

Central Asian Republics Regional

The Development Challenge: It is in the U.S. national interest to promote stability and development in Central Asia. The countries of Central Asia are critical allies in the war on terrorism and potential sources of world energy supplies. At the same time, the countries face pervasive poverty, authoritarian rule, political repression, significant health issues, and the potential for extremism.

The regional nature of Central Asia's development challenges requires coordinated and integrated assistance from USAID. Several regional issues pose particular challenges. All countries in the region have a vital stake in improving regional management of shared water resources, which are absolutely essential to the agricultural sector and energy supply sector. The ecological problems posed by the disappearing Aral Sea also have regional consequences. Health issues are rapidly becoming regional in nature. The incidence of tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and drug use has increased dramatically in all countries of Central Asia. A failure to prevent the spread of malaria from Afghanistan to Tajikistan has now resulted in a malaria problem that has already grown into a regional threat. Although regional trade is essential to Central Asia's overall economic development, many barriers to cross-border trade continue to exist and are particularly difficult to overcome. Risk of regional conflict also poses serious challenges due to stresses on individual communities produced by shared scarce resources, unemployment, and artificial national borders. Lastly, while there is variation across the countries of Central Asia, democracy, human rights, and independent media benefit from a regionally-coordinated approach since authoritarian governance is pervasive in all countries.

The USAID Program: To meet these challenges, the goals of USAID in Central Asia are to promote economic growth, democratic development, health care reform, improved natural resource management, expanded access to basic education, and conflict mitigation.

The Program Data Sheets provided below cover six strategic objectives for which USAID is requesting regional funds. These six objectives promote reforms and training that foster the growth of small and medium enterprises, promote civil society and expand access to information, improve primary health care and prevent infectious disease, encourage better use of the region's water and energy resources, prevent conflict, and address other cross-cutting issues within the region. Regional resources will complement country resources to allow for multi-country expansion of activities supporting regional objectives.

FY 2004 funds will be used to implement the program as currently planned and previously described in the FY 2004 Congressional Budget Justification. Specific activities to be funded by FY 2004 and FY 2005 appropriations are described in the Program Data Sheets that follow.

Other Program Elements: Other USAID funding sources, which complement and reinforce the inputs of regional funding, are directed at country specific programs. These activities are addressed in individual country reports.

Other Donors: Donor relations are detailed in individual country summaries. USAID works closely with bilateral and multilateral organizations to address country-specific and regional issues. The World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the Asian Development Bank are important regional partners. The European Union also has a substantial program throughout Central Asia.

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Central Asian Republics Regional
Program Title:	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
Pillar:	Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade
Strategic Objective:	176-0131
Proposed FY 2004 Obligation:	\$469,000 FSA
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$1,200,000 FSA
Proposed FY 2005 Obligation:	\$200,000 FSA
Year of Initial Obligation:	2001
Year of Final Obligation:	FY 2006

Summary: USAID's program to improve the environment for the growth of small and medium enterprises includes providing better business and economics education, increasing access to financial services, and supporting a grants program for business and professional associations.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2004 Program:

Business Skills and Information (\$469,000 FSA, \$49,940 FSA carryover, \$274,900 FSA prior year recoveries). USAID will assist business and professional associations through a competition-based grant program that directs funds toward four specific areas: advocacy, member services, cross-border trade development, and accounting reform. The grant program is intended to bolster the sustainability of other projects in the economic growth program that provide business and trade advisory services, implement International Accounting Standards in the private and public sectors, and support advocacy efforts to improve the legal and regulatory environment for businesses, particularly in regard to cross-border trade. Principal contractor/grantee: The Pragma Corporation.

To raise the level of business and economics education, USAID will continue providing support to strengthen the quality of higher education and thus better prepare youth to enter and compete in a market economy. The program will train professors in modern business and economics, and work with administrators at higher education institutions to build capacity and develop economics and business programs that meet international standards. Principal contractor/grantee: Carana Corporation.

