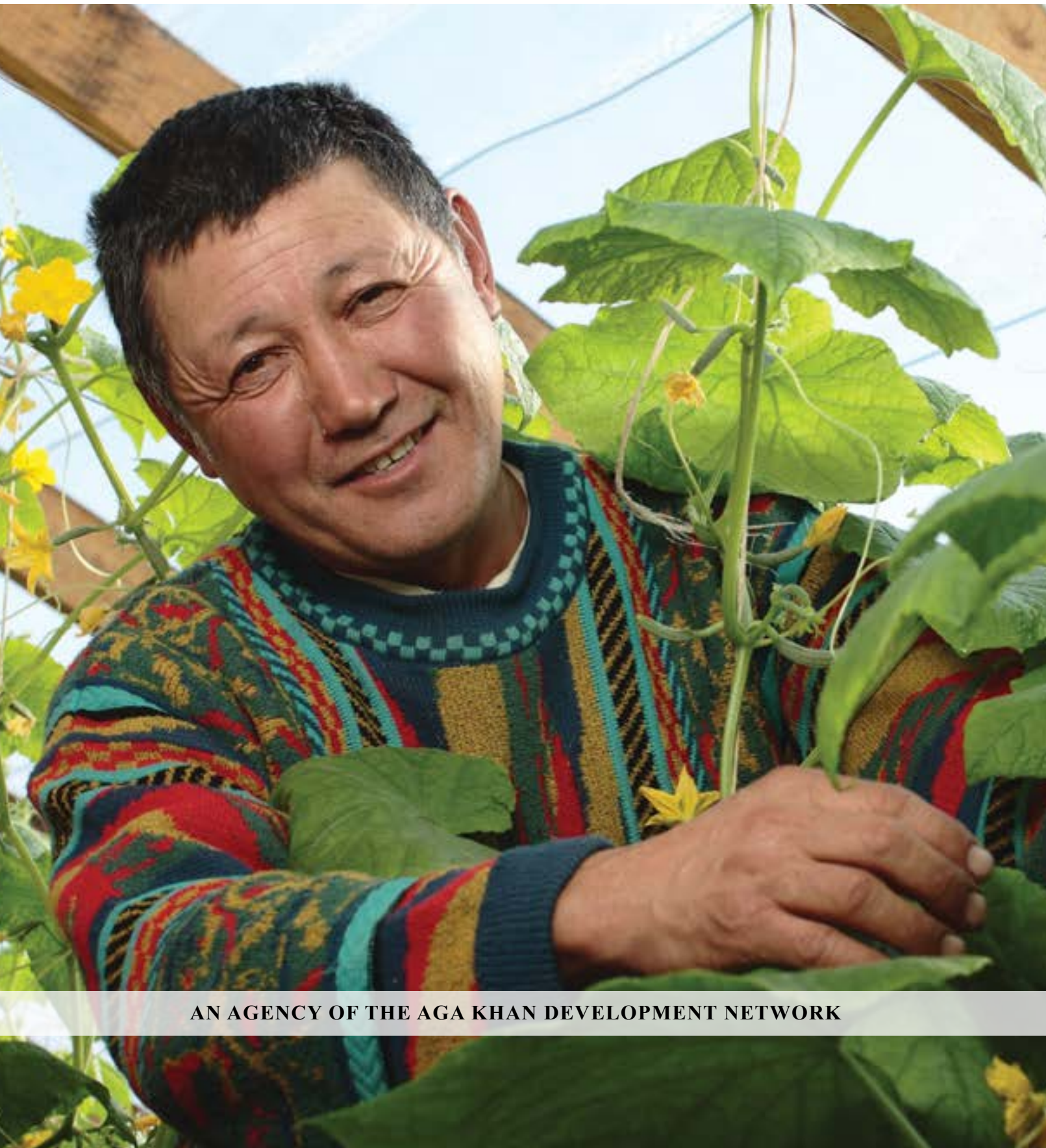




MSDSP KG

*An Initiative of the Aga Khan Foundation*

**ANNUAL REPORT 2012**



**AN AGENCY OF THE AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK**

*MSDSP KG supported Monolbek, one of 10 farmers, to construct Chinese-style solar greenhouses within "Vegetable Value Chain Development in Naryn Oblast", financed by the European Union.*

# Contents

2	Message from the executive director
3	Who we are
4	2012 Programme highlights
6	Early childhood development
10	Community health
12	Natural resource management
18	Local governance
22	Disaster risk reduction
26	Financial overview
28	Institutional collaborations
28	Contact us

## List of acronyms

AKDN	Aga Khan Development Network
AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
CBO	Community-based organisation
CEEBA	Centre for Energy Efficient Building in Central Asia
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
ECD	Early Childhood Development
FEIS	Foundation Education Initiatives Support
KAP	Knowledge, attitudes and practices
LDS	Local development strategy
MoES	Ministry of Emergency Situations
MSDSP KG	Kyrgyzstan Mountain Societies Development Support Programme
NRM	Natural Resource Management
RAS	Rural Advisory Services
SHC	School Health Committee
VHC	Village Health Committee
VPU	Vegetable Processing Unit

## Message from the executive director



Talant Aldashov,  
Executive Director

Dear friends,

We are pleased to share with you our accomplishments achieved in 2012 in collaboration with donors as well as governmental and nongovernmental partners. In this report, we present both qualitative and quantitative results of our programmes and highlight through success stories the tangible differences made in the lives of beneficiaries.

Last year, we were able to mobilise significant resources for continued support to the livelihoods of mountainous communities of Kyrgyzstan. In particular, we implemented 21 short- to long-term projects funded by 10 different donors with a total budget of \$2.4 million. All of these projects were designed in line with the priority actions identified in AKF/MSDSP KG's strategy for 2011-2014 with the aim to improve the environment for and quality of education, health care, natural resource management, local governance and disaster risk reduction in target areas.

A major programme stride in 2012 was the launching of participatory elaboration of local development strategies in 15 sub-districts of Osh and Naryn oblasts, which aims to capitalise on our multi-sector investments to promote good governance. Among a number of innovations piloted last year, MSDSP KG, with the financial support of the European Union, constructed 10 cold-climate solar greenhouses in Naryn Oblast, and local farmers harvested fresh tomatoes and cucumbers in December for the first time in the region's history.

As part of our continued effort to improve institutional capacity and enhance operational management, we restructured the organisation by establishing two branch offices in Naryn and Osh cities with headquarters in Bishkek. To improve staff motivation and performance control, human resource policies and procedures were updated with the support of consulting agencies. Internal procurement rules were streamlined to meet international standards and donor requirements more closely. In addition, MSDSP KG developed internal and external communication strategies and made significant investments in strengthening reporting and monitoring systems.

Our accomplishments would not have been possible without the generous support of our donors, close collaboration with local partners, and commitment and hard work of our staff. We are confident that, together with our stakeholders, we will continue generating new ideas and creating more opportunities for sustainable development in select areas of the country.



## Who we are

**Aga Khan Foundation (AKF)** is a private, international, non-denominational, not-for-profit organisation established in 1967 in Switzerland by His Highness the Aga Khan. Its activities are mainly concentrated on the needs of rural communities in mountainous, coastal and resource-poor areas. The Foundation seeks to develop and promote creative solutions to long-standing global challenges such as poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease. AKF is an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), a group of development agencies with mandates that include the environment, health, education, architecture, culture, microfinance, rural development, disaster reduction, promotion of private-sector enterprise and revitalisation of historic cities. For more information, please visit the website at [www.akdn.org](http://www.akdn.org)

**The Kyrgyzstan Mountain Societies Development Support Programme (MSDSP KG)**, an initiative of AKF, is a locally registered public foundation which seeks to improve the livelihoods of select communities in Kyrgyzstan's mountain areas. MSDSP KG's core programme area includes the mountainous districts of Alai, Chong-Alai, and Kara-Kulja in Osh Oblast as well as Naryn and At-Bashy districts in Naryn Oblast, covering a total population of more than 320,000 people.

