

Occasional Papers Series no. 39

Growing Civil Society in Central Asia

**INTRAC's First Central Asia
Regional Conference,
Almaty, Kazakhstan,
13-14 June 2002**

Edited by Anne Garbutt and Simon Heap

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	2
PREFACE.....	3
1. KEYNOTE SPEECH.....	4
1.1 INTRAC and Civil Society.....	4
1.2 Donor Understanding of Civil Society.....	7
1.3 Some Recurrent Themes	8
1.4 Summary	8
2. MODELS AND MODES OF CIVIL SOCIETY.....	9
2.1 Models of Civil Society	9
2.2 Quantifying Civil Society and its Characteristics	11
2.3 Issues of Civil Society.....	12
3. CIVIL SOCIETY: A CRITICAL INTERROGATION	14
3.1 Democracy and Civil Society.....	14
3.2 Civil Society, the State and the Market	15
3.3 Strengthening Civil Society: Challenges for Donors.....	17
3.4 Politics of Plurality and Choice	18
3.5 Politics of Universality.....	18
3.6 Politics of Autonomy and Dependence	19
3.7 Summary	20
3.8 Discussion	20
4. CIVIL SOCIETY CAPACITY BUILDING	23
4.1 Capacity Building.....	23
4.2 Summary of Critical Factors	25
4.3 Capacity Building in Central Asia	26
4.4 Summary	27
5. CIVIL SOCIETY–STATE RELATIONS.....	28
5.1 The Static Model.....	28
5.2 New Agendas	29
5.3 The Dynamic Model.....	31
5.4 Summary	33
5.5 Discussion	34
6. COUNTRY GROUPS.....	35
6.1 Kyrgyz Republic.....	35
6.2 Kazakhstan.....	36
6.3 Turkmenistan.....	37
6.4 Uzbekistan.....	38
7. LESSONS LEARNED FROM DAY ONE.....	40
8. RESEARCH ON CIVIL SOCIETY IN CENTRAL ASIA	41
8.1 Discussion	42
9. THEMATIC WORKSHOPS ON CENTRAL ASIA'S EXPERIENCE	43
9.1 Social Partnerships.....	43
9.2 Community Development and Decentralisation	44
9.3 Civil Society Organisations and the Political Process	45
9.4 Kazakhstan Research Report.....	47
9.5 Donor–Civil Society Partnerships.....	47
9.6 Presentation of Results	48
10. LESSONS FROM THE CONFERENCE	49
10.1 Thanks and Closure	51
Bibliography	53
Appendix 1: Conference Timetable	55
Appendix 2: List of Participants	56

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC) wishes to acknowledge the Department for International Development (DFID), UK, for providing the financial support to the INTRAC Central Asia Programme, as well as the local staff who worked closely with the locally-based INTRAC staff.

The editors would like to thank all the INTRAC Central Asia staff for taking notes during the different sessions. They would like to particularly thank Natasha Laptieva, Programme Assistant (Kazakhstan), and Charles Buxton Programme Manager, Central Asia, for all their hard work in collecting the conference notes, processing them and getting them translated into English.

The Conference organisers thank all the participants for their energy, wisdom and ideas, three essential ingredients for growing civil society in Central Asia.

PREFACE

INTRAC has been working with the Non Profit Sector in Central Asia since 1994 initially working with NGOs helping them develop as active organisations. What soon became clear was that providing organisational development assistance to NGO support organisations was not enough. The non-profit sector could not develop and grow in a vacuum and it was with this in mind that INTRAC began working with different types of non profit organisations as well as continuing it's work with support organisations helping them to develop an understanding of the importance of, developing ways of improving the environment within which they are working. The programme has over the past two years evolved further and the term civil society has entered the arena. In December 2001 INTRAC's Tenth Anniversary conference in Oxford, set out to evaluate and appraise the different approaches adopted to supporting, building and reinforcing civil society. Within this conference there was a clear representation of civil society organisations from across Central Asia. The INTRAC programme of institutional development of civil society in Central Asia was presented as a model of civil society development that, whilst may not be replicable in other areas of the world certainly, had gained some valuable lessons learned that could be shared internationally.

The Central Asian delegates at the Oxford conference were of one mind that a regional conference examining the issues of civil society development was much needed. Once the delegates returned home discussions were held with the INTRAC staff in the region and it was agreed 'Growing Civil Society in Central Asia' was to be the topic for the first INTRAC conference to be held in the region. INTRAC could not do this alone and in collaboration with the Almaty-based Institute for Development Co-operation (IDC) work earnestly began on developing the ideas and programme further. The following pages are a compilation of the papers presented at the conference and notes of the findings from the different working groups that convened over the two short days.

The outputs of the group work remain in raw data form as both INTRAC and IDC do not presume to have sufficient insight into the thought processes of so many delegates. The analysis of the findings is left to the reader to link to their own experiences gained and extract lessons learned from the shared experiences highlighted. The paper has been prepared with a mind to sharing ideas and helping other individuals and organisations working towards developing a stronger civil society in Central Asia. The findings should be seen as a first attempt to pull together experiences and ideas of a group of Central Asian people who are committed to introducing the concept of civil society development throughout the five countries. Providing a sound base for further debate and hopefully assisting other civil society organisations develop further their role in civil society development, within their own working context.

1. KEYNOTE SPEECH

The conference was opened with an introductory presentation by **David Marsden, Research Director, INTRAC**. In the following chapter he examines the INTRAC understanding of civil society, donor approaches to civil society strengthening and some recurrent themes facing civil society strengthening programmes.

In December 2001, international delegates gathered in Oxford in Britain to attend INTRAC's Tenth Anniversary conference. The participants represented a broad cross-section of organisations, including civil society organisations from a range of regions, international NGOs, official donor agencies and foundations. **The aim of the Conference was to evaluate and appraise different approaches to supporting, building and reinforcing civil society.** The Conference brought together theoretical debates on the nature of civil society with practical experience. Today we hope to share some of the ideas, models and approaches suggested during the December conference and facilitate discussion on the possibilities of their application to civil society strengthening in Central Asia.

1.1 INTRAC and Civil Society

In 1993 INTRAC held a conference in the Netherlands on *Governance, Democracy and Conditionality*. After the Cold War, major donors made good governance one of the conditions upon which aid allocations would be made; but this strategy was not applied in a consistent or co-ordinated manner. The recognition that multi-party elections did not necessarily guarantee a change or improvement in government and transition towards democratically elected governments did not in itself guarantee a more democratic culture led to a more positive approach to the promotion of good governance in the form of support for civil society.

Civil society was then being defined as all the diverse organisational forms that exist outside of the state and the market but which provide a counterbalance to both. It was argued that the motive for supporting civil society was that a strong civil society will demand a more democratically accountable and transparent state.

During our 1996 conference, *NGOs, Civil Society and the State: Building Democracies in Transitional Societies*, some participants argued against the whole concept of civil society as yet another neo-colonial imposition from the major northern development agencies. It was argued that many societies are not organised on this western model but around more complex sets of social relationships.

Since 1996 we have seen an expansion of civil society support programmes. Indeed INTRAC staff and associates have ourselves been involved in designing, running and evaluating civil society support programmes. By the late 1990s political scientists re-confirmed the role of civil society as a counterbalance to totalitarianism, whilst economists argued that civil society would ensure growth with greater equity. Indeed in many parts of the world a major part of external funding is designated primarily to civil society support. This massive interest and the lack of evidence being presented to show that civil society support programmes have been reviewed in any rigorous manner led us to organise the December conference.

The Conference was structured around the following five themes with corresponding papers:

1. the **theoretical approaches** underpinning practical civil society strengthening programmes;
2. the nature of the **state** (whether in transition, stable or engaged in internal conflict) and its relation to civil society;
3. the nature of **capacity building** in the context of civil society;
4. the **strategies** and **methodologies** being used to strengthen and support civil society;
5. the **monitoring** and **evaluation** of civil society strengthening programmes.

Jude Howell and Jenny Pearce set out the parameters of the debate in their paper, *Civil Society: a Critical Interrogation*. This started by tracing the concept of civil society in international development, from its initial unsophisticated use in the early '90s as a synonym for NGOs, to its current importance within development thinking. A distinction was drawn between **mainstream** and **alternative** approaches to civil society as the basis for their critique. The mainstream approach, which dominates donor thinking and research, has viewed civil society as part of a problem-solving agenda for addressing poverty and inequality. This incorporates a **consensual** view of relations between civil society, the market and the state within the context of socially responsible capitalism. Civil society here is seen instrumentally as a benign policy alternative to the developmental state, within a neo-liberal economic agenda.

By contrast, the alternative approach of some radical European NGOs and grassroots movements sees the role of civil society as potentially **conflictual** in counter-balancing the excesses of the state. This stresses the importance of civil society in promoting new forms of participation in decision-making; the critical question posed is how the poor and marginalised can have space for increased political and economic participation. In their critique of the mainstream approach, Howell and Pearce went on to argue that a key weakness in practice has been the lack of contextual understanding of civil society in different countries. The external aid dependence of much civil society strengthening has led to a situation that undermines the long-term sustainability of civil society: "Civil society does not lend itself to external manufacturing". This emerged as the central theme of the Conference.

The question of the extent to which civil society organisations are able to retain their autonomy from the state was developed further by John Beauclerk and Simon Heap in their paper, *Civil Society-State Relationships: Models and Actualities*. They started by assessing the shift in civil-society state relations from a static model, where civil society is largely defined in relation to the characteristics of the state. As an alternative, they proposed a dynamic conceptualisation of civil society-state relations which is able to include both the **oppositional** nature of civil society's role, particularly in advocacy on civil and political rights, and its potential to be **complementary** to the state in terms of economic rights and service delivery. Furthermore, the dynamics of the relationship are worked out in different arenas of government from the local to the national levels.

The Conference also explored strategies and methodologies of civil society strengthening in practice. Brenda Lipson's paper addressed the question: 'What are the specific characteristics and challenges of undertaking capacity building at civil society level?' Based on INTRAC's experience in Central Asia since 1994, Anne Garbutt's

paper synthesised the lessons learnt and issues raised from the Institutional Development of Civil Society Programmes. A key theme again was the paramount importance of understanding the particular country **context**. In fact, much donor practice in the region has been based on and informed by models of development experience from very different regions of the world, with a lack of understanding of Central Asian societies. The paper emphasised the need for supporting the emergence of analytical, free-thinking leadership of civil society within transitional countries that will be able to forge its own models of engagement with both the state and the market.

During the Conference a group including participants from Cyprus, Balkans, Eastern Europe, Ukraine and Central Asia to compare approaches to civil society strengthening in their respective countries and once more, reinforced the importance of context. For example, a delegate from Central Asia highlighted the length of the process of transition and the need to be patient – Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) could not have worked in the 1990s because the government would not accept it, but it is needed now. Participants identified the need to distinguish a general approach to capacity building from particular tools used in it. Similarly, delegates recognised the problems associated with foreign organisations getting involved with advocacy as opposed to using a rights-based approach: “you have to have local organisations who will fight the fight with government”. The trial and error approach is universal – as one participant concluded: “people are trying democracy, to see what works”. The need for mutual respect in partnership relations – this is easier with bilateral or lower-level links than at the higher, general civil society level. The shifting loyalties of individuals – for example, many NGO people in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union have gone into politics or business.

Funding and relationships with donors was another area that received attention from this group. In Central Asia, there is little funding and donors have a 'buyers market', so it is hard for NGOs to say no. In the Darwinist view, you have to play the game – it was survival of the fittest in the Hungarian NGO sector when funding was reduced. Sometimes funders learn – for example, USAID learned to encourage local partners in project consortia. The role of the Northern NGO is to advocate good practice in programmes at the planning stage. In Bosnia, a conflict/humanitarian aid situation, lots of effort was put into NGOs but none into other CSOs like trade unions. We must not forget the self-interest of donor nations (where there are raw materials or a political interest).

Only the civil society sector can achieve an ideological shift in society without violence – through education and awareness raising. Social mobilisation helps people have an interest and stake in community affairs, counters passivity. In most transition countries the move away from reliance on the state will take a long time, people remember important benefits they received from it. The economic and social crisis in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union has been very deep and damaging. We must not assume change can come quickly or that Western models are the most appropriate.

Other areas for discussion raised, but not fully explored by this group include: new democracies, national identities multiethnic states and religion, good governance, who are the main actors in civil society, whose concept of civil society are we talking about? the values of civil society and Western interests. These may be areas that we can explore during the present conference.

Brian Pratt, INTRAC's Executive Director, presented the final paper, *The Monitoring and Evaluation of Civil Society Support Programmes*. Monitoring and Evaluation are important in terms of answering the critical conceptual questions: does a stronger civil society actually lead to improved democracy? Does democracy lead to improved services, greater equity and less oppression of key social groups? Therefore, does strengthening civil society actually result in pro-poor policies? A key challenge in developing monitoring and evaluation is, first and foremost, the lack of conceptual clarity on which many civil society strengthening programmes are based. In terms of developing methodologies, three specific challenges were identified. Firstly, **attribution**: given the long chains of causation, it is difficult to know what effect can be attributed to the intervention. Secondly, being **realistic** about goals and setting clear objectives within the resources available and thirdly, clarity over **time frames**: too many programmes are very short-term in design and in vision. It is important to distinguish between short and longer term objectives and the methods to monitor them.

The thematic presentations were complemented by contributions from keynote speakers. Dr Alan Fowler, a Founder Associate of INTRAC, provided the opening address, arguing that civil society is not in fact a sector with clear-cut boundaries. Rather, he proposed the need for an organic and institutional view of civil society. His alternative model will be explained in greater detail, following this introductory presentation. Dr Fowler's view was further reinforced by Dr Rajesh Tandon of Participatory Research in India (PRIA) who suggested that civil society strengthening is actually about analysing the space and restrictions for civil society participation in decision-making and finding ways of extending that space.

1.2 Donor Understanding of Civil Society

The conference highlighted the lack of ideas and understanding of certain key concepts. For example, It showed that the major donors had in fact carried out little real analysis of what they are doing and their impact. Although it would appear that the official donors were more aware of the need to understand better the workings of civil society in any given context than perhaps other groups. Secondly, the international foundations were not as well represented as other groups, but we felt that this in itself, was significant as it became clear that many of them are only marginally accountable and could not be classified as 'learning organisations'. In contrast, the Northern NGOs were extremely defensive of their actions and showed concern over the trend for official agencies providing direct support of civil society in developing areas. **Indeed, the nature of the different donors' approach clearly has an impact on the way that civil society programmes are designed and managed.** Some retain a very instrumental view that civil society is about helping big agencies deliver assistance at less cost. Others have far more political views which encompass concepts such as democratisation, strengthening social capital and so forth, whilst others do really view the whole concept of civil society through a poverty reduction lens.

Many agencies and commentators still have a very narrow view of what constitutes civil society, hence they do not include trade unions, social movements, professional and business associations, the challenge of how they might engage with such groups is only now starting to be understood.

1.3 Some Recurrent Themes

In the final analysis, civil society is, of course, still a useful concept, as evidenced by the present and continuing need to strengthen civil society in countries such as Afghanistan. However, during INTRAC's December conference, it became clear that civil society is not a one-size-fits-all concept, there remains the potential for domination by elites and the result of strengthening civil society is not predictable or guaranteed – reform and revolution, losers as well as winners are equally possible outcomes. As a result, there is a real need to understand the **context** and to develop monitoring and evaluation of civil society support programmes. Similarly there is a need to remove bias and distinguish clear roles for different groups within civil society. Donor incentive systems often work against good civil society service provision as they prioritise spending above impact and the negotiation of complex relationships. It is essential to recognise that civil society is not just about the amount of money going through or towards it! Who you work with can cause jealousies and local political backlash in civil society and between civil society and others. In strengthening civil society, are we prepared for conflicts? Repression on one hand and fundamentalism on the other? Issues around civil society as a system: should there be a focus on philanthropy or civil society as a political vehicle or vehicle for social justice? Where do the demarcations lie between the Political and civil society? It is important to remember that people have multiple identities, there is some debate about what they fall back on in conflict and adversity. It is suggested that the less 'progressive' (i.e. clans, tribes, ethnicity etc) rather than the larger groupings are those which could mitigate some areas of conflict. Certain groups may capture the benefits of both civil society and the state (e.g. specific ethnic/religious groups as well as class/caste).

