how it should be", i.e. they have tended to implement a *supply-driven approach* or *impulse from outside*. NGOs in the second group have worked on a wide variety of projects and had more favorable starting conditions (because of support of donors). Typical problems of such NGOs include reluctance to continue their work when financing is reduced: activities tend to come to a halt when funding dries up. However, a few of them have become institutionalized and found a place in civil society.

Many international NGOs have opened representative offices in Kyrgyzstan, with their own projects, which are implemented directly or through local partners. Their operations are restricted by their mandates to frameworks defined by donors and intergovernmental agreements.

In spite of their differences in goals and operational mechanisms, the overwhelming majority of public associations in Kyrgyzstan pass through the following stages of development:

1. Using their own resources to solve a *specific issue* and *advocate the interests* of a specific group of citizens.
2. Seeking *additional financing* and grant assistance.
3. Awareness of the need to implement *system-wide changes*, attempts to work within the regulatory and legal frameworks and change operating conditions.
4. *Creating interaction* between the civil, government and commercial sectors to solve pressing social issues, integration with *network-based organizational frameworks*, and willingness to participate in design of strategies and long-term development plans.

### NGOs in Kyrgyzstan: profiles

There are differing levels of consolidation between citizens in various spheres of civil society in Kyrgyzstan today. Associations working in *legal protection, the social sector, promotion of business interests* and similar spheres are the most active.

NGOs have to find ways of overcoming problems, which are characteristic for transition economies: lack of experience in democratic governance, weakness of state institutions, and lack of resources needed to solve pressing social issues. Indeed, during the first years of reform in Kyrgyzstan NGOs found themselves carrying out functions, which should come within the scope of government and the private sector. NGOs in a transition economy become new social institutions, performing specific functions for specific people, primarily in the social sphere.

Civil society institutions are diverse, making it difficult to give a detailed profile of an average, or typical NGO. However, main quantitative and qualitative features of the average Kyrgyz NGO can be listed.<sup>22</sup> Quantitative analysis suggests that such an NGO

- is based in Bishkek (nearly 50% of all NGOs);
- has 11 employees;
- carries out programme activities, which are financed primarily by donor grants;
- has highly educated staff;
- is multilingual, i.e. its staff speak many languages.

On the *qualitative side*, NGOs divide naturally into two types. Features of the first type are as follows:

- Its programme activities are primarily financed by grants from one donor.
- Its portfolio is usually not diversified.
- The NGO is based around one charismatic leader, or two at most, and has a closed membership.
- Unlike in developed countries, employees of such an NGO are not likely to move on to government work, i.e. the NGO is not a source of high-calibre human resources for government.

This profile suggests a "caste" mentality in the structure of such an NGO, which makes success in representing the social group, for which it supposedly serves as an advocate, unlikely. NGOs with the above profile also tend to provoke a number of specific problems:

<sup>22</sup> Study of civil society conducted by the authors within the framework of the NHDR, 2005. Annex I



1. They may seek to obtain donor funding “at any price”. Such behaviour is bad for the reputation of NGOs in society, creating suspicion and distrust towards them.
2. Their dominance makes it hard for donors and other stakeholders (for example, those managed by the state) to find suitable partners. On the whole, lack of confidence in NGOs by the state and the business sector increases dependence of these organizations on donors, reduces their sustainability, and restricts their operations.
3. New organizations, even those with much potential, find it hard to get started, because they cannot compete against the “entrenched” NGOs.

It is therefore important for such NGOs to change into (or be replaced by) a second type, with the following features:

- Programme activities that are financed by grants of several donors and, most importantly, by the Kyrgyz private sector.
- Activity in several adjacent sectors, not one sole sector.
- Intelligent and open membership.
- Staff mobility and willingness to support the state, with flow of NGO staff into government service.

In practice there are many transitional types of NGOs, but we believe that the two profiles, which we have just given, are a good indicator of the sort of progress, which is desirable .

### 2.3. Measuring the impact of civil society on human development

There is a temptation to state in this Report that strong civil society would lead straight to economic growth and human development. Many works focusing on civil society stress that an active and strong civil society helps to solve the problems of economic policy, encourages private initiative and restricts excessive interference in the economy by the state, thus promoting economic growth and human development.

However, this is not always the case. Many countries have shown that there is no rigid cause-and-effect relationship between human development and

economic growth on the one hand and a developed civil society on the other.<sup>23</sup> For example, growth of the South Korean economy started in a context of suppressed civil society, particularly in the labor sphere.<sup>24</sup> By contrast, Bangladesh is a striking example of a country with a developed civil society: thousands of NGOs, interest groups and social service organizations exist at national and local levels. But this plethora of NGOs has not resulted in increased social welfare. Bangladesh remains one of the poorest countries in the world. Similar examples among CIS countries could also be cited.

The road to economic success does not necessarily have to be paved by civil society. However, a highly developed civil society can be an ally of a successful market economy. Civil society institutions have a qualitative, complex and mediated influence on the basic components of human capacity – education, health, and well-being. A reverse mechanism also operates: sustainable development of a country’s human and social capital sends strong, positive feedback to civil society institutions, helping them to carry out their functions more efficiently (Figure 2.3)

We will show how development of the civil sector leads to economic growth, poverty reduction and humanitarian progress and what frameworks exist in the Kyrgyz Republic to convert civil society activities into constructive, everyday work on political, social and economic reform.

In a transition economy civil society has a valuable role in delivering some public and private goods, which the market and the state fail to deliver. The failures are bound to emerge because the government is moving away from the production sector, is affected by budget constraints, and market relations are emerging in a disorganized fashion. Civil society organizations can help to draft laws and play a role in quality control on the consumer market, where consumers are often unable to make informed judgments about quality of services (for example, care of the disabled, nursing homes, performance by social workers, etc.) due to asymmetric information. Non-profit organizations can act as a counterbalance to information monopolies and gain consumers’ trust, as well as producing goods privately, to offset failures of the market.<sup>25</sup>

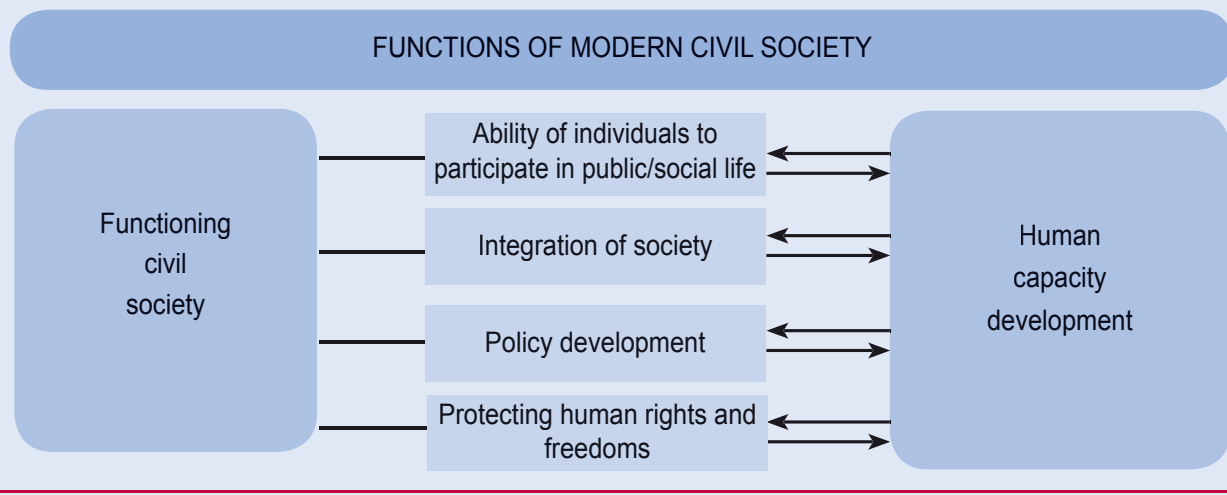
<sup>23</sup> Thomas Carothers, *Think Again: Civil Society*, 2002

<sup>24</sup> After weakening of the military regime in the 1980s, development of civil society and democratization made a significant contribution to achievement of sustainable growth.

<sup>25</sup> D. Chanady, *The Civil Society Structure*. *Civil Society and Law Bulletin*, 2003, #1(47). For example, if there is alternative between hiring a visiting nurse from a private clinic or a charitable organization, preference, all things being equal, would be given to the charitable organization.

Figure 2.3

**Civil society and human capacity development**



Civil society *increases efficiency of production factors* by helping to develop and implement legislation that favors development of entrepreneurship, including reduction of regulatory barriers and by introducing public policy formats, which reduce motivation for rent-oriented behavior. The overall effect is to lower entrepreneur costs and increases efficiency.

Civil society is a powerful *motivational instrument for improving and continuing education*. It makes a significant contribution to policies that ensure a *favourable environment* and serves as a powerful force for promoting a *healthy lifestyle*.

Civil society supports and develops the notion of a healthy, educated, intellectually and culturally complete individual, and by instilling and promoting the relevant values in society, the civil sector encourages the pursuit of health, education, a clean environment, etc. by members of society, thus contributing to an increasing demand for relevant social services and, to a certain extent, determining development of the social sphere. This invariably improves HDI education and health indicators. Civil society also creates the necessary *institutional*

*background* for improving the quality of education and healthcare (as shown in the relevant sections of this Report).

Quantitative estimates of the impact of civil society on human development processes require reliable statistical data. It is not our goal to provide an explicit mathematical model describing the impact of civil society development on human development indices. That would be difficult to achieve given the lack of accurate detailed information describing the complexity of civil society and the impossibility of formalising particular interrelations. However, the hypothesis of significant and positive influence of civil society institutions is proven for certain civil society sectors (Box 2.2).

The analysis in this Chapter has shown that the non-governmental sector is assuming an ever greater role in Kyrgyzstan's social and economic life thanks to quantitative and qualitative development by NGOs. Civil society institutions are taking an increasing role in economic, political and social processes in sovereign Kyrgyzstan on its way to building a new economy, new society, and new individual.

**Box 2.2**

**Influence of think tanks on economic development**

Possible impact of think tanks (mainly based on NGOs) on total factor productivity (TFP) of the economy in Kyrgyzstan was analyzed. The dependence of TFP on the number of researchers working to promote economic reform was tested by econometric methods. Analysis of the standard errors of this relationship showed a significant relationship between TFP and researcher numbers, offering strong evidence of a positive correlation between economic think tanks and economic development (an important part of human development).

## Chapter 3: Individual Self-expression and Protection of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms

### 3.1. Self-identity and individual rights. Civil society against the dehumanization of society: is the battle already lost?

Personality is the most important human social trait and the *self-identity of a person* is expressed in ethnic, civil, professional, class and other aspects, by which a person feels himself to be more than the resident of a particular country – by which he feels himself to be a true citizen with the right to elect or to be elected to office in that country. This is the vector, along which individual interests, needs and objectives take on a different coloring and mesh with the interests of society. One of the main tasks of an emerging civil society is to enhance people's *civil self-identity*, which, can only be expressed through implementing real rights and freedoms and executing civic duties.

There are three main ideas behind the process of social (civil) self-identification in Kyrgyzstan:

- *The idea of citizenship*, expressed in the slogan – “Every citizen of Kyrgyzstan is a citizen of this country and not of any other country”.
- *The idea of civil equality* – “Everyone living in Kyrgyzstan enjoys equal rights and equal opportunities to advance their private interests”.
- *The idea of responsibility* among state, social institutions and people – “Everyone living in Kyrgyzstan has a right to demand from the government and society that their needs be met, and each citizen has responsibilities to society and other people”.

Self-identity is inseparably linked to the ability of individuals to participate in public/social life and this means introducing a person to the national system of values. The sort of values which may command respect are intra-ethnic unity, inter-ethnic solidarity and democratic values (universal principles and national characteristics). The processes of civil self-identification and socialization are essential for formation and development of the political, economic and cultural resources, which are the “internal engine” of social progress.

But there is unfortunately no denying that serious negative phenomena, of a dehumanizing nature, are also on the increase in modern Kyrgyz society, and are threatening the positive legacy of the country's

traditional value system. Such dehumanization of social relations takes various forms:

1. Collapse of the family as an institution. We are currently witnessing the break-up of the traditional three-generation Kyrgyz family, entailing rifts between the generations.
2. Increasingly mercenary relationships in society, which penetrate family, inter-ethnic, inter-confessional, intra-professional and other relationships.
3. Destruction of the traditional system of values and principles, mainly moral, liberal, economic and political.
4. Criminalization of society and social relationships is growing alarmingly.

These processes are most noticeable when an individual is left defenseless against uncontrolled market forces and repressive state machinery, and when government and civil society fail to compensate for the harshness of these impacts. This tends to destroy the traditional self-identity of people, and to encourage localization of interests along ethnic, religious and other lines.

The way to stop such dehumanization of social relationships is to create a democratic society based on the rule of law, in which the connecting link is recognition and provision of guaranteed inalienable rights. In turn, development of a state based on the rule of law depends directly on civil society. Civil society provides the necessary prerequisites for creating and developing a healthy human society by protecting the basic rights and freedoms of individuals, helping group interests, and nurturing democratic culture.

#### Civil society protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens

An important element of a modern society is a human rights institution that protects the full, free, safe, healthy life of the people living in that society. In the 50 years since the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, economic and social and, quite recently, ecological aspects of human development have been added to the traditional list of political and civil human rights.

Protecting human rights and freedoms is the most important and historic function of civil society. This

Box 3.1

**Civil rights and freedoms in the Kyrgyz Republic**

The Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic defines the fundamental rights and freedoms of Kyrgyz citizens.

*Basic rights* include the right to life and health, freedom and personal protection, to own property, the inviolability of personal life and the home, good name, freedom of labour and labour protection, education and intellectual property, rest, participation in public administration, and a healthy environment.

A citizen of Kyrgyzstan has the right to exercise freedom of expression, association, speech, conscience, religion, creative activities, national identity, mobility and choice of where to live, and economic freedom.

is shown by the fact that the state and society are always inevitably in an asymmetrical position. The state enjoys power and a huge enforcement mechanism, and has the ability, and sometimes the right, to use violence against the individual, whereas the individual, even in the most developed state, has only one means of defense against the state – a strong judiciary.

In Kyrgyzstan weakness and corruption in the court system and the low level of confidence in the judiciary has given a special role to human rights NGOs, which have frequently gone beyond usual NGO functions and taken on legal roles (many professional lawyers in Kyrgyzstan are activists in various human rights and educational organizations).

*Human rights* (“*watchdog*”) organizations are public associations, designed to serve poor and neglected social groups, enforce their rights, seek social change and serve people. By helping to protect basic human rights they promote national

development, ensuring social cohesion and strengthening stability and security.

The specific features of human rights organizations are:

- *strictly targeted purpose* – protection of human rights and freedoms;
- *non-profit making* – they do not seek to make a profit, acting disinterestedly and without any commercial goals;
- *non-politicized*: they do not support any political party or political movement;
- *individual activity*: in protecting civil and political rights, they focus not only on social groups and strata, but also on specific individuals.

**Human rights movement: problems and paradoxes**

Civil society organizations engaged in protection of human rights include various NGOs, business associations, trade unions, political parties, religious organizations and citizens' groups. These civil society institutions have differing roles and functions.

*Trade unions* have traditionally occupied a special place in the campaign for human rights. Decades of Soviet experience have left a popular perception of trade unions as organizations, whose function is to control the distribution of social goods and benefits while remaining totally accountable to the government. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union such trade unions virtually died out, partly because they lost control of financial and material resources. They have not yet been replaced by new mass trade unions, which are capable of defending the rights of working people against encroachments by government and employers.

Box 3.2

**Functions of human rights organizations (watchdog organizations)**

- *Signal*: drawing public attention and the attention of international organizations to violations of human rights and inadequate legislation.
- *Mobilization*: mobilizing citizens groups to protect their rights and freedoms, taking an active civil position and creating effective mechanisms for achieving group goals.
- *Educational*: forming and increasing civil awareness and teaching citizens international standards and international human rights legislation, in order to help prevent violations.
- *Drafting legislation*: making a qualified analysis of human rights legislation to bring it into accordance with international standards and developing recommendations to government, based on the analysis.
- *Integration*: developing contacts between human rights activists and civil servants in order to design recommendations on improving the system of human rights protection and conduct by branches of government.
- *Charitable*: material support to people whose rights have been violated due to political factors or inadequate decisions by government.

## Box 3.3

## Trade unions as defenders of citizens' rights

In 2004 informal leaders of a union of traders at the Dordoi market in Bishkek organized a series of protests against mandatory use of cash registers. The protests were successful, and the same union again showed its ability to mobilize people and defend rights immediately after the March revolution in 2005, creating local militia groups to defend shops from looters. This example was followed, immediately after the March events, by a trade union of minibus drivers, which presented grievances to the government and the general public, organized a one-day strike and negotiated with the city council and owners of the transport company.

Staff of the Issyk-Kul National Park set a unique example of professional unity and environmental rights campaigning, when 34 of them publicly submitted a package of demands to government, calling for better protection of the natural environment at Issyk-Kul, which is a large mountain lake of outstanding purity and ecological interest. The ecologists went so far as to hold a hunger strike, which lasted for several days. The case is remarkable, because the activists were standing up for general public interests, and not only for their own interests. Impact was strengthened by cooperation between the ecologists and non-governmental ecological organizations<sup>26</sup> as well as choice of a suitable lobbying strategy.

The trade unions, which do exist and operate today, have a pronounced political coloring. This may be why the most energetic trade union is in the most politicized sphere – the mass media. The Journalists Union not only monitors the rights of journalists and provides legal training for them, but also deals with violations of the rights of journalists, helps them to obtain legal aid, provides a lawyer in court, publicizes the journalist's case and lobbies public opinion in his or her favor. The Journalists Union thus performs most of the functions (from informational to legal) of a human rights watchdog organization.

The fiscal reforms of 2004 and the revolutionary events of 2005 were catalysts for trade unions to become more involved in the human rights movement (Box 3.3).

So the character of trade unions in Kyrgyzstan is changing and their action is helping to create new *checks and balances* in the relationship between government and private business.

*Political parties*, which represent a large sector of civil society, have shown limited commitment to defending human rights and freedoms, at least to date. Party programmes talk about defense of basic human rights, but in practice the struggle between parties for political power has little to do with defense of such rights. Political parties in Kyrgyzstan, unlike the western paradigm, do not have clear-cut social and ideological parameters, but focus instead on the public image of their leaders. Party rhetoric promises to address human rights issues after gaining power, but manifestos lack any detailed programmes. Political parties have yet to shift their policies *from rhetoric to real actions that promote rights and freedoms of actual people and groups*.

*Religious organizations*, have varied records in defense of human and civil rights. The established religions in Kyrgyzstan, which are Islam and Orthodox Christianity, have shown little interest in solving the vital and immediate problems of their congregations. However, new religions (as a rule, sects), which have emerged since the country's independence, often give priority to problems of people, offering help with employment, access to study abroad and professional training, advice about marriage and family issues, care for the elderly and invalids, etc., to those who join the new religion. This focus on the daily lives of their followers has helped the new religions to win converts from Christianity and Islam. The people, whom these new religious organizations target, often belong to groups, which are excluded from government or other social assistance programmes. Vulnerability of the poor and handicapped, elderly and unemployed, and particularly young people, provides fertile soil for missionaries.

The *NGO sector* is very active in human rights defense. According to the Counterpart Consortium, there are 42 organizations in Kyrgyzstan committed solely to human rights, and many NGOs dealing with gender, ecology, youth, special interests, charity, etc., often also deal with human rights issues.

NGOs campaign for various kinds of human rights: *civil, political, economic, social and cultural*. Human-rights NGOs in Kyrgyzstan have developed through several stages, widening the scope of their activities, and experiencing changes in their relationship with government, civil society and international organizations.

*The first stage, in 1992-1999*, was focused on educational, informational and advisory techniques,

<sup>26</sup> AKI-PRESS, June 9th 2005.

Box 3.4

**The Constitutional Assembly of 2002: government versus NGOs**

The Constitutional Assembly, which brought together all the branches of government in 2002 with aim of constitutional reform, demonstrated the government's attitude towards the civil sector. Civil society was represented predominantly by pro-government NGOs and independent NGOs were left outside the decision-making process. A number of human rights organizations, led by the Civil Society against Corruption, quit the Assembly in protest, signaling the undemocratic nature of governance practices in Kyrgyzstan. This episode provoked some negative assessments of the state of democratic development in Kyrgyzstan from Freedom House International.<sup>29</sup>

and familiarization with the international space (learning how NGOs operated in other countries). There was a dominance of educational formats (seminars, workshops), conferences and publishing and research projects. NGO leaders went on study tours abroad and foreign specialists carried out various meetings and training programmes. The most common topics were democracy and democratic participation, human rights and the rights of groups, NGO building, information strategies and fund raising. This period has been described, not inappropriately, as the period of "total seminarization".<sup>27</sup>

In this stage donors often provided small grants for institutional development of NGOs,<sup>28</sup> but there was little time for NGOs to develop their own agendas. Transplantation of the principles and values of western NGOs to the Kyrgyz context was not possible in such a small space of time.

*The second stage (from 1999 until the tragedy in the southern town of Aksy, where a number of demonstrators were shot by police)* saw a shift in the focus of development and donor organizations to election issues. The number of NGOs participating in political and election issues grew. One large project was training of observers for parliamentary elections in 1999.

The Aksy events roused strong feelings in civil society, encouraging NGOs to become even more political and to clarify their own goals and values. The events deepened the divide between government and NGOs, and this stand-off was made definitive by appearance of forums for independent comment, participation of NGOs and the government in international forums at different levels and with different agendas, preparation by

NGOs of reports based on findings of mass surveys, which contradicted the government position, etc.

The government failed to respond appropriately to the shift in activity by human rights NGOs. Means of democratic communication and information tools were not put in place. The government continued to support an imitation of civil society and to use the NGO sector as an instrument for achieving its own goals.

The government's own democratic rhetoric excluded overt repressive measures against unruly and troublesome NGOs, and civil society built up a strong information campaign. This period saw many high-profile court cases and conflicts between government and human rights organizations, which stood up for rights and freedoms of certain political and public figures. These campaigns did much to enhance the image of leaders of human rights organizations.

NGOs also broadened their scope of action to include monitoring, public opinion polls and alternative reports, creation of a *public advocacy network, pickets, demonstrations, press conferences and letters of protest*.

*A third stage, in 2003-2005* saw further development of the human rights movement, fueled by incompetent government political policy.

In addition to general protection of the rights of voters, human rights activities in Kyrgyzstan include:

- protecting women and children from domestic violence;
- protecting the right of citizens to access information;
- protecting consumer rights;
- protecting the right of pensioners to proper social support;
- protecting women's rights to access strategic economic resources, for example, land;
- protecting rights to a healthy ecological environment;
- protecting the reproductive rights of men and women;
- protecting rights of sexual minorities;
- numerous projects focused on protecting the rights of vulnerable groups to participate in decision making.

<sup>27</sup> "Legislation and the mass media, Kyrgyzstan". Bulletin of Kyrgyz-American Bureau on Human Rights, 2003 #1

<sup>28</sup> Funding for institutional development would be essentially discontinued at a later stage

<sup>29</sup> See, for example, *Countries at the Crossroads: A Survey of Democratic Governance*. 2005. Freedom House Publication

## Box 3.5

**What is more important: protecting human rights or producing attractive reports?**

Internet pages of human rights NGOs contain reports, information, and project and programme statistics. The commonest approach is to list all project initiatives supported by international donor organizations. Funding levels become a form of ranking: much project funding means that the organization is heavyweight; low levels of funding mean that it is lightweight. As a rule, examples of assistance to individuals, victims of human rights violations, are rare on these sites.

For example, information on the site of one human rights organization tells us that the main goal of the organization is to monitor human rights in custodial institutions, and a section about achievements tells us about work with children's homes: "Monitoring of human rights in children's homes and schools for orphans in the Kyrgyz Republic was implemented with a partner organization. ...A report was published giving results of the monitoring of children's homes and schools. It reflects the human rights situation in these institutions and the conditions of the children. The report was distributed among government agencies, NGOs, and international organizations; it is a contribution to the campaign to change the system of child custody in the Kyrgyz Republic".

The grant recipient apparently believes that it has done its duty: the monitoring was carried out, violations were noted and the report was sent to the appropriate organizations. But there is no sign here of a campaign for the rights of real people. The real person – boy, woman, handicapped teenager, who is suffering serious hardship, whose life and fate depends on intervention of a compassionate man or woman – is missing from the picture. Many NGOs are now stepping up their direct assistance efforts, but much still remains to be done.

Increasing numbers of people are involved in the human rights movement, which is becoming a mass phenomenon. The revolutionary events of March 2005 started as a protest against violation of rights of certain political figures during elections. Prominent leaders of human rights organizations are now working on reform of the constitution to offer better protection of human rights. However, violations still exist and institutional mechanisms for defending the rights of particular groups of citizens are not yet in place.

Analysis, carried out for the purpose of this Report, show a number of paradoxes in the current human rights situation in Kyrgyzstan:

1. It is paradoxical that a new Constitutional Assembly in 2005, at which half of participants (57 of 114) were from civil society, produced a draft revision of the Constitution, in which Chapter 16, devoted to human rights, was the most heavily abridged part.
2. Despite the impressive range of protected rights, practices of "exclusion" mean that an average man or woman from a remote village is even more vulnerable to violation of his or her rights and freedoms than representatives of a risk-group.<sup>30</sup>

3. Despite a wealth of experience in human rights protection and impressive quantitative indicators of performance by human rights NGOs,<sup>31</sup> the concept of charity tends to be distorted and politicized in the human rights movement. Many NGO activists and leaders treat protection of human rights as a way to earn personal political capital or gain promotion.
4. Not all NGOs understand the goals and value of rational collaboration with the government in creating social infrastructure (specialized medical aid, social advocacy, etc.), without which NGOs cannot carry out their function of defending rights.
5. Globalization and the development of information technologies has encouraged appearance of a new species of human rights NGOs in Kyrgyzstan, which exist in a virtual dimension.<sup>32</sup> These virtual organizations project the image of genuine, and highly efficient NGOs, but, in fact, they tend to be small groups of individuals promoting political interests.