**Sectors:** MSDSP KG implements a range of **integrated interventions** in **early childhood development**, **natural resource management** and **health** which converge in villages and are implemented in collaboration with and between **community-based groups** and **local governments**. **Disaster risk reduction**, **enhancing local governance** and **improving climate change resilience** are cross-cutting themes across MSDSP KG's work

**Approach:** MSDSP KG employs **multi-input area based development** approach. It identifies specific entry points and niches in select sectors where programming can demonstrate and effect significant impact which, over time, can a) become models to be replicated and adapted elsewhere in the country and b) influence public policy. In this regard, emphasis is placed on internal **monitoring, documentation** and **evaluation**.

From top to bottom

The Early Childhood Development programme in Chong-Alai District introduces more interactive activities by which children can learn.

Mothers attending training on child care in a mothers' school established within the Community Health programme.

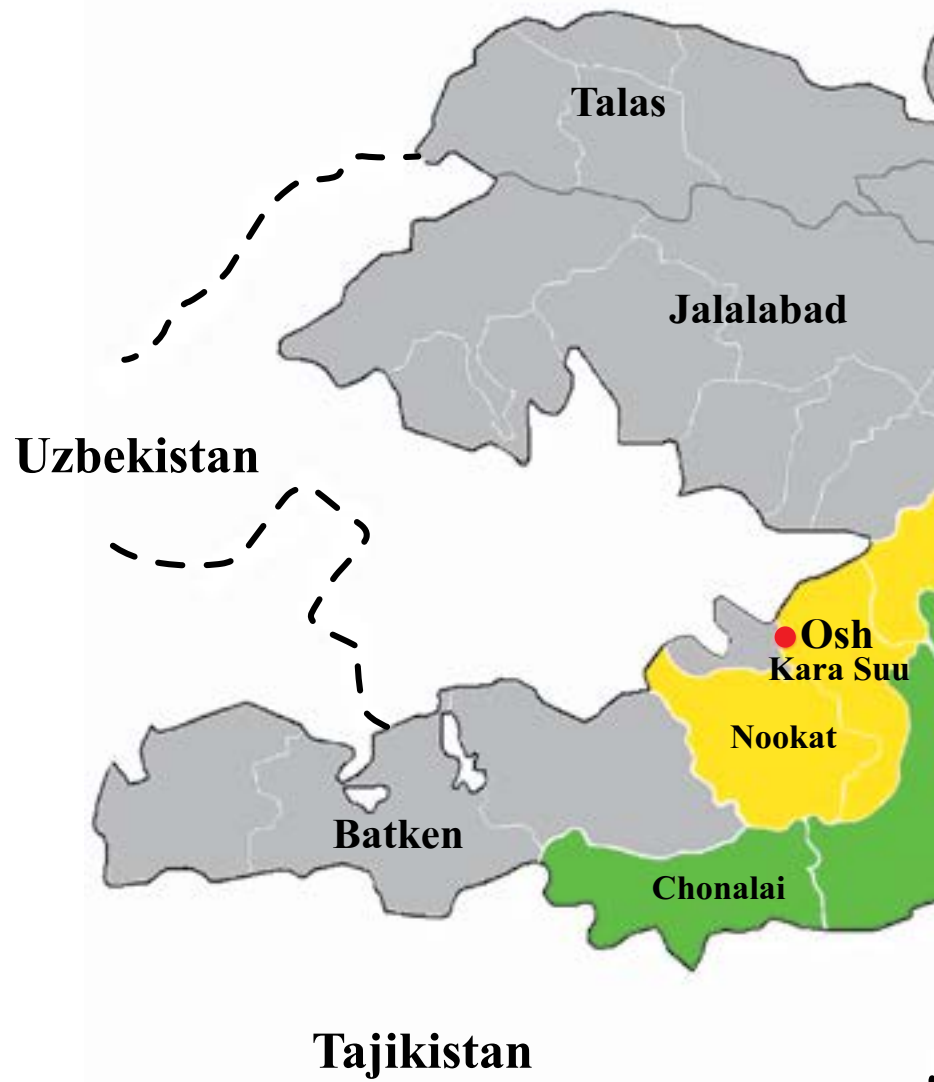
The local community contributes to the Altyn-Dara irrigation canal rehabilitation project in Chong-Alai District within the Natural Resource Management (NRM) programme.

The NRM programme improves vegetable diversity in Naryn Oblast by focusing on farmers' knowledge and skills, improving access to high quality seeds, and introducing farming practices and technologies appropriate for cold climate.

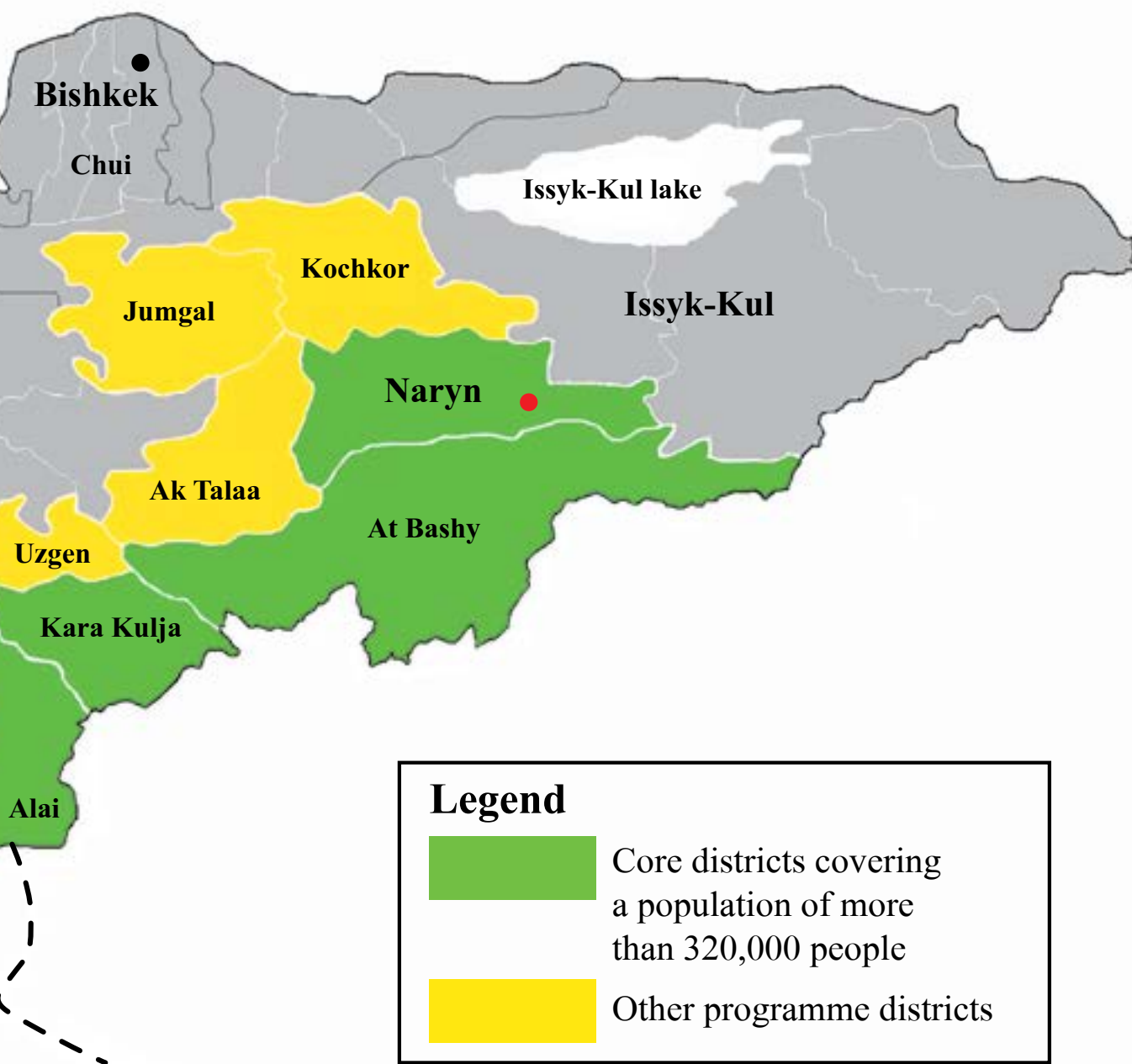
MSDSP KG's team is conducting risk assessment of the geological risks and socio-economic vulnerability of the population of 20 remote rural villages of Chon-Alai and Alai districts within its Disaster Risk Reduction programme.