1.4 Summary

The in-depth and stimulating discussions provided much important reflection for INTRAC as it looks ahead to the next ten years. INTRAC will continue to engage in this debate and will also take forward the suggestion of developing case studies of civil society strengthening in order to identify appropriate roles, responsibilities and mechanisms at different levels. To take these ideas and suggestions to the next stage, INTRAC will provide a summary of Alan Fowler's new civil society and present the following three papers:

1. civil society: a critical interrogation;
2. civil society capacity building; and,
3. civil society and the state.

Our aim is to revisit these concepts, challenges and approaches to civil society and discuss them in the context of the experience of Central Asia. Thus, we aim to facilitate the exchange of ideas and opinions on the development of civil society in Central Asia, compare regional and wider international experience and encourage regional links and networking.

2. MODELS AND MODES OF CIVIL SOCIETY

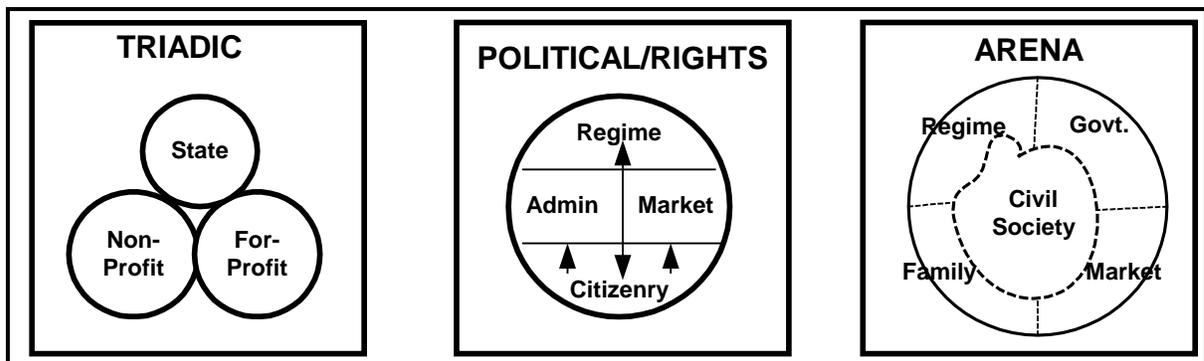
Inessa Frantz, IDC (Institute for Development Cooperation), Kazakhstan followed David Marsden's speech with a theoretical paper examining the different models or viewpoints of how civil society can be identified in relation to the state and private sector. The presentation draws heavily on a paper written by Alan Fowler that was presented at the INTRAC 10th anniversary conference.

2.1 Models of Civil Society

There are several fixed viewpoints of Civil Society models. Let us consider the most popular ones and let us start with the so called triad model which represents three separate circles, though having common boundaries. They are the state sector, commercial and non-commercial sectors. This model represents the dominating forces of any society with a leading role given to the state sector.

Another model is called a 'political' one and includes such components of Civil Society as regime, system, market, and citizens, presenting a hierarchy of those components in the order of their presentation here. These components may impact on one another but they have clear-cut boundaries, though all the components are within one common circle.

Presently, the arena model, whose author is Dr Alan Fowler, is one model which is attracting great interest. In 2001, this model was a subject of discourse, commentaries and disputes at the INTRAC International Conference in Oxford dedicated to Civil Society development. It evoked great attention, interest and approval. According to this model, regime, state, family, market – four components – constitute the basic formative forces of the civil society, providing the 'construction materials', whereas the civil society itself is in the centre and presents a kind of arena for social activities and processes.



I draw heavily from Alan Fowler's commentary of the model. Civil Society is not a uniform entity with uniform roles and behavior. This way, on which people - its citizens – get together to pursue their aims, satisfy their needs and advocate their interests is different within different countries. Why? Every country has its internal social and political system, its history and its evolution. Therefore, it is better to speak of a Civil Society configuration, rather than of a sector with permanent characteristics. For you to understand your own Civil Society better you have to decide in each case what belongs and where. The present article explains some complexities in trying to resolve the issue.

The benchmark in our study of Civil Society is our understanding that it is not the same as state bureaucracy, political parties, business circles, family, state structure. In other words, Civil Society has its own boundaries, or, let us say, its margin. But a boundary may not be very transparent or very stable. Therefore, it is necessary to define these boundaries for each country, so as to understand what is on the inside and what is on the outside of Civil Society.

The diagram that is given below illustrates a view of Civil Society as a kind of arena, including different components, that is, different associations, representing its different objectives and purposes. Thus, delimiting the boundaries and defining the components we can find answers to many questions. It is remarkable, that in contrast to his earlier model, Professor Fowler includes here a new agent, a new active force – the family. To what extent is family important?

In many countries of the world there is a broader context to the family, where it means more than just parents and children. It may include other kin relationship, such as clans or ethnic groups having special ties, acknowledged obligations and responsibilities. In many places kin relationship groups establish organizations for mutual aid and support and for political activities. Can these organizations and associations, that are not open to people outside the kinship group, be referred to as within Civil Society?, asks Fowler.

State institutes include army and police, revenue and judicial bodies and organizations, as well as academic and educational institutions, which are in between the state institutions and the Civil Society arena. The market is represented by companies and local entrepreneurs, societies and cooperatives. The various business associations are located in the market–Civil Society nexus. The family sector is represented by the system of formal and informal aid and support, which also occupies a position in between the family and Civil Society arena. Political systems and regimes are correspondingly presented by the legislation system, political parties, lobby groups, with various activist movements on the boundary of Civil Society.

Thus, Civil Society itself may have the following forms with their corresponding functions:

- forms: institutes, organizations, associations, movements, societies, collectives, networks, brotherhoods, sects, groups, clubs, castes, clans, tribes.
- functions: safety, culture, entertainment, philanthropy, charity, faith and confession, prosperity, volunteering, propaganda, reforms, representation, promotion of interests, delivery of societal services.

It is evident that under conditions of Civil Society in Central Asia these will take form of:

- organisational forms enshrined in legislation: institutions, foundations, public organisations, associations, condominiums, rural consumer cooperatives, notary offices and auditors. Other forms include institutes, clubs, movements, unions, centers, agencies and bureaus. Sects, clans and tribes are not very characteristic in our region, but we have *djuses*, *mahallas*, *ails* and *auls*, councils of elders, veterans and women's councils.
- functions: all the above ones, as well as education, health care, poverty alleviation and others. A peculiar feature of our Civil Society is *asha/ashar* (voluntary work) traditions alongside some other ones.

It is especially important to understand that there are no general laws, rules, ways of development of a separate country, region, continent Civil Society. Transfer of models and forms, as well as programming, is impossible, detrimental and contradicts polymorphism of development. What is considered inadmissible in one society, may be normal for another one, what works under certain conditions, may not be fruitful under different ones. For understanding laws of Civil Society development in one separate country it is necessary to study and understand its specificity, its mentality, history, peculiarities of culture, institutes, customs and traditions. This may seem to contradict globalization processes and assertion of general standards, some universal laws and rules, which all the human society is to comply with without exception. We are going to discuss if that is true, at this conference, in particular.

2.2 Quantifying Civil Society and its Characteristics

Let us review the dynamics of civil society development, its qualitative and quantitative aspects, in Central Asia. We begin with the number of NGOs (being at this stage and for certain reasons major subjects of Civil Society in Central Asia) in the countries of Central Asia. Kyrgyzstan leads with one NGO per 1,900 of its population; this is the highest NGO density in the region. It may be explained by the fact, that at the dawn of sovereignty, during its first years, Kyrgyzstan took a decisive course towards democratic reforms and proclaimed favorable conditions for the activities of foreign investors and international agencies' missions. We must emphasise, from the very first, that the numerical data are taken from the statistic agencies, based on the numbers of registered NGOs, and we do not consider here how many NGOs are operational and how many are just registered.

Kazakhstan takes the second place with one NGO per 2,300 persons of population, as a matter of principle, the difference with Kyrgyzstan is not so great, and there is a tendency for Kazakhstan to catch up with Kyrgyz numbers in the near future. There is one NGO per 5,000 persons in Tajikistan and per 10,000 persons in Uzbekistan. Turkmenistan completes the list with the lowest NGO density per capita. There is one NGO per 18,400 persons of Turkmenistan population. It is evident that the situation in Turkmenistan is shaped by the authoritarian administrative system, numerous instances of human rights abuse, alongside an information vacuum.

That much relates to quantitative aspects. Let us see how this is connected with qualitative aspects of NGOs development. During the last few years USAID (United States Agency for International Development) has been carrying out an annual assessment – the so-called NGO sustainability index – in the countries of Eastern Europe, CIS and Central Asia. At present this is one of the few developed and widely used tools for evaluation of NGO efficiency. The sustainability index is a summary index of seven variables: the country's legal environment, organisational potential, financial status, advocacy, service delivery level, infrastructure, public institutes image. Sustainability index is scored from 7 to 1, where 1 is a maximum value and 7 is a minimum one.

Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan shared equal scores of 4.3 in their NGOs sustainability index for 2001. However, whereas we see the dynamics of Kazakhstan development during the last three years increasing from 4.8 to 4.3, Kyrgyzstan reveals stagnation and regression during the last three years, from 4.2 to 4.3. Nevertheless, in 1999 and 2000

Kyrgyzstan had a leading position in the region. Turkmenistan NGOs had the lowest sustainability index, 5.8 in 2001, but we also see a positive trend (from 6.6 in 1999). Uzbekistan takes the second place with its 4.6 sustainability index and also with positive dynamics from 5.3 to 4.6. Tajikistan has a similar trend, from 6.4 in 1999 to 5.1 in 2001.

Let us compare the NGO sustainability index of Central Asian countries with the index for the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. To do that we calculate the aggregate NGO index for our region and for the two European regions. The NGO sustainability index for the countries of Eastern Europe is equal to 2.4. The NGO sustainability index for South-Eastern Europe is 4.2. And, finally, the aggregate NGO sustainability index for our region is 4.8. The difference between our region and South-Eastern Europe is relatively small, but the difference between Central Asia and Eastern Europe it is considerable (their index is twice as high as ours).

2.3 Issues of Civil Society

Conference participants need to consider some of the issues to be considered during the two days of our work:

- What is our definition of Civil Society?
- What is our specificity, in what way are we different?
- What are our main opportunities and threats?
- What are fundamental drivers of Civil Society?
- What can we take from the practice of international development?
- What development models can be borrowed from us?

Sociological dictionary: **Civil Society** is the sum total of non-state public relations and interests, expressive of variety of the society members' needs and interests. **Civil Society** – covers all the aspects of human activities in the society – political, economic, spiritual and social. Human initiatives in the political sphere include formation of parties, political movements; in the economic sphere – private (non-state) economic entities and trade unions; in the spiritual sphere – unions of creative workers, interest clubs; and in the social sphere – family and other communities.

Philosophical dictionary: **Civil Society** is a term which in pre-Marxian philosophy, beginning with the 18th century, meant public and, in the narrow sense, property relations and the bourgeois society itself. An essential drawback of English and French materialists' Civil Society theory was lack of understanding of its dependence on production; its formation was explained by the features of human nature, administrative and legislative systems, ethical and moral norms. Civil society is the sum total of societal relations was understood as something external related to individuals, as an 'environment' for their activities. Marx uses the term and the concept of Civil society in his early works in 1843, drawing attention to its objective character and providing economic basis for civil society theory, where Civil Society includes the institute of family, social groups and classes, relations of property and distribution, put simply, the forms and ways of society existence and function, of human life and activities.

Explanatory dictionary: **Civil Society** is a society of free, equal citizens, whose relations in the sphere of economy and culture are developing independent of the state power.

In my understanding, Civil Society is a kind of buffer, an area formed for interaction between various societal structures. This is not so much the sum total of various organizations, their quantitative and qualitative representation (private, public, state), the fact of their physically being there, as the degree of their interaction. This is their ability to hear, react, join, work together. This is an ability to advocate and promote their own interests, the interests of not only their contemporaries, but of their descendants as well.

Let us consider the peculiarities of Civil Society development. In my viewpoint, **the process of Civil Society development is, first of all, suggestive of managing conflicts of interests of different layers, clans, groups of society**. This shows what is society's opportunity not to conceal or disguise conflicts, but let conflicting phenomena coexist without excesses of transgression. A characteristic feature of developed Civil Society is its ability not to let any 'explosive social problem accumulate to its critical mass status.

Civil society is a kind of organism with self-regulating functions of safety, development, growth and coordination of its components. The level of civil society development corresponds to the level of development of its interrelations:

- degree of their legitimacy (their compliance with international and national legislative frameworks);
- their ethical status (respect of rights and dignity of any nation, its mentality and traditions);
- degree of their compliance with the interests of social groups (whose interests they are representative of);
- degree of reflection of the present and the future;
- degree of their impact in reducing to naught possible negative tendencies; and,
- degree of guarantee of gender equality in realisation of opportunities in life, absence of gender stereotypes.

Speaking about Civil Society as a complex mechanism for exercising multi-interactions we speak about such its tools (components) as the Parliament – an arena for people's representatives discussions; transparency of state administration policy; the system of public hearings, discussions and debates; the system of ombudsmen; the election system; freedom of unions; advocacy and lobbying tools; and many other things based on the main law of the country – its Constitution.

Let me wish you productive work and good results, not only at the Conference, but in all your work at the processes related to strengthening Civil Society in Central Asia in which we are all involved, in one way or another. And let me express hope for our further cooperation, working shoulder to shoulder, we must remember that we are not alone when aspiring to our complicated objective, and that it is realistic for us to achieve our ambitious aim – growing Civil Society.

3. CIVIL SOCIETY: A CRITICAL INTERROGATION

Jude Howell (Institute for Development Studies) and Jenny Pearce (Bradford University) delivered a paper at the 10th anniversary conference exploring critically some of the implicit assumptions made by donors about the relationship between civil society, democratisation and the market. The following chapter provides a summary of their paper as presented by **Charles Buxton (Programme Manager, Intrac In Central Asia Programme)**

A great deal has been written on the concept of civil society, but this has not always helped clarify why it could be considered an essential component to development processes in the South. The underlying premise of this paper is that there are two main approaches to civil society, which we call the mainstream approach and the alternative approach. Neither the mainstream nor the alternative approaches are coherent or unitary. Nonetheless, we use these ideal types to explore the difference it makes to policy and practice. We are attempting to emphasise our point that the concept of civil society is normative and should be problematised rather than applied uncritically.

For multilateral banks, international development institutions, governments and some large international NGOs, poverty and inequality are recognised problems of the global economy today which can be solved with the right set of policies. This mainstream view increasingly appeals for partnership in the building of a consensual approach to development between civil society, the market and the state. It is concerned with the risk to social cohesion from the unfettered pursuit of individual gain in the market, and has begun to talk in terms of 'socially responsible capitalism'.

Grass-roots movements and change-oriented NGOs look to an alternative genealogy of the concept, which articulates a critical approach to the global economy. A different set of values and priorities should guide the economy and the development process within it. Rather than partnership, they seek to show the embedded power relationships and inequalities which make development an often conflictual rather than consensual process. They query the extent to which the pursuit of commercial interest and gain is compatible with social and ethical responsibility to the wider society.

This paper thus explores critically some of the implicit assumptions made by donors about the relationship between civil society, democratisation and the market. It suggests that there is a mainstream and an alternative imagining of civil society, which have implications for the nature of donor intervention and its potential outcomes. The paper considers some of the key issues arising out of current donor attempts to strengthen civil society. It draws particular attention to the politics of plurality and choice, the politics of conceptual and organisational universality, and the politics of autonomy and dependence. In the light of this analysis the paper suggests how to move forward with the idea of civil society.

3.1 Democracy and Civil Society

Donors start out with two implicit assumptions, namely, that democracy contributes positively towards development and that civil society is an important democratic check upon the state. In particular, the US approach views the task of 'civil society' as system

maintenance – or the creation or strengthening of democratic institutions which protect the rule of law and legitimate peaceful opposition, and the expression of dissent in acceptable ways – facilitating economic progress and prosperity. However, this is, in many respects, a deeply conservative vision where political stability is as important as political freedom, and protection from the state more important than positive conceptualisations, debate and action around how best to develop the common interests of a society.

