



**USAID**  
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**KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

## SUCCESS STORY

### CASH FOR WORK: BRINGING LIFE BACK TO NORMAL

**Cash for work activities in Osh have helped restore a sense of normalcy while promoting tolerance and community cohesion.**



*Ethnic Uzbek and Kyrgyz women and men came together for the first time after the violence to clean up their community park.*

Photo credit: USAID

*It is good to work together instead of looking at each other with hatred... simple people must stay closer to each other.*

*This cash-for-work activity is a great opportunity for us to make some money... we work together, we talk to each other, but we don't talk about our ethnicities.*

*—Various community members in Osh*

“At first, I was afraid to go out and interact with Kyrgyz people, but now I know working together helps overcome distrust. People come here to work and earn income to feed their families... nobody emphasizes his/her nationality. We share our bread and tea, and have common problems... we have nothing to divide,” said Shuhrat Nematov, a 28-year-old Uzbek living in the southern Kyrgyz city of Osh.

Shuhrat Nematov is one of 30 people engaged in a USAID cash-for-work activity that is designed to build confidence. USAID launched the activity to promote stability and reduce the potential for conflict following the April and June 2010 crisis in Kyrgyzstan.

Since ethnic violence erupted in southern Kyrgyzstan in June, ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks, overwhelmed with fear and distrust, have avoided each other. USAID's confidence building activity has managed to bring ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks together and reunite them via a joint community-based initiative to renovate Delfin Park, which borders the two neighborhoods in Osh. Over a period of three weeks, 30 ethnic Uzbeks and ethnic Kyrgyz worked shoulder-to-shoulder to clean up the Delfin Park area, including preparing the site for the installation of a soccer field and repairing the tennis court.

During the next phase of the park's rehabilitation, USAID will fund the installation of playground equipment, a soccer field, benches, and picnic tables and purchase sports equipment (tennis rackets, balls, and soccer balls).

This activity demonstrated to community members how working together can build up their communities while at the same time improving the relationships between them.