## 2012 Programme highlights



# Kazakhstan



# Early childhood development

In education, MSDSP KG is concerned with developing and promoting early childhood development (ECD) models which enhance the coverage, affordability, breadth and quality of programmes and learning opportunities for young children in Osh and Naryn oblasts. With this goal in mind, MSDSP KG offers pedagogical training to kindergarten and primary school teachers, increases access to teaching aids, establishes and supports central, satellite and jailoo (summer pasture) kindergartens as well as Parental Resource Centres, and invests in physical improvement of the ECD infrastructure. In 2012, MSDSP KG continued its support to ECD actors and institutions in select communities of Osh and Naryn oblasts through implementation of four projects.

## Achievements in 2012

**Development of Pre-School Education project funded by AKF:** The aim of the project is to improve early childhood development opportunities in select mountainous communities by supporting the existing state-run kindergartens and as well promoting alternative community-based ECD models.

- Pedagogical trainings improved the knowledge and skills of 31 kindergarten teachers on ECD, benefiting nearly 900 kindergarten students.
- Establishment of five district-level methodical unions in Alai, Chong-Alai and Kara-Kulja districts of Osh Oblast and Naryn and At-Bashy districts of Naryn Oblast provided over 200 kindergarten teachers an opportunity to improve their pedagogical capacity.
- Support to 20 jailoo kindergartens in the above-mentioned five districts allowed approximately 500 children to not miss out on learning opportunities when they join their families on summer pastures to tend livestock.
- In an assessment of the jailoo kindergarten project, testing of 65 kindergarten students before and after the jailoo season revealed an overall increase of 12.4 percent in test scores. The increase in children's test scores supports the interview findings where parents and teachers said that they observed improvement in children's school performance after attending jailoo kindergarten.
- Following a field tour organised by the foundation "Roza Otunbayeva's Initiative" where MSDSP KG's pilot models were presented to government officials from all seven oblasts, authorities in Chui, Issyk-Kul and Jalal-Abad oblasts adopted jailoo kindergartens and shift groups.

**Primary School Support project funded by AKF:** The aim of the project is to improve quality of primary school education in target communities by increasing capacity of teachers and provision of learning materials.

- Pedagogical trainings improved the knowledge and skills of 41 teacher-mentors directly and 232 teachers indirectly on developing critical thinking and creating a favourable learning environment for primary school students.



- 51 primary school teachers exchanged experience and knowledge through experience-exchange seminars.
- 75 target schools, covering nearly 2,000 students, were provided with teaching aids.
- The Ministry of Education purchased 68,000 books developed within MSDSP KG's ECD programme.
- Impact assessment of sub-project "English in Schools" showed that students of target schools outperformed students of non-target schools by 28 percent on English language tests.

**Reading for Children project funded by AKF:** The project supports primary child care providers, i.e. parents, with the aim to improve quality of child care at home.

- Training of trainers improved the knowledge and skills of 40 facilitators (librarians and volunteers) directly and 1,500 parents indirectly on the connection between coherent speech and thought and the importance of family reading in early childhood development.
- Each of 66 Parental Resource Centres, serving a total of nearly 24,000 children and their parents, was provided with 56 books of 18 different titles along with video materials.
- An assessment of the Reading for Children project found that families in target villages have a greater number of children's books at home compared to families in non-target villages, and that the level of interest in reading among children in target villages is higher than that of non-target villages by 40 percent.
- Mini-libraries were set up at 20 jailoo kindergartens providing reading opportunities for over 500 children spending their summer in pastures.
- 40 episodes of children's animated TV show "Adventure to the World of Books," which had previously been produced within the programme and broadcasted on national TV, were translated into Turkish language and broadcasted in Turkey.
- 27 local writers and illustrators were trained on writing and creating children's books.

**"Promoting Kyrgyz Biological and Cultural Diversity among Pre-School Age Children" project funded by the Christensen Fund:** The specific objective of the project is to increase access to culturally appropriate quality learning opportunities for children aged three to six and instill appreciation for and awareness of biological and cultural diversity.



With MSDSP KG’s support, Cholpon Osmonova worked with parents and community members in Oktyabr village to establish its very first (satellite) kindergarten – providing 25 children the opportunity to learn to count, read and think logically.

- 3 types of children’s books were developed in the Kyrgyz language on biodiversity and culture.
- 10 new episodes of the children’s animated TV show “Adventure to the World of Books” were produced and broadcasted nationally.
- Over 100 kindergarten teachers and parents learned to make pedagogical tools using locally available materials.
- One hundred and fifty parents and other caregivers improved awareness on child development and household-based approaches to raise children’s love for nature and local culture.
- Four district-level festivals to promote Kyrgyz traditions and culture among young children were organised with the participation of 365 children, parents, teachers, local and regional authorities and media representatives.

### Success story: Community replication of MSDSP KG’s ECD model

**In Kyrgyzstan, 96 percent of pre-school age children in rural areas do not have access to kindergartens<sup>1</sup>. Inspired by MSDSP KG’s ECD model, one woman decided to start a kindergarten in an isolated mountainous village in Alai District.**

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the number of kindergartens in Kyrgyzstan dropped from more than 1,400 in 1991 to 945 by 2009.<sup>2</sup> Today, only 4 percent of pre-school age children in rural areas have access to kindergartens, compared to over 11 percent nationwide.<sup>3</sup> Limited government funds, shortage of professional teachers, dilapidated infrastructure and outdated teaching materials are the main obstacles to expansion of children’s access to ECD.

Since 2005, MSDSP KG has contributed to improving ECD access in its target communities through the construction and rehabilitation of central kindergartens, introduction of satellite kindergartens and a shift system, set-up of jailoo kindergartens, and capacity building of teachers. ECD coverage increased in Chong-Alai District from 7 percent in 2005 to 58.7 percent in 2012 and in Alai District from 3 percent in 2005 to 28.5 percent in 2012.<sup>4</sup>

Cholpon Osmonova, a Kyrgyz language teacher in a school in Oktyabr village of Alai District, became acquainted with MSDSP KG’s ECD model when she visited the neighboring village Askaly and saw a satellite kindergarten established with the support of MSDSP KG. Cholpon says, “I was very excited and interested to see this fully functioning kindergarten, and I immediately turned to MSDSP KG which helped establish this kindergarten. MSDSP KG explained to me how to organise a satellite kindergarten – a community-run kindergarten based in a private house, school or some other public venue.”