An alternative approach to democracy and its relationship with civil society is the radical continental European tradition with particular influence among grass-roots organisations and development NGOs. Three themes distinguish it from the American view of civil society and democracy: the search for the 'common good', the pursuit of human emancipation, and the identification of conditions for inclusive rational-critical public debate. Civil society is an arena to debate and challenge the prevailing ideas of progress and development through active participation in non-formal and non-institutionalised spaces. Those who champion this interpretation do not seek merely to strengthen existing democratic institutions or to defend civil society against the state, but to promote new forms of participation where they can have a say in deciding what form progress and development should take. Taken together, the implications of this alternative vision, we argue, point to the need for a renewal of debate on the role of the state, who should define that role and how, and the way that the state and society inter-relate. Civil society could be the source of a regenerated public sphere with public interest on the agenda, without suppressing pluralities and differences. It could be the source of new and constructive thinking about the state and development as well as the source of critique of capitalist development. Translating this possibility into the real material world of exploitation and poverty in the South remains a considerable challenge.

3.2 Civil Society, the State and the Market

Donor discourse on civil society tends to highlight the tensions between civil society and the state on the one hand and the state and the market on the other, whilst the relationship between the market and civil society is implicitly viewed as benign, harmonious and complementary. While one broad set of ideas endorses the **consensual** nature of the triadic unity (state, market and society) and presumes a fundamentally positive relationship between civil society and the market, the other set highlights the essentially **conflictual** character of the trinity and questions the assumed mutuality of civil society and the market. We characterise the first approach as **socially responsible capitalism** and the second as **alternatives to capitalism**. These emerged out of the mainstream and alternative versions respectively. Socially responsible capitalism assumes that civil society and market economies are positively related and that civil society and the market operate as separate, autonomous spheres. Civil society thus emerges as a way of resolving the contradictions and tensions of capitalism and in particular its atomising, unequalising and exclusionary effects. However, we challenge these assumptions on four counts.

First, we argue that capitalist development does not inevitably and naturally give rise to a vibrant, autonomous civil society. We suggest that the emergence of an oppositional civil society in state socialism reflects a political rather than an economic logic rooted in the development of capitalism. For example, demands for democracy during the 1980s in Eastern Europe were initially movements which called for new forms of self-management of the socialist economy, not for market-oriented economies. Thus the

emergence of civil society in Eastern Europe arose out of a political rather than market logic. The case of the Four Little Tigers, namely, Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong and South Korea challenges the inevitability of a positive dynamic between capitalism and civil society. In addition, China has experienced staggering rates of GDP growth in the reform period and has made significant strides in raising standards of living and reducing rural poverty despite the lack of non-state organisations. In contrast, Bangladesh has a vibrant civil society with a plethora of local NGOs and international NGOs, but it remains one of the poorest countries in the world. These examples challenge the assumptions that a market economy necessarily gives birth to and expands a civil society, that a flourishing civil society is an integral component of a capitalist economy and that civil society serves as a political counterweight to the state.

Second, we suggest that the assumed boundaries between civil society and the market are not clear-cut, undermining the acclaimed autonomy and separateness of civil society. Though there is a continuing debate as to whether the market is best included or excluded from civil society, the complexities of the civil society/market axis in the tripartite consensus model remain undertheorised and unproblematised. In the neo-liberal model civil society and the economy are de-coupled to the extent that the material basis of civil society and the negative effects of the market on civil society are erased from view. In contrast the radical, alternative vision highlights the potential negative and destructive effects of the economy on civil society and seeks to understand the dynamics of power relations in capitalist societies. Though civil society appears to be defined as a separate conceptual sphere from the market, its definition in terms of 'non-profit' reduces it to a set of economic activities. The non-profit sector operates as a sphere of economic activities which generate outputs in the form of schools, universities, hospitals, clinics, soup kitchens. These in turn provide employment, income and add to the gross national product. However, civil society has no obvious source of wealth; defined as non-governmental, it should be materially independent of the state; defined as non-profit, it should not accumulate capital. This leaves it in theory dependent on sources of financing from within civil society such as membership fees, donations and service charges but in reality it is dependent upon the state and philanthropy. Hence, while the non-profit sector is on the one hand a sphere of economic activity, generating its own outputs and income, on the other hand its material base is linked to the state and the market. Civil society is autonomous in that it has its own logic; yet it is also derivative and dependent. This point becomes particularly relevant in the context of aid-dependent countries where donor funding provides a significant input to the activities of civil society organisation.

Third, we argue that the definition of civil society as the arena of 'nonprofit' weakens the political function of civil society as a critical eye on both state and market. In late twentieth century capitalism empirical civil society includes an expanding realm of service-delivery organisations as well as organisations devoted to contesting ideas, protecting political and civil rights and challenging global inequities. Civil society is both an arena for the contestation of world-views but also is itself an arena of contestation. Yet the emphasis in the discourse of socially responsible capitalism upon the service-delivery role of certain civil society organisations pays lip-service to the role of civil society as a check upon the market. In contrast the 'alternatives to capitalism' approach emphasises less the non-profit dimension of civil society and more the notion of civil society as a social space within which to reflect critically upon how society organises economic production and reproduction and to experiment with such ideas. It cherishes civil society as a space for checking both the state and the market. Civil society serves politically as a point of pressure upon the state to provide decent basic public goods and to facilitate spaces for people to organise self-

support groups and facilities. It also serves politically as a site from which to resist global capital, to hold transnational companies responsible for the environmental and social consequences of their economic operations and to press for democratic regulation. The surge of interest in the growing sphere of non-profit social welfare provision legitimises a significant shift in thinking about the relative roles of the state, market and civil society in addressing the socio-economic inequities and vulnerabilities generated or reinforced by capitalism. In this context it is significant that donors are often using the terms 'non-profit sector' or the 'Third sector' rather than civil society, which serve to reinforce the depoliticisation of any discussion around the consensus model of market, state and civil society.

Fourth, we suggest that market economies can undermine the cohesive and integrating dimensions of civil society, creating and reinforcing processes of social exclusion. In tracing the conceptual separation of civil society from the economy we can also observe undercurrents of tension and ambivalence around the atomising impact of the market upon civil society and the concomitant integrating effects of civil society upon the market. The idea that civil society complements and indeed facilitates capitalist development is premised upon a liberal conceptualisation of the economic actor as an utility-maximising, autonomous and rational individual. On the one hand the market seems to provide the material and social basis for the autonomy of civil society against the state; on the other hand it seems to undermine the solidarity bonds of association, restricting the autonomy and diversity of civil society. The anti-state theme which dominated civil society debate in the 1980s and much of the 1990s has consolidated a depiction of civil society as an unified, benign, harmonious plurality of a people struggling for negative liberties from an oppressive state, be it socialist, authoritarian, dictatorial or military. It is easy to be swept away by the appearance of plurality and diversity and miss the politics of civil society. By the mid-1990s there was a growing awareness of the divisions and unequal power relations within civil society as well as the economy. The realisation that there are 'barriers to entry' into civil underpins the growing interest in the idea of 'social exclusion'. In the context of unequal economic and social power how can 'the poor' and those on the margins of society find a voice in civil society? How can they finance associations and campaigns when the resources of corporate capital and privileged social groups are so much greater? Whose interests do donors promote in their civil-society strengthening programmes?

3.3 Strengthening Civil Society: Challenges for Donors

Donor organisations vary in the purposes for which they use the concept of civil society. US donor interest in civil society has as its prime objective democratisation therefore its aid support to civil society is biased towards those groups which similarly promote this goal. Civil society assistance, is not limited to fostering democratisation, it also accords neatly with a broader agenda of promoting neo-liberal economic policies. Donor efforts to strengthen civil society include the establishment of specific programmes to strengthen civil society, often within broader programmes around democracy and governance; specific projects to build the institutional capacity of civil society organisations; setting up partnerships between civil society organisations, business and government; promoting the financial sustainability of civil society organisations through support to local foundations and philanthropic institutions. These attempts to operationalise the concept of civil society are innovative and imaginative, promising to open up new avenues of participation for otherwise marginalised voices. They also seek to resist an essentialist, conflictual approach towards relations amongst market, state and civil society, suggesting co-operative rather

than antagonistic forms of mutual engagement. To a certain extent they also implicitly recognise the multi-dimensionality of individuals, the plurality of their identities, the co-existence of contradictory motives and interests. However they also bring to the surface the dilemmas and contradictions which donors face in attempting to construct civil society from the outside. Here we focus on three particular challenges: politics of plurality and choice, politics of universality, and politics of autonomy and dependence.

3.4 Politics of Plurality and Choice

Some scholars have shunned the use of civil society, pointing to its conceptual fuzziness, ideological impregnation and referential ambiguity. However, donor agencies, faced with the task of developing, nurturing and strengthening 'civil society' have been forced to attempt some delineation of the concept. For all donors civil society is defined predominantly in sociological fashion as a sphere of intermediary organisation, which unlike the market is 'not-for-profit' and unlike the state is 'non-authoritative'. Whilst many donors recognise that civil society embraces a range of associational forms such as youth clubs, human rights organisations, football clubs, learned societies, because of the nature of their activities and their ideological perspectives, they operate in practice with a narrower selection of civil society. Donor agencies tend to define civil society in terms of long or short lists of organisations that depoliticise, sanitise and technicise the arena of association, disguising the real differential relations of power and diversity of voices and interests. In addition, donors select organisations to work with according to their particular programme priorities, guiding philosophy and values, and perceptions of local groups with regard to their values, capacity, effectiveness and influence. Further still, many donors fail to make these criteria transparent and others have no clear selection strategy. The failure of many agencies to operate with clarity not only has an impact upon the effectiveness of their programmes but also makes it considerably harder for local organisations to understand the nature and goals of donor agencies. The politics of choice is removed from view. Yet whilst the public documents of donor institutions and the rhetoric of partnership appear to celebrate the plurality of civil society, actual practice as reflected in funding, projects and programmes suggest that processes of selection have occurred which are not accidental. Thus the neutral appearance of civil society discourse tends to mask political agendas and render ideological hegemonies and values almost invisible.

3.5 Politics of Universality

Not only is there a tendency to assume that civil society within nation-states is homogenous in moral purpose and values, but also that there is but one civil society in the world. Donor agencies end up projecting their vision as an established and natural truth upon other societies and take for granted that particular kinds of organisations constitute civil society. Formal organisations such as business associations, development NGOs, churches, clubs and so on are considered part of civil society but informal associations belong to 'the traditional', 'the backward'. For donors, NGOs are viewed as a key, and indeed 'natural', component of any civil society so that where they are absent, they should be created. However, organisations created from the outside often lack a distinct social constituency of support and therefore any social or political meaning for local communities. Creating NGOs from the outside also does not ensure that these will have a democratic content or aspire to being vehicles of social and political change or even gain legitimacy in local contexts. In his critique of US democracy aid, Carothers (1999:248-49) points to the failure of donor agencies to appreciate the complexities of social and political life in different contexts and to ignore socially and

politically significant organisations which do not neatly correspond to mainstream American understanding of civil society actors: “American democracy promoters have made few efforts to understand civil society on its own terms in complex traditional societies in Africa, Asia and the Middle East. They basically ignore the many layers of clans, tribes, castes, village associations, peasant groups, local religious organisations, ethnic associations, and the like as essentially unfathomable complexities that do not directly bear on democratic advocacy work. Democracy promoters pass through these countries on hurried civil society assessment missions and declare that “very little civil society exists” because they have found only a handful of Westernised NGOs devoted to nonpartisan public-interest advocacy work on the national scale”. To imagine that building civil society can be a project which is achievable within a five year time-frame defies historical experience.

3.6 Politics of Autonomy and Dependence

Given that it is rare for donors to withdraw completely, civil societies are critically constructed from the outside rather than from within. In contexts of aid dependence the manufacturing of, and the long-term sustainability of, civil society become significant issues. External dependence on donors can easily lead to a distortion of local agendas as local NGOs competing for funding shape their planned programmes and activities around the priority of donors. In countries where civil society and democratic institutions are fragile, the arrival of donors with preconceived notions about what civil society should do and what it should look like can end up weakening the capacity of local organisations to develop their own visions of civil society, their own understandings of how to achieve social and political change and their own solutions to problems that are central to their lives. In some contexts the national state and donors compete to shape civil society in their image, reinforcing the conceptualisation of civil society as anti-state and also underlining the politics of donor interventions. Thus, in operationalising the idea of civil society donors encounter certain dilemmas and contradictions which call for a re-thinking of strategy and purpose. There is a politics of choice which leads to insiders and outsiders, the included and the excluded. There is a politics of partnership which reinforces particular visions and norms and underplays the conflictual elements of relations within civil society and between civil society, state and market actors.

Civil society does not lend itself to external manufacturing. It cannot be created via blue-prints from offices in Washington DC or London. Civil societies in any context have a history and must develop in tune with their particular historical, cultural and political rhythms. Underlying the politics of universality, partnership and choice are differential power relations, whereby donor agencies, with their financial, human and knowledge resources, inevitably dominate interactions with fund recipients. This in turn raises the paradox that civil society organisations, which are supposed to be marked by the feature of ‘independence’, end up sacrificing this autonomy to various degrees through their reliance upon donor funding. This becomes reflected in competition amongst local NGOs for funding at the expense of seeking common strategies and alliances, the reification of ‘the project’ and ‘the NGO’ rather than a concerted strategy to overcome commonly identified problems and the adoption of donor priorities in an effort to sustain activity and ultimately the existence of the organisation. Without careful and sensitive prior analysis of needs and the social and political context, donor intervention into local civil societies can end up distorting and weakening local processes of association and problem resolution.

3.7 Summary

Through this critical interrogation of civil society we draw attention to some of the assumptions that are made by scholars and donors about the relationship between civil society, democracy and the market. In outlining the two, somewhat caricatured, approaches towards civil society, namely, the mainstream and alternative approaches, we seek to emphasise that there is a politics of civil society and that this politics in turn impinges upon attempts to operationalise the concept. We think it is important that donor agencies make transparent their understanding of what constitutes civil society and their assumptions about the relations among civil society, democratisation and economic development. Donors need to recognise that there is a politics of civil society, and understand and be open about the historical preface to their civil society agendas and the factors conditioning their support for certain selected organisations within civil society. This in turn implies distinguishing between normative and empirical conceptualisations of civil society – that is, recognising civil society as it actually is, rather than as how it should be. This means moving beyond blueprints for realising normative visions of civil society towards contextualised social and political analyses that can better inform donor interventions. This in turn will require deconstructing the notion of the NGO as the prime organisational vehicle for and manifestation of civil society, and recognising that any organisation is constituted by particular social and historical relations.

There also needs to be more thinking aloud about civil society, inequality and poverty. We need to shift the debate on from a unilateral focus on 'civil society versus the state'. We need to explore more closely and critically the links between civil society and capitalism, between civil society and inequality and between civil society and poverty reduction. This in turn may well require looking again at the role of the state in development. Civil society potentially offers a way of thinking anew about the developmental state. The concept pushes us to ask how engaged, active and strong publics could not just defend citizens from the state, but also participate in thinking and debating the common good for a society and how a democratic state could play a role in this process. It is crucial that the intellectual and associational space for civil society is protected and fostered so that people can reflect openly and critically about the common good and can experiment with alternative ways of organising social, political and economic life.

3.8 Discussion

The above paper prompted a wide-ranging debate on the different interpretations of what civil society and the components of civil society can mean in Central Asia. It highlighted issues surrounding donor influence, religious needs and the importance of working for civil society development within the context of the five very different post-Soviet states.

At the start of the transition decade in Central Asia, two main types of organisations were created to take forward new thinking and new organisations: the first being 'formal consortia' newly created organisations subsequently recognised by the government and donors. These organisations were formed by former members of the *nomenklatura* and the creative intelligentsia (teachers, artists, culture workers); the second a 'non-formal consortia' not registered as NGOs and not recognised by donors.

One participant, Rafael Balkin, said that a good example of community organisation is the Uzbek *mahalla*. However, Uzbekistan is very different from Kazakhstan or Kyrgyzstan and they need to present their equivalent to the *mahalla* institution. Kazakhstan was called a 'laboratory' of the Soviet peoples since so many people were thrown together there (whether settlers during the virgin land campaigns, exiles during the Second World War years, and former prisoners).

This theme of differences was taken up by others in the session, who emphasised the gulf between city and rural life. In a sense, Kazakhstan has two different populations, rural and urban, and where you were born is key to how your life turns out.