Improved Implementation of Laws and Regulations (\$874,900 FSA prior year recoveries). USAID will support land tenure reforms in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Technical assistance will improve land tenure institutions, markets, and mechanisms for enabling farmers to obtain secure access to land. Regional funds will also be used for economic policy reforms and implementation in the Central Asian republics, including monetary and fiscal policy reforms, improved tax administration, and banking supervision and sector reforms. Principal contractor/grantee: ARD, Inc.

FY 2005 Program:

Business Skills and Information (\$50,000 FSA).

Access to Capital (\$150,000 FSA). USAID will support microfinance through the Central Asia Microfinance Alliance. Targeted technical assistance, training, and small grants to microfinance institutions (MFIs) will improve, and, in some cases, establish accounting, loan tracking, and internal control systems; begin annual strategic planning exercises; restructure credit committees to strengthen loan approval processes; complete external audits; and computerize MFI offices. USAID will also support a wholesale lending entity that will provide loans to MFIs in the region with the goal of helping these institutions expand their portfolios and thus increase their outreach. Principal contractors/grantees: ACDI/VOCA (prime) and the Foundation for International Community Assistance (sub).

Performance and Results: With support from USAID, Junior Achievement International translated, published, and distributed 13,500 books and 400 teacher guides throughout the region, with appendices created for each country's specific business environment and culture. A training-of-trainers workshop was conducted in partnership with the Academy for Educational Development for 30 instructors who will facilitate workshops for approximately 100 teachers in each of the five countries of CAR. These 500 teachers have the potential to reach 25,000 students, assuming 25 students per class and two classes per teacher. Additionally, USAID launched a competition-based grants program for business and professional associations in August 2003. USAID approved five grants worth \$24,239. Two of these helped a Turkmen accounting association hold its first conference (a requirement for certifying international accounting standard-trained accountants) and assisted a Ferghana Valley association of beekeepers to organize a trade fair.

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Central Asian Republics Regional
Program Title:	Water and Energy
Pillar:	Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade
Strategic Objective:	176-0161
Proposed FY 2004 Obligation:	\$1,658,000 FSA
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$435,000 FSA
Proposed FY 2005 Obligation:	\$1,200,000 FSA
Year of Initial Obligation:	2001
Year of Final Obligation:	FY 2006

Summary: USAID's water and energy activities are focused on improving the capacity of institutions and specialists within Central Asia to better manage natural resources and energy. Activities include: well-directed technical assistance on policies and practices; the introduction of improved technologies along with associated training; and targeted public outreach program. On the regional level, USAID goals are to improve regional cooperation and to mitigate conflict over transboundary water and energy resources.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2004 Program:

Regional Cooperation in Water and Energy (\$400,000 FSA, \$434,622 FSA carryover). The Transboundary Water and Energy Project (TWEP) assists Central Asian leaders develop and agree on measures to improve water and energy cooperation. The program will focus on two key issues: helping the Syr Darya Basin countries agree to adopt and implement a set of operating rules (developed by USAID) for the Toktogul Reservoir as a means of making the operation of the reservoir more responsive to the demands of Uzbekistan, and promoting a multi-year fuel delivery protocol that would set an average annual level of fuel to be supplied to Kyrgyzstan from Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan. Activities will include operating rule training, an associated decision support system, and negotiation facilitation for the development of a long-term agreement. These two activities have been identified as crucial in helping solve potential conflict between downstream nations who use the water for irrigation and Kyrgyzstan, which uses the water for winter power needs. TWEP will continue to provide a limited amount of technical assistance to the International Fund for the Aral Sea as this regional organization begins to implement a strategic five-year plan for activities related to the Aral Sea Basin. Principal contractor/grantee: PA Government Services (prime).

Regional Communication Systems (\$0 FSA). Activities improving regional weather and water data collection and transmission systems will wind down over the next year with the completion of the installation of the USAID-funded meteorburst communication system. Training on the system will continue as specialists within the region look to expand the number of stations and take the measures required to assure the system is fully operational. Continued technical training is critical to the sustainable operations of improved communications systems and the development of regional agreements on expanded data sharing. Principal contractor/grantee: PA Government Services (prime).