1 Ministry of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Analysis based on data provided by District Education Departments

Upon returning home, Cholpon started discussions with the district administration, Aiyl Okmotu, and community members for the establishment of a satellite kindergarten in Oktyabr, a village with 234 households and 130 pre-school age children. The Head of the Aiyl Okmotu made a room available in the public library, and parents equipped the room with toys, a television set, DVD player, blankets, stationary and other necessary items. Parents also agreed to make monetary contributions (KGS 150 or USD 3.13 per child) on a monthly basis to finance the operations of the kindergarten. MSDPS KG provided the rare and most needed supplies – over 120 children’s books and teaching aids – in addition to providing regular consultations during the establishment of the kindergarten. Thus, a kindergarten was established in Oktyabr village for the first time in its history.

On 3 May 2012, the opening ceremony of the kindergarten took place with the participation of community members, local authorities and MSDSP KG representatives. “But the most important guests at the ceremony were the children of our village,” Cholpon states with a bright smile on her face. Currently, 25 children are attending the kindergarten, where they learn to count, read, and think critically and get prepared for school. “I understand that MSDSP KG does not have the means to establish a kindergarten in every village, but the experience they shared with us and the consultations they provided were invaluable,” says Cholpon. “We have proved that communities can replicate MSDSP KG’s model of satellite kindergartens on their own initiative and give an opportunity for children to receive pre-school education.”

On 23-24 April 2012, a government delegation led by the former President of the Kyrgyz Republic, Roza Otunbayeva, visited programme sites to learn MSDSP KG’s ECD model. The delegation, consisting of local government officials from all seven oblasts of the country, visited central, satellite and jailoo kindergartens supported by MSDSP KG. During the visit, Ms. Otunbayeva highlighted the key role of early childhood education in building a person’s economic and social potential and thanked MSDSP KG for its innovative and effective approaches.



During her visit, Roza Otunbayeva, former President of the Kyrgyz Republic, highlighted the role of MSDSP KG’s ECD programme in improving and expanding the access to education in remote rural areas through shift-groups, and satellite and jailoo kindergartens.

## Community health



To improve access to nutrient-rich diets for the population, MSDSP KG introduced kitchen gardens in Alai and Chong-Alai districts.



Izat, kitchen gardener says, “People often ask us how we manage to grow vegetables, sell them in the market, preserve vegetables and make salads. We are always happy to share our knowledge and experience and show our kitchen garden to those who are interested.”

In health, MSDSP KG is concerned with improving the health and nutritional status in isolated mountain communities in Alai and Chong-Alai districts of Osh Oblast with a focus on women of reproductive age and children under five. MSDSP KG has established and trained Village Health Committees (VHCs) and School Health Committees (SHCs) to raise awareness and promote healthy behaviours. MSDSP KG also invests in the construction of health facilities such as medical-obstetric centres and mothers’ schools and supports households to establish kitchen gardens to improve nutrition.

### Achievements in 2012

- 50 primary health workers, with a potential to reach 45,000 people, were trained to be trainers on development care – an approach that promotes the importance of cognitive development, language skills and social development of children starting from birth.
- 14 new mothers’ schools, with a potential to reach 53,000 people, were established and equipped and their staff were trained on pre-natal care.
- 64 SHCs were strengthened through trainings, exchange visits and summer camps, which in turn raised the awareness of 21,500 students on healthy lifestyle through sports events and theatre performances.
- An assessment of MSDSP KG’s Health Programme showed that SHCs are an effective source of health information for both children and parents.
- Nearly 40 kitchen gardeners enhanced their capacity to grow vegetables in high-altitude kitchen gardens and prepare nutritious meals using vegetables and fruits through trainings and exchange visits.
- 495 schoolchildren and 26 teachers improved their understanding of nutritious diet and learned to prepare food and salads using locally available fruits and vegetables through trainings.
- 76 kindergartens improved their sanitary conditions through provision of hand-washing facilities.
- A medical-obstetric centre in Kara-Shoro village of Alai District was provided with a drinking water pipe.

### Success story: Kitchen gardens

**In the high-altitude communities of Kyrgyzstan, the overwhelming majority of health problems suffered by women and children are related to malnutrition.<sup>5</sup> To improve access to nutrient-rich diets for the population, MSDSP KG introduced kitchen gardens in Alai and Chong-Alai districts.**

<sup>5</sup> A survey of health conditions in Alai and Chong-Alai districts conducted by MSDSP KG in 2004.



In 2004, MSDSP KG launched a kitchen garden project with six farmers' groups – two in Alai and four in Chong-Alai – consisting of nearly 60 households in total. Sharabidin Mashirapov is a member of the farmers' group in Jash-Tilek village of Chong-Alai District, located at an altitude of 2,300 metres. To help Sharabidin set up a kitchen garden in his homestead, MSDSP KG provided him with training, instructional booklets, materials to build plastic tunnels and high quality seeds.

What started as a small pilot project had a quick spillover effect. Inspired by the successes of their neighbours and relatives like Sharabidin who participated in the project, other households started to adopt the project's best practices and replicate kitchen gardens on their own. Currently, 310 households are managing kitchen gardens in 28 villages of Alai and Chong-Alai districts. Of more than 20 kitchen gardeners interviewed, 56 percent reported improvements in health, especially in the health of children and women of reproductive age<sup>6</sup>.

The kitchen garden had a visible effect on the health status of Sharabidin's family too. In 2009, his daughter-in-law gave birth prematurely as she was suffering from anemia. Thanks to the kitchen garden, Sharabidin's family diversified their diet and started to consume more vegetables. In 2011, their daughter-in-law gave birth again, this time to a full-weight healthy baby.

The kitchen garden has not only provided Sharabidin's family with a nutrient-rich diet, but has also become an important source of income generation. In 2012, Sharabidin and his wife obtained an abundant harvest: seven tons of cabbage, 800 kg of carrots, 500 kg of tomatoes and 400 kg of beets. They sold the surplus vegetables in the local market, covering the needs of hundreds of households across the district. With the profit from the sale of vegetables, they remodeled their house, threw a wedding for their son and are planning to construct a greenhouse.

Additionally, Izat, Sharabidin's wife, was able to preserve vegetables for the winter. This improved their social standing in the community as it enabled them to meet the demands of holidays and receive guests. Izat also attended several trainings organised by MSDSP KG on how to prepare salads from vegetables and fruits. Before the trainings, Izat knew how to prepare only one simple salad. Now, their dining table is covered by a variety of fresh vegetables on a daily basis. Izat says, "People often ask us how we manage to grow vegetables, sell them in the market, preserve vegetables and make salads. We are always happy to share our knowledge and experience and show our kitchen garden to those who are interested." Perhaps the Mashirapov family's most important contribution was changing the perception of their community about the potential of growing vegetables in high-altitude climates.

*"I remember when I was setting up my kitchen garden, villagers expressed disbelief in the possibility to grow vegetables in our district, which is situated at an altitude of nearly 3,000 metres above sea level," says Sharabidin. "Success didn't come right away. I participated in a series of trainings and experience exchange visits to improve my knowledge and skills in vegetable cultivation. With the consistent support of MSDSP KG, I was able to grow carrots, beets, peppers, tomatoes, garlic and greens."*

<sup>6</sup> Mountain Societies Research Center, University of Central Asia, "Sustainable Mountain Development in Central Asia: From Rio 1992 to Rio 2012 and Beyond," p. 105.

# Natural resource management

In Natural Resources Management (NRM), MSDSP KG seeks to enhance the production and productivity of selected crops as well as to improve animal health in order to increase rural incomes in Alai, Chong-Alai and Kara-Kulja districts of Osh Oblast. In this work, MSDSP KG engages farmers and community-based organisations to diversify agricultural production and re-orient them towards the market, improve farming practices, expand access to agricultural inputs and rehabilitate agricultural infrastructure. NRM programming includes strengthening of private veterinary services, training for farmers and lead entrepreneurs, demonstration of new agricultural technologies on crop management, livestock breeding through organising Farmer Field Schools (FFS), rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure and climate change adaptation.