Resolution of these paradoxes depends on many factors, and particularly on the stance adopted by government and civil society. The 2005 revolution

<sup>30</sup> The authors are not asserting that such groups are legally well protected – only that, thanks to international projects and programmes, institutional mechanisms for protecting rights and providing assistance to such groups have been put in place and developed, while problems and rights of ordinary people have tended to be neglected.

<sup>31</sup> Hundreds of women, who are victims of domestic violence, receive medical and psychological assistance. Hundreds of cases of violations of human rights in different spheres of life have been recorded and reported to the general public. Thousands of human rights advocates have been trained in essential skills (negotiating, monitoring, etc.), information and propaganda campaigns have been carried out, and hundreds of thousands of copies of publications have been disseminated, etc.

<sup>32</sup> The Kel-Kel youth rights organization, set up in 2005, is one example: it has 2,500 members who have registered on-line. In reality only a core of up to 10 people was active, at least until recently. Kel Kel has now acquired significant political capital, and the number of its real activists is increasing, though not to the extent suggested on its web site.

Box 3.6

**An excerpt from the speech by E.Umetaliev, Chairman of the Kyrgyz Congress of Business Associations, delivered at the International Forum of Associations in 2004 (December 7-8, 2004, Bishkek)**

The role and significance of business associations:

- Protection and advocacy of the entrepreneur community as a crucial element of civil society.
- Encouraging economic and democratic development by participation in formulation of government policy.
- Mobilizing and consolidating the business community to achieve common goals.

*“The mission and goal of the Congress of Business Associations is to establish a coalition of associations from all regions of the country to protect and advocate the interests of Kyrgyz entrepreneurs.”*

destroyed old norms, put an end to political stagnation and gave the government, civil society, and business new opportunities. The challenge for civil society is to assert the true spirit of human rights in the new context. According to a formula, used in Germany, “strong civil society is proof of effective government.” Indeed, international experience shows that the greatest effect is achieved when governments and NGOs pool their resources to protect human rights.

Civil society in Kyrgyzstan now has a unique chance to support and stimulate the growth of institutions that protect human rights. It is vital to give up the essentially Soviet notion that only the state determines the framework and limits for people’s action. People have their own rights and liberties, and their defense is the key task for civil society. Today is a time of hope and opportunity for building a just state, creating new meanings and goals for Kyrgyzstan and taking real action.

### 3.2. Rights and interests of social groups

Civil society is a way of presenting and fulfilling the needs of individuals, but also of groups that are united by a common interest. Groups pursue their interests through civil society institutions. This section looks at the various types of social groups, which are well developed in Kyrgyzstan and which contribute much to the democratization process in the Republic.

#### Business associations: overcoming threats to freedom of entrepreneurship

Development of business is the main driving force for economic growth in any country. Success of this

process depends on perception by entrepreneurs of their role in development of the economy and society. Growth of voluntary *public business associations*, based on equality and non-profitability, reflects the level of this perception. Business associations are an integral part of civil society, demonstrating its readiness for self-organization, protecting its rights, and representing its interests. Such associations are rightfully viewed as one of the most effective and goal-oriented forms of organization in civil society.

Business associations pursue two main goals (Box 3.6):

- Lobbying the interests and protecting the rights of their members.
- Participating in government policy development.

The main reason for setting up business associations in Kyrgyzstan, as in any other country, is to resist excessive government regulation of the economy, which inevitably leads to corruption and increases business costs and risks. Another stimulus for creation of business associations is emergence of local companies, which intend to build a long-term future on the Kyrgyz market: such companies understand the value of collective action to defend the interests of the sector, in which they work.

A survey conducted for this Report (Annex I), covering about 30 sustainable public associations including business associations, showed that the major goal of business associations today is *to lobby the interests and protect the rights of association members* (58.8%). Since 2002 – and particularly in 2004 – there has been rapid growth in the number of business associations working on protection of economic freedoms, economic deregulation, tax policy, and access to information.

This survey also found that general associations (i.e. those, which combine various business sectors) are tending to become more specific. In 2000-2001 the State Commission on Private Enterprise and regional administrations tried repeatedly to establish so-called business associations at local, regional and national levels, based on business location. These efforts failed because:

1. they were imposed from above, when businessmen had not yet realized the importance and benefits of associations, and businessmen were required to pay significant fees to belong to them (or risk dangerous conflicts with the authorities), so most businessmen left the



associations as soon as they could and lost faith in the concept of business associations as such;

2. business associations based on regional (not sectoral) grouping are bound to be weak, because they are not usually established voluntarily.

Associations created from the bottom up *by businessmen in specific sectors or professions* are the most successful and effective. Such groupings often occur spontaneously, in response to a common problem or adversary (the Tour Operators' Association arose as a counter to the State Commission on Tourism, the Telecom Operators' Association aims to deal with Kyrgyztelecom). After solving a problem through joint efforts, association members come to realize the benefits of cooperation. They stay together and seek new ways to jointly regulate their area of business. Survey findings show a strong trend among businessmen in Kyrgyzstan to link up based on professions and sectors: the number of business associations, which declared their purpose as formulation of sector policy, had grown by six times in 2004 compared with 2000.<sup>33</sup>

There are much fewer successful associations based on regional location, and they tend to limit themselves to provision of general business services to their members: advice and information, help with business plans, protection in court, etc. Such associations are more like service bureaus, being less focused on advocating the interests of their members, because association members have less in common. Members of such organizations vary hugely, and behave more like customers, turning to the association when they need help.

Development of business associations depends directly on *maturity of business and market development*. Market immaturity, widespread uncivilized competition, and poor business practices has made it hard for businessmen in Kyrgyzstan to fully appreciate the idea of cooperation. Most of them do business according to rule of "everyone-for-himself". However, popularity of associations is growing in parallel with development of the market, as shown by the fact that there are many more and better associations now than four years ago, and that strong associations are found in strong sectors. This dependence is supported by the experience of other countries. For instance, Kazakh associations

are much stronger than those in Kyrgyzstan because the Kazakh market is stronger.

*Economic deregulation* has also given a significant impetus to the development of business organizations. The number of active business associations has almost doubled in the last four years.

Development of business associations has to be an evolutionary process. A businessman only looks for partners to help protect his rights when he is an owner, who has invested something of value (his efforts, money, and time). A business association is not like other NGOs, which work with focus groups and clients. It functions more like a business, because it has to go through all the development stages peculiar to business. All attempts to put business associations in front of business itself – both by the government and by international donors – have failed. *Only the market and its actors determine whether or not an association should be established and determine its role in the market. Neither government resources nor donor contributions can keep an association afloat if its members take no interest in it.*

Business associations are established and maintained based on the common interests of their members and strong and qualified executives. It is a grave mistake if associations do not realize this. A strong executive organization, which can involve members in action by the association, is more important than a strong leader. Indeed a strong leader can be a disadvantage, because the agenda of business associations often includes ownership questions, and suspicions that the association is the vehicle of a specific businessman will undermine confidence in it.

It is also obvious that formation and consolidation of business organizations depends on their self-financing ability. At present, very few such organizations can subsist on membership fees alone, and some have ceased to function after being deprived of grant money. However, research has shown that the number of business associations financed by membership fees had almost doubled in 2004 compared with 2002.

Concise lists of the positive and negative features of business associations and their environment in Kyrgyzstan today may be useful.

<sup>33</sup> Results of an express survey conducted within the framework of this Report

Strong points of business associations in Kyrgyzstan:<sup>34</sup>

- A good legislative base has been established.
- Businessmen understand the importance of unity in any dialogue with government.
- New business associations have been established based on specific business activities.

Weak points of business associations in Kyrgyzstan:

- Poor impact on decision-making in the economy.
- Business associations are mainly focused on protecting group interests, and individual members have little confidence that their specific interests will be protected by their association.
- Absence of permanent staff in many associations has negative effect on activities.
- Many business associations are still dependent on grant funding.<sup>35</sup>
- Associations lack experience in drafting of laws, rules and regulatory standards.

Despite these problems, it is becoming more evident that active dialogue between businessmen and the state by means of public associations is a powerful tool of civil society. A dialogue between businessmen and government via public associations is the most efficient way of legally lobbying business interests, and it enables direct participation by business in formulating and implementing economic policies, particularly as regards economic deregulation.

### The role of civil society in promoting cultural freedom and ethnic diversity

A key task of any modern society is to regulate the relations and interaction between various ethnic groups living in the country. Inter-ethnic problems are a challenge for developed democratic countries, and they tend to be aggravated in developing countries.

In developed countries ethno-cultural and religious needs are usually satisfied by *respecting the rights of people of different minorities (ethnicity, language, religion, etc)*. Developed countries have laws and

other government regulations to protect the rights of groups, whose rights are violated.

After the USSR collapsed, new states emerged, which were strongly interested in their own national and civil unity. It has been found that an approach, which aims to protect the rights of ethnic minorities in these new states, often fails to solve outstanding problems, instead creating new problems. This is because a protection-oriented approach leads to cultural isolation of the minority, making its adaptation in the larger civil community more difficult.

Kyrgyzstan offers an interesting example of a new approach to ethnic and cultural rights and freedoms. This approach is based on many factors, such as traditional Kyrgyz tolerance, and sharing of values and cultural space. Issues of survival during the transition period have left little time for inter-ethnic disagreement and ethnic policy has been geared to finding a national and state model that incorporates cultural diversity. Civil society has played a large part in this process.

Creation of a new paradigm was supported by civil society initiatives including national-cultural centers and ethnic associations such as the Tatar-Bashkir Association "Tugan Tel" and the People's Assembly of Kyrgyzstan.

The aims of these organizations are:

- development of their culture and language;
- mobilization and concentration of resources<sup>36</sup> to address various problems within the ethnic communities and in localities where the communities are mainly located;
- taking part in preparation and discussion of legislation in order to secure rights and freedoms of ethnic groups (there are over 150 different ethnic groups in Kyrgyzstan).

Forms of activity of ethnic public associations are diverse – *kurultai*, holidays celebration, establishment of Sunday schools, opening of language classes in high schools, organization of art exhibitions, presentations, etc.

The Fourth People's Assembly of Kyrgyzstan held a joint discussion between ethnic associations, governmental institutions, and expert and academic

<sup>34</sup> In our opinion, these refer mostly to the Bishkek Business Club, the Association of Accountants and Auditors, and the Congress of Business Associations

<sup>35</sup> The SoyuzTekstil Association, Association of Consulting Companies, and the Association of Exporters ceased to operate after grant funding was discontinued

<sup>36</sup> Many ethnic associations receive significant support from their "home countries". Most spending by such associations is on ethno-cultural needs, but help is often afforded beyond the boundaries of their own ethnic group.

communities, and adopted a public policy document, the Ethnic Development Concept Framework, in January 2004. This document comprises a number of basic principles for the country's ethnic policy (Box 3.7). Adoption of these crucial provisions made it possible to move forward from discussion to solution of many important ethnic issues.

Another document developed in conjunction with the OSCE – “Education as an Integration Factor in Multiethnic Communities” – proposes benchmarks for formulating and implementing education policy. These benchmarks offer various ways of implementing cultural rights and freedoms without detriment to national civil unity and while preserving equal access to education. If secondary school teaching is exclusively in the state language, there is a clear threat of discrimination against some children and limitation of their professional career opportunities. Multilingual and multicultural education is a better tool for coping with challenges in the area of education and culture. Given globalization and traditional education patterns, students in Kyrgyzstan, which is a small country, should study at least three languages (Kyrgyz, Russian, and English). Those parents who so wish should be able to help their children study another language (for instance, their mother tongue)<sup>37</sup> Kyrgyzstan's multi-ethnic make-up creates excellent conditions for studying other languages and cultures. Multi-ethnicity is a valuable asset, which Kyrgyzstan can and should use to its best advantage.

Joint discussion of the most urgent problems faced by various ethnic groups and public, educational, and governmental institutions, have led to general agreement on the following points:

- Any preferences shown to a particular ethnic group infringe upon opportunities of other groups, since the government lacks resources to meet all ethnic and cultural needs.
- Most current problems are the same for all ethnic groups, and efforts to solve such problems for one group and not for others are a pointless source of tension.
- The best way to solve specific problems of ethnic groups is for those groups to invest their resources in solution of general socio-economic problems.

It is notable that many social challenges are being met by community organizations, which unite

### Box 3.7

#### Ethnic Development Principles

- Equality between all ethnic groups
- Harmonization of civil and ethno-cultural identity
- Pivotal role of the Kyrgyz ethnic group in promoting inter-ethnic relations
- Equal opportunities for development of all ethnic groups
- Support for ethnic and cultural diversity
- Division of responsibilities and authority in ethnic development
- Partnerships and open cultural exchanges

people of various nationalities, rather than by mono-ethnic NGOs. For example, the Mady-Guzar organization unites about 2000 people – Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, Russians, Tajiks, Tatars, Bashkirs, and Turks - in the south of Kyrgyzstan. Work by Mady-Guzar since October 2000 has led to considerable improvement of living conditions in villages of the region, reducing the number of people below the poverty line and installing drinkable mains water.<sup>38</sup> This sort of poly-ethnic initiative takes action before ethnic problems arise and helps to lay down the foundation for civil peace, tolerance, and conflict avoidance.

Ensuring basic rights and freedoms of all citizens of the Republic irrespective of their ethnic, cultural, religious and other affiliation is the major precondition for sustainable development of human and social capital. Interethnic cooperation will have increasing positive impact on human development, particularly if attention is paid to correcting some negative phenomena, including inadequate representation of ethnic groups in government and poor development of general legal frameworks.

An important function of ethnic associations is *resource mobilization and concentration* to solve problems within the communities themselves. Many of these associations receive significant support from their ethnic homelands outside Kyrgyzstan, but resources are used to address ethnic and cultural needs of ordinary people, often beyond a strictly defined ethnic group. Kyrgyz society has a history of studying and tolerating other cultures, which is a great advantage that should not be sacrificed for the sake of short-term political goals.

A good basis for the mutual development of different ethnic groups is being developed in Kyrgyzstan

<sup>37</sup> Global Human Development Report, 2004

<sup>38</sup> A. Zaharova, D. Mamajusupova. A role of ethnic resources of the south of Kyrgyzstan in addressing social and economic problems

Box 3.8

**The People's Assembly of Kyrgyzstan (PAK) and ensuring ethnic rights**

The PAK was established in 1994 based on a few national and cultural centers. It took the form of a deliberative body, a kind of “people’s parliament”, under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic. Ratification by Kyrgyzstan of international conventions respecting the rights and freedoms of all ethnic, religious, and lingual minorities in Kyrgyzstan was mainly thanks to efforts by the Assembly. Today, the PAK comprises independent ethnic associations and national and cultural centres. Given a lack of public resources, these centres have assumed responsibility for developing their native culture and language. Ethnic associations are engaged in different types of educational and cultural activities, from holding festivities and establishing Sunday schools to starting language groups in secondary schools.

In recent years, some aspects of the PAK – excessive formalism and loyalty to the government – have been justly criticized. As a result, the PAK has reviewed the way it works and is undergoing a major reform, which will enable it to assume the role of formulating and implementing ethnic policy in Kyrgyzstan. The role of the PAK has been crucial in preventing excessive politicization of ethnic issues in Kyrgyzstan, helping to keep the peace inside the country and creating a constructive partner dialogue for development of ethnic policy.

and as soon as some negative features of social relations, such as inadequate representation of ethnic groups in the government, are overcome, interethnic cooperation will play a more positive role in the country’s development.

**The role of civil society in promoting gender equality**

There are a large number of public organizations working in the *gender sphere* today in Kyrgyzstan. According to various databases there are from 150 to 350<sup>39</sup> “women’s NGOs”. However, the very term “women’s NGO” raises a number of issues and questions,<sup>40</sup> and definitions of gender NGOs are somewhat vague.

We believe that the best way of measuring and analyzing the NGO role in gender equality is to look at the issues and problems, which have been addressed. A first group of gender NGOs has specialized in addressing *practical gender needs*,<sup>41</sup> in particular:

- charity to the poorest and most vulnerable groups of women (disabled, elderly, single mothers and others);
- assistance to women and their families in the process of surviving and mitigating poverty and

hardship (organizations for developing self-employment, handicrafts, professional women’s groups and others);

- urgent assistance and crisis rehabilitation.

The grass-roots women’s councils, which are widespread in Kyrgyzstan, can also be included in this bloc. Such councils have tremendous institutional capacity, but are still searching for a niche in civil society, and currently focus entirely on addressing practical gender needs.

The second group consists of women’s NGOs *addressing gender issues and needs at the strategic level*.<sup>42</sup> These NGOs work to expand women’s and men’s access to basic social services – education and public health, – to overcome gender barriers and promote women to the decision-making level, to increase economic rights and opportunities of women, to develop gender legislation, etc.

Activity by such organizations is the best way to create national institutional mechanisms for achieving gender equality. However, only a few NGOs based in the capital have been able to formulate and implement such strategic policy<sup>43</sup> (they include the Women Entrepreneurs’ Support Association and the Alga NGO). Gender NGOs are devoting more attention to strategic social

<sup>39</sup> The database of the Counterpart Consortium contains more than 240 women’s NGOs, and it is thought that there are up to a hundred others, which were set up earlier and not brought into Consortium’s orbit.

<sup>40</sup> An organization can be reckoned to be a “women’s NGO” based on the sort of problems it deals with, gender of its members, of its beneficiaries or even of its leader.

<sup>41</sup> By limiting themselves to practical gender needs, NGOs help men, women and their families to survive in the present, but cannot ensure a better future.

<sup>42</sup> Tackling of strategic gender needs can produce institutional and systematic solutions, changing the relationships between men and women, their behaviour and the attitude of government. However, strategic needs are less obvious, than practical gender needs, and much time is needed to effect changes.

<sup>43</sup> A considerable number of NGOs and community organizations have worked and continue to work at grass roots level, providing assistance and helping address poverty and other social and economic problems, but as a rule they have been inserted into existing programmes and projects and cannot effect changes to state gender strategies and policies.

## Box 3.9

**Gender movement in Kyrgyzstan: civil sector and the state**

**1994 – 1996: creation and growth.** Women's NGOs took root thanks to support from the global women's movement, international organizations and the 4th International Women's Conference in Beijing. The Kyrgyz government showed commitment to gender development, accepting obligations laid down by the Beijing Action Platform. Key results were:

- development of an institutional mechanism to achieve gender equality;<sup>44</sup>
- development and adoption of the Ayalzat programme;
- ratification of important conventions on women's rights;
- organization of a parliamentary hearing on the status of women;
- several women's leaders took important positions in government.

**1997 – 2000: development and promotion of gender ideas to the general public.** There was a significant increase in the number of NGOs in Kyrgyzstan addressing gender problems, knowledge of the fundamentals of democracy, human rights, etc., was disseminated, and priority audiences for gender were defined (women politicians and public leaders, young women and girls, female journalists, university and schoolteachers, and others).

Emblems of gender development were promoted, and the Democratic Party of Women emerged with support from the Kyrgyz government.<sup>45</sup> However, much of this went no further than declarations of intent, the mechanism for achieving gender equality remained limited, and there were practically no legislative mechanisms for achieving gender equality and ensuring inclusion of gender components in all strategies and programmes.

**2001 – 2004: the government took back some of the rights and achievements, which the gender movement had attained.** A national action programme was approved, but remained little more than a wish list due to inadequate funding. There was a decline in the real status of women (and men) and their status as measured by several human development indices.

However, women's NGOs achieved a certain degree of stability, including institutional stability, during this period. Gender experts and NGO members took an active role in the international struggle for gender equality, and the action of certain women's NGOs and women's leaders in 2003 secured approval of essential gender legislation in Kyrgyzstan, namely:

- On state guarantees to ensure gender equality in the Kyrgyz Republic.
- On social and legal protection from domestic violence.

**Spring 2005 – to date: a time of changes and hope.** There have been qualitative changes in the NGO environment: the traditional grant-and-project approach, based on donor policy, has been replaced by greater focus on real needs of men and women. There have been important attempts to formulate a political agenda and determine a strategy for achieving gender goals using local expertise. Real volunteer activity in a true civil society spirit has blossomed.

and economic problems and are campaigning for attention to gender issues in preparation of local budgets with involvement by a broad circle of women's groups.

Other civil society institutions, such as trade unions and political parties, have different approaches to gender equality.

*Trade unions* have moved away from the Soviet paradigm of protecting the reproductive health of the working woman, shifting their emphasis to promoting the right to choose one's work and the concept of identical employment rights for women and men. But, although gender councils have been set up by the Federation of Trade Unions, gender analysis remains margin in union activity.

*Political parties* have prioritised gender education and are more actively involved in implementing a gender approach. One political party – My Country – has enshrined the gender dimension in party documents and its organizational structure. But such achievements have been very rare and are due to the impact of a very few female leaders. On the whole, the gender approach has not become common practice among political parties in Kyrgyzstan. The legislative context remains unfavorable for political parties, which are unable to serve as platforms for female leadership and for promoting women's input to national development.

The most important measure of gender balance is representation of women at all levels of power and in decision-making bodies. Women's representation

<sup>44</sup> Initially within the format of the State Commission for Women's, Family and Youth Affairs under the Kyrgyz government and afterwards within the format of the Secretariat of the National Council for Women's, Family and Gender Development Affairs.

<sup>45</sup> Results of parliamentary elections in 2000, when political representation of women increased only marginally (from 4.8% in 1995 to 6.7%), highlighted ineffectiveness of gender policy.

**Table 3.1**  
**Percentage of women occupying top positions and running public organizations (by region)<sup>47</sup>**

Region	Percentage of women occupying top positions	Percentage of women running public organizations
Kyrgyz Republic	28.9	29.7
Batken region	19.3	23.0
Jalalabat region	28.6	29.2
Issyk-Kul region	16.0	36.9
Naryn region	13.6	38.0
Osh region including Osh	21.9	13.3 Osh – 29.8
Talas region	23.6	32.2
Chui region	33.0	30.15
Bishkek	35.7	34.8

in official public bodies remains low (official organizations may, for example, include one woman as a token gesture) and NGOs still lack necessary capacity for comprehensive and continuous gender lobbying. The situation demonstrates the double standards of public officials and politicians, who are ready to use women's and gender issues as a means of achieving political power, but have no intention of giving women access to politics and real decision-making.

However, a considerable number of women work in the NGO sector and are leaders of local NGOs (Table 3.1). Many leaders of local and regional administrations take the views of women's NGOs into account in decision-making.<sup>46</sup>

The following new developments and tendencies relevant to gender NGOs deserve to be emphasized:

1. A number of women's religious NGOs and associations of women are emerging, which follow a particular faith (including an NGO for female Moslems, various Christian women's groups and so on). These NGOs are multifaceted (they are women's organizations, but also have a religious aspect, consist of rural or urban dwellers, etc.) and, naturally enough, they are under strong influence from religious organizations and structures.
2. Networking and interaction has become important. Many NGOs have started implementing consolidated functions for a number of organizations in a single geographical region or professional field. This consolidation guarantees successful fundraising strategies, gives more weight to the networks and associations in public and political arenas, and gives women's groups and women themselves more prominence and greater voice. (Box 3.10)
3. There are new female faces in local politics, new groups of women are exploring non-government initiatives and challenging existing NGOs, and gender issues have become one of the most popular topics in the national mass media (from women's role in Islam to feminist models).

Achievement of gender balance depends on public policy decisions, which take account of gender requirements and do not violate the rights and freedoms of either men and women. Necessary conditions for this are as follows:

- Deepening the *professionalism* of women's NGOs, forming and developing core *gender*

### Box 3.10

#### Consolidated Efforts – Real Outcomes

Consolidated associations have already achieved considerable results in Kyrgyzstan:

Consolidation of a number of organizations based on an initiative by the Diamond Association and the Association of Lawyers and Academicians helped to lobby for a draft law addressing the problem of domestic violence (the NGOs used the constitutional provision, which allows the general public and NGOs to initiate, draft and submit a draft law to parliament).

Seven women's NGOs (Women's Support Center, Gender Research Center, Association of Crisis Centers, and others) prepared an alternative report on implementation of the CEDAW convention and presented it at a special UN session.

The Agency of Social Technologies, Women's Support Center, Association of Women for Entrepreneurship and others held a National Women's Forum in April 2005, which lobbied appointment of a special presidential representative on gender equality in the Jogorku Kenesh.

It is particularly important to note that women's networks have already been established at national level (including the informal organization, Women Can Achieve Everything!).

<sup>46</sup> Monitoring Implementation of the National Plan to Achieve Gender Balance. Bishkek, 2005.

<sup>47</sup> Data of the National Statistics Committee.

*experts* and ensuring presence of such experts throughout the Republic. International theory and practice of gender instruments should be adapted and applied in Kyrgyzstan as the basis for state gender policy.

- *Analytical and research material* based on the gender dimension should be developed as a real source of effective state policy, particularly at local level. Research needs to focus on previously ignored groups and relations, and to consider the nature of the issues being dealt with.

Resolution of these issues would enable a qualitatively higher level of gender development and help to overcome existing problems in gender approaches.

### 3.3. Civil sector and local self-government: progress and obstacles

Development of local civil structure has been one of the greatest democratic achievements in Kyrgyzstan since the country became independent. It has been encouraged by *overall decentralization* of the state governance system and by various projects and programmes aimed at *social mobilization*. Local civil structures (jaamats, public councils, associations of self-help groups, various initiative groups, local NGOs, local development centers) have been established, initially oriented to solving urgent problems of ordinary people, such as obtaining micro-credits, economic organization, school renovations, or water pipe repairs. Larger alliances of local communities also exist, notably the Congress of Local Communities, which includes the Villages Association and the Association of Small Towns. Via these organizations people

assume responsibility for the place, where they live, promoting effective local self-government by:

- addressing socio-economic development issues at a local level;
- implementing various educational programs;
- drafting legal documents on local development issues;
- helping local government officials to implement new improved management technologies.