Training, Transfer of Best Practices, and Public Outreach (\$1,258,000 FSA). USAID will publicize the lessons learned from work on resource management in Central Asia throughout the region. Examples include: market reforms and energy loss reduction in Kazakhstan that can be applied to Kyrgyzstan; regulatory reform in oil and gas in Turkmenistan applicable to Kazakhstan's efforts to put its offshore oil and gas regulations into a coherent package; and the interest of Uzbekistan in energy efficiency work that was completed in Kazakhstan and in the small hydropower development activity that is being undertaken in Kyrgyzstan. Some limited regional training and public outreach activities on natural resource successes will be carried out in association with this activity. Principal contractor/grantee: PA Government Services (prime).

FY 2005 Program:

Regional Cooperation in Water and Energy (\$300,000 FSA). Water programs will focus on the use of critical water data as part of a solution to develop trust between countries over shared resources. Work also will continue on bilateral and multilateral agreements for regional energy markets and water sharing. Although the information technology infrastructure projects will have come to an end, USAID will continue region-wide training and public outreach activities that showcase successful demonstrations and other resource management lessons learned. USAID will continue to take advantage of opportunities to improve regional cooperation, mitigate conflict, and bring specialists together over critical water and energy issues. Principal contractors/grantees: PA Government Services (prime).

Training, Transfer of Best Practices, and Public Outreach (\$900,000 FSA). USAID will continue to use regional money to support regional training programs and public outreach on water and energy programs that are ongoing in other countries. There will be a greater emphasis on water related programs as the energy portfolio is reduced. The regional funds will also be used more to support training activities in the area of Water User Association development.

Performance and Results: Regional funding, in addition to country-specific support, has enabled USAID to implement transboundary programs. The Transboundary Water and Energy Program (TWEP) and upgrades to regional water data collection and communication systems are examples. As a result of TWEP, joint work with Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan related to financing of the long-time proposed Kambarata hydroelectric dam has finally convinced Kyrgyz resource managers that market reforms in the domestic electric sector are required before any financing for such a facility could be realistically explored. This change in viewpoint is due to the quality of the technical analysis and presentation prepared by USAID. Kazakhstan officials have now agreed to assist Kyrgyzstan in this process. Recent work on the potential long-term solutions to energy and water sharing in the region has been embraced by the international finance institutions and heralded as the direction in which they would like to push regional cooperation. USAID has played an important role in creating a dialogue among water specialists in the region and increasing their capacity to make decisions based on collected data as a way to address transboundary issues. During the past year, there was also significant advancement in the installation of the USAID-financed meteorburst communications system in Central Asia. Central Asia water management agencies now are able to automatically collect water and weather data at key remote sites and transmit that data via meteorburst technology to a central site near Almaty, Kazakhstan. The data is then relayed to regional weather and water forecasting agencies for processing. The system installed in Central Asia consists of a master station, 29 remote stations, 3 receiving stations, and associated computers and software to receive and store information. The result is greater transparency and accurate decisions on water planning and allocations.

Water and energy pilot demonstration models are ongoing in each of the Central Asia republics, along with associated training and public outreach programs. Regional funds allow for training participants to attend courses in neighboring countries or put training materials into use, as appropriate. Over 8,000 people have been trained on every aspect of the program under USAID's energy and water strategic objective. Similarly, USAID's public outreach programs continued to build the capacity of media professions and thereby improve reporting. Media coverage increased by 27% during FY 2003, with over 550 news stories aired as a direct result of regular meetings with the press at all demonstration model sites throughout the Central Asia republics.

By program completion the region's shared water basin and energy resources will be under a regulatory system that leads to more transparency and reduces the potential for conflict. An improved system of collecting, analyzing, and transmitting water and weather data will also be implemented throughout most of the Central Asia region.

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Central Asian Republics Regional
Program Title:	Democratic Culture and Institutions
Pillar:	Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
Strategic Objective:	176-0211
Proposed FY 2004 Obligation:	\$207,000 FSA
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$721,000 FSA
Proposed FY 2005 Obligation:	\$150,000 FSA
Year of Initial Obligation:	2001
Year of Final Obligation:	FY 2006

Summary: Regional funds augment USAID's democracy efforts throughout Central Asia. Specifically, regional funds are utilized to bring together individuals and organizations working to create stronger and more sustainable civic organizations as a way of strengthening democratic culture among citizens and target institutions.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2004 Program:

Civic Organizations (\$207,000 FSA, \$120,602 FSA carryover). Regional funds will support institutional grants for leading Central Asian NGOs. The institutional grant fund will provide direct assistance to more mature Central Asian NGOs. USAID's implementing partners, along with the NGO resource center networks in each of the five Central Asian countries, will establish and manage a grant fund that will award grants up to \$25,000. Grant funds cover basic operational costs of leading NGOs. Grantees will be selected by a review panel comprised of NGO experts from each of the five Central Asian countries.