The informal side of life is very important in Central Asia. In local communities a life goes on which is unknown to and uncontrolled by the state; several people agreed that in Almaty, for example, there is a yard (*dvorovoy*) culture. The Soviet era community systems at the residential level have gone, and the new condominium groups are in the process of being established but only to deal with bare essentials like the payment and maintenance of services (light and gas). But children growing up in the courtyard become part of these informal networks and hierarchies – in that sense Almaty has a *mahalla*-type system. It was pointed out that many such groupings develop a “culture of resistance” to the state. They resist control and potentially develop the politics of liberation.

Zoya Salieva, Executive Director, Centre for Information and Culture, Bukhara, Uzbekistan, then took the discussion of the *mahalla* further, commenting that the donor programme to support *mahallas* had had a good start luckily. The views of residents and NGOs were taken on board in the launching of the programme, surveys were done and the donors listened. However, gradually the programme became more formal, less popular in style and content. The transfer to a new bigger programme has not been so successful.

Kyrgyzstan representatives commented that the programme to support *mahallas* in the south of the country has been generally alright. This is in the context of national decentralisation programmes.

Raya Kadyrova of Fund for Tolerance International commented that religion remains an important factor in Southern Kyrgyzstan and in Fergana Valley generally. The Soviets were not able to uproot religion and it remains part of society, any population can be effectively reached through religion or religious organisations. Religious groups should not be treated as the “opposition” by the government.

Mansiya Kainazarova of CAID returned to the urban community theme to say that the pull of the criminal groupings is very strong amongst young people, even educated and gifted youth. Each district has an informal leader (*razvodyaschi*). The economy has a formal sector (NGO as well as state and business), but the informal economy is huge and follows its own rules.

Other contributors commented that these complexities are avoided by donors, who do not even try to differentiate between countries and nationalities in the region. They fail to tackle issues of the shadow economy or informal communities, maybe for political reasons.

Another contributor noted that the informal economy is not necessarily criminal; it may be just not fully formed, not mature (for example, new, small businesses).

Leonid Solomin of the Association of Free Trade Unions said his association is helping workers adapt the self-organisation to the conditions of the market economy. Donors seem to assume that civil society and democracy will automatically have a good effect on society; to trade-unionists this is not a given. So he agreed with the critical and questioning tone of the above paper.

'What does 'democracy' mean in Central Asia?', Leonid asked, arguing that it meant simply a form of government. However, it should mean more than this, it should mean a way of life, a more free approach. He argued that democracy or civil society should consist of citizens (not just NGOs) – that is, people who were ready and able to demand their rights and can use them.

Today in Kazakhstan lots of rights are violated, at work people are slaves to their bosses. People attend workshops (like this) and play games, have discussions – then go back to their boss who tells them what to do, and they have no rights. To unite collectively is the only way to fight back – this idea seemed to have general assent.

There was reference to those who shout about problems (*krikunī*) but who do not solve them. It was agreed that everyone has to stand up for their rights. This applies both to labour and general civil or human rights.

Another contributor picked up the theme of NGO–government engagements, which civil society must work out, work with, and learn. This is illustrated by the concept of social partnership in Kazakhstan – it is being discussed at many different levels.

Solomin criticised the NGO sector for its dependence on external donors. If the donors left which civil society groups would survive? Only the trade unions could.

Asiya Sasybakaeva of Centre Interbilim brought in another set of contrasts. In the development process, in Kyrgyzstan civil society has grown faster than progress in the economy; in Kazakhstan the reverse seems to be true. There was mention of the Latin America experience referred to in INTRAC publications. The Latin American countries seem to have faltered in their civil society development and disparities between rich and poor have increased dramatically. It is important Central Asia does not go the same way.

4. CIVIL SOCIETY CAPACITY BUILDING

The strong contextual debate on providing support to civil society development in Central Asia, led naturally on to the fourth presentation by **Anne Garbutt (INTRAC Regional Manager for the Former Soviet Union)**. The presenter and **Brenda Lipson (Training and Capacity Building Director)** wrote this paper.

This paper attempts to answer the question ‘what are the specific characteristics and challenges of undertaking capacity-building at civil society level, as opposed to other levels of intervention i.e. organisational or individual?’ It will propose that there are indeed some critical factors for consideration when working at this level of complexity and it will explore how these express themselves in the context of Central Asia.

The paper looks at those initiatives that *explicitly* set out to develop the capacities of civil society organisations, either as a means to a further end or as an end in itself. The initiative may be a partial element of a broader programme or may be expressed through a specifically designed programme. It is an initiative which is generally multi-layered, operating within sectors and across them – that is, for the purposes of this paper we are not considering capacity-building initiatives designed with just one individual organisation in mind. The paper also assumes that there is some conceptual model and vision of the role of civil society organisations which informs the shaping of the initiative, and which may or may not be explicit.

4.1 Capacity Building

INTRAC uses the following a working definition of the term 'capacity-building':

Capacity building is an ongoing process of helping people, organisations, and societies improve and adapt to changes around them. Performance and improvements are taken in the light of the mission, objectives, context, resources and sustainability.

We can refer to three elements which influence the shaping of civil society-level capacity building: the overall programme design; the definition of the strategies to be employed; and the choice of capacity-building instruments

As regards the first, the **overall programme design**, the essential question for any capacity-building intervention is that related to the overall purpose, the issue of ‘what you are building capacity to do’. The answer to this provides the orientation for shaping the capacity-building initiative but concern has been expressed about who actually defines the answer. This concern explores the power relationship between the resource providers and the ‘subjects’ of the interventions. If the balance is tipped in favour of the resource providers (supply side), then the programme design primarily reflects their interests, often largely shaped around the donor’s requirements for effective project implementation and reporting.

In terms of the design of capacity building interventions at civil society level, we can identify the following three critical factors. First, the degree to which the design is truly reflective of the specifics of the context and the civil society under study, rather than

reflecting a pre-determined agenda or set of donor interests. Related to this, is the issue of the strong influence of the donor's views on whether the investment in strengthening civil society organisations is a means to an end or an end in itself. Second, there would appear to be an apparent absence of shared debate amongst practitioners on (and subsequent enrichment of) appropriate capacity assessment methods at the level of civil society. This may well be a factor hindering the enrichment of the initiatives themselves. Last, but just as important, the degree to which the design and planning methods are as open and flexible as possible. An area of debate familiar not just to those involved in capacity-building, but also in the wider arena of organisational science, is that related to what one writer refers to as, "the perennial tension between blueprint or deliberate strategies and those that are more incremental or emergent" (Morgan 1997). At civil society level this becomes critical because of the multiplicity of factors to consider, the difficulties of identifying stakeholders at this level, and the need to ensure that the complexity of the process is reflected in the ability to 'craft' strategies along the life-span of the initiative.

The second element for consideration is that of what kind of **strategies** are to be employed. INTRAC would hold to the view that capacity building is essentially a process that involves change. This conscious intervention is aimed at producing human change, whether at the level of the individual, community, organisation or society. It is through this human change that we make an impact on the world around us.

Therefore, a first critical factor influencing the choice of strategies is whether the designers/decision makers consider that civil society strengthening necessarily involves change and hence whether there is subsequent clarity of understanding about **leverages for change** at this level. That is, is there clarity about who are the 'civil society change agents'? The answer to this will determine the choice of which civil society organisations are included within any one programme. We have seen over the last few years a shift away from a largely NGO-focused approach, towards the inclusion of social movements, community-based organisations, networks etc. The greatest difficulties would appear to lie in the inclusion of the more 'amorphous' types of informal groupings or looser alliances, campaigns etc. All of these different types of organisational forms present unique challenges for capacity-building interventions, some of which we are facing in our Central Asia work.

Additional factors are the degree to which the design incorporates an integrated, holistic or systemic view will influence whether strategies are developed to build a connectivity across the levels (society, sector, organisation, individual). What we tend to see are initiatives shaped exclusively around the donor's own geographic or sectoral priorities, without taking into account the knock-on effect on relations between those targeted and others and tending to operate exclusively at the individual organisational level.

Whether the designers/decision makers hold a view of society which is largely 'consensus' or 'conflict' oriented will influence the choice of participants, as will the view on what role civil society organisations play. For example, we could take the view that the initiatives that include strategies to establish joint state/civil society 'partnership' schemes for service delivery are essentially operating within a type of 'consensual' model which views positively the likelihood that the different parties are willing and able to overcome existing barriers to collaboration. Stubbs and Clarke (2000) refer to the importance of this approach particularly in 'low trust environments', seeing it as more effective than targeted support to one sector alone. Partnerships are sometimes

'artificially created' for programme implementation purposes (Wardle and Kiuranov 2001).

Finally, whether an understanding of how individual organisations develop is incorporated into the development of capacity-building strategies at civil society level. Are, for example, the 'partnership' strategies forcing newly established organisations to 'jump' a phase in their natural development, from independence to inter-dependence (Kaplan 1999)? We may need to reflect more upon the extent to which these organisations need to establish their 'uniqueness' and 'self-reliance' over and above (or alongside) the building of effective collaboration with other sectors.

The third element for consideration is that of the **capacity building instruments**. By these we mean investment in such things as training, information exchange and dissemination, building capacity for Policy Research and engagement, Resource provision, building relationships and ensuring a favourable legislative/fiscal environment.

Here five critical factors come to mind. First, the limitations of stand-alone training interventions are even more keenly felt when operating at this level of complexity. Complementary interventions should be considered such as peer group support initiatives, mentoring, action learning sets, exchanges etc. to reinforce individual learning. Second, there is a need for greater clarity on the link between individual training interventions and stronger, more effective organisations. Clarity is needed as regards how the particular choice of instrument or tool might influence the potential for linkages between learning at the human individual level and impact at societal level. Third, we are witnessing an increased emphasis being placed on the capacity-development of co-ordination mechanisms such as networks, alliances, coalitions. This requires a profound understanding of the complex interactions taking place within these - at the individual, organisational and alliance levels. Similarly, the emphasis placed by some initiatives on the development of capacities in policy research and engagement might well benefit from a balancing of investment. Clarity is required within each specific context to judge the relative weight of investment in the capacities of individual civil society organisations or in the existence of a specialised organisation serving the needs of the sector as a whole. Finally, it is important to give consideration to the implications of policy-related capacity building. This is an area which potentially challenges the status quo as regards the distribution of public resources, and some positive experiences of civil society capacity-building for increased state policy engagement have been threatened by the lack of accessible resources for the implementation phases (Sinclair *et al* 2001, Madrid 2001).

4.2 Summary of Critical Factors

We can attempt to group around thematic issues the critical factors which were identified in relation to programme design, strategy development and capacity-building instruments.

Power

The first grouping is that which is related to the familiar debate around power – familiar because in many different occasions when reflections take place on development issues in general and on capacity-building specifically, the reference to the importance of considering power relations is made. Thus, when considering civil society-level capacity building it is not surprising that this debate again comes to the fore.

Methods and Instruments

The second area is that of reflecting on whether we have the tools to do the job. Do we have the methods and instruments that are appropriate to civil society-level capacity building?

Capacity and the Capacity Builders

We are all finding our way in this complex exercise - the decision-makers, the resource providers (who may be the same as the first group), the implementers and the participants.

Organisational Development

A final, but perhaps most critical, thematic issue might be that of the degree to which civil society-level capacity building is grounded in a profound understanding of the intra- and inter-organisational development processes.

4.3 Capacity Building in Central Asia

So how do these issues relate to our experiences in Central Asia? INTRAC has made a deliberate effort to not go down the route of providing blueprint strategies within its civil society strengthening programme, but to allow the programme to emerge with the changing environment within which civil society is rapidly developing. The paper will now examine the critical factors raised through INTRAC's international work and explore the implications to the Central Asia programme.

Power and relationships

INTRAC challenges the view that State, Market and Civil Society can work harmoniously at all times. The power balance between these three sectors within Central Asia remains unstable and all three sectors are struggling to find their own position within a challenging environment. Changing attitudes and behavioural values will inevitably cause conflict between and within sectors. This is not necessarily negative however all three sectors must be aware of the changes and adapt their own strategies accordingly. It is essential that the civil society leaders are aware of how much power they have particularly in relation to their increasing links to the outside world. These links are not as accessible to other sectors including Government employees therefore they have a major role in introducing external views and ideas that can help the development process.

Methods and instruments

INTRAC recognised the limitation of stand-alone training courses when introducing PRA into Central Asia. Partners accepted PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) as an intervention designed to work with communities without understanding the wider concepts of development and development issues. The most recent series of capacity inputs have included a programme called ETSP (Educational and Training Support Programme) where the participants their organisations and their clients have been included in a nine month programme where inter-module work has been as important as the training inputs themselves. There is a real need to develop critical thinkers that question and understand how people exercise choices.

When monitoring civil society development programmes the question to be asked is whether we have the right tools to measure attitude and behavioural changes, when the

'developers' do not fully understand the behaviour and attitudes of the society within which they are working. Local Civil Society Leaders who are imbedded in society have an important role in ensuring that international Capacity Building Programmes are continually questioning that they are measuring realistic changes that are relevant to the society within which they are working.

Capacity and capacity builders

International organisations when working in Central Asia should ensure that their international staff, who bring mind-sets and pre-conceived ideas from other areas of the world, are willing to develop new strategies in partnership with local staff who have the political and social history knowledge of the area within which they work. International organisations need to be constantly monitoring the work they do, bearing in mind that the transference of skills from other parts of the world may not be appropriate even from one Central Asian state to another.

One of the key areas needed within any civil society development programme is leadership training. Leaders need the qualities that take them beyond the day to day work of managing their organisations. They need a much broader based understanding of how their role can influence, strengthening not only their own organisations but also the wider environment within which they work. They also need to understand their influence with other decision-makers particularly the resource providers from both within Central Asia and from outside.

Organisational Development

Within the Central Asian context it is now time to develop advocacy skills within civil society, helping organisations and the people they represent to voice their frustrations and worries in a clear coherent way. They will then be better placed to increase their legitimacy within the existing power and accountability structures. Civil society organisations in Central Asia need to develop a better understanding of intra and inter-organisational development processes in order to ensure their advocacy skills are targeted at the right levels.

4.4 Summary

Civil society strengthening programmes in Central Asia are all placed within an ideological vacuum, which means the pro-democracy political behaviours are not embedded in society. Developing civil society organisations within this environment will take time and demand flexible processes while political behaviours become embedded. The notion of developing civil society cannot be introduced in isolation rather it is inextricably linked to the development of state and market.

However within this restrictive framework it is important to note that the issues and critical factors important in other parts of the world are just as relevant in Central Asia. When designing Capacity Building Programmes it is essential that collaboration between the external capacity builders and internal capacity builders is seen as a collaborative effort that both groups can only be strengthened if they can appreciate the qualities each one is bringing to the process.

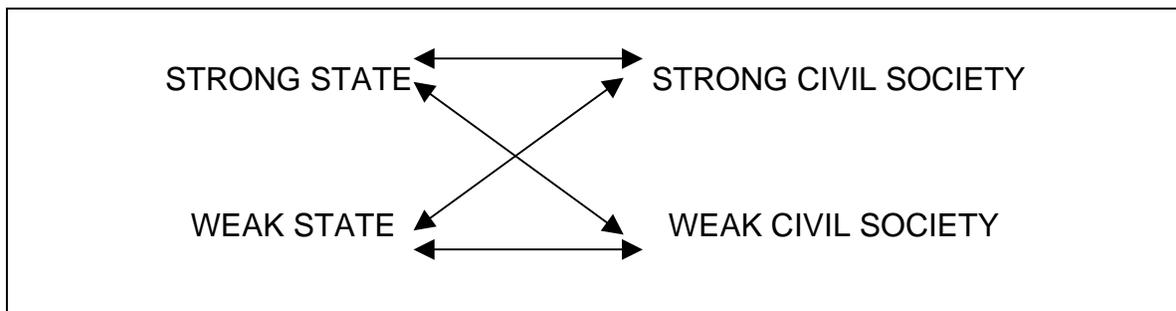
INTRAC has a deep commitment to the building of alliances with local Central Asian organisations in order that they can together help Civil Society improve and adapt to the rapid changes it is experiencing.

5. CIVIL SOCIETY–STATE RELATIONS

The fifth and final paper was prepared by **John Beauclerk (Programme Manager Eastern Europe)** and **Simon Heap (Senior Researcher)** and delivered by Simon Heap. It examines global trends in civil society-state engagements and presents the simplistic model of State-Civil Society relations and a more complex dynamic model looking at both the oppositional and complimentary tendencies of the relationship.