## Achievements in 2012

**Support to livestock breeding funded by AKF:** This initiative aims to improve animal health and productivity in target communities through improved access to veterinary and breeding services.

- Since 2011, cases of brucellosis in livestock have decreased by 13 percent in Alai District and 14 percent in Chong-Alai District in part due to MSDSP KG programming. Since 2007, MSDSP KG has trained 79 veterinarians (97 percent of all veterinarians in the two districts) in veterinary services and/or business development and provided 20 of them with modern equipment and medical preparations. It has also trained 588 farmers (7 percent of all farmers in the two districts) on animal health care.
- In a knowledge, attitude, and practices (KAP) survey conducted among 45 veterinarians and 181 farmers, the vast majority of respondents reported improvements in veterinary services citing increased farmer awareness of veterinary services, improved facilities/equipment and improved knowledge of veterinarians as main reasons. Additionally, 84 percent of surveyed veterinarians reported higher income compared to five years ago.
- A resource centre was established under the Veterinarian Association in Alai District providing veterinarians with an electronic database necessary for successfully operating veterinary services and with a conference room for conducting meetings and trainings.
- Two artificial insemination points established by MSDSP KG in Alai and Chong-Alai districts inseminated a total of 39 cows and obtained 29 improved-breed calves.
- Six new Farmer Field Schools specialising in livestock were established and trained 54 farmers on five themes.

**Support to crop production funded by AKF and GIZ:** Projects in the agronomy sector aim to improve productivity of select crops in target areas through capacity building and improving access to input supplies.

- 180 farmers were trained on the organisation and development of Farmer Field Schools as well as cultivation of true potato seeds.
- 360 farmers strengthened the security of animal fodder through establishment of three district-level seed rotation funds and provision of trainings on the technology of barley cultivation.
- 125 farmers improved their agricultural productivity through distribution of a total of 17 tons of potato seeds and 15 tons of mineral fertilisers.

**Support to non-farm enterprises funded by AKF:** The objective of the project is to strengthen the potential of local residents on sustainable development of entrepreneurship in Alai and Chong-Alai districts.

- Non-farm enterprises supported by MSDSP KG, such as handicraft cooperatives, bakeries, and dairies, displayed their products at district-level exhibitions in Alai and Chong-Alai districts, which garnered significant interest from the regional and local authorities as well as media.
- Four women’s groups generated a total of KGS 65,000 (USD 1,356) from the sale of their products at the above-mentioned exhibitions.

**Repair of irrigation infrastructure funded by USAID and Coca-Cola Company:** MSDSP KG’s infrastructure projects are aimed at enhancing agricultural productivity by increasing availability of irrigation water and promoting effective management of irrigation structures.

- Over 27,300 people in Osh and Naryn oblasts improved access to irrigation water through the rehabilitation of four irrigation canals.
- 35 members of Water Users’ Associations were trained on irrigation water management and prevention of conflicts over access to irrigation water.

**“Vegetable Value Chain Development in Naryn Oblast” project funded by the European Union:** The objective of this project is to support poverty alleviation and improved nutrition in Naryn Oblast through value chain development in the vegetable sub-sector.

- 10 Chinese-style solar greenhouses, adapted to local conditions, were constructed in Naryn Oblast.
- 350 farmers from ten villages improved their knowledge and skills on vegetable production in greenhouses, under plastic tunnels, and in open fields through a series of trainings, exchange visits and group and individual consultations.
- High quality seeds were distributed to 350 participating farmers, of whom 10 grew vegetables in greenhouses, 71 under plastic tunnels and 269 in open fields.

- A Vegetable Processing Unit (VPU), which would ensure high standards of food safety and quality, was set up in Naryn town; its staff was trained in business management, marketing strategy, as well as production and sanitation standards.
- A vegetable chain was developed by linking farmers, input suppliers, VPU and consumers.
- A mass information campaign, including TV commercials, billboards, brochures and other informational materials, helped to raise the local population's awareness on the nutritional value of vegetables and the quality of vegetables processed by the VPU.

### Success story 1: Improving livestock productivity through artificial insemination

**Livestock breeding remains the primary source of income for the majority of households in MSDSP KG's programme areas. In Alai and Chong-Alai districts, MSDSP KG established two artificial insemination points to improve animal productivity and increase rural incomes.**

Cholponbai Berdibaev, a veterinarian from Jar-Bashy village of Chong-Alai District, opened a private veterinary service in 2009 with the support of MSDSP KG. As an experienced and knowledgeable veterinarian, Cholponbai has since provided quality services for over 700 local farmers annually treating and preventing various diseases in livestock.

While working as a veterinarian, Cholponbai had noticed that farmers are primarily interested in increasing the quantity of their livestock rather than improving the productivity of their existing stock. Unfortunately, merely acquiring more animals



Cholponbai's artificial insemination point in Jar-Bashy village is changing perceptions among Chong-Alai farmers. He notes that farmers are now starting to understand that having one highly productive improved breed cow is better than having several cows with low productivity. "Over 30 farmers expressed willingness to inseminate their cows in 2013," says Cholponbai.



does not guarantee increased income for farmers as local livestock breeds are very low in productivity. Cholponbai wanted to introduce in Chong-Alai District new foreign breeds of cows that produce higher quantities of milk and meat, but he did not have any theoretical or practical knowledge in artificial insemination. In 2009, therefore, Cholponbai participated in a specialised training for inseminators organized by MSDSP KG in cooperation with LLC “Central Asia Breeding Service.” MSDSP KG also provided Cholponbai with equipment, materials and semen necessary for setting up an artificial insemination point, where farmers can inseminate their cows for a fee of approximately KGS 500 (USD 10.43).

“At first, my business was slow since local farmers did not have even a basic understanding of artificial insemination,” says Cholponbai. “To help farmers understand the benefits of artificial insemination, I did a lot of awareness raising and information dissemination.” He also participated in experience exchange visits with inseminators from Sokuluk district of Chui Oblast and Nookat district of Osh Oblast organised by MSDSP KG, as a result of which he managed to upgrade his skills and improve his work. Cholponbai’s efforts paid off as farmers from all over the district started to approach him for his service. Since 2009, he has inseminated 46 cows, which resulted in 25 improved breed calves and counting.

At the exhibition held on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Chong-Alai District in October 2012, Cholponbai demonstrated improved breed calves obtained through artificial insemination in comparison to local breeds. His calves garnered significant attention from local residents and district- and oblast-level government officials, who saw the visible difference between the two types of calves. For instance, an 18-month calf of limousine breed weighed 370 kg, whereas same age calves of local breeds weighed only 180-200 kg.

## Success story 2: Greenhouses: a source of nutrition and income

**Less than three percent of the territory of Naryn oblast is arable. Hence, its population of 260,000 people depend on livestock breeding as their main, and often only, source of food and income. Monolbek, one of 10 farmers who constructed cold climate solar greenhouses with the help of MSDSP KG, is contributing to increased dietary diversity and improved nutrition in the region by growing vegetables even during the winter when temperatures drop well below zero degrees Celsius.**

Monolbek Sultanov is a farmer from Jan-Bulak village of Naryn Oblast. He has always rejected the widespread notion that the cold mountainous territory of Naryn Oblast is unsuitable for vegetable cultivation. By constructing a greenhouse in his backyard and growing vegetables in the middle of December, Monolbek has convinced his relatives and neighbours that consuming fresh locally produced vegetables is possible not only during the summer but also in the winter. Previously, the local population had little access to fresh vegetables – a source of essential vitamins – during the long and harsh winter



MSDSP KG supported Monolbek, one of 10 farmers, to construct Chinese-style solar greenhouses within “Vegetable Value Chain Development in Naryn Oblast”, financed by the European Union.

months of Naryn Oblast. “For us, eating fresh vegetables during the winter used to be an expensive luxury. All we had on our dining table was meat, onions and potatoes,” says Monolbek.