These institutional grants address two main shortcomings in donor-funded civil society programs. By providing institutional support, rather than support for a concrete project, the grant fund will alleviate the often frantic "grant-chasing" that Central Asian NGOs are forced to engage in to survive. Additionally, by creating and empowering an international (five-country) committee of local NGO experts to review grant proposals, this approach will break new ground in terms of its participatory nature and transparency. It is expected that these grants will be accompanied by a package of targeted technical assistance from USAID's civil society implementers. Grantees may be required to work, as a part of their program, with smaller organizations, to ensure that their expertise is shared with the less advanced part of the sector. Principal grantees: International Research and Exchanges Board (prime), the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (sub), and Partners for Democratic Change (sub).

Political Processes and Institutions (\$600,000 FSA prior year recoveries). Regional funds will support activities surrounding elections that will take place throughout the region. Given the political sensitivity of elections, the actual activities to be undertaken will depend largely upon the political will in each country for the establishment of competitive elections. Activities may include grants to NGOs and independent media outlets for activities related to voter education, the promotion of public discussions concerning socio-economic issues within the framework of elections, the production of candidate debates, and the establishment of transparent elections through watchdogs and election monitors. Depending upon the political will within each country's government, funds may also support activities related to the election commissions' administration of elections.

FY 2005 Program:

Civic Organizations (\$150,000 FSA). USAID will use FY 2005 funds to continue supporting the institutional grant program for Central Asian NGOs. These institutional grants will be awarded on a quarterly basis. It is anticipated that each quarter will focus on a set of themes, which may include: gender, environment, students and youth, and civil society advocacy. In awarding these grants, the

review panel will evaluate the overall mandate and mission of the applying organizations, and their likely ability to serve in a leading advocacy role in their community. Additionally, applicants will need to demonstrate that the organization is committed to developing a civil society. Principal grantees: the International Research and Exchange Board (prime), the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (sub), and Partners for Democratic Change (sub).

Performance and Results: Programs supported with regional funds complemented USAID's country-specific activities. Specifically, regional funds supported a Women's Organizational and Leadership Training Program to enhance the knowledge, competence, and skills of Central Asian women. Through this program, approximately 25 women from Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan participated in a training exchange program in Haifa, Israel. Many of the participants were selected with the help of USAID implementing partners throughout the region or work directly with partner organizations. For example, one of the Tajik participants is the director of the Dushanbe Civil Society Support Center, which is a recipient of USAID grant funds. Participants received training on effective communication and organization, NGO management, leadership skills, strategic planning, and mobilization of community support. Additionally, program participants visited many Israeli non-governmental organizations and government agencies. By program's end, there will be stronger and more sustainable civic organizations.

In 2003, our regional media initiative facilitated a news exchange between television stations throughout the region, resulting in a weekly program, which independent stations were allowed to broadcast free of charge. The project had the dual purpose of providing technical support and programming to independent television stations in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. A production staff funded by USAID assisted stations in developing and producing their best stories, which were then edited into a news magazine format, covering all of Central Asia. The end product was sent back to each station for broadcast. A recent assessment of USAID media projects in the region found that both independent stations and viewers thought this project was very valuable since it provided one of the only sources of news on all of Central Asia. With access only to local news and news re-broadcast from Russia, most Central Asians have little idea of events taking place in neighboring countries.