The key relationship between Civil Society and the State has exercised academics, policy-makers and practitioners for many years, and even more so in the past decade. Major global economic and political trends are highlighting and accentuating the Civil Society–State nexus as fundamental driver for social development, democracy-building and economic delivery. Our paper draws together contemporary evidence and analyses the factors at play in nations around the world. The paper begins by briefly describing the global trends, then explores the conventional model of State-civil society relations, which we find too static and zero-sum in nature to act as a good tool of analysis. A more nuanced dynamic model is put forward instead and then delineated through the many variables impacting on relations between civil society and the State.

5.1 The Static Model



Views on the connection between the state and civil society are wide, even polar. A **Static Model** attempts to encompass them all. Some argue that civil society is a bulwark against government; others see it as an indispensable support for government. In terms of the role of a strengthened civil society in relation to the state and formal power and authority, there are two contrasting schools of thought. One views the relationship as essentially oppositional, antagonistic and conflictual. This notion is found in Western liberal thought in which the Civil Society is seen as the means by which individuals are protected from incursion of the state and by which state power is limited. This view lies behind the arguments that civil society must be strengthened in order for it to serve as a buttress against the state and to redress the massive imbalance between state and citizen power.

A second view sees Civil Society and the State as mutually interdependent and complementary rather than as antagonistic. This view regards Civil Society and the State as neither fully autonomous nor fully self-sufficient. According to this view, Civil Society strengthening cannot be done independently of the State and certainly not at the expense of the State (Clayton 1996). This thesis, originally developed by de Tocqueville and, updated for the contemporary world by Robert Putnam (1993), postulates that

democratic government is strengthened, not weakened, when it faces a vigorous civil society. In other countries where the State is relatively weak and fragile, the second view may be more appropriate in order to promote long-term democratic governance. In such instances both the State and Civil Society need to be strengthened. A weak State will not be able to provide the political stability and legislative framework in which a civil society can develop.

An undoubted strength of the Static Model is that it offers a broad analysis of state-civil society relationships. On the other hand, weaknesses of the Static Model are many and undermining. Limiting the analysis to ideas of strengths and weakness gives too crude and inertia-laden a model of the multiple relationships between state and civil society and the very different contexts in which they play out. It does not allow for concepts of multiple levels of relationship with the state according to particular circumstances, nor says anything about the modalities of joint work, nor allows civil society actors to assess their particular situations and plan their moves accordingly. It can be strongly argued that civil society actors work in a range of circumstances, adapting their strategies to need and to the space available to them. Fowler analyses the characteristics and functions of civil society in terms of the ability of actors to choose a purpose or role in society (varying between service and reform) and their ability to retain and exert control over decisions (on a scale of degree of autonomy ranging between the contained and the independent). In transition countries, where civil society starts from a contained boxed-in position, actors can choose to move either towards a contracting role in service provision or aim for reform through advocacy. Or they may seek to combine both roles.

One pair of commentators are proponents of the view that the state fully arbitrates in questions of civil society. Yet counter propositions can be found throughout Latin America, however, where CSOs and NGOs developed and grew during military dictatorships. Serbia is also an example from Europe where civil society flourished despite its opposition to Milosevic. Our argument is that typologies which start from the state as the key determinant of the relationship, though useful, do not take into account the expanded role which civil society has been assigned by itself and by others. We therefore sets out what we see as the key elements of the new paradigm.

5.2 New Agendas

There have been dramatic re-negotiation of the roles of state, society and market in meeting the challenges of globalisation and the technological revolution. Two agenda shifts in development paradigms and policies are at the core of the changed perspective:

- The Governance Agenda's:
 - pressure for democratisation;
 - reform in the role of the state;
 - decentralisation of public administration;
 - devolution of responsibility for public services to politically mandated institutions,

has combined with the Neoliberal Agenda's three strands:

- increasing democratisation of States;

- adoption of structural adjustment policies explicitly advocating a retreat from key social and economic responsibilities;
- administrative decentralisation.

We agree with Alan Fowler (2000) that several key factors are placing pressure on, and creating more scope for closer cooperation between the state and civil society: "The emergence of civil society in the international development agenda provides the political complement to the economies of adjustment; these two pillars being bridged by the concern for good governance".

How did these connections come about? Civil society interacts with governments on many **levels** and for many reasons. This interaction is becoming broader and more frequent, if not necessarily easier. Four factors seem to account for this: reform in the role of the state, specifically privatisation of public services and state control of the economy; the continuing decentralisation of public administration; the devolution of responsibility for, though not necessarily authority over, public services to local or regional institutions; and democratisation, with its implicit goal of opening space for and stimulating wider inclusion, equality before the law, civic mobilisation and citizen engagement in public affairs (for example in transparent allocation of resources) and policy making. A change in any of these factors offers a potential for increased state-society interaction

Decentralisation is also an explanation of increased State-Civil Society connections. Most NGOs act at the local level; generally isolated from, and in competition with, local government, but often dependent on them for facilities, funds and political access. The primary motivation for decentralisation was small government derived from the neo-liberal model, but the secondary motivation now gaining ground is that unsuccessful top-down development models need bringing closer to the people, if not originating from them. "Widespread popular participation is vital to successful decentralisation" and this requires local authorities to seek out community groups with which to relate and NGOs to assist them in this task (World Bank 2000-01). Civil society actors that are close to community needs, familiar with setting local agendas, and locally accountable stand to benefit from decentralisation.

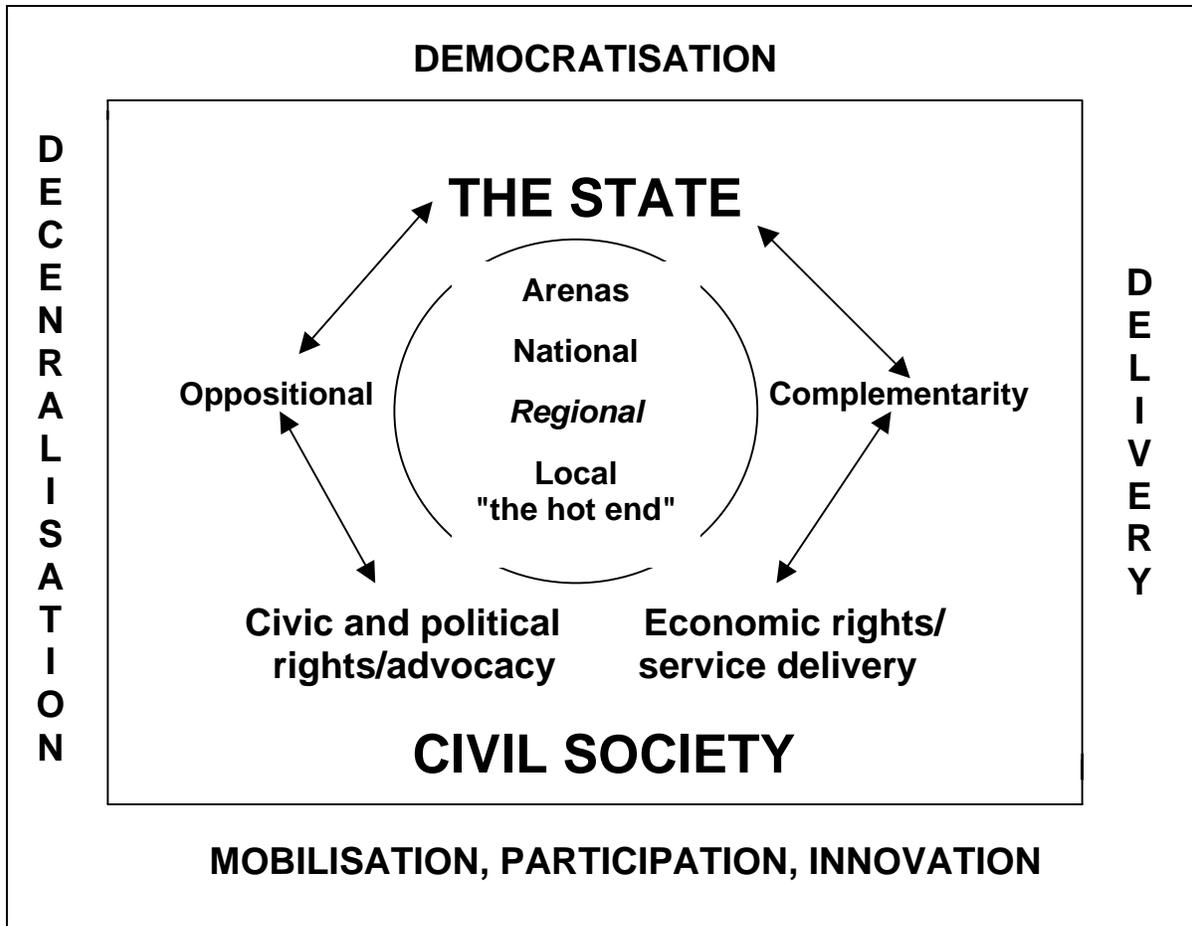
Transition is also a major impetus for new connections between the state and civil society, despite the many countries suspended in a "no man's land" between authoritarian communism and capitalism. Levers include the relaxation of central planning opens up space for civic action, the shift from public to private service provision and moving from single party to multi-party systems increases the number of civic players with which the authorities need to contend. In the Russian Federation,

Although it has often not been easy to attract the attention of the relevant government agency to specific problems, we have managed to maintain our independence and to establish working relations with state officials in most government agencies. We tried to explain to them that their professional interests coincided with those of civic organizations and that we could work together to resolve common problem. (Pustintsev 2001)

Let's explore how a more realistic and (to use the World Bank's language above) more dynamic model, based on experiences can be developed.

5.3 The Dynamic Model

The Dynamic Model of State-Civil Society relations seeks to accommodate both the oppositional and complementary tendencies. The relationships between civil society and the State are highly complex and operate at multiple levels of engagement. The Dynamic Model offers the idea of civil society moving up to national arenas and in opposition, conflictual mode (occasional victories though), while there is a counter-trend of civil society moving down to grassroots and finding mutual benefits.



In this model civil society takes the initiative in breaking the static mould of the strong state/weak state model to establish its functional autonomy within the limits available. Civil society actors actively seek out complementarities with the state in their (joint) efforts to meet their constituencies' social and economic rights through the delivery of services, taking advantage of state contracts but also exercising their own resource mobilisation capabilities. These activities generate the legitimacy for an oppositional approach.

Although this model can describe options for individual CSOs, it can also be seen in a sector-wide perspective with different actors fulfilling different roles and situated at various levels of the upwards and downwards continuum. Support organisations and

other advocacy groups may be organised at national level but they also depend on contacts and complementarities down to the 'hot end' of localities and municipalities.

Let's look at the components of collaboration between the state and civil society in the light of the dynamic model described. These components are arranged according to the two directions outlined in the Dynamic Model: with the oppositional strand represented by the democratisation agenda getting out the vote, decentralisation and accountability, and the complementarity strand represented by service provision, whether through privatisation, contracting or partnerships.

Civil society has come to be synonymous with profound social change. The term came to the fore during the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe as many countries embraced democratic change. Popular people's movements were instrumental in bringing down oppressive regimes and promoting democracy. The term civil society was increasingly used to refer to 'people power'. Elsewhere the political liberalisation that was taking place in the South also reflected the important role played by ordinary citizens in acting together to protest against authoritarian government and to campaign for democracy. In its complementary mode, civil society is seen as a means of stimulating interest in political processes amongst jaundiced western electorates.

A significant motive in the 'discovery' (by western donors) of civil society in the 1990s was the prospect of influencing electorates to take advantage of the space created in new democracies and to vote out former communist or authoritarian governments. In short, **'Getting Out The Vote'**. Accordingly, in the early 1990s the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) opened a new category of aid assistance that defined civil society in terms of "nonstate organisations that can act as a catalyst for democratic reform" (Howell & Pearce 2001). Other external agencies, for example, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), soon followed with democratisation programmes which supported NGOs for voter registration campaigns ahead of key elections. The media as well as NGOs were targeted. The anticipated end result was political. 'Getting Out the Vote' initiatives are to be firmly placed in the static model, the reason of democratisation CSOs being to weaken and eventually topple states reluctant to play the neoliberal game. Civil Society has come to be regarded as a *sine qua non* of **democracy** – and, at that, of already existing democracies and emerging democracies alike. Civil Society and democracy are increasingly used interchangeably: "a healthy, vibrant civil society is both the fullest indication of and a precondition for a healthy democracy" (O'Connell 1999).

Two questions here: in the eyes of the state, has decentralisation empowered or shifted the burden, and is decentralisation a case of bringing top-down development closer to the people, or intended to allow government to reduce, if not abdicate, its responsibilities?

Pro-Poor Coalitions fit the Dynamic model of relationships by acknowledging and including, rather than suppressing or prioritising, the political dimension of combined efforts at poverty alleviation or social inclusion. Approaches such as these are having resonance with bilateral donors. For example, as opportunities for constructive relationships with newly democratised states develop, DFID's work in the Balkans has shifted from civil society strengthening programmes to building state-civil society relationships for reducing poverty and social exclusion.

Privatisation, Contracting and Compacts are key features of the new policy agenda relating to service provision. Over the last decade the pendulum has swung wildly between the State and civil society as bearing legitimate responsibility for the provision of public services, eventually settling on the following paradigm: only the state can organise and distribute the necessary resources to the population as a whole, on a sustainable basis; a regulatory, enabling and co-ordinator role for the state; CSOs meeting the gap between basic, standard state provision and local need; continued efforts by CSOs to protect their independence – justified by the freedom to innovate that it provides; and the State promoting a greater degree of transparency and citizen participation in publicly-funded activities.

Contracting has fundamentally altered the relationship between the voluntary and state sectors. It is the main reason for the dramatic increase in CSOs.

The ultimate expression of the British model of state-civil society relationships is a non-binding **Compact**, codifying the relationship between the public and voluntary sectors. The objective of the compact is to harness the voluntary sector contribution within the overall framework of government policy. This is opposite from some Southern government's controlling attempts over civil society. Legislation rather than non-binding agreements are the norm and when governments legislate their motives are often to control the development process rather than to facilitate a thriving civil society (Bennett 1997:4). Indeed, Rutzen (2001) describes Compacts as inappropriate in countries where governments are hostile and the Compact offers "platitudes instead of action", or where NGOs need quick legislative reform the Compact would simply distract. Compact-like arrangements are however in vogue in Eastern Europe where the focus is on the benefits accruing to CSOs from government subsidies, on the potential for supporting the political transformation of the country or in providing political legitimacy to the NGO sector (Rutzen 2001).

Compacts lead to contracting, and contracting means implementing the government agenda. NGOs for which contracts provides the sole source of revenue have effectively moved beyond definitions of civil society based on autonomy and constituency as sources of legitimacy. Such organisations are not independent, or membership based, but nor are they strictly commercial. The US recognises these as components of civil society: "not-for-profit public service providers", but in the European context it could be argued that ever more pervasive state contracting of services calls for a new categorisation of agency, such as the semi-state agency common in Ireland.

5.4 Summary

A more dynamic conceptualisation of Civil Society-State relations is required at the beginning of the 21st century. The variables which are overtly or covertly accentuating, neutralising or working against civil society-State relationships at various levels in countries have been analysed in the light of global trends of democracy, decentralisation and donor policy as well as more local factors like sectoral competition and collaboration in service provision. We recognise the limitations of the Static Model conceptualisation, and offer a more nuanced Dynamic Civil Society-State Model. In the former case, our argument is that typologies which start from the state as the key determinant of the relationship, though useful, do not take into account the expanded role which civil society has been assigned by itself and by others. This paper has set out what we see as the key elements of the new paradigm.

We would argue that although civil society can fight it, collaborate with it or reform it, civil society cannot ignore the state. The Static Model takes as its point of departure as the state as the initiator, indeed key determinant, of civil society. The world has moved on; there are new forces and realities in play. The state, weakened by current trends of globalisation, neoliberalism, decentralisation and transition is no longer the sole arbiter of civil society. At many levels, power between the State and Civil Society has been, and continues to be, transferred, melted, solidified, formed and reformed.

We have outlined the relationship variables from both civil society's and the state's points of view. As regards the theme of this conference, civil society has been reborn into the past decade of development thinking and practice, but models have not kept pace with that, let alone the 'coming of age' of civil society in contemporary times. Continuing the analogy, donors have been the midwife in this process – sometimes in from the prenatal stage and handedly placed there at the birth, other times turning up late and offering unclear contradictory advice in those crucial life-determining early months and years.