Development of the civil sector at local level is very uneven. Efforts do not always bring the desired effect and many initiatives do not get beyond the planning stage. Some villages and towns use strategic, integrated approaches to solving local problem, but in other communities civil society is still at a very early stage.

A major role in supporting and enhancing these local structures (associations of self-help groups and various community-based organizations), has been played by *donor policy*, which has been changing since the late 1990s. Only those communities that can actually mobilize and contribute to achieving their goals receive grants to implement social and economic projects. Therefore, communities with the best *organizational capacity, financial transparency, and ability to build partnerships* with international organizations, other NGOs, and the government, have been successful in attracting additional funding. Among donors, UNDP is the organization, which has done most to show the potential and efficiency of social mobilization and investment through local communities (Box 3.11).

In recent years, local administrations have come to realize that local NGOs can help them in their work and have re-assessed their cooperation with such NGOs. This partnership was significantly

#### Box 3.11

#### Experience of Shoola, a Rural NGO

Shoola was one of the first NGOs in Ton district, a part of Issyk-Kul region. It is socially oriented. Specifically, Shoola does the following

- offers health support to expectant mothers, children with disabilities, and people on low incomes;
- develops the talents of rural children;
- distributes food and clothing to needy families;
- organizes get-togethers and festivities for the elderly.

Shoola has a positive background of *working with local authorities* (the Ton district Akimiat, law-enforcement agencies, local self-government, the prosecutor's office, court, and tax office). The organisation has proved its ability to support social and economic welfare in the community. It is capable of a constructive dialogue with government and has the respect of ordinary people, which is important for making its activities effective.

Box 3.12

**Social mobilization as an effective social tool**

Social mobilization is the process of strengthening potential of local communities by encouraging ordinary people to participate in decision-making and implementation to solve specific problems.

Experience in Kyrgyzstan shows that when an initiative group appears in a local community it can solve more than immediate problems, like fixing the roof of a school or a water pipe. Focusing of efforts and joint participation in purposeful activity encourages people to go beyond solution of specific problems to develop a *new vision* of their future and of their part in the *process of regional development*.

Experience in Kyrgyzstan also proves that sustainable activities by ordinary people at local level depend on suitable external support from donors or NGOs. What is important is not so much the scale of financial aid, but rather the *educational and organizational programmes*, which donors can offer and which transfer new skills and experience to local people.

Some of the first examples of such support in Kyrgyzstan were effected by the UNDP poverty reduction and decentralization of governance programmes, where initiative groups took part in seminars, improved their project development skills, and gained experience of transparent financial management. Training in new social and administrative technologies has allowed self-help groups and community-based organizations, which emerged as part of these programs, to grow into independent active associations, which can now provide effective support to local initiatives (local government, schools, etc.).

consolidated after the Law on Local Government was adopted in 2001. This law gave more authority to local government institutions. In many localities, NGO activists have started working as investment managers, attracting additional funding to their villages by launching and implementing various projects. Having gained experience in implementing single projects and establishing standing resource centres, local communities are now ready to help formulate local development strategies and plans and to cooperate closely with all development entities. This raises the prospect of communities that could go beyond everyday needs and problems to address strategic development goals. Public discussion and coordination of strategic priorities help local people and government officials to find the best solutions to local problems and to implement them efficiently. This enables courses of action, which address specific needs of each community instead of replicating a standard approach in all cases.

Civil sector development at local level is highly uneven. There are villages and towns where civil society activities are based on a strategic and integrated approach, while in some villages young NGOs have only just begun to develop. Generally, strong local government favors establishment of effective and *partnership-oriented NGOs*. Having established *regional resource centers* for NGOs, some donors are helping local NGOs to progress to a new development stage. The centers have been providing educational services to newly established groups and associations and they have become a bridge between international organizations in Bishkek and rural areas of the country. They

increasingly focus on tasks, whose solution will ensure sustainable and comprehensive human development in the regions instead of limiting themselves to day-to-day needs. Public discussion and coordination procedures allow local people and officials to take a balanced and efficient approach to problem solution.

Changes in the attitude to development have been more marked in those communities where UNDP, the Soros-Kyrgyzstan Foundation, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and the Urban Institute have implemented their projects to create resources at local level. The most valuable resources are human and organizational: the most proactive groups are identified when an initial project or programme is being implemented, and are later involved in further development. Thanks to these processes, the character of support for local initiatives has changed significantly. Starting with small grants for social projects by local administrations, the support has developed into an effective way of coordinating the interests of different participants. The main principles at work here are:

- Development of a *strategic development plan* for each locality.
- Every project carried out in the framework of the strategic plan, must be *realistic and address real problems* of the relevant community.

At the Kyrgyzstan Development Forum (September 2004) local community representatives decided to establish a National Development Network (NDN). The NDN adopted a development declaration and memorandum defining its goals, principles, and priorities. The Network consists of 50 communities



## Box 3.13

**The motto of the National Development Network (NDN) is: “Community success is the success of individuals and of the whole country”<sup>48</sup>**

The *mission* outlined by the NDN Organizational Committee is as follows:

- To propose solutions independently, without waiting for special prompting.
- To seize each opportunity and existing resources instead of waiting for special conditions.
- To propose a vision of the future to partners and to implement it.

Can the NDN have real impact on human development? That question can only be answered with time, but local communities are already successfully implementing a variety of projects (income generating, infrastructural, ecological, social, etc.), which bring them closer to the NDN goal of making Kyrgyzstan’s towns and villages pleasant, comfortable, convenient and safe. Projects include:

- development of information technologies;
- a center for adaptation of juveniles;
- public facilities offering Internet access;
- improvement of irrigation networks;
- small-scale manufacturing projects;
- social and legal assistance to the population;
- family law units.

NDN participants say:

*We are ready to build equitable dialogue with society, donors and the authorities to address the most pressing community and national problems.*

*We can solve both new and old problems.*

*We are ready to move into the future. Together!*

totaling 500,000 people and is a self-organizing structure open to all those who want to improve their lives by improving their communities. It uses a single format and common procedures, and is based on joint projects, including publications, campaigns, etc. Network organizations operate at national and regional levels. For example, the Central Asian Alliance of Mountain Villages, which operates within the Network, is now a recognized vehicle for people from different villages and local communities to share their experience.

Civil society is becoming a real, effective and evolving tool for protection of basic rights and freedoms of both individuals and social groups at all levels of power in Kyrgyzstan. However, development potential of civil society is still limited by external conditions (inadequate legislation and lack of effective mechanisms of interaction with the state) and internal factors (inadequate resources of NGOs, and failure to apply democratic technologies in decision-making).

<sup>48</sup> Development Declaration approved at the Kyrgyzstan Development Forum on September 25, 2004.

## Chapter 4. Civil society: developing appropriate approaches and solutions

### 4.1. Public participation is the main factor of public policy

Reforms in any sphere of the economy or society are accomplished by formation and implementation of *policy*, i.e. a combination of legislative, executive, and supervisory measures that define the general lines, along which the life of society develops. This is a three-stage process: from policy-making to policy implementation to monitoring and evaluation. (Graph 4.1)

As civil society develops the state loses its monopoly over this process. At the *policy-making level*, as we will show below, the role of civil society, especially of think tanks, is critical. Policy-making involves the development of alternative and competing strategies. Independent think tanks are capable of offering this alternative vision, so involvement of the civil sector is crucial for government when it approaches comprehensive reforms. Such involvement ensures political support for the reforms by ensuring wide and transparent discussion of the measures, which are envisaged, and making the goals and the scope of the reforms accessible to the public. The non-governmental sector becomes a sort of an early warning system, by which the government can

gauge likely response of the general public to future policy.

It is usually assumed that the role of the non-governmental sector in *policy implementation* is less important because responsibility is carried by government agencies. However, this stage also offers many possibilities for co-operation. As will be shown, civil society is very active in implementing the government social policy. But its role in implementing economic policy is no less important, as long as the criteria necessary for its efficient participation are observed.

Civil society should be most active during the stage of *monitoring and evaluating* the measures that have been implemented. Monitoring of governmental activities by government itself would involve a conflict of interest, so the non-governmental sector is best placed to give an independent and objective assessment of results.

Active participation of civil society in policy development and implementation lends a public nature to the policy, improving its effectiveness, subject to certain conditions.

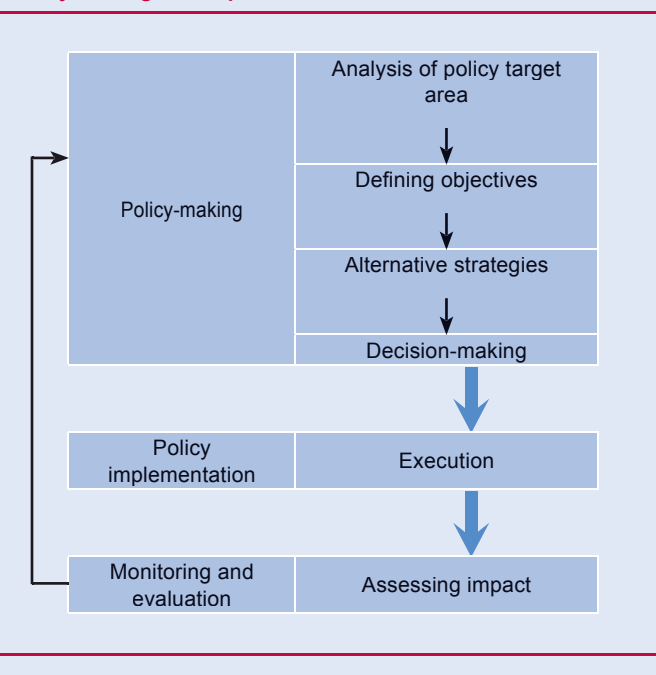
### Background and prospects for public policy development in Kyrgyzstan

A national policy, which is genuinely *public*, involves specific features and procedures in its development and implementation by various levels of government. The policy is *public* if its development is based on and takes account of the expectations of various social groups (via their representatives). In essence, public policy is both the means and result of public participation in the process of decision-making by government.

All this shapes the integral nature of public policy, which is *confidence of people in government agencies*. We could add several other necessary conditions for making policy public. In particular, the mass media has to function as the civil inspector of government activities (Box 4.2). However, one evident point is that a policy (a combination of legislative, executive and governing measures implemented by the government), which is public, is no longer a private matter that only concerns state authorities.

Graph 4.1

#### Policy-making and implementation



The private and secretive (non-public) nature of decision-making by the state machinery has caused previous Kyrgyz governments to follow inefficient and mistaken policies. There are a number of reasons for this:

1. Although the process of democratic reform has is now at least 15 years old, *the legacy of the command system is still felt*. Most top government officials acquired their governance experience during Soviet times, and relatively young officials have had to follow their example because they have lacked opportunities to acquire up-to-date managerial skills in proper schools.<sup>50</sup>
2. The second reason is the *subjective attitude* of government officials in matters of public participation in decision-making.

Relations between the state and civil society should not depend on the subjective views of a particular official, but this was not always the case in the previous government. If an official is aware of the need to work with civil society organisations, co-operation is fruitful. If not, the co-operation soon becomes a mere formality. For example, government work to implement investment matrices had positive outcomes overall, largely thanks to willingness of officials to work with civil society, but activities by the State Committee on Tourism, Sport and Youth Policy (now effectively defunct) set a negative example.

3. The third reason is the *absence of a legislative basis* for co-operation between government and civil society.

Significant progress has only been achieved in the past couple of years. The Law on the Civil Service, which was adopted in August 2005, contains a principle of publicity and public accessibility to information about the work of civil servants. However, this principle is not developed in detail in the Law, and more work is required. The Law on Normative Legal Acts has recently been amended with a provision stipulating the need for civil organizations to participate in preparation of legislation. However, the law does not elaborate on this principle, and further amendment is needed. The relationship between civil society and the state is set out in more detail in several other laws. Generally, though, important legal changes in the status of civil society have only recently been introduced.

<sup>49</sup> These principles were developed by authors on the basis of workshop documents "Discussion of public policy problems". Saint-Petersburg, 2003

<sup>50</sup> Many young specialists educated in western universities have moved to donor organizations and the private sector

#### Box 4.1

##### What makes policy public<sup>49</sup>

- *Transparency of government*. This transparency implies both free access to government information in a form understandable to the public and the presence of real mechanisms of public influence on government decision-making.
- Focus on *solving people's problems*. Ongoing co-operation with local communities must be the policy focus.
- Presence of an *advisory system* that involves civil organizations representing the interests of specific public groups and is based on efficient partnership
- *Independent evaluation of the effectiveness* of specific projects and programmes.
- *Open cooperation with independent research centres*, which can determine the most efficient ways of solving problems.

#### Box 4.2

##### The mass media as a force for public policy development

The mass media plays a significant role in developing and monitoring public policies, ensuring civil control of government activities, and encouraging political culture. As an *instrument for civil society development*, the media offers civil society institutions an opportunity to express their viewpoints and increases awareness of various events and NGO activities.

The media have the following functions in *policy development*:

1. Ensuring public discussion of government decisions, and covering such important political events as elections and staff selection.
2. Organizing campaigns for or against various political decisions, events, or public figures.
3. Ensuring transparency of government activities as far as possible.
4. Providing a real outlet for civil society to present its political position.

#### Box 4.3

##### Economic Policy Council (EPC): routinely against public policy

This Council was established in early 2002. Its objectives included the following:

- To consolidate economic policy-making mechanisms.
- To ensure a comprehensive and consistent approach to implementation of economic policy.
- To provide timely responses by developing and adopting preventive measures.

High-quality decisions could have been achieved here if a feedback mechanism between state and civil society had been set up. Instead, the EPC became a classic example of an administrative system - a kind of mini-government within the government with simplified but, *per se*, the same closed procedures of decision-making, ready to approve decisions regardless of whether they were good or bad. EPC bylaws were finally changed after frequent criticisms about ignoring the opinion of civil society, but it remained the case that representatives of civil society could only participate indirectly in Council meetings and only when *invited by the Prime Minister*.

**Table 4.1**  
**Partnership Mechanisms**

	Passive partnership	Active partnership
Types of partnership	Recommendations by civil society for policy-making	Participation of the civil sector in policy-making and implementation, monitoring and evaluation
Nature of interaction	The state is a “black box”	Feedback mechanisms

4. *Lack of clear understanding* by both the government and civil society as to which partnership mechanisms are effective, and which are not.

International experience shows that use of partnership mechanisms tend to be limited to policy formulation and implementation of specific projects. There is a lack of mechanisms for private sector participation in implementation of economic policy. Moreover, the mechanisms of private sector participation in policy-making tend to be reduced to national forums or meetings, at which representatives of NGOs and the private sector communicate their opinion to government agencies. This partnership has a one-sided, or passive, nature.

Two different models of partnership between the state and civil society can be distinguished, based on the nature of the interaction (Table 4.1). We believe that drafting of the Comprehensive Development Framework, especially during the early stages, is an example of one-sided partnership, although qualified experts took part. Government agencies claimed to be conducting a dialogue with civil society, but in fact the government side remained a “black box”, into which recommendations made by civil society representatives would simply disappear with no clear response or no response whatsoever.

The distinguishing mark of passive partnership is that government agencies try to *impose* the platform and rules for dialogue with civil society and the private sector. What often happens is that councils are established by the government side. Examples have included the National Council for Good Governance and the Public Chamber for Economic and Business Development. As stated in Presidential Decree No. 269 of 9th December 2004, the objective of the Public Chamber is “to raise the living standards of the population through partnership and mobilization of public and private sector capacities for developing and implementing sustainable economic growth of the regions and sectors of the economy”. However, this is a format imposed by the authorities, without

support from business. Accordingly, international donor organisations have not responded to the Decree’s call for grant funding of operations by the Chamber.

Another feature of passive partnership is that the government tries to *limit scope of this partnership*. The partnership mechanisms are usually limited to policy formulation and mechanisms for private sector participation in implementing and monitoring economic policies are virtually non-existent. Our view is that partnership can only be effective, when it meets a number of criteria:

- The partnership process should be transparent, excluding secret negotiations and deals.
- All stakeholders should have equal access to information.
- There should be no discrimination against participants.
- All decisions should be subject to impact assessment in order to gauge potential benefits and losses to society.

Unless these criteria are met, there is a risk of rent-seeking activities, where added value is redistributed in favour of one party, instead of benefiting the whole of society. This danger has arisen in the past, when, for example, the government discussed oil excise duties solely with oil traders, and the State Agency for Tourism and Sports discussed tourism licensing only with tour operators. The civil sector should be privy to these discussions in the role of a third, independent party.

A considerable number of NGOs in Kyrgyzstan participate in the making of public policy to some extent. Three categories of NGOs can be distinguished according to the nature and extent of their participation:

NGO types	Examples of currently operating NGOs
• Focused on political goals	Civil Society Against Corruption, For Fair Elections.
• Focused on promotion of economic reforms	Association of Civil Society Support Centers, environmental NGOs, Initiative Center, Osh Foundation for Legal Reform Assistance, Lawyers of Kyrgyzstan, Investment Round Table
• Representing the interests of specific social groups	Young people’s and women’s organisations, trade unions, veterans’ associations, consumer protection associations, human rights organizations, associations of doctors, lawyers, etc.

Some NGOs, particularly large public associations, are amalgams of the three different types. For example, the People’s Assembly of Kyrgyzstan represents the interests of ethnic groups and is

active in developing co-operation mechanisms with government agencies and is also heavily involved in political activities. The Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society does not advocate the interests of any particular social group, but claims political participation in key political processes and works to design democratic mechanisms of co-operation with government bodies. Business associations and the Investment Round Table, a public association established to promote business interests, are also active in creating mechanisms and structures for co-operation with government bodies, participating in political decision-making and, when necessary, becoming directly involved in politics, and supporting specific political forces.

In addition to the above mentioned types of NGOs there are others, which do not have direct relation to the public policy making processes, but sometimes become involved in public policy making for particular purposes. Examples are Umut, the Meerim International Charitable Fund, the Center for Social Technologies, and educational NGOs.

The first proactive civil sector participation in policy-making was during drafting of national programmes, such as Araket, Manas, Ardager, Bilim, Ayalzat. The civil sector also helped to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The best examples of decision-making with civil society participation at national level were drafting and adoption of the Comprehensive Development Framework up to 2010 and the National Poverty Reduction Strategy. Political parties and NGOs took part in developing these documents at various stages. The Partnership Matrix (Box 4.4) was prepared within the frameworks of these documents.<sup>51</sup> It was developed and adopted as a basic guideline for joint action between government agencies, non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

The Partnership Matrix was the most serious effort yet to create a partnership mechanism in Kyrgyzstan. It was drafted with participation of more than 300 non-governmental organizations, finalized by the Counterpart Consortium and submitted to the government after long discussions and numerous round tables. As the product of input by

#### Box 4.4

#### The Partnership and Participation Matrix: objectives, principles and methods

Aimed at achieving results and consensus between all social forces, the Partnership Matrix implements the following tasks:

- Information dissemination.
- Conducting regular consultations and discussions.
- Including all institutions in implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies.
- Ensuring accountability and transparency.
- Increasing and strengthening involvement of parties in programmes.
- Strengthening the responsibility of relevant parties.
- Strengthening the capacities of relevant parties.

many representatives of civil society, the Matrix has been used for drafting and implementing a variety of national strategies and programmes.

The role of the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) in developing partnership is ambiguous. On the one hand, it proved to be an incentive for civil society during initial stages. Many NGOs were enthusiastic about the call to combine their efforts. On the other hand, many proposals remained on paper. Government officials have claimed that co-operation is exemplary, while many NGOs emphasize that their participation has been limited. Ultimately, civil society and not government has to be the arbiter of whether a policy is genuinely public.

The attributes of public policy outlined above are interrelated and complement each other. However, it is critically important to avoid mere imitation of public participation (such imitation has been a problem in recent years). Ways of intensifying public policy in specific sectors will be suggested later in this Report. However, ways of dealing with key problems of public access to decision-making at governmental level can be summarized at once.

Procedures for civil participation in political decision-making and governance must be improved and augmented. Many procedures require institutionalisation, even to the extent of their inclusion in legislation. The introduction of various *public hearing* formats is necessary, including:

- information sessions;

<sup>51</sup> National Strategy for Poverty Reduction 2003-2005, p. 155

Box 4.5

**Public hearings: extending public policy standards in the budgetary process**

Transparency of the budget and public access to discussion of the budget are important criteria of a democratic society. Campaigns for public hearings on drafts of national and local budgets have been underway in Kyrgyzstan for six years, supported by the Urban Institute (as part of the project for Development of Self-governance in Central Asia), UNDP (as part of the Democratic Governance Programme) and the Soros Foundation (as part of the Budget Dialogue partnership project between the Foundation and the Ministry of Finance).

The participants in public hearings include Parliament, the Ministry of Finance, local keneshes, local self-government bodies, NGOs and business. The strategic objective is to create new formats and instruments of budget transparency through dialogue between the state, business and civil society, as well as expanding people's access to budget information.

The key to success is involvement of non-governmental groups that can analyze and evaluate the budget process, and creation of partnerships to promote budget dialogue.

The procedure of public hearings has allowed citizens and public organizations to make real proposals about:

- development of financial plans for the regions;
- specific expenditure priorities;
- new sources of revenue and increase of the tax base.

- open forum formats;
- "dual hearing" formats;
- various forms of policy analysis carried out by civil society institutions or with their participation.

*Regular partnership* (formalized councils, etc.) between NGOs and the general public, on the one hand, and government institutions, on the other, must be expanded. *Formalized councils*, which would have government representatives present, but which would only give voting rights to representatives of NGOs or associations, could prove effective for ensuring free expression of public concerns. Decisions of such councils would serve as advice to government bodies. Elaboration of procedures for permanent participation by interested NGOs and wider circles of civil society in developing policies would have much practical value.

New standards would have to be built into administrative procedures and civil service job requirements in order to achieve this. Special trainings would be necessary for government staff, and curricula of higher educational institutions would need relevant additions concerning rights and procedures of civil participation in politics.

An important step towards creation of public policy formats was establishment of a working group to develop a programme for expansion, legal reinforcement and implementation of interaction between state agencies, local government and civil society. The working group was set up by Decree of the Acting President of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 218, 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2005. Authors of this Report believe that the programme needs to:<sup>52</sup>

- propose amendments to the Constitution which would enhance participation by civil society in preparing and implementing government decisions;
- give a professional assessment of the legislative and regulatory framework in Kyrgyzstan as regards compliance with public policy standards;
- organize training on preparation of government documents for a large group of officials at various levels from the Government, Presidential Administration, Jogorku Kenesh and a number of ministries and agencies;
- enlist help of analytical centers to devise new government procedures, which favour public policy making;
- organize tenders for analytical centres to develop government procedures for working with strategic documents, to assess efficiency of work by ministries, and of planning, coordinating, reporting and implementing of public policy decisions;
- introduce regulatory impact assessments (RIAs) by independent analytical institutes as a day-to-day practice.

Efforts to formulate and implement policies based on partnership between civil society and the state have been made in many sectors in Kyrgyzstan. Their success or failure is the theme of the next sections in this Chapter.

<sup>52</sup> These proposals have been prepared by the authors of the report together with E. Taranchiev and S. Masaulov, who are members of the working group

## 4.2. Making and executing economic policy: partnership sustainability problems

Government institutions often complain about the immaturity of the business community and its unorganized and non-constructive attitude. Business people in turn criticize the government for not providing support and for ignoring pressing problems. At the same time, there are no government representatives who dare say, at least openly, that they are not willing to work with the business community. The President, parliamentary deputies, and judiciary all emphasize the need for close co-operation between the state and the business sector in society.

The government cannot improve the economic environment without assistance. Although, in a market economy, it is the job of government to create a framework for business, the private sector must participate in establishing and enforcing rules of fair play. Civil society has a key role in drawing up legislation to improve the business climate because, without feedback from the private sector, *the state cannot take account of real interests of business people.*

Although there was awareness of this interrelation between the state and the private sector by the late 1990s, there were no formally established mechanisms for making it operate. There are objective reasons for this:

1. There was inertia from the Soviet period, when government determined nearly all aspects of public life.
2. The “benevolent state” paradigm tended to dominate at the beginning of transition, with intellectual potential concentrated in government bodies.
3. In the early years of the transition crisis the private sector was fighting for survival and was not capable of institution building.

However, the situation has changed in recent years. The economic climate has improved, allowing business to divert attention from immediate problems and start creating associations and NGOs, which aim to improve the economic environment – institutions capable of dialogue with government. The state proclaimed a service-oriented business policy and began to learn new methods of interacting with business, acquiring the habit of talking to business

and treating its proposals as proposals made by an important section of society.

The following government-business interactions have become commonplace:

1. *Conferences, round tables, workshops* on vital economic problems.
2. Development of research products by *think tanks* and their delivery to the government.
3. *Mutual work* with government on ways of improving economic policy.

The first form of interaction is obviously important. However, government officials tend to believe that partnership can be limited to the holding of such meetings, which is obviously not the case, according to the criteria mentioned above. Recently, business associations have realized the limited nature of this cooperation and have started to develop their own research products. This is how the International Business Council operates. However, research capacity of business associations is limited: such research is most successfully undertaken by think tanks.

