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KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

CASE STUDY

USAID Promotes School Budget Transparency

USAID initiates first school budget hearings in Central Asia that are public



Photo: Quality Learning Project

Galina Shakun (standing above, right), Principal of Orlovka School, presents the school budget and plan for the new academic year.

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–Kanat Sadykov, Minister of Education and Science

Telling Our Story

U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>

CHALLENGE The Kyrgyz Government has increased its education budget annually since 2002. Despite these efforts, the increase is not enough to finance initiatives to improve the quality of education. This is in part because the increases are not used effectively and transparently. To solve this problem, the Ministry of Education and Science is reforming the school financial and management systems from the national to the community level. The Kyrgyz Government has transferred all 299 schools of the Chui Region to a new financial-management model, “Per Capita Financing,” that is more transparent and market-oriented. This model gives financial independence to schools and guarantees the transparency of the school budget for stakeholders: the parents and the community.

INITIATIVE The USAID Quality Learning Project supports the Ministry of Education and Science to implement the new school financing and management strategy by training school administrators and the community to cooperate in the school management process. At a public budget hearing, parents, the community and school administrators gathered to discuss school financial and management questions for the first time, making the process more transparent and effective. USAID provided technical support to the Kara-Jugach and Orlovka schools of Chui province, conducting the first budget hearings in Central Asia. More than 200 people took part, including representatives from the Ministry of Education, local government, parents, teachers and students. The hearings also involved other school directors who observed firsthand the advantages of public hearings.

RESULTS The public budget hearings garnered the community’s interest and gave them a forum to discuss issues of concern openly. In Kara-Jygach school, the community’s trust was won by the budget hearing’s openness and objectivity. “This budget hearing gave me a much clearer picture of the school’s needs than ever before. Now that I understand the school’s needs better, I promise to find additional funds to purchase four computers for the school,” said Bakyt Myrzaliev, the Head of Kara-Jygach local government.

Six schools in Chui region organized their own public budget hearings independently after USAID received positive feedback from the community and education administrators. For instance, Kanat Sadykov, the Minister of Education and Science openly noted, “The experience of Chui oblast’s budget hearings should be spread to all schools in the country since it created trust between the community and schools... These budget hearings are the outcome of school reform and a commitment to improve Kyrgyzstan’s education system.”