The state becomes less of regulatory bureaucracy and more as a facilitator of democratic civil society. There is a need to reinvent the state by reconceiving it as an ally, not an enemy, of civil society and an instrument by which citizens pursue those public and civic ends they cannot achieve on their own as individuals or consumers. But the state appears unable, more than unwilling, to relinquish control, no matter how much they dress it up with 'partnerships' and 'compacts' and no matter where in the world, North, South or East.

5.5 Discussion

There was a very limited time for discussion, however the issues raised and noted below all added to the debates that were going to be held in different thematic groups over the next day and a half.

- Advocacy of civil society is seen as defending political dissidents and the like.
- Political parties are part of civil society.
- The simpler the model the simpler the solution, but the more complex the model the more complex the solution. But do models matter?

Forms and functions of Civil society or the 3 E's of relationships:

- Existence: the environment, space to engage;
- Expression: competencies to express interest and engage; and
- Engagement: information mechanisms and opportunities to interact with other systems.

The Confederation of NGOs raised the case of Kazakhstan where NGOs and government were building relations, often privatisation, and local and regional engagements not a smooth process and often misunderstanding

6. COUNTRY GROUPS

After lunch on day one the participants divided themselves into country groups to discuss how they saw Civil Society developing within the context of their own countries. Each group was provided with a list of three questions to consider. The questions were not designed to guide the groups but to give them a framework on which to hang their discussions if required:

- What is civil society like in your country?
- What are the most active civil society groups in the country?
- What role are CSOs/NGOs playing in the country?

The four groups that had documented their discussions highlighted the importance of continually examining the context of their own Countries. Issues highlighting those differences included the significant inroads made by civil society in influencing the Government Poverty Reduction Strategy in the Kyrgyz Republic. In Kazakhstan the debate was much more about what civil society can do and who can be included in the phrase 'civil society', the Turkmenistan group raised the important issue of the Governments past attempts to suppress the development of civil society and in Uzbekistan the group highlighted the passivity and lack of interest in Civil Society by both Government and the general population.

All Civil Society development programmes including INTRAC need to be aware of the dangers of developing blue print components that will be rolled out in different countries. Each country has a unique history and are facing unique problems within their own context and therefore all civil society work must be planned within the context of the country within which the needs are specific to that environment.

The following notes were recorded from the discussions of the groups and highlight some of the specific contextual needs of each country.

6.1 Kyrgyz Republic

The Kyrgyz Republic group work was facilitated by Erkinbek Kasybekov the Director of Counterpart Consortium, Bishkek. There was no presentation at the beginning of this session, but rather Erkinbek facilitated discussions with the twelve participants from Kyrgyzstan, using the 'key question' of "what are the major challenges facing Civil Society in Kyrgyzstan?".

The following issues were identified by the group as being important:

- Legislation, particular in reference to financial issues and taxation, which does not support an enabling environment for the NGO sector. However, general provisions for public associations is better in comparison to the rest of region;
- The absence of a 'charitable giving' culture is seen as major obstacle in mobilising resources and achieving self-sustainability for local organizations;
- Information flows are poor between sectors and between urban-rural, but increasingly better within the NGO sector, information is being shared more effectively;

- It was discussed that Civil Society Organisations lacked capacity to interact with other sectors, and that where support for this interaction was being provided there was a regional imbalance;
- 'Lack of sustainable structures' - but this was not elaborated on and was left unclear as to what structures were being referred to; and,
- No common understanding of Islamic cultural role in contemporary Kyrgyz society and no common understanding of the specific role of Civil Society.

With these key issues in mind, the group reviewed what role CSOs are playing in Kyrgyz Republic and how effective is that role:

- Keeping Government accountable - certainly civil society is playing a significant role in some areas of policy with Government providing 'promises', however Asiya of Centre InterBilim talked about 'bad governance' related to accountability for public expenditure: "the Government is not open about its expenditure as it is afraid of the reaction from civil society";
- CSO advocacy and impact on policymakers is seen as fairly effective. The contribution from CSOs on debates regarding poverty alleviation were judged to be important in terms of Government policy on poverty and the final Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, although, of course, the contribution is expected to become much bigger/more effective with time;
- NGOs are playing a significant role in terms of service delivery, but the frameworks in which these roles are played (for instance, in partnership with local government) are not clear and the debates on such relationships are not straight-forward;
- Success in area of improving democratic processes and the general political environment, with examples cited regarding monitoring of recent local elections by CSOs; and,
- Participants were unsure as to whether civil society has played any significant part in pushing along the process of decentralising government and decision-making.

6.2 Kazakhstan

Inessa Frantz of IDC presented detailed statistical description of civil society in Kazakhstan.

Questions in my mind:

- NGOs *being* rather than *doing* was raised.
- Who is counting and why: bureaucrats, donors, researchers who like describing rather than explaining.

Leonid Solomin commented that Civil society is about rights, but rights are not enjoyed by all. Donors import notions of freedom, rights and democracy. Democracy is a form of governance. "Freedom and democracy are within us". The social protection of rights should be the concern of everyone and donors should see trades unions for example, as a form of protection.

The level of public expectation of what civil society can do, can solve, needs to addressed.

Confusion about the mass media being part of civil society - but surely the word (word processor or pen)/ the voice is a tool of civil society, like the street protest, the gun or the bomb.

6.3 Turkmenistan

The discussion in this small group (four NGO representatives) followed the questions set for all country groups, with Volodya facilitating.

Turkmenistan saw a short period of civil society growth (1993-95) followed by a braking process. Between 1995 and 1999 the government made people feel that the development of civil society was not welcome, for example, the term, non-government organisation was not accepted and instead we use the term 'public' (*obshestvenny*) organisations (OO).

Other key moments pointed out by Volodya and Natasha were in 1997, when a NGO handbook (*Neskolko shagov k vozmozhnoy pobede*) had to be withdrawn, and in 1998 when an article on social partnership was taken out of the national papers. Counterpart was able to set up their centre in 1998, however, and government-inspired NGOs have developed for key groups/functions such as support for youth, women and veterans (including the disabled). These are under the patronage of the president and named after members of his family.

Volodya said that a problem affecting civil society is the recent cuts in higher education. The length of university courses is being cut to two years, then you have to do a period of work and only after this can you come back and study again.

Communication to the outside world is also problematic. Visa for travel can be restricted, while the government removed licences of businesses to leave only one Internet provider in the country. Another problem is the relative isolation of the civil society sector from international donors.

The restrictions in social life have led to a large exodus of the Russian-speaking community.

What are the most active civil society groups in Turkmenistan? The following list was made:

- Official (Government) NGOs (see above). These are clearly important;
- Political parties;
- Ecological projects at mainly the local level (planting trees, cleaning up, helping animals);
- Religious organisations (both Muslim and Russian Orthodox) – but in the last two years they have faced increasing restrictions; and,
- Organisations representing disabled people – but new organisations have trouble in registering, are encouraged to join the existing ones.

All agreed that the United Nations provides a useful umbrella for many activities. There are no human rights organisations active in Turkmenistan *per se*. Registration of NGOs is a big problem now.

What role are CSOs/NGOs playing in Turkmenistan? NGOs are trying to introduce elements of true democracy. Natalia pointed to NGOs like her own, who are able to do an impressive range of activities in education/schools. This includes education on such controversial issues as drugs, HIV/AIDS, and prostitution. There are projects on civil dignity and with groups such as unemployed youth. Some NGOs, like *Aina* work with refugees and humanitarian aid (under the UN programme) covering health and education aspects. Participants agreed there is a quite a wide range of social issues one can work in.

The presidential system has become very overbearing in recent years – with the issue of the president's own book, his direct influence on the education system and the level of propaganda in the media. On the other hand, there are some examples of open dissent – for instance, the public protests about food shortages in 1995, and recently in a town where residents forced a reconsideration of the imposition of a mayor whom they did not accept. Ashgabad is more restrictive than some other towns – for example, local government in Krasnovodsk on the Caspian has a more liberal reputation.

In short, Turkmenistan can learn from elsewhere, but Turkmenistan is a warning to other countries in the region.

6.4 Uzbekistan

The following issues were identified as affecting the development of Civil Society in Uzbekistan.

- Lack of financial resources for Civil Society Organizations;
- Weak networking among various elements of the Civil Society;
- Passivity and misunderstanding of the role of Civil Society;
- Lack of legislation related to charity and social partnership;
- Lack of government interest in the development of Civil Society;
- Taxes;
- Authority of the NGO;
- Lack of self-realised approach to NGO development;
- Lack of understanding of Civil Society by civilians;
- Unprofessional approach of public organizations;
- Lack of transparency and corruption in government institutions; and,
- Lack of information

The most active Civil Society groups are:

- Civilians;
- Makhala (community);
- Family (clan);
- NGO;
- Public organisations (religious organisations, parties, trade unions);
- Governmental Institutions;
- Business;
- Youth movements;
- Religious organizations;
- Missionary organizations; and,

- Sport organizations.

The key roles Civil Society organisations are playing in Uzbekistan are:

- Instrumental;
- Law;
- Structures;
- NGO programmes;
- NGO services – informational and educational activities;
- Increasing civil activation of the population;
- Protection of rights;
- Legal;
- Transfer parts of organizations; and
- Facilitation.

7. LESSONS LEARNED FROM DAY ONE

At the end of day one the five country groups presented a series of issues that affected the growth of civil society in their own country, the facilitators from each group then met in the evening to further analyse the issues and consolidate them into one or two main issues. A small working group then took the main issues and produced the following nine points that were presented at the start of the second day of the Conference by Anne Garbutt. All actors involved in growing Civil Society of Central Asia must consider when planning or developing any programmatic or developmental work.

1. The descriptive histories defined the differences between the five countries highlighting the issue of context as so important when working in the development of Civil Society.
2. Dependency on Donors and International organisations can stunt the indigenous organic growth of Civil Society organisations.
3. There is a lack of agreed vision by Civil Society organisations on what Civil Society is and what role it is able to play.
4. There is a lack of traditional democratic interaction within the five Central Asian countries.
5. Inappropriate perceptions of Civil Society actors ability to solve problems.
6. Disincentives are created by Donor top down approaches that skew the interface between local Civil Society organisations and Donors.
7. Lack of understanding by society that they are able to influence change, so leading to poor participation by communities, particularly in rural areas.
8. Do not underestimate the importance of long established structures that were in Central Asia before the Soviet System (Mahallas, family groups, Clans etc)
9. Civil Society groups need to develop further their independence and autonomy, lessening their reliance on donors and other external influences.

These Nine points were immediately typed up after the conference for all participants as a reminder of the outputs they had developed to help improve the planning processes of any Civil Society development programme in Central Asia.

8. RESEARCH ON CIVIL SOCIETY IN CENTRAL ASIA

After the presentation of the nine lessons learned from day one, **Simon Heap (INTRAC Senior Researcher)** and his group of local researchers from Kyrgyzstan, Bakyt Baimatov and Bermet Stakeeva, from Kazakhstan four lecturers based at KIMEP in Almaty: Aliya Kabdieva, Aigerim Ibrayeva, Dina Sharpiova and Saule Dissenova shared their research summary papers on civil society in their respective countries. Alisher Kasymov from Uzbekistan also introduced his experience of civil society. A full INTRAC publication presenting the three year research work on Civil Society in Central Asia will be completed in August 2003. The following pages are a short extract prepared by Simon Heap for this publication.

Civil society in Central Asia is a fascinating subject to analyse because its development is a deeply historical process and is located at the convergence of a number of large contemporary trends. There are:

- Westernising projects;
- Islamising forces;
- Presidential visions;
- Nation-Building exercises;
- Environmental degradations;
- Ethnoterrorial tensions;
- Post-Socialist unravellings; and
- Grassroot stirrings.

The interaction of these forces have led, and are leading to, a series of contradictions. The certainties of the past have been replaced by uncertainties. The world has changed and civil society has been developing. Most of the people in the region have spent the vast majority of their lives under Communism, where society's obedience and passivity was the order of the day, so there are many dichotomies and contradictions to work through:

The masses v the individual
Comrades v citizens
Workers v employees
State-employed v self-employed
State-run v State ignored
Unilinear politics v contested politics
Single option to multiple option
Top-down v bottom-up
Collective v individualism
No choice v free choice, or at least lots of choice
Certainty v uncertainty
Core v periphery
Gender, ethnicity and age did not matter v when they did matter crucially.

All this means Civil Society in Central Asia is difficult to monitor, map and analyse/ However, INTRAC is half-way through a three year study which is seeking to do just that in four countries. The aim is to continue to strengthen INTRAC's and other's efforts to

analyse the dynamics of civil society growth firstly in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan and then in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. We present three of those four countries here in this session.

Short summaries of work-in-progress were made by the Kyrgyzstan research team Bakyt Baimatov and Bermet Stakeeva. The Kazakhstan research team, which consists of four lecturers based at KIMEP here in Almaty: Aliya Kabdieva, Aigerim Ibrayeva and Dina Sharpiova Saule Dissenova. After the coffee break the Kazakhstan research team will run a workshop on their work. Finally, turning to Uzbekistan, Alisher Kasymov began his work only recently and so will give his initial thoughts on the Uzbekistan experience of civil society.

Civil society is an arena of contestation. We like the idea of arenas: space, time, motion and process are all involved there. Yet, civil society seems defined by its relationships to others with the Government and foreign donors, but not too much by civil society's characteristics itself. Civil society as a counterbalance, as a countervailing force, as a positive force.

Civil society links are strongly vertical (to donors and government and to beneficiaries), but much less so horizontal between groups.

We see the two meanings of growing civil society: internally: organically, coming together around an issue, but also by external stimuli: donors and catalytic events. Both are required for healthy growth.

Interested readers are directed to the INTRAC website, <www.intrac.org>, for the very latest on the project, as well as full reports in English and Russian.

8.1 Discussion

After the two summary presentations on Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan there was heated debate about the content of the Kazakhstan report. Interestingly enough the researchers from KIMEP were academic lecturers who do not see themselves as an integral part of civil society; their research was therefore from a perspective of outside civil society looking in. The participants of the conference particularly the representative of the Confederation of Free Trade Unions see themselves very much as leaders in the development of Civil society within Kazakhstan. This led to a very heated discussion about the content of the research paper and the accuracy of its analysis. There was no satisfactory conclusion to the debate however what was encouraging was to see the strength of the debate and the quality of the arguments put forward by the participants who see themselves very much as civil society leaders. This type of debate can only add to the strengthening of civil society and its role in development throughout Central Asia.

9. THEMATIC WORKSHOPS ON CENTRAL ASIA'S EXPERIENCE

After coffee on day two the participants broke away into thematic groups that they elected to join themselves. The following five sections are the outputs from each of the thematic groups that can be used to add to the debate surrounding civil society development in:

- Social Partnerships;
- Community Development and Decentralisation;
- Civil Society Organisations and Political process;
- The Kazakhstan Research Report; and,
- Donor-Civil Society Partnerships.

9.1 Social Partnerships

Alexander Nisengoltz facilitated the group, and Gulmira Djamanova provided her own background research on the subject. Examples were given from participants as what was understood by the term Social Partnership. For instance, in 2001, the Presidential Office in Kyrgyzstan created a body that is responsible for social partnership issues between government and NGOs. One area of the partnership is involving NGOs in the implementation of the presidential programme in providing support (books and clothes) for children from poor families to attend school.

An example from Uzbekistan was the partnership between NGOs and *Mahallas* in rural areas in the form of discussions of the issues related to the collaboration and involvement of local authorities into the process. As a result, there has been a wide expansion and involvement of a much larger number of people.

Gulnara Dosumova spoke of the fact that in Nukus in the semi-autonomous region of Karakalpakstan in Uzbekistan, partnership had taken a formal form. Over the last several months, there have been a number of meetings between NGOs and government bodies with further identification of the collaboration possibilities in terms of social projects. There is currently a public advisory committee, which identifies directions in development, social projects and priorities.

In Tajikistan, the Public Advisory Committee was established in 1996 as a form of partnership. Currently, it consists of 73 organisation and two opposition political parties.

Natalia Usacheva stated the need for the model of power in social partnerships to be restructured from vertical to horizontal ways. There is a need in explanation of the partnership necessity to the government representatives, as every government problem is a public problem. It is important to involve citizens into a public hearing and transparency of the financial sources. The question was posed as how to raise civic sense of responsibility and civic sensibility in civil servants.