### Role of think tanks in economic policy-making<sup>53</sup>

Kyrgyzstan does not yet have companies with their own analytical groups for assessment of state policy. Local companies lack the relevant experience and cannot afford such capacities. And even if such groups did exist within companies, their impact would be limited, because there are no mechanisms in Kyrgyzstan by which the private sector can obtain action by government in response to its comments and criticisms. Whether set up by specific companies, business associations or other entities, independent analytical groups that examine government policy are called *think tanks*. They have only just begun to appear in Kyrgyzstan, but some distinguishing features are already recognizable.

The role of think tanks in Kyrgyzstan was fairly insignificant before 2000, but there has been rapid development since then. Based on results of an express survey, authors of this Report estimate that the number of think tanks in Kyrgyzstan had grown by nearly three times in 2005 compared with 1996.

Distinctive features of think tanks in Kyrgyzstan are donor funding and the development and implementation of *specific mechanisms for lobbying*

<sup>53</sup> The study entitled “Situation in the intellectual property market in Kyrgyzstan” (Bishkek, Soros-Kyrgyzstan Foundation, 2005) was published after this section had been drafted. However, the authors of this section believe that their conclusions substantially concur with and supplement the analytical report.

Box 4.6

**New-style think tanks: breaking constraints, achieving goals**

The work of think tanks involves much routine analysis, which may be useful but rarely captures the imagination. One exception to this rule is the Bishkek Business Club (BBC), whose members have written a policy document entitled “Vision – 2020” and a business strategy, which explains the strengths that Kyrgyz business needs to develop from now until 2020. The Bishkek Business Club has held several large forums: “Export Strategies for Kyrgyzstan”, “Education – Enlightenment or Business”, “Shadow KG or Sunny KR”, “The Middle Class: Bedrock of a Happy Country”. The forum titles show that the Club sets high goals.

In order to achieve these goals the BBC aims to break out of the rigid constraints, which currently limit opportunities for business in Kyrgyzstan. The BBC promotes Kyrgyzstan as a corporation, as a symbiosis between leaders in different sectors. It is assisted in this mission by representatives of civil society, who contribute to forum debates.

*“Boldness and drive will appear if you set high goals” –  
T. Toichubaev, BBC Chairman*

*the interests of the private sector.* Think tanks mainly advocate interests of the business community, which partly compensates weaknesses of business in lobbying its own interests, mentioned above. Because they do not issue from companies or groups of companies, think tanks cannot protect the interests of specific business associations, but they have been successful in many areas, particularly in reducing risk of rent-oriented activities, which arise when the business community and the state interact opaquely. In-depth study and knowledge of government procedures enable think tanks to promote the cause of business with government in the best possible way.

Research products of think-tanks in Kyrgyzstan have included the information and analysis publication “Prospects for Kyrgyzstan’s Economy” published by the Center of Social and Economic Studies (CASE-Kyrgyzstan) in 2000-2001, the “Framework Analytical Report” on issues of economic deregulation, prepared by the Investment Round Table for the third Investment Summit (June 2003). In spring 2005 the Soros-Kyrgyzstan Foundation initiated a new project “Forum of Reforms: Alternative Stabilization Programs” in the framework of the Public Administration Programme, producing nine analytical documents (short-term stabilization programs) focused on rendering assistance to the current government, parliament and political leaders.

Recent improvements in legislation, supporting economic development and transparency of government, have established a direct link between *economic growth* and *think tank activity*. However, the current think tank network in Kyrgyzstan suffers from several significant shortcomings, which may make some think tanks unsustainable. The problems include:

1. lack of demand for research by key decision-makers, government and parliament, and limited interest from the business community;
2. modest financial resources are inefficiently used, since financing levels are determined by costs and not by results;
3. NGO think tanks are oriented to donors, and projects are undertaken without participation of those, to whom the final results will be relevant (business associations and government).

Overcoming of these problems will create a new, improved groundwork for think tanks, which will decline in number but improve quality of the services, which they offer, thanks to working on a contract, self-financing basis and diversifying their research material.

#### Developing new partnership technologies

Techniques for cooperation in design and implementation of economic policy in Kyrgyzstan include:

- implementation of investment matrices;
- creation of cooperation mechanisms between state agencies.

Economic policy implementation through *investment matrices* (short-term economic programmes) has used many partnership techniques between the state and civil society.<sup>54</sup> The matrices are intended to serve as “technological negotiating platforms” for the state, society and business and are aimed at ensuring communication of business views to government agencies, both at the policy-making stage and during implementation.

Feedback between business and the state, as an important condition for active partnership, has been ensured by means of working committees and working and expert groups representing the private sector, government agencies and international organisations and (importantly) they have permanent memberships and working procedures. The importance of such partnership relations is noted in another World Bank report, “A Better Investment Climate for Everyone”, which points

<sup>54</sup> Kyrgyz Republic Country Economic Memorandum An Integrated Strategy for Growth and Trade, Volume 1: Main Report, p. 102



out that “good investment climates are nurtured by broad public support: a consensus in favour of building a more productive society can facilitate policy improvements”.

Various ministries and state agencies have recently begun creation of *social* and *expert councils* including civil society representatives. The Expert Council on Tax Policies at the Ministry of Finance is one example. The Tax Council successfully lobbied inclusion of its members and representatives of the Chamber of Tax Consultants on a government commission responsible for drafting the new Tax Code. As a result many points concerning tax administration were amended to make them more business-friendly.

Another example was a partnership project between the Association of Communications Operators and the Ministry of Transport and Communications, entitled “Policy Making in the ICT Sphere and Development of an Action Plan for the Ministry of Transport and Communications for 2005”. This project was supported by the Soros-Kyrgyzstan Foundation.

The most important aspect of this project was that it discussed possible positive and negative aspects, risks and advantages to the various players *at the decision-making stage* and not after the decisions had been made. Work by research and analytical committees and regular consultations by leading government agencies with business and civil society representatives gave the government side the benefit of new ideas and initiatives. In addition to the Soros-Kyrgyzstan Foundation, several other participating organizations also committed resources (government agencies, business associations, public associations, and other donors working in the ICT sphere, supported by the organization Civil Initiatives for Internet Policy), confirming relevance of the project and its realistic, partner-based nature. An important outcome of this project was commitment to an annual Action Plan for the communications sector, involving government agencies, business, civil society, and international organisations, and institutionalisation of this process.

Partnership in economic policy formulation helps to improve economic legislation:

1. At least 67 pieces of economic reform legislation have been drafted on a partnership basis.

2. Kyrgyzstan took a major step towards an open-door policy by liberalizing the Law On External Migration, to give citizens of 28 countries a simplified visa procedure.
3. A moratorium has been placed on drafting and adoption of new regulations limiting business activities.
4. 33 laws have been passed, abolishing licenses that are not provided for by the Law on Licensing.
5. The National Policy Concept for Regulating the Economic Activities of Enterprises (Economic Deregulation Concept) has been approved.

Documents adopted by the government have emphasized the importance of:

- participation of businesses and business associations, including self-regulatory organizations, in the process of drafting and applying legislation that regulates business activity;
- mandatory notification through the mass media of plans to draft legislation on state regulation of business activities, with a short description of the content of proposed drafts;
- mandatory publication of draft legislation in official publications and government internet sites in order to provide open access;
- establishment of a time frame (not less than 60 days from the date of official publication of draft legislation), within which any stakeholder can comment and remark on the draft legislation before procedures for its approval are put in motion.

It cannot be claimed that the given examples of public-private partnership in the economic sphere are perfect mechanisms for bringing about cooperation between civil society and the state. Some tasks have not been completed and some have been completed in a distorted way and not as originally planned. One programme, which was not fully implemented, is “Reforming the system of mandatory fees paid by enterprises for conducting business”. Efforts as part of this programme failed to restrict the “bad law-making” ability of the state, and new administrative barriers have been put in place.<sup>55</sup> Several councils have ceased working due to inability to find a common language with government officials.

<sup>55</sup> Thus, for example, the law “On Investments in the Kyrgyz Republic” (June 2004) provides for “...equal investment rights for local and foreign investors... except for cases stipulated by the legislation of the Kyrgyz Republic”. Such a reservation is enough to cast doubt on equal rights for foreign investors. The law “On Sustainable Development of the Eco-economic System of Issyk-Kul” says that “transfer of recreation facilities and tourism infrastructure to ownership of foreign entities is forbidden. If a foreign entity or citizen inherits such assets he or she shall be obliged to transfer ownership to a citizen of the Kyrgyz Republic within one year from the time when the property right to the recreation facilities or tourism infrastructure arises”. This is a clear case of discrimination and compulsory expropriation.

### Self-regulatory organizations

Gradual withdrawal of the state from regulation of economic processes creates a need for market self-regulation through specialized professional organizations. The need to create self-regulatory organizations arises from the relationship with the state, but also from the need to create sustainable competitive privileges in the market and, more generally, *to harmonize the interests of government, business, and the general public.*

*Self-regulation* means the regulation of specific markets and domains by economic agents directly, without state participation. It arises from independent and initiative-based work of an association of business or professional entities, aimed at *developing and establishing rules and standards for business or professional activities and ensuring that they are observed.*

The main functions of *self-regulatory institutions* are to:

- standardize and control professional activities and their outputs to meet consumer needs and increase competitive advantages;
- ensure advocacy in disputes with government agencies;
- guarantee that members bear responsibility;
- provide professional public expert evaluation of draft laws and other regulations and participate directly in their drafting, particularly in drafting of technical regulations.

Studies show that several models (levels) of market self-regulation are feasible in Kyrgyzstan:

- The state transfers its functions to self-regulatory organizations.
- The state determines the extent of participation of self-regulatory organizations in regulating a specific segment of the market.
- Self-regulation of a free market, i.e. state regulation is ruled out completely.

Kyrgyzstan needs to create conditions for institutionalizing self-regulation, as the best-possible form of civil sector participation in administration of the economy. A survey of business associations in Kyrgyzstan showed that most respondents understand the notion of self-regulatory bodies. Many also think that the state could delegate certain functions and responsibilities, such as licensing and certification, to self-regulatory organisations.

However, business associations lack practical experience in developing standards and many are

still incapable of clearly distinguishing between the functions performed by business associations and those performed by self-regulatory organizations, confusing one with the other. The legal and organizational basis of self-regulatory organizations is currently under discussion. The debate is focused on ways of transferring state functions self-regulatory organizations, the whether membership of self-regulatory organisations should be compulsory or voluntary, and ways of avoiding emergence of cartels.

Varied and effective partnership mechanisms for framing and implementing economic policy are emerging in Kyrgyzstan. However, civil society has to convince the new government to maintain and develop positive aspects of partnership mechanisms created earlier, and the two sides must then find ways of taking the process further.

### 4.3. Civil Society as a legitimate stakeholder in social policy development: problems and challenges

From the beginning of reforms in Kyrgyzstan civil society has been involved in framing and implementing a policy of equal access to social services (particularly education and healthcare), overcoming poverty, and raising the living standards of the people. Other important areas, on which the non-government sector has focused, are gender equality and the environment. Increasing social involvement and social participation are both a necessary condition for ensuring sustainable human development and the most important positive outcome of such development.

In the first years of transition it became evident that the state would not be able to meet all its social obligations and many of them have been taken over by the general public via local government, civil society organizations and the private sector

This has been a painful process, because of long-standing stereotypes of universal state care, which defined the everyday life of people in Kyrgyzstan for decades. People had never before had to face the problems of unemployment or the need to pay for medical care. Nevertheless, social reforms in the transition period have achieved some success, largely due to social initiatives and the willingness of people to participate in socio-economic development of their communities and the country as a whole.

Donor assistance to the country at various levels and in various forms was an important factor supporting greater social involvement and participation. In this respect technical and advisory assistance is even more valuable than purely financial contributions, although financial assistance was also essential. Development of the social role of the third sector was helped by a shift in focus, as more international organisations began to involve the general public and various public associations in their support efforts, in addition to government and official institutions.

The search for partners among local NGOs and activists did much to encourage *social mobilization*, helping the effort to reducing poverty levels, partially restore social infrastructure, and, most importantly, increase initiative and responsibility of ordinary people in solving their problems. Various forms of *social mobilization* (consolidating the efforts of people living in the same area, repairing social infrastructure facilities, uniting parents seeking to help disabled children, etc.) led to emergence of various NGOs focused on specific and immediate problems.

NGOs functioning in the social sphere face a set of common problems and challenges, which have serious impact on their operations:

1. *Lack of mutual trust* between government agencies and the non-governmental sector.
2. *Absence of institutional mechanisms* to ensure co-operation between government bodies and NGOs (for example, agreements on providing social services within the framework of budget financing and procedures for civil society participation in policy-making).
3. *Prevalence of donor funds* in financing of NGOs in the social sphere, many of which could already be using public funds, local budget funds, or funding from local businesses.

### Civil society and social security: filling the gaps in government social policy

Protecting the most vulnerable sections of the population has traditionally been the province of the state and Kyrgyzstan has affirmed its intention to create a socially oriented market economy. However, difficulties encountered during the transition period have made it difficult for the state to support unemployed, elderly, children, and other vulnerable groups.

#### Box 4.7

#### 1992 – 2004: Brief overview of social reform

**1992 – 1995:** First attempts at reform, difficulty adapting the Soviet welfare system to a market environment, limited donor assistance, absence of a project-based vision in social reforms, development of the first national and state programmes, framing of new legislation taking account of international law.

**1995 – 1998:** Design and implementation of the first models for reforming various social sectors, launch of advisory and technical assistance projects, expansion of the scope of donor financial assistance, first attempts at institutional reforms in the social sphere, intensive work on civil society formation, support for non-governmental organizations.

**1998 – 2004:** Reform models implemented in various sectors (healthcare, employment, pensions, social security, etc.), social mobilization projects introduced, active donor financing of local community projects, increased influence of the non-governmental and private sectors in socio-economic development, design of indicators and introduction of a system of social monitoring and evaluation in social projects and programmes.

The non-governmental sector has taken responsibility for filling the vacuum in provision of social services during the transition process. *Social security and restoration of a full range of social services* to the most vulnerable sections of the population is now a significant part of the activities of many NGOs. These organisations have set an example in developing *social partnership* and promoting *social mobilization* in Kyrgyzstan. Patterns of co-operation between government agencies, local self-government bodies, non-governmental organisations, donors, and local communities have emerged and spread. According to statistics, the social security sphere has seen the highest growth in numbers of non-governmental organisations (by 86 times).<sup>56</sup>

Many of social NGOs work at local level, have limited staff, and are focused on problems in a specific village or urban district. Others have expanded over the years and assumed more sophisticated functions, revising their mission statements, and increasingly participate in decision- and policy-making. Various institutions are involved in analysis, independent expert assessment, and tasks aimed at changing social behaviour.

Despite all their differences, these NGOs have certain goals and objectives in common:

- Improving quality of people's lives.

<sup>56</sup> Ten Years of Independent Kyrgyzstan: Numbers and Facts, Bishkek 2001, p. 10. Kyrgyzstan in Numbers, Bishkek 2003, p. 39.

- Expanding people's access to social services.
- Increased involvement in current social changes.

A distinctive feature of the civil sector today – in the welfare network and beyond – is the tendency to combine efforts of various institutions. By creating associations, organizations in the social sphere have been able to implement projects on a countrywide scale and even throughout Central Asia. These include networks of organizations advocating the rights of specific population groups and professional associations. The experience of the Ishenim network, which provides assistance to the elderly, is remarkable. This network, created by NGOs in Kyrgyzstan, is now being transformed into a regional network, consolidating the efforts of organisations in Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan. This process is being supported by Kyrgyzstan's Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and the Kyrgyz government.

NGOs have found that ministries and government agencies working in the social sphere (the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Ministry of Health, and some other agencies) are willing to cooperate with the non-governmental sector.

Representatives of NGOs working in the social welfare field agree that problems can only be solved by joint efforts between the civil, government and private sectors. This requires expansion of the legislative framework and new laws on social protection guaranteed by the state. Funds from local budgets should be used more extensively for solving both current and strategic problems, co-operation with the business sector should be developed, and soft loans should be used along

with other grant assistance offered by the Kyrgyz Government. Branches of government (the Social Fund, Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, and their local offices) should be involved in these efforts. At present, the continued lack of trust and transparency in certain government agencies makes it impossible to use all available resources to the full extent.

Experience to date shows that Kyrgyzstan is quite capable of implementing civilized approaches, in which some social services are assumed by the non-governmental sector through agreements between NGOs and the state. There are examples of this at local level. One such is the successfully operating Center for Assistance to Elderly People, located in Balykchi, which delivers services to the elderly by agreement with local authorities in a social patronage format (care, assistance with housework, etc.).

#### Social correction as a function of civil society: compensating government failures

Human society is very diverse. Its functioning and development is influenced by state boundaries, property, gender, ethnic identity, the interests of various individuals and social groups, etc., and all of these factors need to interact coherently. It is therefore unsurprising that society is far from being ideal – that it is distorted and asymmetric. Healthcare institutions are managed by those who do not particularly need their services, public transportation routes are planned by those who do not use them (they use their own cars or those of the state), stores do not belong to the customers, and so on. Many examples demonstrate one thing: asymmetry of the social order creates instability

#### Box 4.8

##### The experience of NGO network co-operation and social partnership in welfare

In 2003 the Ishenim international NGO network (Kyrgyz organizations in the network are Umut-Balykchy, DCCA, Arysh, Shoola NGO, and Mehrshafkat NGO) held a major conference entitled "Self-organisation by community groups to reduce poverty and develop civil society institutions: Experience, problems, and prospects". The conference was supported by the Kyrgyz Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. The following major issues were raised at the conference:

- Determining problems and prospects for interaction between sectors to increase civil involvement.
- Examining the legal basis for development of community groups.
- Studying the experience of urban mobilization (young people, the elderly).

Conference participants shared their experience of organizing community development and co-operation groups within the civil sector, analyzed existing models of community organization and prospects for their development, and looked at ways of institutionalizing civil society at various levels.

The conference issued a collection of the practical experiences of its participants, *The People's Encyclopaedia*, and came to agreements on documentation of socio-economic conditions of target groups among the young and elderly in Central Asia.

and the function of *social correction* is to correct this asymmetry

Social correction is an important function performed by civil society institutions. It is relevant in nearly all spheres of life, but is usually focused on solving the most complex social problems. The core of *social correction* is guiding, adapting, renewing, and changing social life, bringing together the interests of citizens, the state and society, and ensuring dynamism – the opposite of stagnation. This requires consistent and long-term impacts on members of society, changing stereotypes and behaviour and adjusting to new economic, social, political, psychological, moral, and ethical contexts.

The most notable achievement of social correction in Kyrgyzstan has been in changing people's attitude towards AIDS. The role of civil sector in combating HIV infection and its consequences is difficult to overestimate. In most countries the spread of HIV-infection and AIDS has long been viewed as a social, rather than a medical problem. When it became evident that prevention and treatment of this disease using medical means was impossible, society was faced with the challenge of changing its *behaviour and attitude* to many problems that had previously been rarely discussed in public. Another challenge was the need to change attitudes to certain social groups, the so-called risk groups. It was clear that effective response to a global epidemic such as AIDS required a high level of social solidarity.

These challenges have been particularly tough in Central Asia, whose societies have a strong traditionalist features, putting difficulties in the way of open discussion of sex-related problems and marginalized social groups. However, the threat of epidemic has spurred action and Kyrgyzstan has set an example in organizing targeted social interventions to help prevent the spread of HIV-infection and AIDS.

Civil society has taken responsibility for interacting with people most at risk from the epidemic – drug addicts, sex workers, sexual minorities, etc. The contribution of community-based organizations has been decisive in limiting spread of infection.

The basic principles of preventive programmes in Kyrgyzstan have rapidly altered from Soviet-style command measures to partnership measures,

#### Box 4.9

#### Civil society in the fight against spread of HIV/AIDS in Kyrgyzstan

Basic activities:

- Population awareness work (primarily with young people) on the dangers of contracting the disease and promotion of safe sexual behaviour.
- Working among isolated communities (so-called risk groups) to encourage their socialization, change their attitude towards the problem of AIDS and promote safe behaviour, which reduces risk of HIV-infection.
- Working with government, law-enforcers, medical and educational institutions to gain their support in combating infection.

Success in checking spread of the epidemic depends on a *multi-sectoral approach* and *joint action* by the government and civil sectors. Thanks to the efforts of NGOs people in risk groups are now receiving targeted assistance from volunteers in the immediate environment of those risk groups. Community involvement has made it possible to introduce peer group education programmes.

and HIV/AIDS is now treated as a multi-sectoral problem and not purely a matter for healthcare. The NGO-inspired movement against AIDS has spread knowledge and skills that enable people to reduce their levels of risk, and has encouraged the appearance of a new generation with a responsible attitude towards their own health.

Analysis of efforts to combat HIV/AIDS highlights a number of serious problems:

1. Problems related to the *status* of NGOs. 74% of funding from the Global Fund against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria was formally allocated for implementation of programmes by civil society organizations.<sup>57</sup> However, it is often difficult to make a precise dividing line between NGOs and official institutions in this sector.
2. The legal environment makes it difficult to curb the epidemic and reduce damage to society. Research showed a failure of general democratic mechanisms and procedures, and inconsistencies between national legislation, on the one hand, and international laws and agreements on HIV/AIDS and drug use, which have been ratified by Kyrgyzstan, on the other hand. One of the first and most significant successes in this sphere was public discussion in 2004 (supported by civil society initiatives, backed by UNDP) of a new draft law on HIV/

<sup>57</sup> Annual report on implementation of the grant of the Global Fund against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in the Kyrgyz Republic (AIDS element), 2004-2005, Bishkek

AIDS, taking account of best national and international practice. The law was approved by the Jogorku Kenesh in June 2004. Nevertheless, problems related to incapacity of governmental and non-governmental institutions, responsible for guaranteeing social justice and enforcement of basic human rights, continue to deepen.

3. *The problem of local capacity development.* Representatives of the non-governmental sector tend to lack skills needed for organizing, conducting, and monitoring efficiency of programmes.
4. *Inefficient interaction with state agencies and lack of transparency in financial procedures* by state institutions. NGOs are deprived of access to actual medical treatment of HIV/AIDS, which reduces NGO ability to organize care and support.

HIV / AIDS is not the only problem of concern to civil society in the context of social correction. NGOs also focus efforts on:

- creation of new values in society, such as aspiration to a healthy life style, “life-long education”, development of new rules of personal and business ethics, etc.;
- implementing programmes to ensure gender equality;
- protecting the rights of people held in custody;
- encouraging environment-oriented behavior by individuals and society as a whole.

#### 4.4. The civil sector and social services

Role of the civil sector in promoting healthcare reforms at community level

Health is one of the major elements of human development. The Human Development Index measures health by life expectancy, A broader analysis views public health as a condition for living a “long and interesting life”.<sup>58</sup> The role of civil society in *promoting a healthy lifestyle* and *organizing the public healthcare system* is currently becoming apparent in Kyrgyzstan and the idea that healthcare is the exclusive responsibility of medical workers has been superseded.

Healthcare reforms have had most impact in rural areas. Towns and district centers have mainly preserved access to healthcare services by specialised doctors, but reorganization of the system with emphasis on primary care has required

new approaches to healthcare in the countryside. Villages have tended to lose access to the proper levels of medical care, which they enjoyed during the Soviet period. This is a disturbing trend, since three-quarters of Kyrgyzstan's population live in villages and there are serious levels of poverty in rural areas.

Analysis shows that civil society, particularly community-level institutions, has become the *most effective organizer* (though not producer) of healthcare services at local level. Such institutions can act as a focal point for interaction between medical workers, local authorities and people, offering a comprehensive approach to solution of pressing healthcare problems. Non-governmental organisations are also capable of clearly defining potential for long-term co-operation between various donors working in related fields in the same village or district. It is important to change the established stereotype that health is the exclusive responsibility of medical workers, and to demonstrate the responsibility of each individual for his or her own health and that of friends and relatives. It is especially important to show that, in the new context, access to many services depends on a proactive and joint approach by the community.

There are several pilot projects currently underway in Kyrgyzstan that aim to improve healthcare by involving ordinary people and to promote healthy lifestyles via local civil institutions. Successful examples of such projects include:

- the Swiss Red Cross project to create rural healthcare committees in Naryn region;
- a joint project on reproductive health involving several donors, implemented under the auspices of UNFPA;
- a DFID project to promote sanitation and hygiene in rural areas of Kyrgyzstan.

Each of these projects emphasizes a different aspect of healthcare. The DFID project and the rural healthcare committees in Naryn are primarily focused on education and awareness, while the UNFPA project stresses the organizational element and social partnership between medical, educational, and governance bodies at local level. Despite these differences, the projects have a common aim: to solve problems in healthcare by enlisting community support. This means that:

## Box 4.10

**Lessons learned from the project for improvement of the quality of sexual and reproductive health services through empowering users**

**Project objective** – to create community-level initiatives and community organisations interested in improving the work of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) service providers. Project interventions covered three aspects:

- *Social mobilization* to create an initiative group composed of rural activists interested in improving SRH service quality, willing to take responsibility for solving relevant SRH problems and co-operating with service providers, distributing awareness materials, promoting a healthy lifestyle and concepts of gender equality and reproductive rights.
- *Improving medical facilities*, retraining MC and FGP staff in pilot villages, supplying the necessary equipment and contraceptives and expanding the range of services.
- *Educational activities* to create abilities and skills for working in local communities, including SRH, among the initiative groups and to create sensitivity to issues related to SRH and reproductive rights among local authorities, law-enforcement officials, teachers, and rural activists.

As a result of this project, supported by UNFPA, pilot villages and aiyl okmotu were able to solve a number of public health problems in local communities. For example, public pharmacies have been opened in several villages through contributions by the general public. One of the villages produced an “ambulance” for pregnant women and maternity patients, using a car belonging to one of the villagers (local people have agreed to take turns driving it). In another village people are discussing possibility of regular preventive check-ups at the district hospital by specialists that the local FGP lacks. Funds for this are also accumulated by the local initiative group through community contributions. All facilities for pilot FAPs and FGPs were made fit for use mainly thanks to local contributions (with some grant support). In a remote village an FGP-based maternity ward was opened with support from local people and NGO projects. Community members are already willing to take over many responsibilities for educational and awareness-building activities, giving doctors more time to perform specialized duties.