As a hardworking and diligent farmer, Monolbek was recommended by his community to participate in MSDSP KG’s project “Development of Vegetable Value Chain in Naryn Oblast” financed by the European Union. Within this project, MSDSP KG supported ten farmers from ten villages to construct Chinese-style solar greenhouses. Monolbek actively participated in the construction of a pilot greenhouse in a neighboring village and then replicated the process on his own under the technical supervision of MSDSP KG engineer. Monolbek contributed with labor and locally available materials, whereas MSDSP KG provided him with construction materials, drip irrigation system, high quality tomato and cucumber seeds to sow in his greenhouse, and a series of practical trainings on how to grow vegetables effectively in greenhouses.

The type of greenhouse that Monolbek built is designed for a cold climate and is unique in Naryn oblast. Following an exposure trip to China, MSDSP KG, in cooperation with specialists from the project partner Center for Energy Efficient Building in Central Asia (CEEBA), adapted the technical design of a Chinese-style solar greenhouse to the climatic conditions of Naryn oblast. This greenhouse can maintain an above zero temperature without any additional heating even when the outside temperature is as low as -20°C, thanks to the stone walls which absorb and keep solar energy.

“I abandoned pretty much all household work and became fully involved in the construction of the greenhouse,” says Monolbek. “Thanks to this greenhouse, my family has diversified its diet and generated additional income from the sale of surplus vegetables. Now I know what it means to have a greenhouse in my backyard.” Indeed, the project baseline survey revealed that 76% of consumers in Naryn oblast prefer locally produced vegetables, of which tomatoes and cucumbers were reported as most favored. Therefore, it is not a surprise that tomatoes and cucumbers produced in Monolbek’s greenhouse are in high demand by local consumers. In 2012, Monolbek earned approximately KGS 100,000 (USD 2,087) from the sale of his vegetables. Using the lessons learned from last year and the skills gained from trainings provided by MSDSP KG and project partner Rural Advisory Services (RAS), he expects to raise his revenue to KGS 150,000 (USD 3,130) next year.

Many neighbors are inspired by Monolbek’s example and intend to build similar greenhouses. Monolbek is happy to share his knowledge and experience with others. “I am aware that my effort is only a drop in the sea, but I also know that a sea starts from drops,” he says with optimism.



The Chinese-style solar greenhouses are perfectly adapted to the climatic conditions of Naryn Oblast. This greenhouse can maintain an above-zero temperature without any additional heating even when the outside temperature is as low as  $-20^{\circ}\text{C}$ , thanks to the stone walls which absorb and keep solar energy.



# Local governance

Local self-government authorities and community-based organisations (CBOs) have an important role to play in socio-economic development. MSDSP KG is working to realise this potential by building the capacity of local authorities to better fulfill their responsibilities and to connect more effectively with their constituents by encouraging participatory planning and joint decision-making over how public resources are allocated. MSDSP KG began to strengthen and re-establish school parliaments to increase school children's involvement in decision making. School parliaments are anticipated to become sustainable structures through which youth issues can be addressed in the years to come.

## Achievements in 2012

**“Promoting Stability and Economic Opportunity in the Kyrgyz Republic” project funded by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs:** The project aims to 1) build the capacity of local-level civil servants and community-based organisations, and 2) facilitate the formulation and support the execution of local development planning to improve living conditions of rural communities.

- 15 working groups, consisting of 474 local government officials and civil society representatives, were set up in 15 target sub-districts of Osh and Naryn oblasts. A total of 35 percent of working group members are women and 21 percent are youth.
- The working groups assessed the gaps and weaknesses of existing local development strategies (LDS) and received approval from their respective Local Councils to redesign LDSs.
- The working groups surveyed 20 percent of the population of their sub-districts and conducted focus groups with one-seventh of all households to assess community needs and identify development priorities.
- Based on the needs assessment, the working groups drafted new LDSs. In 2013, the LDSs will be presented to the communities at public hearings and will be formally adopted for implementation.

**“Pro-Poor Integrity – Phase VI” project funded by Integrity Action:** The objective of this project is to increase the commitment of state-owned utilities and local government institutions to providing quality sanitation, water and social protection services in Naryn District of Naryn Oblast, and Chong-Alai District and Osh city of Osh Oblast, through public oversight and/or civic monitoring.

- Eight monitoring groups were set up, consisting of 32 civil society representatives responsible for monitoring public services. Over 37 percent of monitoring group members are women.
- After receiving training on civic monitoring of public services, the monitoring groups monitored the delivery of water supply, sanitation and social protection services, and presented their findings and recommenda-



tions to the relevant local authorities.

- Four Centres for Public Services Oversight were established to address integrity challenges and disseminate information on public service rules and procedures among the population.
- 12 radio programmes on integrity in public services provision were broadcasted in Naryn town.

**“Strengthening School Parliaments to Improve Children’s Participation in Local, Regional and National Decision-Making on the Kyrgyz Republic” project funded by the European Union:** The project aims to empower children in the rural areas of Kyrgyzstan to play a leading role in their development and the development of their communities through effective participation in decision-making at the local, regional and national levels.

- School parliaments were established or strengthened in 178 secondary schools in Osh and Naryn oblasts reaching approximately 62,000 students.
- 140 people (40 teachers and 100 children) from 20 resource schools were trained as trainers on six themes: 1) children’s rights, 2) education, 3) health, 4) training skills, 5) social partnership and 6) project development and implementation.
- 363 representatives (121 teachers and 242 students) from 121 cluster schools were trained on two themes (children’s rights, education) by 15 resource schools. Trainings for cluster schools will continue in 2013.
- Eight quarterly district meetings were held with approximately 50 participants for each meeting, where children, together with their duty-bearers (teachers, school administrations, parents, community leaders, etc.) discussed problems related to their well-being. A total 35 quarterly district meetings will be held over two years.
- One annual oblast forum was held in Osh city with the participation of 157 representatives of School Parliaments, school administrations, parents, and local government officials with the aim to establish partnership among school parliaments at the oblast level. A total of four annual oblast forums will be held over two years.
- An educational film, “School Parliament: Mine, Yours, Ours,” was developed and broadcasted on three national TV channels. It was shortlisted at the International Documentary Film Festival “One World Kyrgyzstan 2012” and screened in all seven oblasts as part of the festival route.
- A comic book to encourage youth activism was developed, and 3,000 copies were distributed to target schools.



Sydykbek presenting at the Osh Oblast Annual Forum organised within the project on 17-19 December 2012.

## Success story: Promoting children's self-advocacy in rural Kyrgyzstan

Knowledge and engagement are the key factors that help children grow up as informed and responsible citizens. In Kyrgyzstan, however, civic awareness among children is low in rural areas and children's involvement in decision-making that concerns their rights and well-being is even lower. To address this problem, MSDSP KG is supporting over 62,000 children in 177 schools to play a leading role in their development and the development of their communities.

"In rural Kyrgyzstan, children are viewed solely as dependents. They are obliged to obey adults, told not to interfere in adults' affairs and rarely asked to provide their opinions. Most adults think that they can identify children's needs better than children themselves. Having no alternatives, children are forced to accept such attitudes," says the principal of one of the 177 schools targeted by MSDSP KG's School Parliament project in Naryn and At-Bashy districts of Naryn Oblast and Alai, Chong-Alai and Kara-Kulja districts of Osh Oblast.