Arstanbek Berdaliev sought to clarify the understanding of the Social Partnership. In his opinion, Social Partnership is a mutual problem identification, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation process with equal distribution of the rights and approved sources. It is a real partnership when partners bring equal input for a common goal. In

Kyrgyzstan, there are many examples of the Social Partnership at a local level. For example, in Nookatskom *rayon*, 100,000 *som* (\$2,000) was set aside from the local budget for sole purpose of supporting NGOs.

9.2 Community Development and Decentralisation

The group was led by Farrukh (Tajikistan) and set out to answer three questions:

1. What are the (most important) traditional forms of community association in Central Asia?;
2. How can local government and NGOs help in community development?; and,
3. How can the voice of the communities be heard (in wider society)?

Farrukh began by talking about the Tajik and Uzbek situation. When people speak of traditional communities they usually mean rural communities. In towns, there is a common division by particular crafts or occupations (ie all craftsmen of one type in a particular street or quarter). Donors who refer to community development usually refer to rural area – the *kishlyak* or *selo* (village); in towns to the *mahalla*.

Farrukh said that the authority of the *mahalla* as a social or community unit is dropping, as the government tries to change its function and add administrative responsibilities – eg the payment of certain benefits. It is now becoming an organ of local government, the traditional ceremonial role is being lost.

Another traditional form of community organisation – the *ashar* collective voluntary work system – is in decline, less people take part in such activities. Farukh said this is because of the trend of increasing individualism, also the migration of villagers to the towns.

Zoya agreed with the statements about changes in the *mahallas*. In Uzbekistan, the government is trying to strengthen its links with the people. This is a first step towards government decentralisation, though the government still controls *mahallas*. However, there are cases when the *mahalla* residents have forced a replacement of the government-appointed chairman. She said it is important for NGOs to work with *mahallas* and their commissions which deal with key issues for local people.

Shukhrat (*mahalla* chair, Tashkent) said that in the past *mahalla* meant the rear of a nomad caravan. Before the revolution it had a geographical meaning, also meant a rich local leader. After the revolutions the *mahallas* were destroyed and new committees were set up to deal with family problems etc, subject to the *rayon* (district) executive committee. The 1999 law makes *mahallas* an “organ of citizens self-government”. The town hall (*hakimat*) can control elections but the function of the general meeting (*kingash*) is important too. The *mahallas* have their own budget and some room for independent action.

Asel (Adult Training Centre, Osh) brought in Kyrgyz experience from Osh. The government/UNDP decentralisation programmes have been very positive; there are 60-80 professional associations in South Kyrgyzstan doing good work. Many *aiyl okmutus* are supporting local NGOs. In some commissions, there is 50:50 representation and joint work in planning budgets. These units have a general fund, as well as the functional budgets laid down by central government.

Outa (EU Delegation) described community development in the Finnish model: both advocacy and service delivery functions within local government. She mentioned the danger of some NGOs, especially in advocacy, becoming or being seen as “opposition”.

The discussion then moved onto what is gained and lost from recent developments in communities, and how to help the most vulnerable sections. Bakyt (INTRAC) introduced comments from his civil society research in Kyrgyzstan. The *aksakal* councils play an important role in adjudicating local problems. Now elections to the council are often on new criteria, including knowledge of local issues. Younger people and professionals are often appointed. The councils have new powers in the justice system; they hear more serious cases.

Another important local organisation is the credit union (or the local water users associations). These bodies benefit from international experience brought in by various agencies. However, it was agreed that there is a danger of setting up parallel organisations which will not survive once the agency or donor goes away.

When looking at the losers in these changes, it seems that local government officials at the *rayon* level will lose from the advance of *ayil okmutus* and NGOs. However, Outa pointed out that decentralisation and greater efficiency of local government should eventually make all staff better respected.

BIOM described recent efforts in Bishkek to inform condominium members about basic issues regarding services through public meetings. Soros and other international donors helped fund this work by the Town Hall.

Farrukh pointed out that decentralisation has different aspects: finance, authority and legal responsibility. There is a danger of going too fast in the transfer of responsibilities downwards. Both human and financial resources are needed.

BIOM described the UNDP seminar series bringing together youth, business and government to brainstorm different problems in the community and then to come up with projects to address them. In this two-year programme some successful projects were created and run.

Finally, Bakyt pointed to the experience of government and NGOs coming together in the *oblast* level assembly in Talas in Kyrgyzstan. This joint work helps both sides know each other and the local situation better. However, some have suggested that the contacts may create an elite or pro-government layer of NGOs.

9.3 Civil Society Organisations and the Political Process

A fairly lengthy and well-thought out introduction was given by Nurlan Sakhanov of Counterpart Consortium on the political history of the region and a review of the models describing how Civil Society can be seen interacting with other political forces. Nurlan also mentioned some interesting statistics describing the ‘weight’ of the different sectors in different countries regarding property ownership (approximately 50% by State in Germany, but only 25% in Kazakhstan).

Concentrating on the entities of the Third Sector, Nurlan asked what role do NGOs play in the political process in the countries of the region, and to what extent is any CSO activity a political action ?

Though there was no shared understanding of what is 'political' about NGOs, interesting points were raised by individual participants. Yusup Kamalov of UDASA, Nukus, was sure that the "creation of a NGO is itself a political process". Anton Ivanov of Almaty *akimat* disagreed: CSOs engage in social activities and/or community development/education and *not* political activities. He admitted though that it is only those NGOs involved in advocacy work that have a political agenda. Asiya Sasykbaeva pointed out that to a greater or lesser extent, NGOs have entered into agreements with government in all the Republics in respect of delivery of public services, and thus must constitute a political entity. There was general consensus that organisations in the third sector are working in relative isolation and do not have the capacity to enter the national policy-making debates. Yusup continued his line of thought by adding that all individuals, whether as private citizens or as representatives of organisations, who enter the 'public domain' join the political process by doing so.

Allan Oliver of NDI commented that it is in the interest of NGOs to be involved in the political process in each country, as changes in legislation can enhance the environment in which they work. Asiya gave the example of Kyrgyzstan, where many NGOs have as part of their explicit mission statement a desire to advocate for political change. But in Uzbekistan, Yusup noted, such advocacy can be dangerous. Thus, many NGOs do not "advertise" their objective of having political influence, otherwise they may face prosecution from Government. In Kyrgyzstan there is a much more favourable environment with Government actively seeking consultation with the third sector as the Government themselves "have run out of ideas", claimed Asiya. It should also be noted that those that are in the third sector and who wish to join the mainstream of political activity, can openly give up their NGO posts and run for election/become public officials. This has been the case with a number of prominent politicians. Asiya also commented on how NGOs in Kyrgyzstan act as a tool of accountability of the actions of the political process.

Turning to 'citizenship and citizen's rights', Nurlan noted that the monitoring of the quality of public service delivery was a political process and that the feedback from both individuals and civic representational groups were important elements.

Asiya pointed to the 'fluid' nature of the three sectors, and the relative youth of modern civil society in Former Soviet Union, means that the 'political space' needs to be explored further. As yet there are no models, ideals, manifestos that are clear and that have been tested in any way. Participation in elections, for example, is encouraged in Kyrgyzstan, but the political party system is so weak that there is no election manifestos.

Anton was quick to point out that it was not the situation in Kazakhstan (Central Asia) *per se* that was "so bad", as he said that there were many examples around the world of political systems that are functioning very poorly!

With particular reference to Uzbekistan, it was commented that the flow of/access to information and discussion on international politics was crucial to the healthy development of a political system. (Yusup). It was also noted how important the tools of technology and language are to this process. CSOs have difficulty in being included in

the full political process as they are restricted by their telecommunication technology (for example, Internet access) and use of local languages (for example, Uzbek language dominant and those from Karalapakstan discriminated against).

Generally accepted that there are cases where political pressure from the State, in pursuit of nation-building, can result in political exclusion from minority/disadvantaged groups (often represented by CSOs).

9.4 Kazakhstan Research Report

NGOs could be characterised as having good leaders but poor management. Need less on transformational leadership and intellectual support and more on organisational capacity building.

Legislation constricts civil society, and does not allow it full expression. A question raised was are NGOs involved in poverty reduction?

Trade unions and other institutions are bypassed by NGOs – there is little horizontal linkages across civil society.

Strategies and tools of civil society: mass media; protests; violence; dialogue; and picketing.

There were many comments on the research including some of the following: novelty of the research was not shown explicitly; grounded opinion is what is required; interviewing and questionnaire; need more evidence from outside Almaty; and citizen's should be the starting place. Need wide dissemination; electronic/printed copies; sectoral roundtables. Use research as "a granny"; in other words, use it as a resource, not as a definitive piece of research that fully represents the whole complex understanding of what we mean by Civil Society.

9.5 Donor–Civil Society Partnerships

A question raised during this session was, are short-term, once-only and small grants effective? Should donors be necessary sponsoring others or implementing their own programmes?

Donors have their own models; there is little or no co-ordination amongst donors. In response to that statement there was a feeling that there is some co-ordination among donors and NGOs in Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan. In the Turkmenistan this is helped by the fact there are not so many NGOs and a handful of donors. Yet one participant claimed that there is a Black list of NGOs circulating among donors in Turkmenistan. The experience of Kazakhstan is on the organisation of roundtables and donor co-ordination in the form of regular quarterly meetings.

It was admitted that NGOs do not know how to write projects nor final reports. Kyrgyzstan: there is no feedback from some donors (Soros Foundation), while the Eurasia Foundation has a positive practice with good feedback. Protectionism and incompetence of the officers from international organisations and donor's agencies was seen as a factored hindering true development. Many donors have their own focus groups. There is no transparency in the selection of partners by donors. Partners are

permanent, there is no 'fresh blood' (Uzbekistan). They also do not explain why projects are not in dollars (Tajikistan). A database on international donors is required.

The group concluded that the presence of donors in Central Asia region is a significant fact supporting civil society development, but there are some problems needed in the urgent resolution.

9.6 Presentation of Results

At the end of two very hard days the participants managed to provide very brief presentations of the discussions held in each group. There were no real conclusions drawn and the group dynamics to a certain extent did not allow for good note taking. The debates were exciting and very fast flowing. The notes recorded above are [probably of better value to the participants as a reminder of the discussions held and are not of such value to outsiders who did not attend the workshop.

What will be of much more value will be the valuable comments provided in the next section of the report where participants were asked to help the forum provide a set of lessons learned from the two days of working together .

10. LESSONS FROM THE CONFERENCE

After the Thematic Workshops, conference participants were asked to reflect on what lessons does this conference have for your organisation, for civil society in your country, the wider Central Asian region and for international organizations working here? Here are a selection of comments:

Natalya Tukalevskaya, Diabetes Association of Republic of Kazakhstan (DARK): the result of the Conference is the fact that we have started to think about the possibility of conducting our previously planned conference at the regional level, at the Central Asian level. The region is uneven in its civil society development – the regional view helps some countries to learn (for example, Turkmenistan). DARK invites NGOs from the region to a conference on social policy with public and NGO sector in early October.

Erkin Kasybekov, Counterpart Consortium, Kyrgyzstan: all the issues have to be thought through. This conference strengthens the capacity of those organisations which help other CSOs. It was crucial to raise a question on building capacities of facilitators. A profound analysis is needed as far as many other actors are emerging, and these actors need assistance. I consider those issues and those opportunities that we are providing to the civil society as the most important ones. Do they meet the needs of the civil society? We are implementing the European Union project aimed at provision of the communities with a possibility to play an important role in civil society. We have more and more players in our field now but do we have the capacity to help them? The newly emerging civil society in the region will be the product of our work.

Leonid Solomin, Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Kazakhstan: This conference is an opportunity to get to know various views on development of the civil society. However, unfortunately, a question on creation of umbrella structure has not been raised. The struggle for democracy is an association formed with a purpose to competently influence and competently act. An issue of integration is very important, however, it is not being discussed by public associations. Though our governments do discuss these issues, why do not we consider it important,. For instance, we make efforts to create a National Federation of Trade Unions. We need to build a wider umbrella structure across Central Asia.

I am concerned with the fact that beyond all discussions and reports the citizen, the ordinary people are not seen. Citizens themselves are not active, and not aware about their rights. After ten years of independence we have the same psychology, we have not found a mechanism to create a united movement. We need to find a way to help people to change in themselves and demand their rights. The donors are writing reports on Kazakhstan but they never find their way to the people. If we are citizens we must fight for our rights ensuring that the people we claim to represent are truly represented. That does not necessarily mean confrontation with the government; it means working together for a common purpose.

Marat Aigambetov, Counterpart Consortium, Kazakhstan: To me, many topics were interesting. Agents of civil society themselves are interesting. I was pleasantly surprised by the number of organizations of civil society. International practice is limited by certain types of organisations (such as NGOs), though there are many agents, and majority of

them are not within our sights here at this conference. Provided more attention is paid to all subjects, the work would be more efficient. The Conference is topical, and one of the most important moments was the discussion of the research country reports. I would like to suggest all the international agencies to consult their clients regarding such reports. The conference showed that the typology of CSOs is much greater than we are used to working with: they represent wide spheres of interest, include religious organizations and trade unions. The Kazakhstan civil society research report was much discussed, it should be used for further consultation with our partners and clients.

Rakhima Nazarova (Association of Reproductive Health, Uzbekistan): We urgently need more professional people in the NGO sector, able to engage in social partnership with government and the donors. International organisations bring new methods. External experience can be useful, it can change us. It is up to us how we use this.

Asiya Sasykbaeva (Centre InterBilim, Kyrgyzstan): One of the excellent ideas of the conference was to invite representatives of government structures. A representative of the Kazakhstan government structure mentioned that we should work in co-operation with the third sector. It is very hard to invite members of the Parliament, however their participation in this kind of conferences is crucial. INTRAC's contribution is invaluable to introducing new ideas to our sector. Their conduction of this kind of conference and research of civil society development are crucially important for our region. Civil Society and Political Processes Session did not evoke great interest among the conference participants, though this subject is particularly topical today. And this particular subject could be developed into the next conference. I would like to support the idea expressed by the representative of Karakalpakstan to conduct such annual conferences in different countries of Central Asia. We state that the initiative should come from the grassroots, however, our organizations need to be pushed externally to move the boat called the civil society.

Nurgul Djanaeva (Forum of Women NGOs, Kyrgyzstan): It is very interesting to get a contradicting opinion. And that is normal. A proposal to conduct a focused discussion on the research product in order to use that research in our work seems to be very important.

It was mentioned that gender and ethnic factors did not play important role in the past, however this statement contradicts the reality. It can discredit the research. I was surprised by the presentation made by the Kazakhstan research team. You claim that political activity is at a low level. However, at the same time you say that there are 18 political parties and the opposition is formed. How is it possible to talk about political inactivity? We can talk about other methods, other levels, etc. Which criteria were used under staging civil society development? This question is not clear.

I am very much impressed by the fact that INTRAC has conducted the research on civil society in Central Asia. This is a great achievement taking into account that only eighteen month have passed. Thank you very much.

Valentina Sevrukova, Confederation of NGOs (KNOK), Kazakhstan: We have to be careful in adopting different models. If the international donors go away we will be left with just 10% of the NGO sector. Hence sustainability and the work with the Kazakhstan government on social contracting is key. I would like to thank those who organised this conference. It appeared to be a sort of stimulation to express certain action plans. We

met many people here and hope to keep meeting each other, we live in the same region. If you give your advice to other countries this advice should be supported by some facts. My conclusion is: we are different. Civil society has its own foundations. One of these foundations is the 'NGO'. We ask a question: what would happen if donors leave us? Everybody should be concerned with the issues of establishing sustainability of non-governmental sector. For instance, in Poland all donors have left, however, the NGO sector continues to exist and operate. Researches of Kazakh civil society lagged behind the reality, however, we hope it would be improved and completed.

Emil Sultanbaev, DCCA, Kyrgyzstan: The Conference was admirably efficient. We talk about five countries, but it is also important to remember about the sub-regions, for example, the Ferghana Valley. The conference was very valuable, we need to carry on this work.

The Conference was a great event. There is a willingness to continue our discussion furthermore. A need to set practical tasks and get better government participation. There were just few representatives of the power that evidences their poor involvement into the process of building civil society. My proposal is that international experience, such as the mechanism and impact of stakeholders, needs to be reflected in research in order to provide for more dynamic development of civil society. The factors, which slow down the civil society development, need to be discussed in detail. As a whole, I am satisfied with the work of the conference and the selection of participants.