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Central Asian Republics Regional
Program Title:	Health and Population
Pillar:	Global Health
Strategic Objective:	176-0320
Proposed FY 2004 Obligation:	\$1,000,000 CSH; \$600,000 FSA
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$1,000,000 CSH; \$75,000 FSA
Proposed FY 2005 Obligation:	\$1,000,000 CSH; \$400,000 FSA
Year of Initial Obligation:	2001
Year of Final Obligation:	FY 2006

Summary: USAID's quality primary health care (PHC) objective works to: create a high quality, user-friendly, cost-effective PHC system region-wide through retraining of doctors and nurses in family medicine and implementing incentive-based provider payment systems; develop pre-service and postgraduate medical education programs; control tuberculosis (TB) by providing in-service training to doctors and laboratory specialists in accurate diagnosis and treatment, improving the monitoring system of TB laboratories and facilities, as well as establishing modern surveillance methods; fight HIV/AIDS through support to prevention, care, and treatment activities; and reduce the use of narcotic drugs.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2004 Program:

Increase the Quality of Primary Health Care (\$450,000 FSA). Funding will support a new health reform contract for all five Central Asian countries to be awarded in early 2005. Principal contractor/grantee: to be determined.

Control TB and Other Infectious Diseases (\$150,000 FSA, \$75,000 FSA carryover). USAID will launch a five-year TB Control Program to strengthen TB surveillance, lab quality and rational drug management within the region's reforming health care system. The program will emphasize control of drug resistance and strategies to address HIV/TB co-infection. Regional conferences and initiatives like a two-year applied epidemiology program and capacity building of reference labs will strengthen the regional system. Headquarter offices for both implementing partners will be regional in nature although based in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Principal contractor/grantee: to be determined.

Prevent the Spread of HIV/AIDS (\$1,000,000 FY 2004 CSH, \$1,000,000 FY 2003 CSH carryover). The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) works to establish HIV surveillance sites and provides technical assistance in the development and revision of evidence-based service delivery guidelines and protocols. Regional funds will be used toward development and adoption of protocols, conferences, training, and other activities that bring together participants from all countries or target cross-border initiatives. A new HIV/AIDS prevention activity will help non-governmental organizations (NGOs) expand service coverage, target high-risk groups, and assist with use of antiretroviral drugs and counseling and testing services. The new activity will provide technical support to governments in the region to implement grants from the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria (GFATM). Principal contractos/grantees CDC, Open Society Institute-led consortium, and a new, competitively selected partner.

Fight the Primary Causes of Morbidity and Mortality (\$0 FSA). CDC provides regional leadership on a range of public health imperatives, including laboratory diagnostic capacity, reporting and management systems, and training for public health specialists, including epidemiologists and technicians. Regional funds will enable CDC to apply its expertise in the areas of malaria control, tuberculosis control, and other leading causes of morbidity and mortality in the region. Principal contractor/grantee: CDC.

FY 2005 Program:

Increase the Quality of Primary Health Care (\$185,500 FSA). USAID will award a new health reform contract to further extend health finance and health information systems to improve the efficiency and equity of health care for people in Central Asia. The new activity will also assist pre-service medical education institutions to improve training of new physicians, increase the practice of evidence-based medicine and improve the quality of care provided by physicians in PHC and central district hospitals. Principle implementing partner: to be determined.

Control TB and Other Infectious Diseases (\$135,000 FSA). Lessons learned through implementation of components of the TB program will be shared throughout the region through the staff of the TB control program. Principle implementing partner: to be determined.

Prevent the Spread of HIV/AIDS (\$79,500 FSA, \$1,000,000 CSH). CDC will continue to strengthen regional surveillance systems. The third class of students will begin training in the Applied Epidemiology training program, increasing the pool of highly trained epidemiologists available to countries in the region to conduct operations research, outbreak investigations, and lead in analysis and application of surveillance data. The CDC Global AIDS Program may become more involved in the region with USAID support. Lessons learned through implementation of the new HIV/AIDS prevention activity will be shared throughout the region. Similarly, the Drug Demand Reduction program will begin cross-border replication of successful models developed in each country. Principal contractors/grantees: CDC, an Open Society Institute/Kazakhstan-led consortium, and a new competitively-selected partner.

Fight the Primary Causes of Morbidity and Mortality (\$0 FSA). Regional funds will be used for conferences; technical assistance and training that bring together regional experts to address integration of services, for instance, for surveillance and labs, as well as other topics of health sector reform. Principle implementing partner for regional funding: CDC.