This three-year project, financed by the European Union, uses school parliament structures to raise the awareness of children about their rights, enable their participation in decision-making at local, regional and national levels, and empower children to take an active role in the solution of problems in their communities. The project baseline survey found that less than 4 percent of surveyed teenagers could pass a test on children's rights awareness and that children had never before been represented regionally and nationally.

MSDSP KG is supporting the establishment of school parliaments to help empower children and youth in the rural areas of Kyrgyzstan to play a leading role in their development and the development of their community.



Sydykbek Sagynbekov, a student at Begiev School in Biymyrza village of Kara-Kulja District, has actively participated in the project activities and contributed to establishing the school parliament system in his school. After attending a series of trainings on children's rights, education, health and social partnership provided by MSDSP KG and project partner Foundation Education Initiatives Support (FEIS), Sydykbek ran for the school parliament elections in his school. With a unique election platform that addressed bullying and conflict prevention in schools, he won the elections. He is now disseminating his newly gained knowledge and skills to the students of cluster schools in the area. "Thanks to the trainings, I learned to distinguish rights from duties," says Sydykbek. "Knowing that I have indispensable rights, I am not shy anymore when I want to express my views, especially when I am certain that I am right." Pre- and post-training test results indicate that targeted children have improved knowledge and awareness of their rights by three times on average.

Sydykbek participated in district and oblast level meetings with teachers, school administrations, local authorities and community leaders, and collectively explored solutions to crucial issues that affect children's well-being, such as school racketeering, littering on the streets and lack of access to clean water. "I understood through this project that we, children, can contribute to decision-making not only at the school level; we can also present our initiatives at community and regional levels," says Sydykbek. "At these meetings, I got to know the different local authorities that are engaged in policy-making on matters related to children and youth – the authorities that I can influence." At the Kara-Kulja district level meeting held in October 2012, Sydykbek raised the issue of lack of sports activities in his school and the benefits that children could gain from engaging in sports. His concerns were heard; in a month, he and his schoolmates, together with the school administration, obtained a fund from the local authorities and businessmen to open a gym at Begiev School. The gym is now open and functioning, serving not only the students of Begiev School but also the village youth.

The rationale behind the School Parliament project is that student governance structures, if provided with necessary knowledge, skills and means, can foster democratic processes and empower children to engage in self-advocacy and problem solving at a larger scale. In 2013, 50 small grants will be disbursed through a competition that will enable the school parliaments to put their training into practice. "The project has changed not only children. Our teachers and parents involved in project activities have also changed: they have started to treat us better and ask for our opinions," Sydykbek states.



Before the retrofitting: The school was a hazardous place for children in this mountainous region with potential earthquakes of magnitude 9.0.

## Disaster risk reduction

MSDSP KG's target areas in Osh and Naryn oblasts are exposed to a variety of natural hazards, with high risks to human settlements, public infrastructures and agricultural assets. An assessment conducted by the Ministry of Emergency Situations (MoES) revealed that there are 132 potential natural disaster sites in Alai, 121 in Kara-Kulja, 18 in Chong-Alai, 38 in Naryn and 15 in At-Bashy districts. The main hazards include landslides, mudflows, glacial lake outburst flows, avalanches and flooding. Earthquakes are a dangerous hazard as well with potential earthquakes of magnitude 9.0 in Alai, Chong-Alai and Kara-Kulja districts and magnitude 8.0 in Naryn and At-Bashy districts. Through cross-country projects, MSDSP KG works to enhance the resilience of its target communities to natural disasters through risk assessments, awareness raising, rehabilitation of public infrastructures, and capacity-building of local and national authorities working on disaster risk reduction (DRR).

### Achievements in 2012

**“Poverty Alleviation through Mitigation of Integrated High Mountain Risk” project funded by the European Union:** The project objectives are to 1) increase community resilience to geohazards in select mountainous areas of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan and 2) provide a platform for negotiating strategies on integration of environmental sustainability into policies among stakeholders at all levels.

- Hazard and social vulnerability risk assessments were conducted in 17 villages of Chong-Alai District and three villages of Alai District, as a result of which social and geological data was collected, potential risks were identified and hazard risk maps were created for all 20 villages.
- Feasibility studies on engineering works were carried out in 20 target villages, based on which mitigation projects were recommended to the communities.
- 20 target communities, with a total population of nearly 35,000 people, enhanced disaster preparedness through practical simulations.
- Two plantations and two community-based nurseries were established in Chong-Alai District to promote social afforestation as an environmentally sustainable mitigation measure.





After the retrofitting: By reinforcing the existing building of the school, MSDSP KG demonstrated how to increase the seismic resistance of the existing school buildings using cost-effective methods, thereby increasing the safety of people who study and work in these buildings.

- Four officials from relevant government institutions underwent an apprenticeship through direct participation in risk assessments.
- Multiple roundtable meetings contributed to improvement of coordination and information sharing among governmental and nongovernmental organisations working in the DRR field in Kyrgyzstan.

**“Fostering Disaster-Resilient Communities in Isolated Mountain Environments of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan” (DIPECHO VII) project funded by ECHO:**

The project aims to strengthen community disaster resilience and enhance disaster response capacity within government institutions and communities through the implementation of integrated DRR activities.

- A 50-hour mandatory training module for primary school teachers and a four-hour optional training module for secondary and high school teachers on DRR were developed and approved by the Kyrgyz Academy of Education.
- A 15-minute documentary film on disaster preparedness was developed in cooperation with nationally renowned scholars and was broadcasted nation-wide.
- A seismic micro-zonation study was conducted at 49 educational facilities in Chong-Alai District in cooperation with international experts from the University of Porto, Portugal.
- Four government officials from relevant government institutions underwent an apprenticeship through direct participation in the micro-zonation study.
- Two schools were rehabilitated in Chong-Alai District improving the safety of nearly 900 students and 120 teachers. Five schools in Alai District are planned to be rehabilitated in 2013.

## Success story: Building community resilience to disasters

**Rural communities in Kyrgyzstan tend to believe that reducing the risk of natural disasters is beyond their capacity and depends solely on will. In Chong-Alai and Alai districts, the communities are gradually changing their perception about disasters and incorporating disaster preparedness in their daily lives thanks to awareness-raising activities by MSDSP KG.**

In Kyzyl-Eshme village of Chong-Alai District, a teacher at Keldibek School signals to her sixth grade students to indicate that an earthquake has just started. Upon hearing the signal, the students immediately drop everything they are doing and hide under their desks. MSDSP KG Social Mobiliser walks across the classroom and asks the students:

- “What should be your position under the desks?”
- “We must cover our heads with our arms and hands,” the children say almost unanimously.
- “Why are you holding on to the legs of your desks?”
- “Because the earthquake might shake our desks and shift them around,” the children state enthusiastically.

When the teacher gives an order to evacuate, the students hurry out of the building and sit in a neat circle on an open field in the school yard. The children sit there quietly until they are told that the danger has passed.

The above scene is part of a simulation exercise organised by MSDSP KG in Kyzyl-Eshme village to enhance community preparedness to disasters. Over 80 villagers simulated an emergency situation, during which the participants



Even the younger members of the community feel more confident facing the inevitable. “Now I know how to behave during a natural disaster. I will definitely tell my friends and classmates about it,” says a young school girl who took part in the simulation.

were evacuated from their homes and public infrastructures and gathered in a pre-determined safe haven. Primary healthcare workers provided first aid to “injured” children while waiting for the arrival of a doctor. Prior to the simulation, MSDSP KG provided the community with a risk map of the area, first aid kit and other essential tools such as loudspeaker, flashlight, axe and saw.