Galia Omarov, ASTRA, Kazakhstan: The conference has focused on the human side. The arena model of civil society helps this because it puts people in the middle.

Thanks INTRAC and IDC for the conduct of the Conference. We had a chance to listen to each other and learn a lot of new ideas. We got to know that Turkmenistan has a lot to learn from us, and we have a lot to learn from it (to avoid the similar situation). A lot of work is yet to come. We need to measure, find criteria to indicate we have moved forward in civil society development. Social contracting can provide one element, this will be a big step forward.

Nataliya Shabunts (Civil Society NGO, Turkmenistan): Don't look at organisations in a narrow way; the previous mistake forced us to think in a broader way. We need to create a Regional Centre of Civil Society learning and sharing.

10.1 Thanks and Closure

The Conference was a great success with many new ideas being formed old ideas re-discussed, new contacts made and old friendships re-invigorated. The conference organisers had the pleasant task of thanking everyone for coming and closing the procedures.

Anne Garbutt (INTRAC): Thank you for your participation in our Conference. If there had been less participants the Conference would not have been as successful as it was. There has been much 'food for reflection' – what direction shall we now all move to? I was pleasantly surprised to find myself in the middle of a river boiling up with ideas of civil society growth. It is almost impossible to reflect on all these ideas at this moment however we are thankful for the ideas you have all shared with us. One of the most important points raised in this conference was that we should respect each other. This

Conference proved that even though we all come from such different backgrounds we can work in a harmonious way and can have a shared understanding of the concept of civil society. There were just a few donors and even less Government officials, and yet many issues were devoted to the donor agencies and Government relationships with civil society. The relative weakness of donor and Government participation at the conference was a disappointment. Nonetheless, you the participants who are here helped us all to consider thinking about civil society in a much deeper way and the two days have given much opportunity for reflection by all of us.

I would like to thank IDC for all their hard work over the past two days and the many weeks leading up to the conference. INTRAC only has a role in working with civil society in Central Asia as long as organisations such as IDC want to work with us. We are not part of Central Asia civil society but a facilitator that would like to make a very small contribution to the **Growing Civil Society in Central Asia**.

Inessa Frantz (Kazakhstan): Dear colleagues, our Conference is approaching to its end; however, the discussions on building civil society are not approaching the end. After the Conference we passed to the different level of understanding civil society. We understood that Civil Society is not only the presence of numerous groups, but also a buffer, a space. Civil Society is a process of protecting the groups' interests, a possibility to react and achieve certain result. Civil society represents a self-regulated mechanism, a society characterized by high resistance to conflicts and high tolerance to various opinions. Fowler says: "Look for the power sources of the civil society".

These sources could be the election system, the debate and discussion system, and development of lobbying mechanisms and advocacy. Civil society development does not envisage a harmonious society, but could provide skills to solve tensions, which does not go beyond the frames of the interests of particular groups.

I would like to thank the participants for their tolerance and observance of democracy norms of discussions. I would also like to thank the facilitators for their contribution, and the interpreters. I would like to thank INTRAC for the provided opportunity to exchange the opinions and learn many new ideas and for the joint contribution to the development and building of civil society. I would also like to thank INTRAC, especially David Marsden and Anne Garbutt, and all members of the organisation committee and wish all participants success and good luck in the future.

* * * * *

Bibliography

Ashman, D. (2001) *Building Alliances with Civil Society. International Forum on Capacity Building (IFCB). of Southern NGOs A Draft Synthesis Report*. May. Brussels: IFCB.

Beauclerk, J. and Heap, S. (2001) 'Civil Society-State Relationships: Models and Actualities', Background Paper for INTRAC's 10th Anniversary Conference, *Changing Expectations? The Concept and Practice of Civil Society in international Development*, Balliol College, Oxford, 13-15 December.

Bennett, J. (1997) 'Introduction', in Bennett, J. (ed.) *'NGOs and Governments', A Review of Current Practice for Southern and Eastern NGOs*. Oxford: INTRAC, pp. 1-12.

Carothers, T. (1999) 'Western Civil Society Aid to Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Democracy and Rule of Law Project', *East European Constitutional Review*, 8, 3, Fall.

CIVICUS (2001) *Civil Society Index Survey – Self-Assessment*. www.civicus.org

Clayton, A.. (ed.) (1996) *NGOs, Civil Society and the State: Building Democracy in Transitional Societies*. Oxford: INTRAC.

Clayton, A., Oakley, P. and Taylor, J. (2000) 'Civil Society Organisations and Service Provision.' *Civil Society and Social Movements Programme Paper no. 2*, Geneva: UNRISD.

ECDPM (European Centre for Development Policy Management) (2001) 'Advancing the Policy and Practice of Capacity Building in International Development Co-operation. Structuring Civil Society', *Capacity.org*, Issue 11, October. The Netherlands: ECDPM. www.capacity.org/events.html

Fowler, A. (2000) 'Civil Society, NGOs and Social Development: Changing the Rules of the Game', *Occasional Paper no.1*. Geneva: UNRISD.

Howell, J. and Pearce, J. (2001) *Civil Society and Development: A Critical Interrogation*. Boulder: Lynne-Reinner.

IAAC (Irish Aid Advisory Committee) (1999) *Forum on Strengthening Civil Society Through Capacity Building*. Dublin: IAAC.

INZET (2000) Workshop on Enhancing Civil Society Involvement in the Implementation of the new ACP-EU Agreement. Geneva: INZET. www.inzet.nl/projecten/lome/workshop20001128%2B29.html

James, R. (ed.) (2001) *Power and Partnership? Experiences of NGO Capacity-Building*. Oxford: INTRAC.

James, R. (1998) *Demystifying Organisation Development: Practical Capacity-Building Experience from African NGOs*. Oxford: INTRAC.

Kaplan, A. (1999) *The Development of Capacity, UN-NGLS (United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service)*. Development Dossier; www.unsystem.org

Madrid, R. (2001) *Developing a Civil Society Programme in Togo*. Capacity.org, Issue 11. ECDPM (European Centre for Development Policy Management) Publication.

Morgan, P. (1997) *The Design and Use of Capacity Development Indicators*. Paper for CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency).

O'Connell, B. (1999) *Civil Society: the Underpinnings of American Democracy*. Hanover: University Press of New England.

Pustintsev, B. (2001) 'The Kremlin and Civil Society', *The Moscow Times*, 22 October, 10.

Putnam, R. D. (1993) *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Rutzen, D. (2001) 'NGO-Government Compacts in Central and Eastern Europe', *Alliance* 6(3).

Sinclair, M. *et al.* (2001) Report on NGO/CBO Participatory Learning and Advisory Project, Kathmandu. Department for International Development (DFID). Output Purpose Review (OPR). Unpublished. Oxford: INTRAC.

Stubbs, P. and Clarke, K. (2000) *The Civil Society Initiatives Fund (CSIF) in Croatia. A Review of the Department for International Development (DFID)*. London: DFID.

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) (1997) *Capacity Development Assessment Guidelines. UNDP Governance policy paper*.

USAID Global Civil Society Strengthening Co-operative Agreement. Centre for Democracy Governance Global Bureau. PACT (Private Agencies Collaborating Together) / IDR (Institute for Development Research); www.pactworld.org

Wardle, C. and Kiuranov, D. (2001) *Local Democracy Development Project. Centre for Strategic Research and Development of Georgia Evaluation*. Unpublished. Oxford: INTRAC.

World Bank (2000-01) 'Removing Social Barriers and Building Social Institutions', *World Bank World Development Report*. Washington: World Bank.

World Bank (2001) *Capacity-Building of Southern NGOs – The Experience of the World Bank*; www.worldbank.org/essd

Appendix 1: Conference Timetable

Day One (13 June 2002)

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 10.00-10.15 | Official welcome and introduction |
| 10.15-11.00 | Keynote Speeches |
| 11.30-1.00 | Civil society and development: International experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Civil society: a critical interrogation• Civil society capacity building• Civil society-State relations |
| 2.00-3.30 | Civil society in Central Asia: country groups <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kazakhstan• Kyrgyzstan• Tajikistan• Turkmenistan• Uzbekistan |
| 4.00-5.00 | Plenary session: report back and short Q&As. |

Day Two (14 June 2002)

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 9.40-10.00 | Nine point summary of issues from day one |
| 10.00-11.00 | Civil society in central Asia: research summaries <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kyrgyzstan• Kazakhstan• Uzbekistan |
| 11.30-1.00 | Learning from Central Asia's experience: thematic workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Social partnership• Community development• CSO and political process• Advocacy for vulnerable groups in society• INTRAC Kazakhstan Civil society report• Donor-Civil society partnerships |
| 2.00-2.15 | Brief presentation of results |
| 2.45-4.00 | Lessons from the conference |
| 4.00-5.00 | Final plenary |

Appendix 2: List of Participants

Kazakhstan

Inessa Frants	NGO, Almaty	Institute for Development Co-operation (IDC)
Violetta Jalilova	NGO, Almaty	Institute for Development Co-operation (IDC)
Gulmira Jamanova	NGO, Almaty	Central Asia Sustainable Development Information Network (CASDIN)
Mansiya Kainazarova	NGO, Almaty	Central Asia Institute Development (CAID)
Janna Nauryzbaeva	NGO, Almaty	Central Asia Institute Development (CAID)
Nataliya Tkachenko	NGO, Almaty	Central Asia Institute Development (CAID)
Aibek Dumbaev	NGO, Almaty	Zhan
Valentina Sevrukova	NGO, Astana	Confederation of NGOs Kazakhstan (KNOK)
Leonid Solomin	Trade Union, Astana	Confederation of Free Trade Unions
Nurlan Sakhanov	International Organisation, Almaty	Counterpart Consortium
Galia Omarova	NGO, Astana	Agency of Social Technologies and Development (ASTRA)
Aliya Kabdieva	Academic Institute, Researcher	KIMEP
Aigerum Ibraeva	Academic Institute, Researcher	KIMEP
Dina Sharipova	Academic Institute, Researcher	KIMEP
Gulnur Bolyspaeva	Academic Institutes	KIMEP
Nataliya Tukalevskaya	NGO, Almaty	Diabetic Association of the Republic of Kazakhstan
Dina Bektaeva	NGO, Kzyl-Orda	Poverty Reduction Co-ordination Centre
Nadejda Gladyr	NGO, Almaty	Women's Crisis Centre
Lyazzat Ishmukhamedova	NGO, Almaty	Moldir
Natalia Usacheva	NGO, Karaganda	GIAC
Gaziz Telebaev	Ministry of Culture, and Social Accord, Astana	Director of Department of Internal Policy
Anton Ivanov	Government, Almaty	Almaty <i>akimat</i>
Jeremy Horner	Donor, Almaty	DFID Kazakhstan
Nataliya Kruchkova	Donor, Almaty	DFID Kazakhstan
Akhmetova Saule	Journalist, Almaty	
Janar Sagimbaeva	Donor, Almaty	UNDP
Marat Aitmagambetov	International agencies, Almaty	Counterpart Consortium, Kazakhstan

Kevin T. Borrup	International agencies, Almaty	ICNP, Kazakhstan
Alexander Nisengolts	International agencies, Almaty	International Center for Not-for- Profit Law, Central Asia
Allan Oliver	International agencies, Almaty	NDI, Central Asia
Jeff Erlich	Donor, Almaty	Eurasia Foundation
Svetlana Islamova	International agencies, Almaty	UNDP
Nataliya Mamkova	Donor	Soros-Kazakhstan Foundation
Seamus Bennet	INGO	VSO
Julian Hansen	International agencies, Almaty	UNV programme
Daniel Penny	International agencies	
Rafael Balkin	Academic Institutes	Ethnic Initiative
Aizhan Akhmetova	Government	City <i>akimat</i>
Larissa Shvetsova		IDC consultant
Svetlana But	NGO, Almaty	Private School Unit
Nataliya Chumakova	NGO, Almaty	
Dos Kushim		
David Marsden	INGO, UK	INTRAC
Anne Garbutt	INGO, UK	INTRAC
Simon Heap	INGO, UK	INTRAC
Charles Buxton	INGO, UK	INTRAC
Simon Forrester	INGO, UK	INTRAC
Nataliya Laptieva	INGO	INTRAC, Almaty
Evgeniya Novikova	Logistics	IDC
Irina Sokolova	Logistics	IDC

Kyrgyzstan

Aisya Sasykbaeva	NGO, Bishkek	Center InterBilim
Nurgul Janaeva	NGO, Bishkek	Women's Forum
Raya Kadyrova	NGO, Bishkek	Foundation for Tolerance International DCCA
Emil Sultanbaev		Umit
Svetlana Bashtavenko	NGO, Balykchi	BIOM
Yakimchuk Ilya	NGO, Bishkek	Alga
Tatiana Temirova	NGO, Kant	Eurasia Foundation
Aigul Ordokova	International agencies	Depart of Social Dev, NGO
Arstanbek Berdaliev	Government, Bishkek	Liaison Expert
Erkinbek Kasybekov	International agencies	Counterpart Consortium, KG
Abdykadyrova Asel	International agencies	Eurasia Foundation
Bermet Stakeeva	Researcher	INTRAC, KG
Bakyt Baitmatov	Researcher	INTRAC, KG
Lola Umatalieva	INGO	INTRAC, KG

Uzbekistan

Nataliya Kulakova	NGO	Tashkent Public Education Center
Zainab Salieva	NGO	BICC, Bukhara
Gulnara Dosumova	NGO	Renaissance, Nukus
Yusup Kamalov	NGO	UDASA, Nukus
Bibisora Oripova	NGO	UMID, Samarkand
Markhabo Yadgarova	NGO	BWA, Termez
Shukhrat Juraev	Government, Mahalla, Tashkent	Chairman of Mahalla
Rakhima Nazarova	NGO	Association of Reproductive Health
Alisher Kasymov	Researcher	INTRAC, Uzbekistan
Lola Abdusalyamova	INGO	INTRAC, Uzbekistan
Guljakhon Mavlani	INGO	INTRAC, Uzbekistan

Tajikistan

Farrukh Tyuryaev	NGO	ASTI, Khujand
Viloyat Mirzoeva	NGO	Gender and Development
Nuriddin Karshiboev	NGO	National Association of Independent Media in TJK, NANSMIT, Dushanbe
Muattar Khaidarova	NGO	Society and Law, Dushanbe
Kiomiddin Davlatov	NGO	Development Centre
Jamilya Madjidova	Journalist	

Turkmenistan

Aina Rakhmanova	NGO	Annageldy
Nataliya Shabunts	NGO	Civil Society
Vladimir Kosarev	NGO, Ashgabat	ICCA Information Center
Tomasz Anusiewicz	International Agency	UNDP, Slovak Republic
Outa Khermolati	International Agency	EC Delegation

Interpreters

Ludmila Lemets
Lubov Pletneva
Kulyan Janabaeva
Zaituna Gaisina

Occasional Paper Series no. 39

Growing Civil Society in Central Asia

**INTRAC Central Asia Regional Conference,
Almaty, Kazakhstan, 13-14 June 2002**

Edited by Anne Garbutt and Simon Heap

INTRAC and its local partner, the Institute for Development Co-operation (IDC), facilitated the First INTRAC Regional Conference on Civil Society, held in June 2002 in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Ninety participants, representing some of the leading civil society organizations in the region, attended from the five Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. A keynote speech summarising themes analysed in INTRAC's 10th Anniversary Conference started the Conference, while three papers provided the background global context in which the participants explored key issues in their Central Asia environment. The conference then involved participants in several workshops examining both thematic and geographic issues related to the developing Civil Society within the region. Lessons and perspectives about civil society growth were collated at the end of the conference.

ISBN: 1-89-7748-72-8

INTRAC

INTRAC Headquarters, PO Box 563, Oxford, PO Box 563, Oxford, UK
Tel: -44-(0)1865-201851; Fax: -44-(0)1865-201852;
E-mail: <info@intrac.org>; Website: <www.intrac.org>

INTRAC Regional Office, Kievskaya 107, 3rd floor, Bishkek, 720001, Kyrgyzstan
Tel: (996-312) 61-12-77; Fax: (996-312) 61-14-02
E-mail: <icap@intrac.org>; Website: www.intrac.org>

INTRAC is a company limited by guarantee No. 2663769
Registered in England A Registered Charity Charity No: 1016676