1. all of the projects use a technique of *social mobilization*;
2. the initiative groups created by a project usually operate as local mediators, creating *social partnerships* between medical workers, schools, local authorities, and the general public;
3. each project includes and implements an *educational or awareness element* promoting a healthy lifestyle.

Current projects offer several lessons on how civil participation in public health can be most efficient:

1. *Integration of efforts* to solve urgent problems. Participation of civil society makes it possible to make a difference in fields, which are crucial for health, but in which medical workers cannot intervene. For example, an increase in intestinal infections could be due to deteriorating environmental conditions in the area or poor water supply. It would be difficult for medical workers alone to solve these problems. Local NGOs can co-ordinate and manage activities by medical workers and other stakeholders to solve complex issues, and bring together the necessary financial, human, and informational resources.
2. *Mobilizing the general public* and involving civil institutions in promoting public health. The participation of local NGOs can help to meet

certain specific public health needs, reducing expenditures for the healthcare system and enabling targeted support to specific regions, which have particular health needs.

Every village in Kyrgyzstan is different and the ideal would be to develop a separate model for promotion of public health and a healthy lifestyle in each village. These models would depend on specific aspects (size of a village, distance from other communities, extent of public participation in governance, etc.). The choice of starting point in each case would depend on the priorities of community members. Government and donor support could then help to realise such well-chosen priorities.

#### The role of NGOs in securing rights to accessible, quality education

Education has a very important role in human development. Education underlies the empowerment of individuals with new opportunities for understanding the world around them, gaining access to information, and participating in decisions that are important both for the individual and for society. At the same time, education is the key factor in growth of human capital.

Like other social spheres, education in Kyrgyzstan is experiencing deep changes. Civil society has a huge role to play in *reforming the education system*

to support economic growth and capacities for higher individual incomes.

The Concept for Educational Development in the Kyrgyz Republic, adopted in 2002, and the new Law on Education (2003) contain the main guidelines for reform. Special emphasis has been placed on *accessibility* and *quality of general education*. However, the education reform programme has not yet been clearly defined and needs careful analysis and extensive civil *expert evaluation*. This is particularly true in view of the fact that quality and accessibility can be mutually exclusive and much work will be needed to achieve a balance.

Clearly, general secondary education is crucial both for the country's development and for the lives of its individual citizens. School reforms therefore require in-depth preliminary work at the level of pilot projects and extensive expert evaluation by all interest groups and the expert community. Reform of the Kyrgyz educational system is being carried out in the context of wider reforms, whose main thrust is decentralization of governance and introduction of market mechanisms in all areas of life.

Efforts to meet the two priority criteria, of *accessibility of education* and its *quality*, entail a number of problems, which will require involvement of civil society institutions for their solution.

For example, decentralization of educational management and participation of local communities in running schools can lead to *regional inequality of access to educational services*. Rural schoolchildren have fewer opportunities for additional education and for mastering specific professional skills compared with urban pupils. This limits their opportunities for self-fulfilment: graduates of rural schools often have no expectation beyond a life of work in the fields.

Many parents today want to make additional educational services available to their children, enabling them to pursue higher education or go into business. In some villages, where social mobilization has been most successful, local community organisations invite English teachers, music teachers and other educational specialist from towns and cities and pay for the lessons using community funds.<sup>60</sup> This kind of initiative could become the basis for addressing school education issues in villages through involvement of local communities.

Local NGOs or rural communities can also help to solve other major problems faced by rural schools, ranging from family problems, which affect school attendance, to school involvement in the social and cultural life of the village.

#### Box 4.11

##### Issyk-Kul: pilot projects on school reform

There are currently two major projects in Issyk-Kul region aimed at introducing market mechanisms into school management. These projects are being implemented with extensive participation by non-governmental and donor organisations. The mechanisms include:

- a voucher system to ensure advanced training for teachers;
- per capita (per student) financing of schools in two districts.

**The voucher system for the advanced training of teachers** is focused on creating competition between educational service providers capable of offering advanced training courses to teachers to meet school requirements. Each teacher is given a voucher, which enables him or her to take advanced training courses every four years. University departments, non-governmental organizations, and private entities can now offer courses to teachers (previously this was the exclusive right of the Kyrgyz Academy of Education).

**Per capita financing of schools** is a model in which funding follows the student. It implies a concentration of resources in the most effective schools, assuming that parents and children can choose between schools. Choice of school can encourage competition between schools and higher quality of school education.

Another pilot project being implemented in Issyk-Kul, is related to **decentralization of the educational system** and is focused on developing partnerships in regional educational policy.<sup>59</sup> The project working group not only represents educational institutions and agencies responsible for educational management, but also local business people, entrepreneurs, and non-governmental organizations.

<sup>59</sup> The projects in Issyk-Kul region are being implemented under the auspices of the Soros-Kyrgyzstan Foundation, PIKS (USAID) Project and other donors

<sup>60</sup> Poverty Reduction and the Problems of Better Governance. Bishkek, 2001



Correlation between the educational system and the labour market is of critical importance both for the country and for individuals. Many experts say that this correlation is very weak in Kyrgyzstan. Recognition of this problem by civil society was reflected in the major forum organized by the Bishkek Business Club in 2004. The Forum revealed a wide range of inconsistencies, mainly in vocational education. Business people, as the main group of employers, noted that there was a severe shortage of staff and specialists who meet the needs of today's market, despite the large number of higher education institutions in the country.<sup>61</sup>

Professional (vocational) training in Kyrgyzstan is increasingly limited to the higher education system: opportunities for such training in technical colleges and polytechnics (primary vocational education) are declining. This trend is reducing potential for personal fulfilment and having negative impact on economic development at national level. This problem was first brought to wide attention by civil society (together with the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection), which has initiated wide discussion of problems related to primary vocational education and the development of technical vocational schools in public policy. These discussions have led to new projects addressing these problems.

#### 4.5. The civil sector and environmental policy

Kyrgyzstan is seeking to become part of the process of sustainable development on a global, regional,

and sub-regional scale. Participation in international programmes and projects and the signing of international conventions on the environment have helped the country enter the global environmental process and given access to modern technologies, information networks, and financial resources. This enables the state to perform the functions necessary to ensure *protection of the environmental rights* of its citizens as efficiently as possible.

An important instrument for ensuring environmental safety is public participation in decision-making at governmental level and in developing environmental policies. Ratification of the Aarhus Convention<sup>62</sup> in 2001 created a legal precedent for rights of the general public to participate in the decision-making process on environmental issues, giving new impetus to development of cooperation between the state and the civil sector.

#### Role and functions of environmental NGOs: integration efforts

There are currently about 200 environmental NGOs in Kyrgyzstan. They perform a variety of environmental protection functions, including:

- environmental education and raising awareness;
- environmental legislation;
- co-operation with special biodiversity reserves;
- addressing issues related to climate change, desertification, ozone layer, organic pollution, etc.

Increasing numbers of NGOs are being organized in rural areas and more environment-focused NGOs are seeking co-operation with government agencies and international organizations. Public

#### Box 4.12

##### School parliaments and social partnership

The Social Partnership Programme, initiated by the Soros-Kyrgyzstan Foundation, has shown an interesting example of developing school self-governance through a school parliament.

In many regions self-governance bodies in schools have initiated joint extramural activities to involve other local institutions, especially local government, in the life of the schools. These joint initiatives have produced projects, which are supported by the Partnership Programme: renovation of schools, provision of new equipment, extracurricular activities, and establishment of some adult education facilities. Some districts are supporting children from poor families: committees identify needy cases and provide the help, which is needed to improve access to education. The committees help collect funds, write project proposals, and establish relationships with local authorities.

Such initiatives help to make civil-society awareness a part of children's education and make it possible to solve many education-related problems encountered by local communities. Since 2004, USD 35,400 have been spent for these purposes and a further USD 10,000 have been contributed by local communities.

<sup>61</sup> Proceedings of the Forum, Education: Enlightenment or Business, Erudition or Skills? (Organized by the Bishkek Business Club, Dec 17th 2004)

<sup>62</sup> The UN Economic Commission for Europe Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters

Box 4.13

**Kyrgyzstan's participation in global conventions on the environment**

Kyrgyzstan has adopted the key documents of the *United Nations Conference on Environment and Development* (Rio de Janeiro, 1992).

Kyrgyzstan has joined 11 and ratified 4 global conventions on the *protection of the environment* – to halt environmental deterioration in the country by harmonizing national and international legislation on the environment.

Kyrgyzstan is an active participant in international environmental processes at global, regional and national levels, including the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002), the EU Environment for Europe programme, Agenda for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and the Millennium Development Goals. Sustainable development processes have become an important element of new policy in Kyrgyzstan. Work has begun to build sustainable development principles into national strategies and to transform ecological education into sustainable development education.

participation in environmental protection requires *public awareness* and awareness by civil society organisations of the existing environmental issues, of measures taken by governmental and non-governmental organisations, and of forthcoming decisions that can substantially influence the environment. Kyrgyz environmental NGOs, which have recently appeared, include Biom (a young people's environmental movement), Tree of Life, Independent Ecological Expertise, Sustainable Nature Management and the Community Centre for Environmental Information. The Resource Centre of the Kyrgyz Branch of the Central Asian Regional Centre for the Environment opened in 2003.

To perform their *awareness functions*, NGOs publish a number of printed and electronic publications about the environment. These include the Murok magazine which covers current events, and broadcasts by independent radio stations in Karakol and Naryn (Tenir-Too). However, the role of state-owned and independent media in creating awareness of relevant environmental issues is inadequate. Most publications with large circulations publish very few analytical, promotional, or awareness-raising articles on environmental topics. There have been very few awareness campaigns, press conferences, or round-table meetings organized by state and private news agencies to critically analyse national environmental protection policies and suggest changes based on public opinion.

An important aspect of public participation in environmental programmes is the work of environmental organisations on preserving biodiversity within *pecially protected reserves*. Some NGOs have considerable technical and intellectual capacities that enable them produce feasibility studies for creating and managing these areas based on partnerships with government agencies. The Aleine Movement is particularly successful in this field. Successful international

projects with involvement of ecological NGOs to preserve biodiversity have included:

- Central Asian Transboundary Project for Preserving the Biodiversity of the Western Tien Shan, financed by the Global Environment Fund and the World Bank.
- Kyrgyz-Swiss Forestry Programme, 2001-2005.
- Concept for Forestry Sector Development up to 2025.

The effectiveness of efforts by environmental NGOs and the scientific community depend largely on funding by international environmental foundations and organizations, since state financing of scientific and research activities is nominal. Since 2001, 83 projects have received funds under the UNDP Small Grant Programme for executing Kyrgyzstan's commitments under global ecological conventions. In today's conditions environmental NGOs have become a kind of financial buffer for the scientific community and research institutes. Moreover, environmental NGOs mediate in the North-South transfer of technologies for sustainable management of natural resources (including seminars, training and publications).

Civil society institutions perform an important *educational function* by creating public environmental awareness and involving the wider public in development of national policies on the environment and implementing practical measures on environmental protection. These *public awareness-building functions*, including awareness of commitments under global environmental conventions, are performed primarily by NGOs in Kyrgyzstan's biggest cities – Bishkek and Osh – while efforts at regional and local levels are clearly inadequate.

It has to be admitted that that the *environmental functions of civil society often conflict with*

## Box 4.14

## Implementing market mechanisms in environmental protection

Some Kyrgyz enterprises are beginning to introduce environmentally sound technologies, taking note of pressure by the state and civil society:

- Tansuu OsOO is helping to improve legislation related to the production, installation and use of fuel systems. It is working with government agencies to adapt norms and standards developed in Russia.
- The Issyk-Kul biosphere reserve, supported by researchers, is installing alternative energy sources and treatment works in at holiday centers on Lake Issyk-Kul.
- The Centre for Agrarian Sciences under the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources supported by the international organisation, ICARDA, and the Swiss Helvetas RAS Programme, is working with farmers to transfer technologies for environmentally sound use of land.

These projects have clear strategic benefits and create a long-term framework for subsequent work to ensure environmental balance. Moreover, these market-based projects create real partnerships between the state, businesses, the civil sector, and international organizations, and transfer advanced technologies for natural resource management, making best use of investments already made in the developed countries, which created the technologies.

*businesses*. Many enterprises use any means possible to make a profit and thus conclude “agreements” with high-ranking officials who grant these “partners” special status, putting them beyond control by regulatory authorities. Assessments of environmental safety by owners of industrial facilities are often in sharp contrast with assessments by independent experts from environmental NGOs. For example, independent experts say that, despite the environmental measures<sup>63</sup> taken by the Kumtor gold mining venture and its claims that it does not harm the environment, the negative environmental impact from Kumtor is equal to the man-made environmental impact of two entire regions of Kyrgyzstan.

Application of new tools and dissemination of new ecological rules, practices and standards in nature management, results in lower ecological risks. Ecological NGOs play a major role in these processes.

The environmental sector of Kyrgyz civil society has had some notable successes, but a number of *problems* and *difficulties* that restrict operations by NGOs in environmental protection should be noted.

Most environmental organisations *have very few staff* (often just one or two people), and many of them face *serious problems* with financing. NGOs are often *unaware of the mechanisms* behind decision-making at government level and the methods available for NGO participation in decision-making at various levels of the government.

*Legislation* and *current relations* between governmental and non-governmental institutions are often a constraining factor in development of public participation in environmental protection. The lack of a *common centre for collecting and transmitting information* and a *common national system of environmental monitoring* impede gathering of reliable, timely and complete environmental information.

The ecological sector faces the same problems and constraints as the rest of civil society, although joint efforts by ecological NGOs to overcome these problems are becoming more effective.

Despite all the problems, fundamental changes are now occurring in all sectors of social and economic life in Kyrgyzstan, tending to support partnership between government, civil society and business.

<sup>63</sup> These measures include: purification of domestic and industrial sewage, and wastewater treatment; monitoring, including soil, air and water analyses, surveys of rivers and water reservoirs; research; support of conservation areas, etc.

## Chapter V. Civil Society and Political Power

### Box 5.1

#### Civil society and government: the problem of power

Power is the key issue in politics.

**Political relationships** are relationships towards and concerning power.

**Power** is the ability and opportunity to influence people's activities and behavior.

**The political sphere of public life** is concerned with issues of state power and social governance.

Concentration of power in the hands of the government can vary, depending on how civil society and its institutions have developed. The more political functions the government assumes, the less are left for civil society, and vice versa. The historical trend is for civil society to take shape and strengthen, and for government to gradually hand over many of its political functions to civil society..

Civil rights to participate in *political decision-making* are provided for in the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Civil Code and the laws "On Political Parties" and "On Non-Profit Organizations".

Article 23 of the Constitution gives Kyrgyz citizens the right to participate in public administration directly and through their representatives. People also have a right to participate in discussing and adopting laws and decisions at national and local level.

Amendments to the Constitution approved by referendum on February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2003 require the government to interact with civil society (Article 73), giving civil society a constitutional place and role in relation to government for the first time in Kyrgyzstan. The Constitution also states that all Kyrgyz citizens and associations of citizens are free to engage in any actions and activities, except for those expressly forbidden or restricted by the Constitution and other Kyrgyz legislation (Article 21).

Following these constitutional amendments, the law "On Government Regulations of the Kyrgyz Republic" was amended to allow *free public access* to draft legislation. This will allow civil society representatives and any other interested parties to contribute to design of legislation.

These legal changes have encouraged development of new types and mechanisms of civil society involvement in government decision-making and interaction with the public administration.

### 5.1. Political dialogue as a basis for interaction between civil society and government: harmonizing interests

The main aspects of civil society participation in politics are:

- participation in elections;
- monitoring public policies and implementation of decisions;
- participating in managerial decision-making;
- participating in public policy development and political decision-making.

The commonest types of civil society involvement in politics are:

- community activities (gatherings, meetings);
- public councils that work with governmental institutions;
- public councils with no government involvement;
- parliamentary fractions in the Jogorku Kenesh (National Parliament);
- public hearings;
- statements via the media;
- demonstrations, marches and pickets.

Civil society conducts *campaigns* to either support or protest against government decisions on issues of public importance. Such campaigns have been held in Kyrgyzstan in response to government restrictions on publishing, draft laws concerning holding of meetings and demonstrations, media freedom, and elections, and other issues.

A *National Roundtable* was established in 2000 as a new annual institution, to be attended by the President, representatives of all branches of government, political parties, NGOs, and the media. These roundtables have been the main – and sometimes the only – mechanism for presenting and discussing different political interests (excepting election campaigns and referendums). The 2003 roundtable was entitled the "Partner Forum". These meetings have been valuable: they are attended by senior government officials; civil society is broadly (though not fully) represented; and the government and the presidential administration make action plans based on comments and proposals at the roundtables.

## Box 5.2

## Areas and types of political involvement of civil society institutions

NGOs have campaigned against:

- deportation from Bishkek of those who took part in a protest march;
- prohibition of foreign involvement in publishing;
- attempts to exert pressure on the media via large slander and libel claims;
- refusal to allow civil society activists from other countries into the country;
- interference in Kyrgyzstan's domestic affairs;
- new version of the Tax Code;
- persecution of independent journalists in Kazakhstan;
- some parts of the OSCE-supported draft on reform of the Interior Ministry; etc.

NGOs took an active part in discussion of changes and amendments to the Constitution, preparation of a Children's Code, withdrawal of the law "On Community-based Organizations and Their Associations", which was submitted to Parliament on March 5<sup>th</sup> 2004, and in campaigns to abolish capital punishment and combat drug trafficking. One NGO, Mental Health and Society, initiated an international expert analysis of Kyrgyz legislation on protection of the mentally ill (an example of cross-over between political participation and social correction).

NGOs also help to settle political conflicts and conflicts arising from government or NGO activities. For instance, a number of NGOs negotiated with the government and held public campaigns at the time of the Aksy events in 2002, and NGOs reacted when law enforcers took unjustifiable action against a parliament deputy (steps by NGOs included complaints, meetings, pickets, marches, hunger strikes, and holding of unofficial people's assemblies).

In 2002 civil society helped to develop recommendations on amendments to the Constitution. A special *Constitutional Council* consisting of political parties and NGOs was established for this purpose. Presidential meetings with political parties and some other politically-oriented civil society organizations (local self-governance bodies, the Public Council on Democratic Security, Good Governance Council, women's organizations, business associations, etc.) were also held in 2002.

In 2002-2004 there were *public hearings* in Parliament and local keneshes (parliaments) on the most significant issues before Parliament (national and local budgets, procedures for public meetings, assemblies, and demonstrations, civil oversight of the military, and many other relevant issues).

Civil society is becoming more involved in *solving political issues*. An initial stage consisted mainly of campaigns by political parties and NGOs for their right to participate in political decision-making in certain instances. The campaigns were focused on calls for holding constitutional referenda. Civil society institutions conducted a number of roundtables and workshops as part of these campaigns, inviting government officials to attend. Declarations and recommendations as a result of these discussions were not mandatory for implementation.

Studies for the purposes of this Report have revealed a number of problems in development of interactive mechanisms between civil society and the government in formulating, preparing, adopting, and implementing political decisions.

1. There are obstacles in the way of *transition to institutional and standardized forms of such interaction*. The new forms tend to be perceived negatively by both the government and civil society and require careful installation backed by efforts to inform and educate.
2. There is *mistrust* between the public administration and civil society institutions, and a *lack of agreement* within the civil sector on many issues of interaction with government.
3. Because of the state monopoly in social governance, fundamental constitutional provisions defining civil society activities *remain inconsistent*. In particular, participation by political parties in state affairs is limited to two activities: first, nominating their candidates for election to Parliament, government, and local government; and, second, establishing their fractions in representative bodies (parliaments). The right to hold assemblies, marches, meetings, demonstrations, and pickets is limited by the requirement to notify the authorities in advance, and local government often takes advantage of this to prohibit "undesirable" civil society action.

Box 5.3

**Increasing civil society involvement in the electoral process**

To increase civil society involvement in the electoral process Kyrgyzstan has adopted a State Programme for Improvement of the Electoral System in 2001-2005.

The document states that Kyrgyzstan needs political, legal, social, economic, and technical (informational, analytical, etc) conditions to ensure that democratic elections and referenda are held in a way that will develop and strengthen democratic and legal sovereignty and an open civil society.

The main task is further development of the legislative base, which should fully ensure civil voting rights. It is important that all those involved in elections abide by democratic principles during the pre-election campaign, and that election results are determined within the proper time limits, reviewed, and publicized.

The Programme's educational component (prescribing legal instruction for those involved in the electoral process) contains a sub-programme, Elections and Civil Society, which has now been implemented. A Public Consultative Council has been set up, subject to the Central Electoral Commission, comprising political parties, public associations, and NGOs. A consulting network has also been set up, aimed at providing information to civil society on application of electoral technologies and raising electoral and legal awareness of those involved in the electoral process. The Central Electoral Commission has initiated and conducted three annual national conferences entitled "Civil Society Institutions and Elections". The most recent conference, on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2004, adopted two documents: an Agreement between political parties and electoral blocs on pre-election campaigns in 2004-2005; and a Memorandum for media and journalists in Kyrgyzstan covering the 2004-2005 election campaign (entitled "For Fair Elections").

4. *Efficiency of NGO activities* and their influence on the authorities *depends to a significant degree on subjective factors*: the most successful NGOs tend to be those, which have experience of organizational work in state bodies or *have personal contacts with people in authority*. Such NGOs represent a small part of non-governmental sector, concentrated mainly in the capital city and other large urban centers.

Both the state and the civil sector need to take steps to improve mechanisms and procedures of civil society participation in political decision-making and public policy formulation. NGOs must go beyond participation in elections and develop general, integrated mechanisms for participation in political decision-making, based on *active partnership*. It is also important to move from *declarative statements* of position to *real procedures and mechanisms* of cooperation. That will allow NGOs, which formulate policy, to influence the government in practice and to provide analytical information to public figures. It will promote growth of civil initiative and civil consciousness, training in leadership skills for people aspiring to take part in public life, and enable their involvement in political activity.

**Political parties and their role in public policy development**

The *role of political parties in public policy development* is growing in Kyrgyzstan as economic

reforms make headway and social life becomes more democratic. Political parties and movements are proactively participating in formulation and implementation of government decisions. Political parties are growing in number and carrying out qualitatively new functions. NGOs have overcome a number of problems encountered soon after national independence, when political parties were immature and NGOs were constrained to assume and carry out some political functions in their place.

In the early days of independence, political parties in Kyrgyzstan were more like small associations around individual politicians. There were also parties based on the remnants of the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) and those established by the administration for the 1995 and 2000 election campaigns. New political leaders have tended to set up their own parties just before elections. As can be seen in Graph 5.3, emergence of political parties correlates strongly with election campaigns.

It is unfortunate that elections remain the most important stimulus for creation of political parties in Kyrgyzstan.<sup>64</sup> This correlation is inevitable in the initial stages of establishment of the political system in Kyrgyzstan, but it shows the weaknesses of factors, which determine appearance of political parties elsewhere in the world (ideology, programmes, orientation to particular social strata, etc.)

<sup>64</sup> This is confirmed by the creation of two dozen parties from March – October 2005 after Bakiev and Kulov supported an initiative by a number of political leaders and parties to hold additional elections to Parliament based on political party lists.

An attempt in 1998 to stimulate party development by electing some members of parliament through party lists led to establishment of many new parties (Graph 5.3), including several with center and right-wing agenda (Adilet, Ar-Namys and My Country), which challenged left-wing, communist forces. However, the election campaign was fought mainly by political blocs, specially created for the campaign, and members of Parliament, who were elected via party lists failed to create fractions and promote civilized party-based work in Parliament.

The parties, which have managed to survive and develop, are now beginning to carry out their functions of *expressing and aggregating political interests in society*.

As of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2004, there were 42 political parties registered in the Kyrgyz Republic, and their number had increased to more than 60 by the end of 2005. However, not all of them are politically active. Only 12 political parties nominated candidates and took part in campaigning at local elections and only 4 parties won significant representation (Adilet and Alga Kyrgyzstan were most successful, followed by Novaya Sila and Elet).

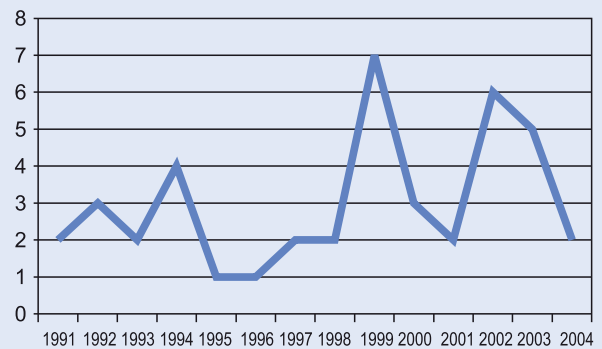
Ideological differentiation of political parties in Kyrgyzstan, as reflected in their election manifestos, is wide: from left wing and center-left to right wing. Centrist parties are most prevalent, representing 62% of the total number of parties. So the country's political space properly reflects the new structure of society, social values and expectations.

By participation in the framing of policy, political parties gradually become tools for expression and defense of the interests and expectations of the social groups they represent. Left wing and center-left parties represent the interests of those in society, who face the most problems as a result of transition to a market economy (pensioners, young people, the poor and socially vulnerable, and those who follow socialist values), while right-wing and center-right parties consist of new social groups, such as businessmen, various asset owners, and some nationalists. Centrist parties attract those connected with government institutions and enterprises, and state employees.