Performance and Results: Regional funding this year took advantage of the Government of Uzbekistan's enthusiasm for rapid expansion of USAID's rural primary health care (PHC) health finance and health information systems model, extending implementation from pilot districts in Uzbekistan to cover 80% of three oblasts. New financing approaches and new attention to PHC have resulted in a gradual increase in PHC's share of funding within the overall health budget from 18.7% last year to 22% this year in pilot sites. At present, 608 clinics are being paid according to the numbers of people they serve, using a per capita payment system, a significant increase over 156 clinics last year.

Regional funds supported Uzbekistan's first birth spacing campaign, training to improve PHC family planning skills, as well as quality improvement pilots on prevention of anemia in women of reproductive age. The birth spacing campaign featured a televised soap opera, one in a successful series centered in an Uzbek village with a familiar cast of characters. The soap opera reached an estimated 1-1.2 million people.

An international conference on the status of TB program implementation in Eastern Europe and Central Asia brought together TB specialists from all over the former Soviet Union for their first opportunity since independence to confer on TB issues, best practices, and lessons learned. TB patients in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan are benefiting from improved drug management practices through USAID-supported training of TB staff and Ministry of Health Drug Departments responsible for pharmaceuticals. More than 8,000 current TB patients and a larger number of future patients will benefit from better drug management practices following USAID-supported training that brought drug department administrators and TB pharmacy staff together to learn how to calculate their drug needs and properly store and distribute drugs.

With successful completion of this objective, the Central Asian Region will have health systems that are financed efficiently and physicians who provide quality, evidence-based care in PHC and central district hospital levels, a coordinated comprehensive HIV/AIDS program that includes prevention, care and treatment, and a firmly established TB control program.

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Central Asian Republics Regional
Program Title:	Cross-Cutting Programs
Pillar:	Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
Strategic Objective:	176-0420
Proposed FY 2004 Obligation:	\$66,000 FSA
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$100,000 FSA
Proposed FY 2005 Obligation:	\$50,000 FSA
Year of Initial Obligation:	2001
Year of Final Obligation:	FY 2006

Summary: Regional Program Development and Support Funds support cross-cutting and/or regional evaluations, studies, and technical assistance.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2004 Program:

Conflict Prevention (\$59,817 FSA carryover). In FY 2004, conflict prevention activities will continue across the region, some with new economic components for selected communities. Mid-program adjustments to the program will be made, including better targeting of communities and more social and non-infrastructure-related activities. In addition, new activities in Tajikistan will begin to complement the community mobilization activities already underway. Regional funding will continue to support regionally-based staff and their support costs, along with at least one regional conference, polling, and monitoring and evaluation activities. Principal contractors/grantees: to be determined through competition.

Program Development and Support (\$66,000 FSA, \$40,000 FSA carryover). Technical and administrative support will be provided to all USAID/Central Asia offices through the regional, cross-cutting strategic objective. Technical and administrative support includes management support, performance monitoring, evaluations, financial analysis, and human capacity assessments. Training will also be provided for program-funded staff and partners in performance measurement and reporting and other aspects of assistance oversight. Principal contractors/grantees: to be determined.

FY 2005 Program:

Program Development and Support (\$50,000 FSA). During FY 2005, regional, cross-cutting funds will continue to fulfill technical and administrative needs within the Mission, including management support, performance monitoring, evaluations, financial analysis, and human capacity assessments. Training also will be provided for program-funded staff and partners in performance measurement and reporting and other aspects of assistance oversight. Principal contractors/grantees: to be determined.

Performance and Results: Program development and support funds were used to fund several region-wide evaluations and/or assessments, including: a regional agricultural assessment; an evaluation of the trade and investment program; a mid-term evaluation of the conflict prevention program and a conflict regional planning meeting; and a review of Mission gender activities. Program development efforts included assistance for initiation of an anti-trafficking program in Kazakhstan, a buy-in to the World Bank "Country Innovation Day" program to promote locally-developed innovative community activities, and various support personnel to assist with Mission program implementation.

The program development and support activities will strengthen and improve work under all of the Mission strategic objectives.