Kyzyl-Eshme, with a population of 1,200 people, is a mountainous village exposed to various natural hazards including mudflows and rock falls. “We used to think that we were absolutely powerless before natural disasters and were taught to simply accept our fate. We did not know how to respond when a disaster struck,” a village elder describes his attitude towards natural disasters before MSDSP KG’s activities. “This simulation exercise was the first of its kind in the history of our village. Now we know the specific areas exposed to hazards, safe havens in the village and the evacuation route.”

Upol Isakova, the principal of the village kindergarten, says, “As a kindergarten principal, I am responsible for the safety of my students and teachers. After the simulation, I feel confident that I can evacuate our kindergarten properly during an emergency situation.” Even the younger members of the community feel more confident facing the inevitable. “Now I know how to behave during a natural disaster. I will definitely tell my friends and classmates about it,” says a young school girl who took part in the simulation.

Kyzyl-Eshme is one of the 20 villages targeted by MSDSP KG’s project “Poverty Alleviation through Mitigation of Integrated High Mountain Risk” (PAMIR) financed by the European Union. PAMIR is a regional project implemented also in Afghanistan and Tajikistan in cooperation with Hilfswerk Austria International and FOCUS Tajikistan.

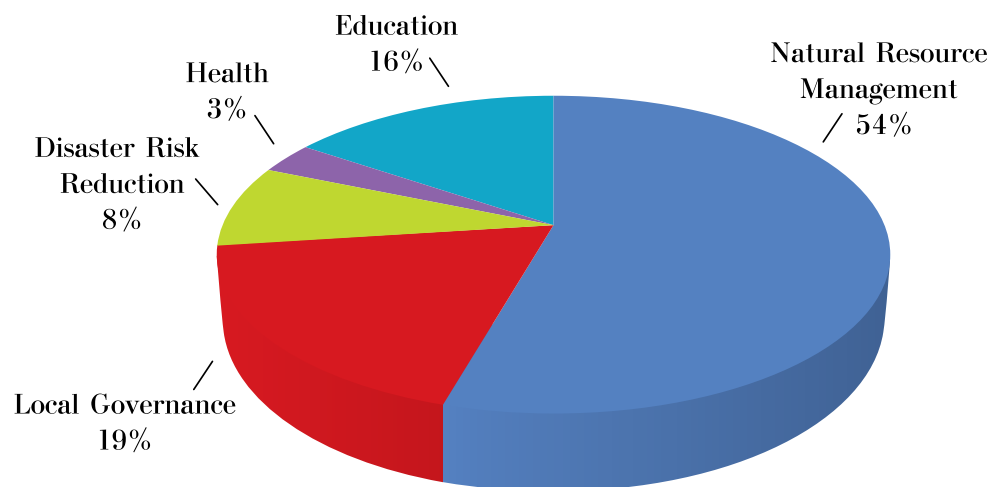


During a disaster simulation with participation of more than 80 villagers, primary healthcare workers provided first aid to “injured” children while waiting for the arrival of a doctor.

# Financial overview

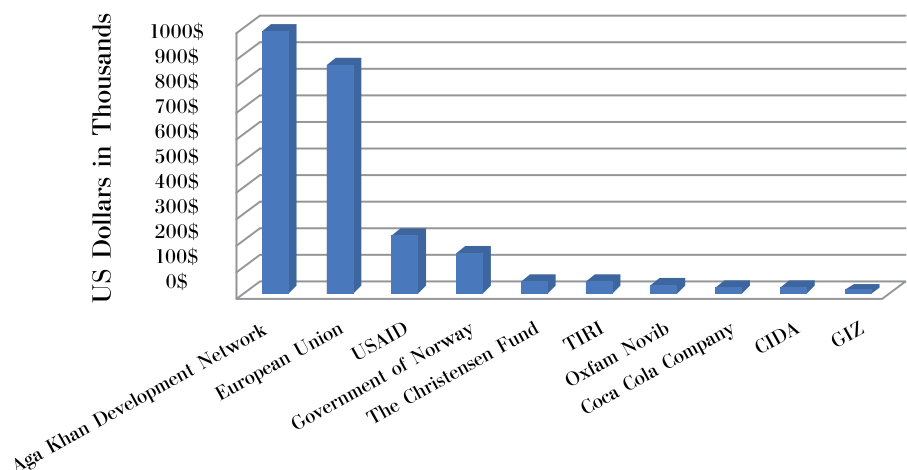
MSDSP KG programming has increased steadily since 2006. In 2012, its budget reached nearly US\$ 2.4 million. The largest share of its budget was spent in Natural Resource Management (54 percent) and Local Governance (19 percent), followed by Education (16 percent), Disaster Risk Reduction (8 percent) and Health (3 percent).

## 2012 EXPENSES BY PROGRAMME



Funds came from AKDN and various external donors including the European Union, USAID and the Government of Norway.

## 2012 REVENUE BY DONOR





**For the years ended December 31, 2012 and 2011***Dollars in thousands*

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Revenues:</b>		
Institutional Donor	988	1,310
External Donors	1,388	907
Other revenues		
Gain on disposal of property and equipment	5	10
Net foreign exchange gains	19	5
<b>Total revenues</b>	<b>2,376</b>	<b>2,217</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>		
Program expenses	1,203	1,146
General and administrative expenses		
Personnel costs	877	794
Legal, accounting, and consulting	18	15
Travel	35	25
Fuel & Vehicle	84	50
General office	47	47
Premises	47	51
Communications	22	36
Professional development	26	43
Depreciation	41	37
Other	17	22
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>2,417</b>	<b>2,266</b>

# Institutional collaborations

**MSDSP KG works closely with many institutional partners across Kyrgyzstan. It also collaborates closely with national, regional, and local authorities in all its programme areas. MSDSP KG's efforts to improve the livelihoods mountain communities in Kyrgyzstan would not be possible without their unwavering support.**

## **Our 2012 partners include:**

### **Local service providers:**

Association of Attorneys of the Kyrgyz Republic  
Centre for Energy Efficient Building in Central Asia (CEEBA)  
Central Asian Breeding Service  
Development Policy Institute  
Foundation Education Initiatives Support  
Rural Advisory Services  
Training, Advisory, and Innovation Centre  
First Micro-Credit Company (FMCC)  
Public Foundation Agrolid  
Public Foundation Bio Service

### **International partners:**

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)  
FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance  
Hilswerk Austria International (HWA)  
Integrity Action (Tiri)

### **Academic and research institutions:**

Kyrgyz Academy of Education  
Kyrgyz National Agrarian University  
University of Central Asia  
BOKU/IAG Institute of Applied Geology  
University of Porto  
Kyrgyz Institute of Seismology

### **Government institutions:**

Ministry of Agriculture and Melioration  
Ministry of Education and Science  
Ministry of Emergency Situations  
Ministry of Health  
National Agency for Local Self-Government  
Naryn State University  
Osh Oblast Centre of Family Medicine  
Osh Oblast Institute for Upgrading Teachers  
State Agency on Environmental Protection and Forestry under the Government of KR

# Contact us

## **MSDSP KG (Headquarters)**

177 Alieva Street  
Osh 723500, Kyrgyzstan  
Tel: +996 3222 22300  
Fax: +996 3222 22344

### **Talant Aldashov**

Executive Director  
talantbek.aldashov@akdn.org

### **Jyldyz Suleimanova**

Osh Regional Manager  
jyldyz.suleimanova@akdn.org

## **Naryn Regional Office**

160a Sheraliev Street  
Naryn 72260, Kyrgyzstan  
Tel: +996 3522 51501  
Fax: +996 543 142502

### **Melis Berdibekov**

Naryn Regional Manager  
melis.berdibekov@akdn.org