However, the ties between political parties and their constituencies are often surprisingly weak. Research conducted in November 2004 showed that names of many parties are not recognized and confidence in political parties among the general public is at a low level. As many as 34.1% of respondents found it

Graph 5.3

## Emergence of new political parties in Kyrgyzstan



difficult to name any political parties in Kyrgyzstan. In September 2003, 38.1% of all respondents failed to answer the same question. Political parties are better known in Bishkek (60.1%). Only six parties are known to more than 5% of respondents. Another three parties are familiar to more than 3%.

Establishment and development of political parties faces a number of obstacles:

1. The *impact of previous values and goals is still fairly palpable*. People do not have much experience of the nature of political parties, except for the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with its "guiding and directive" force and powerful political structure assuming all the functions of the state and society. Parties, which (inevitably) fail to meet this prescription, generate mistrust and disappointment.
2. There are problems arising from the *quasi-democratic (not genuinely democratic) nature of public institutions* and discrepancy between declarations and the actual system of social relationships (reinforced by traditionalist attitudes that sometimes take the role of a national ideology). Hence the fragility and inconsistency of the political landscape, and erroneous and distorted views of political power.
3. *Transformation of the social structure* and formation of group interests in politics are not yet complete.
4. Political parties still suffer from *organizational problems, their programmes tend to be fuzzy* or to have an imitative character, reflecting failure to constructively adapt ideas and concepts.
5. *Political motives* and political orientation is still *weak among the general public*.
6. Kyrgyzstan does not yet have a *national value*

system that can shape political positions and political will.

In a context of poor political culture, these factors diminish the capacity of political parties for involvement in public policy development and implementation.

What do we need in order to mitigate and overcome negative impact of these factors?

1. Civil society institutions should acknowledge and help the government to understand that Kyrgyzstan will never discard the negative aspects of traditionalism and nationalism unless the socio-political structure is represented by national political parties and strong business structures, rather than clan and regional associations. Political emphasis on parties, business structures and NGOs can improve political culture, raise social perception and help to instill modern values.
2. There needs to be more support in legislation for activities by political party. In particular, there should be a law on political parties, a law on the opposition, etc. Constitutional provisions for election based on party lists will stimulate activities of political parties and movements, and encourage formation of two or three national political parties. That could lead to a situation where political parties are willing to support and protect interests of domestic business, which is not the case at present.

Strong and durable parties are not yet in place in Kyrgyzstan, but the country is making progress in this direction. It is therefore highly important to avoid creation of repressive and artificial barriers to objective and fair development of political parties.

## 5.2. Civil society during and immediately after the events of spring 2005

The events in Kyrgyzstan in spring 2005 drew attention not only in Central Asia, but worldwide.<sup>65</sup> One of the main reasons for those events was unwillingness of the state to maintain a dialogue with society. Instead of direct and open discussion with protestors about social problems, the government maintained a fiction of dialogue and understanding. The country had been operating in an environment of distorted communicative flows for some time before the social upheaval of 2005.

Precursors of the 2005 events went back for some years and include the presidential and parliamentary elections in 1999-2000, which were important milestones in formation and development of the protest movement. At that time a number of non-governmental and human rights organizations positioned themselves as active elements in the political process. They included the NGO Coalition for Democracy and Civil Society, Interbilim, For Tolerance and Democracy, and Civil Society against Corruption. These organizations mobilized and trained thousands of election observers and other election participants, as well as preparing and publishing alternative (non-governmental) reports on conduct of the elections.

Efficiency and visibility of NGOs rose to an extent, which forced government to stop ignoring them. Government therefore offered formal recognition and the semblance of cooperation. However, this attitude soon turned into one of pressure and conflict. Following parliamentary elections in 2000 the government adopted the following strategies toward oppositional public organizations:

1. *Undermining their image* - public campaigns against NGOs, accusations of corruption, serving the interests of foreign governments, and acting against the state.
2. *Creating "state" NGOs* to divert grants and establishing parallel organizations to neutralize the protest movement and confuse the general public. "Mirror" organizations were set up and there were attempts to disguise government institutions as civil society organizations (Box 5.4).
3. *Tougher monitoring of NGO activities* by law enforcement organizations.
4. *Amending legislation* to reduce the role of NGOs in political life. For example, amending the Electoral Code to deprive NGOs of the right to nominate candidates and to participate in the election campaign as canvassers. The new Electoral Code was essentially an attempt to put structural pressure on NGOs.

Such strategies were in fact successful and allowed the government to split the civil society movement, to monitor civil society organizations and to control civil society development.

Developments in 2005 were pivotal for civil society. Closer ties of NGOs with parties and former political

<sup>65</sup> The aim in this Report is not to give a full analysis (that will be left to subsequent reports), but to attempt a preliminary assessment of civil society's role in the events of 2005 and the attitude of the new government towards civil society.



elites, and participation in the protests and events of January-March 2005 increased the authority of civil society. A mutually beneficial exchange took place: the most active section of civil society obtained support from the intellectual and financial elite and some sections of government (the core of the political opposition); and opposition politicians obtained a support base, which was largely mobilized by NGOs. This was the exchange, which enabled the “opposition elite” to come to power. However, although many influential NGOs joined the revolutionary protest movement, they were unable to offer constructive political ideas to the opposition in March 2005.

Competition among parties began to gain momentum two years before the parliamentary elections in 2005. Elections to local keneshes in October 2004 became a testing ground for the political struggle and a show of strength by the newly formed pro-government party *Alga Kyrgyzstan*, *Adilet* (a pro-government party with a longer track record), the *My Country* party, *Ar-Namys* (an opposition party) and many others. There were alliances between parties ahead of the elections, and several new parties, such as *Mekenim Kyrgyzstan*, *Soglasiy*e and others, were set up. There were expectations of change in the Electoral Code with possible introduction of proportional representation and party lists.

Candidates of the pro-government *Alga Kyrgyzstan* party were heavily criticized during the election campaign for unfair reliance on government support (so called “administrative resource”). This party won the largest number of seats in parliament assigned under the majority system. It is interesting to note, therefore, that after the March revolution not a single member or candidate of this party spoke on its behalf or indicated his or her affiliation with the party platform: immediately after the events of March 24<sup>th</sup> *Alga Kyrgyzstan* lost all its members and disappeared from the political scene!

Many party leaders joined the protest movement in 2005, but the opposition agenda in March 2005 was not enriched with constructive political ideas, and the leaders themselves were unable to control the protesting masses, offering further proof of political immaturity in Kyrgyzstan.

The events of March 2005 proved that there has been an essential transformation in the nature of

#### Box 5.4

#### Civil society and government: the mirror trick

When the *Kel-Kel* youth organization became well-known and influential, just before the events of spring 2005, an alternative youth organization appeared, which had the same name and even a leader with the same name. The diversionary nature of such double organizations, created by the government, is evident from their conduct. On the day when the leaders of *Kel-Kel* planned a press-conference in AKI-press to denounce violations of human rights and illegal operations against the opposition by the government, the “mirror” organization held a press conference at the same information agency two hours earlier and declared its full satisfaction with preparations for the election campaign.

political parties in Kyrgyzstan. Political movements and associations with well-defined, attainable goals played a large role in the events. Examples are the *Movement for Akaev’s Resignation and Reforms*, created in 2002, the *People’s Movement of Kyrgyzstan* and the *People’s Congress*. These associations include representatives of different political organizations, and their ideologies and understanding of the methods of political action are not usual for political parties. However, such political movements tend to be short-lived: they either break down or change into more stable and organizationally formed structures (sometimes into political parties) after the factor that caused their creation cease to be relevant. While adherents flock to such occasional movements, the traditional parties tend to suffer loss of membership. A constant and significant feature of both parties and movement in Kyrgyzstan is that their period of existence tends to be related to the political life of their leaders rather than to political ideas.

Almost immediately after the regime change, the most active NGOs sought to become key players in the political process, and held a *Civic Forum*<sup>66</sup> to spearhead their efforts.

Officially, the point of the *Civic Forum* was to integrate NGO initiatives and to advance and include their concerns on the political agenda in Kyrgyzstan. However, problems have arisen with achievement of the first aim due to competition between *Civic Forum* leaders, and there have been signs of discrimination against some NGO sectors, including gender, ecology and the rights of ethnic minorities. The positions of such NGOs tend to

<sup>66</sup> The National Civil Society Forum was held on April 19-20. There were more than 350 representatives from Kyrgyz non-governmental organizations, who considered issues of constitutional reform, the role of civil society and government, information policy and the mass media, North-South relations, etc. The Forum organizers were non-governmental organizations supported by donors

be ignored by the Forum organizers, and their proposals left out of agenda and conclusions.

The second aim (of including NGO concerns on the political agenda) was only partially successful: the Forum managed to place constitutional reform on the government's political agenda, but Forum leaders themselves admit that the initiative in decision-making on constitutional reform has been seized by the governing elite.

Failure to achieve greater integration of the non-governmental sector has the following causes:

- NGOs, political parties, business associations, trade unions and religious organizations still fail to realize the extent of their common interests and have not reached consensus on the need for reform of the Constitution.
- There is hostility between civil society leaders, who compete for resources and for recognition as the foremost figures in the popular movement.
- The leaders of the Civic Forum used the same undemocratic methods as government, treating Forum participants as mere onlookers or statisticians, who were expected to ratify decisions taken by the Forum leaders. Communication in the Civic Forum was one-way.

So the events of March 2005 highlighted some more social and political paradoxes, which can be added to those mentioned in Section 3.1:

- Those groups of socially active citizens who carried out the revolution are *still excluded* from the sphere of public and government attention. Women who participated in pickets are a good example – neither the government nor the majority of civil society have proved ready to protect their rights and promote their interests.<sup>67</sup>
- Despite the social upheaval in March 2005, most of the general public immediately returned to a state of *politically passivity*. A national survey of voters in April 2005 showed that 22% of respondents were not going to vote because they did not believe in fair elections, 16% did not believe that their vote could change anything and 22% simply stated that they were not interested in politics.
- Some of the mass media continue the tradition

*of one-sided and distorted representations* of events, although value signs have been reversed after the change of power.

- The old regime broke down due to lack or distortion of communication with people and within government itself, but the new government has made no determined efforts to set up a dialogue and organize communication platforms. It has so far preferred to set up decorative and inefficient civil forums and councils, repeating the avoidance mechanisms of the previous regime.

The consolidation of civil society faced new challenges in spring and summer 2005. Ongoing “street democracy” bordering on mob power had undermined the authority and leadership of NGOs, which had no experience of dealing with such phenomena. A large part of the population had *totally lost trust* both in the authorities and civil society, due to preceding abuse of trust by government and NGO leaders.

*Commercialization* and the *abuse of principles of disinterested service to the public* in some NGOs are in no way conducive to increasing public trust. Heads of several NGOs are privileged figures with some of the highest incomes and most comfortable working conditions in the country. And, paradoxically, they are inaccessible to ordinary people. In such a situation it is hardly surprising that NGOs find it difficult to win people's confidence.

The NGO sector has also failed to *manage escalating conflicts and crises*. Most organizations, whose brief is to prevent and resolve conflicts, rely on an approach, which channels money and resources to satisfy claims of the conflicting parties. But, since resources are scarce and claims are many, the resource-based approach is fraught with danger of new conflicts. Only a very few NGOs have attempted to apply social technologies, which could change the system of relationships in the conflict environment for the better. Prestige of NGOs and confidence in them largely depends on application of such technologies.

However, the recent “revolutionary” period has brought some important gains for NGOs:

Organizations have started a *consolidation process*, bringing a large number of organizations

<sup>67</sup> There is no objective analysis of the motivation and goals of the women's movement in Kyrgyzstan. The mass media offer “feminist” images that vary from a peasant woman with boundless energy to a scheming woman, whose chooses to be a revolutionary in order to win political and financial capital. The predetermined and one-sided nature of both these images highlights continued effective exclusion of women's interests.

and groups into the Civic Forum and the cause of constitutional reform.

NGO involvement in the recent change of government has given an impetus to creation of *new groups* and the *search for a new direction* in activity by the sector.

### The new government: first steps towards partnership (March – April 2005)

In the first couple of months after the March events officials of the new government declared their commitment to cooperation with civil society at a number of forums. However, the overall impression from these forums is one of marking time: they have had no real impact on action (or lack of action) by the machinery of state. Policy programmes put forward by experts, supported by donors, are well written, but the existing rules of discussion and partnership leave it completely unclear how the programmes will be implemented and who will implement them.

Society at large is seriously concerned about possible return to the old system of government based on nepotism and bribes. If no significant measures are taken – measures worked out by government officials and civil society together – the state machinery will roll on along the same old rails. The opportunity will have been lost. That will be dangerous, because it will mean continuation of the crisis of governance and possible inability of Kyrgyzstan to meet the challenges of sovereignty.

The interim government has shown some positive understanding of the role and function of civil society. In particular, there is understanding that *political parties should take a significant role in Parliament* and this process should be strengthened by new legislation on political parties, drafted and adopted by the Jogorku Kenesh. Acting President Bakiev said in his speech at the Civic Forum that approaches to the non-governmental sector need to change: “The former government declared the need for partnership with civil society, but interpreted that partnership as a government right to give or withhold what civil society needs. Some would like to continue this practice and set up more councils, accountable to the President. I think that our role, the role of the President, government, and Jogorku Kenesh should be different. We must create a legal environment for fully-fledged and equal participation of civil society in government and we must work together with you to develop concrete procedures, mechanisms, and forms of such participation. Lets discuss and decide together what we need

to do and how we need to go about it: bring your proposals to any branch of government, and we will find agreement”.

The new government has talked about need to radically change the role of NGOs in public governance and to provide a legislative framework that ensures the rights of civil society. Commitment has been expressed to *clear-cut and effective mechanisms for exercising control over government*.

In particular:

- All important decisions should be taken with public participation. Civil society must have the right to contact government offices for information and explanation of government decisions.
- Civil society must have the right to make proposals and receive logical responses, to participate in creation of interest-coordinating institutions, and to make proposals to the President and government on specific issues.
- Civil society representatives must participate on a permanent basis in sessions of the Jogorku Kenesh and its committees, government proceedings and high-level ministerial meetings, which discuss issues of public interest.
- Civil society must have the right to request public servants to report personally on issues of public interest.
- Civil society and government should jointly develop concrete procedures, mechanisms, and forms of participation by civil society in governance.

The acting President also agreed that *government mass media should be discontinued*. The government needs only one publication to publish official decisions, edicts and regulations. In other respects, as President Bakiev said, the government should be on a par with the rest of society. The President said that steps should be taken to ensure that television is not effectively controlled by one person, and has more public involvement.

Civil society found itself in a state of crisis after the events of March 24<sup>th</sup> 2005. A number of problems have become more acute: the illegitimacy of some political processes, the problem of reconciling differences between the South and North of Kyrgyzstan, between the center and the regions, etc. Without doubt, these problems have affected and will continue to affect the development of civil society in Kyrgyzstan. In the new situation civil society institutions need to do more than represent

existing ideas and programmes – they also need to search for new ones. It must be acknowledged that the interim government has so far failed to initiate any sort of effective partnership with civil society institutions.

The new government has asked civil society to make concrete proposals on procedures, mechanisms and forms of participation. Our recommendations are very simple: to shed fake and artificial forms of cooperation between the civil sector and the state, and keep and strengthen positive, tried-and-tested forms of cooperation.

### 5.3. Civil sector and social integration: bridging the gaps

Civil society initiates new tools and formats for *social integration*, building its activities on foundations of national unity, civil equality, and responsibility of social institutions.

The experience of transition countries in the context of global development trends forces a new look at *the role of civil society in social development and integration*. Kyrgyzstan offers a remarkable concentration of this new experience on a small territory, offering great potential for analysis and drawing of conclusions.

In particular, Kyrgyzstan is made unique by active presence of donor organizations, who responded to the country's declaration of a democratic development path, giving rise to numbers of non-governmental organizations, which are unmatched elsewhere in the CIS.

Consisting mainly of NGOs, the Kyrgyz civil sector initially aimed to *advocate certain values and norms in society*. This was done via work on specific projects, approaching target social groups and solving problems. As mentioned in the National Human Development Report for 2001, UNDP projects on poverty reduction and decentralization based on wide social mobilization have changed many cultural norms in rural communities. By mobilizing resources and learning the project approach, people developed new types of *social responsibility* and arrived at a new understanding of development and life in general.

Such projects reflect major features of activity by civil society in Kyrgyzstan. Each NGO is first of all *an integration and development agent* or a *small center* with various forces revolving around it, aiming to overcome existing stereotypes, solve current issues, and achieve new goals.

Advocacy of the interests of a particular social group will tend to lead to social demarcation, whereas an NGO working with development values and on joint problem-solving is always oriented to overcoming social barriers, *enabling consensus and coordination of interests*.

Conflicts in society occur when certain groups are kept away from power and their rights are infringed. This can occur even in a developed and prosperous country, with well-organized governance mechanisms: in such instances certain sections of the population have become hostages to a well-established and properly functioning power mechanism.

#### Box 5.4

##### Acting in the domain of values

What is interesting is not only rapid growth of the civil sector in the Republic, but also the specific mechanism of its origin and evolution. As a rule in western countries with developed democracies, civil society developed via a *process of political opposition to the state*. The major civil society structures in these countries are organizations and institutions, which define the political space: political parties, parliament, and organizations lobbying the interests of business-structures, or various professional or social groups.

In Kyrgyzstan many pioneer NGOs emerged in response to certain trends in global (not national) development and from activity by *international organizations*. The instigators were the international community, initiative groups, or even individuals who wanted to see the developments and achievements of modern civilization extended beyond the economically developed countries. Such organizations, with global mandates, do not operate in the domain of political interests, but *in the domain of values*. In this respect, their activities are essentially apolitical, although their efforts to advance democratic or liberal values may effect major changes in a country's political life and political culture.

While traditional civil society structures, which protect the interests of certain social groups, often have to draw lines in society, separating groups from each other, public organizations that work with developmental values and participatory solution of problems operate using other rules. They aim to overcoming social barriers, making *coordination of interests possible, and consensus achievable*.

The situation in Kyrgyzstan, with its poor and inadequate governance mechanisms, has been different. The donor community has helped to establish organizations that work with the government and the public on a basis of *partnership*, rather than struggle. They function within the development framework and overcome common problems together. Social integration as a necessary condition of social development encompasses political, social, educational, cultural, and other areas of human activities. The above chapters illustrate the paramount role of civil society for achieving this integration.

Improvements in poverty alleviation, changes in investment policy, or health care reforms would not have been possible without the non-governmental sector. The achievements since independence have been due to combined efforts by government, donors, and civil society to solve common problems. The role of NGOs in this alliance is to encourage social mobilization and integration. They work with local communities, government and international agencies to accumulate the resources, which are needed to solve specific issues at both local and national level.

The events of spring 2005 threatened *social integrity* in Kyrgyzstan, but they also demonstrated the need to enhance *integration processes* both in society as a whole and (as shown in section 5.3) in the civil sector itself, giving a powerful impetus to integration programmes and projects by various NGOs. For instance, in Osh region, the public association

Our Right has launched a project to protect the rights of gypsies (so called “lyuli”). Joint activity with state and public structures is envisaged and success of the project will offer a fine example of inter-ethnic, social and political integration. Another example from Kyrgyzstan’s southern capital of Osh is the Initiative for Strengthening Trust, being implemented with assistance from the OSCE and the Solomon’s Ray public fund. The aim of the Initiative is to strengthen cooperation between civil society and the Osh city department of internal affairs (police) in law enforcement and to develop a dialogue between law-enforcement bodies and the civil sector in Osh.

Kyrgyz experience has shown that if international organizations and civil society combine their efforts, they can be a significant factor for change in developing countries. Importantly, they can represent a non-political factor – a factor that is not dependent on a struggle for power or advocacy of a special interest. This implies the existence of a new force in Kyrgyzstan aimed at social *integration and development*, bringing more and more people into decision-making. This is an opportunity to solve problems together and to achieve common goals, which, surely, is what democratic governance should be.

Rapid development of the so-called third sector may yet be sufficient to bridge the seemingly permanent gap between the *individual* and the *government*, between *government* and *society* and between *life* and *political interests*.

## Conclusion

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As noted in the *Introduction*, the authors of this Report have had to rethink a number of conclusions in the course of their work. But one thing has remained unchanged. Civil society in Kyrgyzstan has matured to a level where it can play a significant role in furthering democratic reforms. The processes taking place in various sectors of public life show that civil society is not only speaking out more loudly about problems of both the state machinery and the social system, but also offering effective ways of addressing these problems.

The Report shows how civil society has appeared and developed in Kyrgyzstan, gaining in strength to become a real factor for sustainable human development. Public organizations in the Republic today carry out varied functions. They protect rights and freedoms of citizens. They act as the active intermediary between the government, citizens, and private business, and as the “integrator of efforts”, which are important for human development. They take upon themselves production of a number of social services. They are catalysts for many political processes and tendencies in the country.

In writing the Report, the authors came to a general conclusion, which is relevant for all segments of civil society, from protection of human rights to defense of property rights, environmental safety or work of local communities on improvement of social infrastructure in villages. This conclusion is that *active dialogue and partnership between the state and civil society is the main condition for ensuring efficiency of both the state machinery and non-governmental institutions in their work for the benefit of society and human development*. This requires the following joint actions by the state and civil society:

- Clarification of responsibilities of the state and public structures in various spheres.
- Development of interaction between the state and the civil sector in the decision-making process and outsourcing of state contracts for

provision of social services, etc.

- Identifying partnership potential and securing the interests of civil society in formulation and implementation of policies in all spheres of public life.
- Independent monitoring of government agencies.

The direction to be taken in further development of our society depends on establishment of effective dialogue. Pursuit by the state of a policy, which is in the interests of all members of society and therefore in the interests of human development, depends on cooperation with the civil sector. Such cooperation can reconcile the seemingly irreconcilable contradictions of the transition economy by approaching problems through the entities of representative democracy, through mechanisms for participation of all citizens in market transformations and for sharing the results of these transformations.

Civil society is taking shape today as a new force, which can bind and harness the country’s political, intellectual and business elites. It is the only force capable of genuinely controlling the activity of power structures and promoting socialization and human development in the triad of individual, society and state”.

However, civil society in Kyrgyzstan still has a long way to go before it can assume all its functions. It has to progress from a closed, caste mentality to openness and wide representation of various social groups, from abstract protection of rights and freedoms to specific help to the poor and dispossessed, from creation of NGOs from above to their birth from the needs and hopes of the people. Such is the path, which Kyrgyz civil society needs to take in its progress to maturity. The events of spring 2005 showed that civil society has embarked on this path, and that the processes of human development will receive new inputs that can make this mutually enriching process irreversible.

## Annex 1. Civil Society in Kyrgyzstan: Problems and Possible Solutions for Interaction between the State and Civil Society

(analytical brief based on the results of an express survey, carried out for the National Human Development Report 2005)

During preparation of the National Human Development Report for 2005 the authors conducted an express survey to study existing practice of interaction between civil society and the state. The survey looked at mechanisms for discussing and taking managerial decisions and for implementation of such decisions, and clarified the degree of involvement of civil society institutions in developing and implementing public policy.

Target groups of the study were state agencies, non-governmental organizations and political parties. More than 30 multi-purpose public organizations were surveyed, using modern methods of collecting and analyzing information as well as focus groups and roundtables.

One part of the study was a detailed analysis of the operating mechanisms of business associations, which are an important constituent of civil society in Kyrgyzstan. The following business associations were surveyed:

1. Professional Union of Workers of Small and Medium-size Enterprises and Entrepreneurs
2. Federation of Business Circles
3. Bishkek Business Club
4. SBDC consulting
5. Center for the Protection of Consumer Rights
6. Committee of Private Entrepreneurs
7. Professional Union of Workers in the Utility Industries and Entrepreneurs
8. Chamber of Trade and Industry of the Kyrgyz Republic
9. Bishkek Chamber of Development and Trade
10. PA for Protection of Rights and Interests of Entrepreneurs Working in ZUM-Aichurek
11. Confederation of Employers of the KR
12. Login PA of Individual Entrepreneurs
13. Association of Auditors and Attorneys of the KR
14. Congress of Women of Kyrgyzstan

15. Chamber of Tax Consultants
16. Association of Consulting Companies
17. Chamber of Accountants and Auditors
18. Aikol Center for Development of Civil Initiatives
19. Consulting Initiative Support Center
20. Center for Support of Public Organizations of Naryn Oblast
21. Leader PA Civil Initiative Center

The main practical tasks of the survey were:

1. identifying the reasons why public organizations were created;
2. identifying the main activities of public associations;
3. identifying financing sources of public associations;
4. studying the experience of cooperation between public associations and the government;
5. assessing efficiency of different types of cooperation between public associations and the government.<sup>1</sup>

The study found that most associations (nearly 60% of those surveyed) were set up to advocate the interests and rights of their members: to promote conditions conducive to business development, lobby tax regulation, coordinate marketing efforts and guarantee rights to economic freedom and access to information.

Interaction with government to address problems of various social groups is an important aspect of modern civil society in Kyrgyzstan. The study showed that business associations work closely with representatives of government (the Prime Minister's Office, Parliament, Ministry of Economic Development, Industry and Trade, and local government). The survey of business NGO representatives and a roundtable on issues of cooperation between the civil sector and the state<sup>2</sup> developed matrices for interaction between civil society. The matrices were based on identification

<sup>1</sup> Detailed description of the study results has been placed on the website of UNDP-Kyrgyzstan.

<sup>2</sup> Representatives of the most active NGOs took part in this roundtable (Institute of Humanitarian Design, Ecological Expertise, Center for Social Technologies, Foundation to Support Educational Initiatives, Investment Roundtable, Counterpart Consortium, Bishkek Chamber of Commerce).

of problems, responsibilities of the parties, possible solutions, necessary resources, and forms and procedures for interaction.<sup>3</sup>

The study confirmed that cooperation between civil society and government is currently based on round tables, conferences and workshops. Respondents' answers suggest that roundtables and meetings with heads of state agencies are the most effective forms of cooperation (respectively 67.6% and 64.7% of respondents approved these forms). Civil society representatives usually do no more than express their concerns and wishes to government and action does not always follow. However, proper mechanisms of partnership between civil society and the state are being set up in Kyrgyzstan, as shown by creation and implementation of *investment matrices*, and activities of the *expert council* in the telecommunications sector.

The study identified the main problems of interaction between civil society institutions and the state. Representatives of the non-governmental sector believe that the most prevalent and critical problems are:

- lack of clear and agreed strategies for interaction;
- lack of effective, fully formed procedures for communication, with a proper basis in legislation;
- *mistrust* between government and civil society institutions, and, sometimes, the general public;
- shortage and irrational distribution of the resources needed to solve specific social problems;
- lack of real support for community initiatives from business.



## Annex 2. Kyrgyzstan in Statistics

General Information on Kyrgyzstan	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Area, thousands of km <sup>2</sup>	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9
Population density, people per km <sup>2</sup>	23	23	23	23	24*	24	24	25	25	25	25	26
Resident population as of the end of year, millions of people <sup>1</sup>	4.5	4.5	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.9	5.0	5.0	5.1
Children and teenagers, %	37.9	38.0	38.0	38.0	38.0	37.4	37.4	36.7	36.0	35.2	34.5	33.8
People of retirement age, %	9.3	9.2	9.2	9.2	9.2	9.2	9.1	8.9	8.8	8.7	8.5	8.4
Rural population, %	63.9	64.6	64.7	64.9	65.1	65.2	65.3	65.2	65.1	65.3	65.1	64.8
Urban population, %	36.1	35.6	35.3	35.1	34.9	34.8	34.7	34.8	34.9	34.7	34.9	35.2
Men, %	49.1	49.2	49.2	49.3	49.3	49.4	49.4	49.4	49.4	49.4	49.4	49.4
Women, %	50.9	50.8	50.8	50.7	50.7	50.6	50.6	50.6	50.6	50.6	50.6	50.6
Kyrgyz, %	58.6	59.7	60.3	60.8	61.2	64.9	65.2	65.7	66.3	66.9	67.4	67.9
Russians, %	17.1	16.2	15.7	15.3	14.9	12.5	12.2	11.7	11.2	10.7	10.3	9.9
Uzbeks, %	13.8	14.1	14.2	14.3	14.4	13.8	13.8	13.9	14.0	14.1	14.2	14.3
Ukrainians, %	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.6
Tatars, %	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8
Dungans, %	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Uigurs, %	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Turks, %	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Koreans, %	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4
Germans, %	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Other nationalities, %	3.9	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.0
Infant mortality, per 1000 births <sup>***</sup>	31.9	29.1	28.1	25.9	28.2	26.2	22.7	22.6	21.7	21.2	20.9	25.7
Child mortality, per 1000 births <sup>***</sup>	44.6	41.9	41.3	36.4	42.1	40.7	35.5	33.2	29.5	29.0	27.7	31.8
Natural population growth, thousands of people	82.3	73.0	80.4	73.4	67.5	69.6	71.2	62.7	65.5	65.8	69.5	74.8
Migration outflow, thousands of people	-120.6	-51.1	-18.9	-11.7	-6.7	-5.5	-9.9	-22.6**	-26.6	-27.8	-16.7	-19.3
Able-bodied population as of the end of year, millions of people	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.9
Employed people, millions of people	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	2.0
Registered unemployment levels as of the end of year, %	0.2	0.7	2.9	4.3	3.1	3.1	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.1	2.8	2.8
General unemployment levels as of the end of year, % <sup>2</sup>	1.7	4.1	5.7	7.8	5.7	5.9	7.2	7.5	7.8	12.5	9.9	8.5

<sup>1</sup> The 1998 column provides data of the first national census, as of 24 March 1999

\* Data adjusted to reflect retrospective recounting based on results of the 1999 census.

\*\* Data rounded to 1000.

\*\*\*Increase of infant and child mortality is due to Kyrgyzstan's adoption of new WHO criteria, by which infants born with very low body weight (from 500 to 1000g), who died soon after birth, were recorded as cases of infant mortality (not still births)

<sup>2</sup> Source of data: 1993-2001 – labor resource survey, 2002 – sample employment survey of households (Nov. 2002), 2003 – integrated sample household survey, 2004 – integrated sample household survey (preliminary data)

Human Development Index	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Life expectancy at birth (years)	67.3	66.0	66.0	66.6	66.9	67.1	68.7*	68.5	68.7	68.1	68.2	68.2
Adult literacy rate (%)	97	97.3	97.3	97.3	97.3	97.3	98.7	98.7	98.7	98.7	98.7	98.7
Combined enrolment ratio (% of population aged 7-24)	66	62	63	64	66	69	69	71	71	72	71	71
Real GDP per capita (PPP, USD) <sup>1</sup>	2330 (1411)	1890 (1169)	1850 (1122)	2101 (1204)	2264 (1351)	2299 (1392)	2377 (1461)	2521 (1560)	2634 (1637)	2875 (1622)	3048 (1714)	3363 (1928)
Life expectancy index	0.705	0.683	0.683	0.693	0.698	0.702	0.728	0.725	0.728	0.718	0.720	0.720
Education attainment	0.867	0.855	0.859	0.862	0.869	0.879	0.888	0.895	0.895	0.898	0.896	0.895
GDP index <sup>1</sup>	0.526 (0.442)	0.490 (0.410)	0.487 (0.404)	0.508 (0.415)	0.521 (0.435)	0.523 (0.440)	0.529 (0.448)	0.539 (0.459)	0.546 (0.467)	0.555 (0.465)	0.570 (0.474)	0.587 (0.494)
Human development index <sup>1</sup>	0.699 (0.671)	0.676 (0.650)	0.676 (0.649)	0.688 (0.657)	0.696 (0.667)	0.701 (0.673)	0.715 (0.688)	0.719 (0.693)	0.723 (0.697)	0.724 (0.694)	0.729 (0.697)	0.734 (0.703)

\* Data adjusted to reflect retrospective recounting based on results of the 1999 census..

Human Development	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Life expectancy at birth in years	67.3	66.0	66.0	66.6	66.9	67.1	68.7*	68.5	68.7	68.1	68.2	68.2
Maternal mortality rate per 100 000 live births	44.5	42.7	44.3	31.5	62.7	33.6	42.3	45.5	43.8	53.5	49.3	50.9
Population per doctor	302	308	306	297	313	319	330	343	355	366	370	375
Scientists and technicians per 1000 people	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5
Enrolment ratio for all educational levels (% of population aged 7-24)	61	61	60	65	71	71	69	71	71	72	71	71
Tertiary full-time equivalent gross enrolment ratio, total	12	16	20	28	34	43	44	49	47	33	42	53
Female enrolment (% of admitted)	62	52	51	51	51	51	50	51	54	54	55	58
Daily newspapers (copies per 100 people)	18	34	35	44	46	23	22	27	16	18	27	10
Televisions (per 100 people)	17	16	14	12	11	12	10	9	7	6	5	5
Real GDP per capita (PPP, USD) <sup>1</sup>	2330 (1411)	1890 (1169)	1850 (1122)	2101 (1204)	2264 (1351)	2299 (1392)	2377 (1461)	2521 (1560)	2634 (1637)	2875 (1622)	3048 (1714)	3363 (1928)
GDP per capita (USD), using the Atlas method <sup>2</sup>	450	360	350	380	390	350	300	280	280	290	330	

\* Data adjusted to reflect retrospective recounting based on results of the 1999 census.

<sup>1</sup> Upper row – NSC data based on 1996 international comparisons, lower row – International comparisons for 2000 (World Bank estimates)

<sup>2</sup> Data adjusted to reflect changes of WB calculation methodologies

Profile Of Human Distress	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Poverty index (% of the population)	45.4	...	57.3	43.5	42.9	54.9	55.3	52.0	47.6	44.4	49.9**	45.9**
Official unemployment rate (% of total population)	0.2	0.7	2.9	4.3	3.1	3.1	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.1	2.8	2.8
Youth unemployment (% of economically active population aged 16-29)	0.2	0.9	3.3	5.0	3.1	3.1	2.8	3.2	3.3 <sup>1)</sup>	-	-	**
Female wages (as % of male wages)	...	...	73	73	71	72	64	68	63	65	64	67
Consumer Price Index (December, % of previous December)	1029.9	162.1	132.1	134.8	113.0	116.8	139.9	109.6	103.7	102.3	105.6	102.8
Nominal exchange rate of USD (average for the period)	5.04	10.84	10.82	12.84	17.37	20.77	39.02	47.72	48.45	46.94	43.72	42.67
Years of life lost due to premature death	23	20	21	24	24	20	20	19	19	18	18	20
Injuries from road accidents (per 100 000 people)	86	76	78	86	79	72	68	67	77	71	81	78
Reported cases of rape (per 100 000 women aged between 15-59)	28	31	26	28	24	20	21	23	24	22	20	18
Emissions of sulfur and nitrogen (kg NO <sub>2</sub> and SO <sub>2</sub> per capita)	11.7	7.4	7.3	7.5	6.4	6.8	5.7	4.0	2.7**	2.2	2.2	1.9
Emissions of carbon dioxide (kg CO <sub>2</sub> per capita)**	2.9	2.1	1.6	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7

\*Results of a multi-purpose poverty survey of the World Bank: figures for 1993 are data of the first survey, carried out in autumn 1993; for 1995, data of the survey carried out in spring 1996; for 1996-1999, data of surveys carried out in autumn of the respective year. Change of indicators for 1996-1999 is due to the recalculation of the poverty line (structure of spending on food was changed). The changes were necessitated by the economic crisis of 1998 (the crisis had a direct impact on the structure of consumption due to growth in the share of expenditures on food and respective reduction of other expenditures). Data for 2000-2002 are calculated based on results of budget surveys of 3000 households

<sup>1</sup> No data

\*\* From stationary sources only

\*\* Data for 2003-2004 according to results of integrated sample survey of households and labour force. Calculation is made according to the new poverty line.

<sup>1)</sup> Young people aged 16-34

Trends in Human Development	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Life expectancy at birth in years	67.3	66.0	66.0	66.6	66.9	67.1	68.7*	68.5	68.7	68.1	68.2	68.2
Tertiary full-time equivalent gross enrolment ratio (%)	82	75	76	63	61	57	61	59	59	53	63	57
Real GDP per capita (PPP USD) <sup>1</sup>	2330 (1411)	1890 (1169)	1850 (1122)	2101 (1204)	2264 (1351)	2299 (1392)	2377 (1461)	2521 (1560)	2634 (1637)	2875 (1622)	3048 (1714)	3363 (1928)
GDP per capita (USD using the Atlas method) <sup>2</sup>	450	360	350	380	390	350	300	280	280	290	330	
Total educational expenditure (as % of GDP)	4.8	6.3	7.1	5.4	5.2	5.2	4.4	3.7	4.2	5.0	5.3	5.2
Total health expenditure (as % of GDP)	3.0	3.9	4.3	3.4	3.5	3.2	2.6	2.2	2.3	2.6	2.4	2.3

<sup>1</sup> Upper row – NSC data based on 1996 international comparisons, lower row – International comparisons for 2000 (World Bank estimates)

<sup>2</sup> Data adjusted to reflect changes of WB calculation methodologies

\* Data adjusted to reflect retrospective recounting based on results of the 1999 census.

Gender Gap (data for women as % of data for men)	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Life expectancy	114	115	115	114	114	113	112*	112	112	112	112	112
Population	104	103	103	103	103	103	103	102	102	102	102	102
Adult illiteracy <sup>1</sup>	...	271	...	...	...	...	271	...	...	...	...	...
Gross enrolment at all levels (%)	106	104	104	103	101	102	102	101	102	103	103	104
Secondary enrolment	103	89	102	93	97	99	99	97	101	97	89	80
Secondary graduates	102	112	108	102	101	124	104	106	121	106	96	102
Full-time university or equivalent enrolment	122	124	162	157	120	115	111	127	112	112	122	129
Natural and applied science enrolment	257	225	213	260	234	215	223	228	189	163	184	181
Labor force <sup>2</sup>	103	96	96	87	87	87	84	83	83	79	79	75
Employment in non-agricultural sector <sup>2</sup>	81	82	96	83	85	84	79	75	74	77	79	75
Unemployment <sup>2</sup>	230	155	146	138	141	148	132	132	132	100	88	88
Wages	...	...	73	73	71	72	64	68	63	65	64	67

\* Data of the 1994 social and demographic survey and the first national census of 1999 for people aged 15 and older

\* Data adjusted to reflect retrospective recounting based on results of the 1999 census.

<sup>2</sup> Source of data: 1993-2001 – labor resource survey, 2002 – sample employment survey of households (Nov. 2002), 2003 – integrated sample household survey, 2004 – integrated sample household survey (preliminary data)

Status Of Women	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Life expectancy at birth in years	71.7	70.7	70.4	71.0	71.4	71.2	72.6*	72.4	72.6	72.1	72.2	72.2
Average age at first marriage	21	21	21	22	22	22	22	22	23	23	23	23
Maternal mortality rate (per 100 000 live births)	44.5	42.7	44.3	31.5	62.7	33.6	42.3	45.5	43.8	53.5	49.3	50.9
Infant mortality rate (per 1000 births)	31.9	29.1	28.1	25.9	28.2	26.2	22.7	22.6	21.7	21.2	20.9	25.7
Child mortality rate (per 1000 births)	44.6	41.9	41.3	36.4	42.1	40.7	35.5	33.2	29.5	29.0	27.7	31.8
Secondary enrolment ratio (%)	63	70	71	72	71	72	69	51	69	68	60	60
Secondary graduates (as % of females of normal graduate age)	70	69	65	63	61	65	63	44	70	50	60	61
Tertiary full-time enrolment (% of overall intake)	55	55	66	63	55	60	53	56	53	53	55	56
Tertiary natural and applied science enrolment (% of female tertiary)	31	23	25	32	22	28	26	33	32	18	29	29
Women in labor force (as % of the total labor force)	51	49	49	46	47	47	46	45	45	44	44	43
Administrators and managers (% of women)	35	36	36	35	32	33	32	30	31	29	30	36
Parliament (% of seats occupied by women)	6	...	5	4	4	3	5	5	7	7	7	7

\* Data adjusted to reflect retrospective recounting based on results of the 1999 census.

<sup>2</sup> Source of data: 1993-2001 – labor resource survey, 2002 – sample employment survey of households (Nov. 2002), 2003 – integrated sample household survey, 2004 – integrated sample household survey (preliminary data)

<sup>3</sup> Increase of infant and child mortality is due to Kyrgyzstan's adoption of new WHO criteria, by which infants born with very low body weight (from 500 to 1000g), who died soon after birth, were recorded as cases of infant mortality (not still births)

Demographic Profile	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total fertility rate	3.1	2.9	3.1	2.8	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.6
Fertility rate over time (as % of 1990)	86	81	86	78	72	75	72	67	67	69	69	71
Dependency rate (%)	70	70	70	70	70	70	68	66	66	64	62	60
Population aged 65 years and older (%)	5.0	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.6
Life expectancy at age 60:												
Men	15.3	14.4	14.4	14.4	14.9	14.9	15.8*	15.6	15.8	15.0	15.0	15.3
Women	19.5	18.6	18.7	18.6	19.1	18.5	18.9*	18.7	18.9	18.3	18.4	18.8
Total population at year end (millions)	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.1
Annual population growth rate (%)	-0.7	0.6	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.3	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.1	1.1

\* Data adjusted to reflect retrospective recounting based on results of the 1999 census.

Health Profile	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Years of life lost due to premature death	23	20	21	24	24	20	20	19	19	18	18	20 <sup>4</sup>
Deaths from widespread diseases <sup>1</sup> (as % of total)	47	48	47	48	48	49	52	54	56	56	56	55
Deaths from malignant cancer (as % of total deaths)	9	8	8	8	8	8	9	9	9	9	9	9
Cases of AIDS (per 100 000)	-	-	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.13	0.21	0.33	3.0 <sup>2</sup>	3.2	2.6	3.2
Alcohol consumption (liters per adult)	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.9	4.1	4.2	4.1	5.8 <sup>3</sup>	6.6	6.7	6.7
Tobacco consumption (kg per adult)	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7
Population per doctor	302	308	306	297	313	319	330	343	355	366	370	375
Health services paid by public insurance (%)	26.0	10.5	7.9	5.4	6.1	5.4	6.0	6.4	6.9	6.7	6.1	5.5
Public expenditure on health (as % of total public expenditure)	11.2	14.8	13.6	14.1	14.6	13.2	12.1	11.5	11.3	10.1	9.6	10.2
Total expenditure on health (as % of GDP)	3.0	3.9	4.3	3.4	3.5	3.2	2.6	2.2	2.3	2.6	2.4	2.3

<sup>1</sup> Cardiovascular conditions and neoplasms.

<sup>2</sup> Growth of indicators is due to drastic growth of the number of patients, mostly males aged 20-29.

<sup>3</sup> Calculation based on sales of products. Vodka prices were reduced in 2001 in order to discourage smuggling and illegal production. As a result, all accumulated stocks were sold.

<sup>4</sup> Increase of indicator is partly due to Kyrgyzstan's adoption of new WHO criteria, by which infants born with very low body weight (from 500 to 1000g), who died soon after birth, were recorded as cases of infant mortality(not still births)

Educational Profile	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Enrolment ratio for all levels (% of population, aged 7 - 24)	61	61	60	65	71	71	69	71	71	72	71	71
Full-time secondary graduates (%)	89	90	87	88	83	94	94	91	94	94	96	96
Full-time secondary technical graduates (as % of total upper-secondary)	31	35	38	33	34	31	26	24	21	22	22	26
Number of universities	18	22	32	39	43	41	39	45	48	46	47	49
Full-time tertiary enrolment (%)	65	75	75	63	61	57	61	59	59	53	63	57
Tertiary natural and applied science enrolment (as % of total tertiary)	11	9	7	7	5	6	7	8	6	5	6	5
Expenditure on tertiary education (as % of total public expenditure on education) <sup>1</sup>	9.0	10.6	8.2	13.6	15.7	19.2	16.1	14.7	17.2	19.6	19.9	19.8
Public expenditure on tertiary students (million som)	20.4	77.8	87.5	166.7	238.4	322.9 <sup>1</sup>	319.9 <sup>1</sup>	337.5	489.6	657.3	747.3	864.3
Total expenditure on education (% of GDP)	4.8	6.3	7.1	5.4	5.2	5.2	4.4	3.7	4.2	5.0	5.3	5.2
Public expenditure on education (% of GDP)	4.2	6.1	6.6	5.2	4.9	4.9	4.1	3.5	3.9	4.4	4.5	4.6

<sup>1</sup> Data for 1993-1997 were changed due to the recalculation of costs as % of public expenditures on education (previously – total education expenditures, including expenditures of enterprises)

Human Capital Formation	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total proportion of students at all educational level (% of total population aged 7-24)												
Total	66	62	63	64	66	69	69	71	71	72	71	71
Men	64	61	62	63	66	68	69	71	70	71	70	70
Women	68	63	64	65	66	70	70	71	72	73	73	72
Number of public organizations (excluding political)	625	727	885	1423	1749	2249	3058	3759	4734	6018	7355	8963
Scientists and technicians (per 1000 people)	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5
R&D scientists and technicians (per 100 000 people)	51	46	52	48	50	35	36	33	32	32	32	33
R&D expenditure (as % of GDP)	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Secondary graduates (% of population of graduation age)	50	49	45	45	58	59	61	43 <sup>1</sup>	64	48	61	60
Tertiary graduates (% of population of graduation age)	13	11	10	13	11	17	19	21	26	30	35	36
Science, engineering and mathematics graduates (as % of total graduates)												
Total	32	34	28	27	32	26	21	20	18	20	18	18
Men	20	20	13	15	18	14	13	11	11	12	11	11
Women	12	14	12	12	14	12	9	9	7	8	6	6
Number of those with higher education (% of population aged 15 and older) <sup>2</sup>	9.4	10.8	10.8	10.8	10.8	10.8	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5

<sup>1</sup> Decline is due to reduction in the number of 9th-grade graduates (from 90 500 in 1999/2000. to 35 300 in 2000/2001.) as a result of completion of experimental transfer of 3-graders to grade 5, or a shift from 10-year secondary education to an 11-year system.

<sup>2</sup> Data for 1992, 1993 – based on data of 1989 census, for 1994-1998 – social and demographic survey in 1994, for 1999-2001 – based on data of the first national census in 1999

Employment	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Labor force (as % of total population) <sup>1</sup>	38	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	39	40	40	39
Percentage of the labor force in:												
Agriculture	39	42	47	47	48	49	52	53	53	49	43	39
Industry	21	19	17	15	14	13	12	10	10	12	15	18
Services	40	39	36	38	38	38	36	37	37	39	42	43
Future labor force replacement ratio	191	191	191	191	191	191	191	186	179	172	166	159
Number of working hours per week (per person in manufacturing)	35	35	36	36	36	36	36	35	36	35	35	35

<sup>1</sup> Source of data: 1993-2001 – labor resource survey, 2002 – sample employment survey of households (Nov. 2002), 2003 – integrated sample household survey, 2004 – integrated sample household survey (preliminary data)

Unemployment	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Number of officially unemployed (thousands of people)												
Total	2.9	12.6	50.4	77.2	54.6	55.9	54.7	58.3	60.5	60.2	57.4	58.2
Men	0.9	4.9	20.5	32.5	22.7	22.6	24.1	27.1	28.0	27.6	26.5	26.8
Women	2.	7.7	29.9	44.7	31.9	33.3	30.6	31.2	32.5	32.6	30.9	31.4
Youth <sup>1)</sup>	0.9	5.0	20.3	29.2	20.3	20.6	19.8	23.2	22.5	22.0	20.7	22.3
Male youth <sup>1)</sup>	0.3	1.7	8.9	2.2	8.2	8.3	8.5	10.6	10.4	10.6	9.6	10.4
Female youth <sup>1)</sup>	0.6	3.3	11.4	17.0	12.1	12.3	11.3	12.6	12.1	11.4	11.1	11.9
Official unemployment rate (total - %),	0.2	0.7	2.9	4.3	3.1	3.1	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.1	2.8	2.8
Total unemployed, including those actively seeking employment (thousands of people)	29.4	70.6	100.0	140.0	103.0	106.4	136.8	144.3	152.0	265.5	212.3	185.7
Duration of official unemployment (as % of total)												
Up to 6 months	73	73	74	57	51	48	38	40	33	34	30	34
From 6 to 12 months	23	19	17	26	24	30	32	30	38	32	30	29
More than 12 months	4	8	9	17	25	22	30	30	29	34	40	37
Male and female unemployed (as % of total unemployment): <sup>2</sup>												
Men	30	39	41	42	41	40	44	46	46	50	53	53
Women	70	61	59	58	59	60	56	54	54	50	47	47

<sup>1)</sup> 16-29 years.

<sup>2)</sup> Source of data: 1993-2001 – labor resource survey, 2002 – sample employment survey of households (Nov. 2002), 2003 – integrated sample household survey, 2004 – integrated sample household survey (preliminary data)

<b>Military Expenditure and Resource Use Imbalances</b>	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Military expenditure (as % of GDP)	0.7	0.9	1.6	1.3	1.6	1.4	1.7	1.7	1.3	1.5	1.5
Military expenditure (as % of combined education and health expenditures)	10.6	9.2	14.8	16.1	19.3	18.6	27.1	31.7	23.2	22.5	23.8

<b>Natural Resource Balance Sheet</b>	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Land area (thousands of km <sup>2</sup> )	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9	199.9
Population density (people per km <sup>2</sup> )	23	23	23	23	24*	24	24	25	25	25	25	26
Arable land and land permanent used for crops (as % of total land area)	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	
Permanent grassland (as % of total land area)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Forest and woodland (as % of total land area)	7	7	7	7	7	8	8	8	8	8	8	
Irrigated land (as % of total arable area)	65	64	64	65	65	66	66	66	66	66	66	
Internal renewable water resources per capita (1000 m <sup>3</sup> per annum)	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.4	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3
Annual fresh water withdrawals	95	94	95	87	77	70	61	67	83	71	63	76
(as % of water resources per capita) (m <sup>3</sup> )	2546	2425	2426	2070	1826	1744	1482	1638	2096	1695	1499	1772
Number of nature reserves and natural parks	5	7	7	8	11	11	11	12	14	14	15	16

\* Data adjusted to reflect retrospective recounting based on results of the 1999 census.

<b>National Income Accounts</b>	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Agricultural production (as % of GDP)	39.0	38.3	40.6	46.2	41.1	36.1	34.9	34.2	34.5	34.4	33.6	32.9
Industry (as % of GDP)	25.1	20.5	12.0	11.1	16.5	16.3	21.7	25.0	23.1	17.9	17.3	16.0
Services (as % of GDP)	25.8	31.5	34.0	30.1	30.3	34.7	32.8	29.6	31.4	35.6	36.8	38.1
Consumption:												
private (as % of GDP)	75.7	78.4	75.0	82.1	68.9	88.3	77.6	65.7	64.9	67.5	77.9	79.6
Public (as % of GDP)	20.3	18.9	19.5	18.5	17.3	17.8	19.1	20.0	17.5	18.6	16.8	17.5
Gross domestic investment (as % of GDP)	11.6	9.0	18.4	25.2	21.7	15.5	18.0	20.0	18.0	17.6	11.8	10.0
Gross domestic savings (as % of GDP)	12.5	6.7	9.3	3.4	14.3	-8.2	1.2	14.4	16.8	17.4	7.6	
Tax revenue (as % of GDP)	14.9	14.7	15.1	12.6	12.5	14.2	12.2	11.7	12.4	13.9	14.3	14.9
Central government expenditure (as % of GDP)	22.9	23.4	28.6	22.2	21.8	21.4	19.1	17.3	16.6	20.2	20.2	20.0
Export (as % of GDP)	33.5	33.8	29.5	30.7	38.3	36.5	42.2	41.8	36.7	39.6	38.7	42.8
Import (as % of GDP)	41.1	40.1	42.4	56.5	46.2	58.0	57.0	47.6	37.0	43.3	45.2	52.6



<b>Economic Development Trends</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
Consumer price index (December, % of previous December)	1029.9	162.1	132.1	134.8	113.0	116.8	139.9	109.6	103.7	102.3	105.6	102.8
Tax revenue (as % of GDP)	14.9	14.7	15.1	12.6	12.5	14.2	12.2	11.7	12.4	13.9	14.3	14.9
Direct taxes, as % of total taxes	61.3	57.3	50.0	45.1	43.2	41.7	38.0	38.4	38.7	40.0	36.4	35.1
Overall budget surplus/deficit (as % of GDP)	-7.1	-7.7	-11.5	-5.4	-5.2	-3.0	-2.5	-2.0	0.4	-1.0	-0.8	-0.5
Broad money (M2)*, million soms, year end	706.4	1545.1	2754	3340.8	4188.2	4910.0	6574.5	7367.5	8201.8	10995.6	14676.4	19379.3
Bank interest rate **	260.5	89.1	46	45.9	23.5	32.9	55.1	38.3	8.0	4.4	4.0	4.0
Trade balance, million USD	-87..6	23..1	-113..4	-332..3	-105.5	-327..9	-145..9	-49..6	8..9	-101.2	-135.3	-222.2
Government bonds issued, million soms	33.6	271.9	200.7	366	733.5	888.5	351.1 <sup>3</sup>	563.2	959.9	768.3	924.6	1217.6

\* M2 – aggregate monetary mass.

\*\* Discount rate of the National Bank of Kyrgyzstan, reflecting minimum cost of money. In 2000 the level was 38.3% due to stabilization on financial markets.

<sup>3</sup> Decline is related to absence of 12-month government bond auctions in 1999 and reduction of auction numbers for 6-month government bonds.

<b>Weakening Social Structure</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
People convicted of crimes (per 100 000, aged 14 and older)	500	478	580	569	627	571	535	617	525	502	474	417
Convicted juveniles (as % of total convicted)	8	6	7	6	6	6	5	6	6	7	6	7
Premeditated murders (per 100 000 persons)	13	14	12	11	8	7	7	8	7	7 <sup>2</sup>	6 <sup>2</sup>	6
Suicides (per 100 000 people)												
Total	12	13	13	10	11	11	12	10	11	11	10	9
Men (per 100 000 people)	20	22	21	17	18	18	19	17	20	19	16	15
Women (per 100 000 people)	5	4	6	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	3
Reported cases of rape (per 100 000 women aged 15-59)	28	31	26	28	24	20	21	23	24	22	20	18
Total number of crimes	42495	41155	41008	39623	37262	34287	39951	38620	39986	37193	35606	32616
Drug-related crimes	2145	2544	2623	2922	3103	3295	3459	3539	3205	3018	3106	3090
Economic crimes	2899	2324	2647	3207	3447	3412	3457	3155	3047	2773	3413	3166
Crime detection rate	53.0	60.2	61.1	69.8	76.3	81.4	70.8	77.2	76.2	76.8	78.8	77.7
Number of emigrants, people	143619	71197	37302	27584	19538	15671	17818	27887	31633	32717	21209	22607
Registered refugees (end of year)	...	6360	13311	16707	15276	14560	10849	10609	9212	7584	7501	5921
Asylum applications:	...	6360	7617	4813	3108	1290	664	655	380	279	160	279
Of which asylum granted	...	...	...	3668	1013	704	372	1509 <sup>1</sup>	273	160	905	284
Numbers removed from refugee lists	...	...	...	272	2444	1420	4083	1749	1670	1788	988	1864
Divorces (% of marriages contracted)	20	21	22	25	25	24	24	22	21	20	16	15
Illegitimate births (%)	17	17	19	21	24	27	29	32	32	33	32	32

<sup>1</sup> Recognized as refugees, including persons seeking asylum in previous years

<b>Wealth, Poverty and Social Investment</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
Real GDP per capita (PPP USD) <sup>1</sup>	2330 (1411)	1890 (1169)	1850 (1122)	2101 (1204)	2264 (1351)	2299 (1392)	2377 (1461)	2521 (1560)	2634 (1637)	2875 (1622)	3048 (1714)	3363 (1928)
GDP per capita (USD)	450	360	350	380	390 <sup>2</sup>	350	300	280	280	290	330	
Share of industrial GDP (%)	25.1	20.5	12	11.1	16.5	16.3	21.7	25.0	23.1	17.9	17.3	16.0
Income share: <sup>3</sup> ratio of highest 20% to lowest 20%	6.1	11.1	7.1	7.8	11.1	10.8	10.6	10.9	9.9	9.1	8.5	8.6
Social security benefits expenditure (as % of GDP)	0.6	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2
Total education expenditure (as % of GDP)	4.8	6.3	7.1	5.4	5.2	5.2	4.4	3.7	4.2	5.0	5.3	5.2
Total health expenditure (as % of GDP)	3	3.9	4.3	3.4	3.5	3.2	2.6	2.2	2.3	2.6	2.4	2.3
Average income per capita (som)	47.7	141.3	189.6	243.7	332.2	411.2	557.3 <sup>2</sup>	716.2 <sup>2</sup>	859.9	958.7	1022.9	1119.2
Income in poorest 20% of households, som per capita	16.41	31.67	58.52	70.19	75.30	94.94	134.64	162.59	216.95	250.89	282.1	275.45
Food expenditure (% of total household expenditure)	53.9	49.3	49.9	49.2	48.3	44.8	45.3	44.4	41.5	41.4	42.4	44.9

<sup>1</sup> Upper row – NSC data based on 1996 international comparisons, lower row – International comparisons for 2000 (World Bank estimates)

<sup>2</sup> Data until 1997 changed due to change of methods

<sup>3</sup> Data changed due to change of methods for calculating balance of monetary incomes and expenditures

<b>Overcoming Internal and External Isolation</b>	<b>1993</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
Radio sets (per 100 people)	16	15	13	12	11	12	10	8	7	5	4	5
Television sets (per 100 people)	17	16	14	12	11	12	10	9	7	6	5	5
Annual cinema attendance (per person)	1.1	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Annual museum attendance (per person)	0.1	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Registered library users (%)	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
Daily newspapers (copies per 100 people)	18	34	35	44	46	23	22	27	16 <sup>1</sup>	18	27	10
Number of books published (per 100 000 people)	9	9	7	9	7	6	9	9	10	13	13	14
Printing and writing paper consumed (metric tons per 100 people) <sup>1</sup>	19	19	5	5	5	5	...	...	...	...	...	...
Letters posted (per capita)	3	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
International telephone calls (number of calls per capita)	7	7	7	6	7	8	8	9	10	11	13	14
Telephones (per 100 people)	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	9*	10*	11*	13
Motor vehicles (per 100 people)	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

<sup>1</sup> In 2001 all daily newspapers, with the exception of Vecherny Bishkek, started to appear only 1-3 times a week, losing the status of daily newspapers

<sup>2</sup> Data for 1994-1998 refer only to the company Akyl

\* Including mobile phones

Energy Consumption	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Commercial energy consumption (billion kg of oil equivalent)	3.9	4.1	3.1	3.9	3.5	3.4	3.5	4.5	4.1	4.5	4.8	4.7
Commercial energy consumption per capita (kg of oil equivalent)	858.5	896.7	673.4	827.4	734.5	713.3	715.7	906.6	835.2	899.5	943.8	918.2
Commercial energy efficiency (energy consumption in kg of oil equivalent per USD 100 of GDP)	236.6	367	207.2	213.9	196.3	209.4	284.1	325.9	270.4	278.1	247.3	211.4
Annual changes in commercial energy consumption (%)	-24.1	3.5	-24.9	24.7	-10	-1.4	1.8	25.1	-7.1	8.5	5.9	-1.7

Urbanization	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Population in the biggest cities - Bishkek and Osh (as % of total urban population)	53	54	55	56	57	58	58	57	57	57	57	56
Population in cities with more than 1 million inhabitants (as % of urban)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Major cities with highest population density (Bishkek), Population density per km <sup>2</sup>	5350	5420	5560	5720	5880	6090	6130	6148	6156	6178	6230	6327
Urban population (as % of total)	36.1	35.6	35.3	35.1	34.9	34.8	34.7	34.8	34.9	34.7	34.9	35.2
Urban population annual growth (%)	-2.5	-0.6	0.8	0.9	1.0	1.5	0.8	1.0	1.1	0.2	1.6	1.9

Environment Pollution and Protection	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Emission of sulfur and nitrogen (thousands of metric tons of SO <sub>2</sub> and NO <sub>2</sub> per capita)	52	33	33	35	30	32	28	24	14 <sup>1</sup>	11 <sup>1</sup>	11 <sup>1</sup>	10
Emission of sulfur and nitrogen (kg of SO <sub>2</sub> and NO <sub>2</sub> per capita)	11.7	7.4	7.3	7.5	6.4	6.8	5.7	4.0	2.7	2.2	2.2	1.9
Pesticide consumption (metric tons per 1000 people)	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.25	0.28	0.28
Nuclear waste	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Annual hazardous and special waste resulting from production (metric tons per km <sup>2</sup> )	1.8	1.0	2.4	3.1	31.4 <sup>2</sup>	29.6 <sup>2</sup>	30.4 <sup>2</sup>	31.5 <sup>2</sup>	31.6 <sup>2</sup>	32.6	32.1	32.1
Urban waste (kg per capita)	278	250	201	237	195	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Waste recycling (as % of consumption):												
Paper and cardboard	...	0.3	0.3	0.27	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Glass	...	0.06	0.06	0.063	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...

<sup>1</sup> Stationary sources only

<sup>2</sup> Significant growth of data was due to start of industrial activities by Kumtor Gold Mining

## Annex 3. Regional profiles

City of Bishkek	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Resident population, end of year, thousands	768.0	769.1	772.0	778.4	790.7
Economy by sectors (% OF GDP)					
Agriculture	1.3	1.0	0.8	0.2	
Industry	7.9	13.0	13.4	10.9	
Services	70.9	63.6	57.7	60.4	
Gross regional product, per capita					
- soms (in current prices)	16216	22642	26042	29647 <sup>1)</sup>	
- USD (according to PPP)	3469	4492	5465	6426	
Social indicators					
Life expectancy, years					
Men	64.6	64.9	63.4	63.6	63.9
Women	74.4	75.0	74.5	73.6	73.6
Economically active population (as % of total population)					
Men	55.5	55.7	55.8	55.3	55.2
Women	44.5	44.3	44.2	44.7	44.8
Salaries, women/men, %	68.5	67.2	67.3	69.3	69.8
Minimum consumer budget per capita, soms	1286.6	1407.6	1506.4	1721.0	1969.1
Below poverty line (including extremely poor), as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	21.3	22.0	20.0	16.4	12.8
People	29.9	29.5	28.2	22.5	16.5
Extremely poor, as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	3.4	2.3	3.7	4.0	3.6
People	5.8	3.1	5.6	6.6	4.7
Population with no access to safe drinking water, % <sup>2)</sup>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Population with no access to health care, % <sup>3)</sup>	16.7	15.2	18.9	8.2	7.1
Share of undernourished children 1-6 years, % <sup>2)</sup>	12.7	11.0	19.1	8.7	5.9
Children not-attending school, % <sup>4)</sup>	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.03
Human Development Indicators					
HDI	0.755	0.776	0.789	0.798	
GDI	7.5	7.1	9.2	5.2	
GEI	0.749	0.761	0.779	0.792	
HPI	0.472	0.538	0.541	0.565	

<sup>1)</sup> Data for GDP by regions (preliminary assessment).

<sup>2)</sup> Data for 2003 use results of an integrated survey of 5016 households. Data for previous years use household budget surveys.

<sup>3)</sup> Data for 2003 use results of a single sample survey of the healthcare module, organized in February 2004

<sup>4)</sup> Data for 2000-2003 use weighted average of children aged 7-17 not attending school.

Batken oblast	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Resident population, end of year, thousands	393.1	398.9	403.6	409.0	413.7
Economy by sectors (% OF GDP)					
Agriculture	50.6	55.1	55.5	52.2	
Industry	6.8	13.4	8.6	5.5	
Services	39.9	30.1	33.1	36.9	
Gross regional product, per capita					
- soms (in current prices)	6530	7111	7495	8543 <sup>1)</sup>	
- USD (according to PPP)	1112	1095	1140	1246	
Social indicators					
Life expectancy, years					
Men	66.0	66.6	66.7	66.4	66.8
Women	71.5	73.7	70.9	73.1	72.7
Economically active population (as % of total population)					
Men	55.2	54.9	57.2	56.5	57.8
Women	44.8	45.1	42.8	43.5	42.2
Salaries, women/men, %	77.7	69.5	69.6	64.6	67.8
Minimum consumer budget per capita, soms		1092.3	1091.5	1158.0	1290.4
Below poverty line (including extremely poor), as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	64.8	39.4	39.5	78.7	70.2
People	69.0	41.2	45.5	84.9	77.8
Extremely poor, as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	28.4	10.0	12.2	30.3	28.5
People	34.3	10.9	14.3	36.3	33.7
Population with no access to safe drinking water, % <sup>2)</sup>	28.2	43.7	47.3	40.3	36.0
Population with no access to health care, % <sup>3)</sup>	7.7	7.2	6.1 *	10.8	8.2
Share of undernourished children 1-6 years, % <sup>2)</sup>	4.2	2.5	14.4	5.1	4.7
Children not-attending school, % <sup>4)</sup>	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.03	0.1
Human Development Indicators					
HDI	0.673	0.682	0.681	0.688	
GDI	10.1	9.9	15.9	13.3	
GEI	0.673	0.678	0.673	0.680	
HPI	0.362	0.341	0.370	0.386	

\* Calculation data

<b>Jalal-abad oblast</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
Resident population, end of year, thousands	893.7	907.2	920.3	933.5	947.6
Economy by sectors (% OF GDP)					
Agriculture	29.3	37.1	38.8	37.9	
Industry	44.0	31.4	24.9	22.7	
Services	23.6	28.6	27.3	31.2	
Gross regional product, per capita					
- soms (in current prices)	13088	11633	11120	10938 <sup>1)</sup>	
- USD (according to PPP)	2403	2051	2026	1992	
Social indicators					
Life expectancy, years					
Men	68.0	66.8	66.4	66.9	66.0
Women	72.9	73.7	72.2	72.3	72.9
Economically active population (as % of total population)					
Men	52.7	52.7	53.7	54.4	56.3
Women	47.3	47.3	46.3	45.6	43.7
Salaries, women/men, %	58.0	53.8	57.2	57.8	58.5
Minimum consumer budget per capita, soms	1104.3	1251.2	1307.9	1445.8	1594.4
Below poverty line (including extremely poor), as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	61.4	47.9	46.2	48.0	40.6
People	67.9	55.0	54.9	57.7	50.1
Extremely poor, as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	12.8	6.2	8.7	12.0	8.6
People	15.1	8.3	11.7	16.6	12.7
Population with no access to safe drinking water, % <sup>2)</sup>	13.1	18.8	14.8	32.6	25.8
Population with no access to health care, % <sup>3)</sup>	7.2	7.1	2.5	2.3	3.1
Share of undernourished children 1-6 years, % <sup>2)</sup>	6.9	8.5	14.0	7.1	5.7
Children not-attending school, % <sup>4)</sup>	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
Human Development Indicators					
HDI	0.723	0.710	0.707	0.706	
GDI	7.2	8.3	8.1	10.1	
GEI	0.718	0.705	0.702	0.700	
HPI	0.420	0.420	0.410	0.422	

<b>Issyk-kul oblast</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
Resident population, end of year, thousands	417.8	419.7	420.6	423.4	426.4
Economy by sectors (% OF GDP)					
Agriculture	29.8	29.8	44.7	27.7	
Industry	55.9	58.6	32.2	56.2	
Services	12.5	10.6	19.3	13.7	
Gross regional product, per capita					
- soms (in current prices)	25670	29788	19869	28209 <sup>1)</sup>	
- USD (according to PPP)	4890	5078	3521	4819	
Social indicators					
Life expectancy, years					
Men	64.3	64.2	61.7	60.2	61.8
Women	72.7	73.8	69.1	70.0	70.2
Economically active population (as % of total population)					
Men	56.7	56.4	59.6	54.9	57.7
Women	43.3	43.6	40.4	45.1	42.3
Salaries, women/men, %	53.2	57.1	60.2	63.6	72.4
Minimum consumer budget per capita, soms	1145.7	1209.6	1271.8	1356.3	1513.5
Below poverty line (including extremely poor), as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	50.8	46.7	35.3	42.8	43.3
People	60.9	55.2	44.1	52.1	54.1
Extremely poor, as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	20.8	16.8	13.7	10.8	11.8
People	27.6	21.3	18.7	14.7	17.2
Population with no access to safe drinking water, % <sup>2)</sup>	0.0	0.2	0.0	12.7	14.8
Population with no access to health care, % <sup>3)</sup>	12.5	6.6	2.0	2.7	7.0
Share of undernourished children 1-6 years, % <sup>2)</sup>	4.4	6.8	5.5	3.2	5.2
Children not-attending school, % <sup>4)</sup>	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.1
Human Development Indicators					
HDI	0.753	0.757	0.720	0.740	
GDI	6.5	6.8	7.2	6.8	
GEI	0.744	0.749	0.708	0.729	
HPI	0.476	0.483	0.445	0.461	

<b>Naryn oblast</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
Resident population, end of year, thousands	254.6	257.9	261.1	264.0	264.5
Economy by sectors (% OF GDP)					
Agriculture	70.8	70.7	64.8	63.3	
Industry	7.9	7.7	9.3	7.0	
Services	17.9	19.8	21.3	24.0	
Gross regional product, per capita					
- soms (in current prices)	11963	11903	12312	13377 <sup>1)</sup>	
- USD (according to PPP)	2150	1927	2089	2193	
Social indicators					
Life expectancy, years					
Men	66.3	64.6	62.1	62.8	62.0
Women	73.4	71.9	70.2	70.5	70.6
Economically active population (as % of total population)					
Men	56.9	56.4	60.2	59.1	58.8
Women	43.1	43.6	39.8	40.9	41.2
Salaries, women/men, %	69.3	65.3	64.7	65.9	72.7
Minimum consumer budget per capita, soms	1080.9	1148.9	1217.8	1301.6	1351.8
Below poverty line (including extremely poor), as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	78.5	67.4	62.1	65.7	60.6
People	81.4	70.4	67.8	72.1	66.3
Extremely poor, as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	36.5	33.5	31.5	26.1	26.5
People	37.6	36.3	34.7	30.4	30.7
Population with no access to safe drinking water, % <sup>2)</sup>	6.7	9.7	10.7	25.7	22.2
Population with no access to health care, % <sup>3)</sup>	12.4	11.8	7.7 *	9.5	5.5
Share of undernourished children 1-6 years, % <sup>2)</sup>	3.1	2.1	4.9	7.0	6.2
Children not-attending school, % <sup>4)</sup>	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.7
Human Development Indicators					
HDI	0.713	0.698	0.701	0.701	
GDI	7.7	8.7	8.1	10.8	
GEI	0.712	0.695	0.688	0.692	
HPI	0.459	0.448	0.393	0.426	

\* Calculation data

<b>Osh oblast, including Osh city</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
Resident population, end of year, thousands	1211.0	1229.7	1247.3	1017.9	1033.5
Economy by sectors (% OF GDP)					
Agriculture	44.0	43.5	50.5	52.1	
Industry	5.6	6.0	10.7	7.6	
Services	46.1	46.6	32.6	33.2	
Gross regional product, per capita					
- soms (in current prices)	7683	7091	8243	9040 <sup>1)</sup>	
- USD (according to PPP)	1309	1129	1427	1543	
Social indicators					
Life expectancy, years					
Men	66.9	68.0	67.1	66.9	67.7
Women	72.8	73.5	72.9	72.6	73.6
Economically active population (as % of total population)					
Men	54.5	54.3	57.9	57.8	58.6
Women	45.5	45.7	42.1	42.2	41.4
Salaries, women/men, %	78.9	66.3	65.6	68.9	72.5
Minimum consumer budget per capita, soms	1024.4	1130.2	1242.3	1355.4	1441.4
Below poverty line (including extremely poor), as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	49.6	51.5	46.8	46.4	47.4
People	51.6	56.1	52.4	56.4	57.0
Extremely poor, as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	18.2	16.9	13.7	15.7	8.5
People	19.8	19.9	17.4	21.2	11.3
Population with no access to safe drinking water, % <sup>2)</sup>	36.6	34.2	34.1	38.0	34.9
Population with no access to health care, % <sup>3)</sup>	6.9	4.7	13.0	9.3	6.8
Share of undernourished children 1-6 years, % <sup>2)</sup>	5.2	6.3	12.2	9.1	7.9
Children not-attending school, % <sup>4)</sup>	0.1	0.0	0.02	0.2	0.1
Human Development Indicators					
HDI	0.690	0.687	0.696	0.698	
GDI	11.7	10.9	14.0	13.2	
GEI	0.689	0.684	0.689	0.690	
HPI	0.403	0.404	0.392	0.412	

Talas oblast	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Resident population, end of year, thousands	203.7	205.9	208.1	210.5	212.1
Economy by sectors (% OF GDP)					
Agriculture	75.6	77.9	77.7	78.5	
Industry	3.9	2.8	4.3	3.6	
Services	19.7	19.0	16.0	16.2	
Gross regional product, per capita					
- soms (in current prices)	13110	13626	15444	19050 <sup>1)</sup>	
- USD (according to PPP)	2245	2154	2489	2855	
Social indicators					
Life expectancy, years					
Men	66.2	65.9	64.1	63.1	63.5
Women	72.3	73.0	68.5	71.5	72.6
Economically active population (as % of total population)					
Men	53.2	52.9	53.5	56.0	57.9
Women	46.8	47.1	46.5	44.0	42.1
Salaries, women/men, %	71.1	67.9	60.3	64.3	68.6
Minimum consumer budget per capita, soms	1030.0	1121.7	1156.9	1190.1	1306.1
Below poverty line (including extremely poor), as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	67.5	61.5	51.8	49.4	44.9
People	72.7	67.3	56.2	55.4	51.3
Extremely poor, as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	30.8	22.1	18.8	14.4	14.7
People	36.6	25.4	21.8	18.1	16.8
Population with no access to safe drinking water, % <sup>2)</sup>	0.1	0.1	0.4	2.5	2.7
Population with no access to health care, % <sup>3)</sup>	10.3	10.7	7.6	5.2	7.2
Share of undernourished children 1-6 years, % <sup>2)</sup>	4.0	6.8	8.1	8.1	7.0
Children not-attending school, % <sup>4)</sup>	0.8	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1
Human Development Indicators					
HDI	0.713	0.714	0.712	0.718	
GDI	5.9	5.1	6.8	5.9	
GEI	0.710	0.710	0.701	0.710	
HPI	0.435	0.453	0.421	0.421	

Chui oblast	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Resident population, end of year, thousands	765.7	758.1	751.4	752.1	752.8
Economy by sectors (% OF GDP)					
Agriculture	47.7	53.9	40.6	50.4	
Industry	16.4	15.5	22.4	9.4	
Services	29.1	27.7	30.1	33.3	
Gross regional product, per capita					
- soms (in current prices)	16463	20421	21798	20851 <sup>1)</sup>	
- USD (according to PPP)	3190	3608	3883	3590	
Social indicators					
Life expectancy, years					
Men	62.8	62.6	61.3	61.3	62.0
Women	72.7	72.6	70.8	69.9	71.0
Economically active population (as % of total population)					
Men	54.8	54.9	53.6	54.3	55.7
Women	45.2	45.1	46.4	45.7	44.3
Salaries, women/men, %	60.2	59.6	64.5	57.8	62.0
Minimum consumer budget per capita, soms	1165.2	1253.7	1278.8	1367.2	1465.4
Below poverty line (including extremely poor), as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	23.1	23.8	18.3	19.7	13.9
People	28.1	29.2	23.1	27.7	21.7
Extremely poor, as % of total population <sup>2)</sup>					
Households	3.5	4.6	4.0	5.8	4.0
People	4.5	5.9	6.0	8.5	6.8
Population with no access to safe drinking water, % <sup>2)</sup>	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.2	0.0
Population with no access to health care, % <sup>3)</sup>	27.1	20.2	17.4	16.1	17.8
Share of undernourished children 1-6 years, % <sup>2)</sup>	9.6	10.7	14.3	10.9	9.1
Children not-attending school, % <sup>4)</sup>	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.2
Human Development Indicators					
HDI	0.716	0.722	0.724	0.720	
GDI	9.7	9.3	8.7	7.7	
GEI	0.711	0.716	0.715	0.706	
HPI	0.584	0.553	0.520	0.568	

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Work on this Report commenced at the end of 2004 and was completed at the end of 2005, during which the events of spring 2005 drastically changed the political landscape in Kyrgyzstan. The Report was supposed to cover only 2004, but the events of 2005 made it necessary to alter our plans and to take pause in order to gauge new processes in various sectors of civil society. There was a clear need to express our understanding of

how civil society behaved during the events of 2005 and to offer a brief assessment of the attitude of Kyrgyzstan's new leaders towards civil society. A number of conclusions therefore had to be recast. The authors would like to express their gratitude to all reviewers of the report, UNDP officials, NGO representatives and participants of roundtables for their comments and invaluable contributions to drafts. Particular thanks are due to:

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future human development reports will be better able to analyze the events of 2005 in depth. However, the authors would like to emphasize that they are solely responsible for the content of the Report and the assessments, which it presents.



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