
**Community Empowerment Network (CEN)
1st Regional Conference**

May 23, 2003
Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

The overall emphasis of this conference will be to focus on approaches which the Community Empowerment Network (CEN) can take to achieve its primary objective: enhanced capacity of communities to effectively design, implement, and monitor community-based projects. Examples will be drawn from the National Networks to demonstrate approaches which can be used elsewhere and ways in which these approaches can be improved.

The objectives of the CEN are as follows:

- increased understanding of what makes CDD projects succeed or fail and application of these lessons to increase project effectiveness
- increased exchange of expertise and lessons learned between various stakeholders involved in the design and delivery of CDD projects
- enhanced quality of and access to relevant capacity building materials and local expertise on community empowerment and civic engagement
- enhanced coordination of capacity building efforts for community empowerment among development partners

8:30 – 9:30 Review of Progress to Date and Road Ahead

This session will begin with a review of the overall objectives of the CEN and its progress to-date. Discussion will focus on how some of the challenges which the CEN is facing thusfar, how it can address these challenges. Furthermore, participants will be asked to provide input on how the CEN can achieve its objectives in the coming year and ways in which progress can be measured.

Chair: Erik Johnson

Review objectives of the conference, this session, and of CEN as a whole.

Discussants: Each of the National Network Coordinators will be asked to provide a 5 minute presentation on (1) challenges the CEN is facing; (2) strategies for addressing challenges; (3) key areas where the CEN can contribute the most to development in their country; (4) ways in which progress towards the CEN objectives can be measured.

9:30 – 10:00am Capturing and Disseminating Lessons Learned

This session will focus on a variety of approaches which can be used for capturing the reasons for success and failure in community empowerment projects and disseminating these lessons to practitioners so that future projects benefit from past experience. The goal is to identify the best ways in which the CEN can utilize these approaches to achieve its aims. The session will begin with four 5-minute presentations to the plenary, and then break into 4 working groups for more interactive discussion. The presentations are intended to simply give examples of activities as a

way of stimulating discussion. The presentations themselves will not be discussed in plenary. The presentations will be:

1. Example of Analysis and Research – Tajik CEN's upcoming Work on Preparing a Manual on Traditional Forms of Communities (Dilorom Atabaeva)
2. Example of Training and Action Learning – Uzbek CEN's work on Delivering Training Modules in Conjunction With Support to Community Projects (Charos Maksudova)
3. Example of Networking – Azeri CEN's Work in Collaboration with NGO Forum, Community Development Initiative Group and USAID Umbrella Grant recipients (Chris Anderson)
4. Example of Media and Dissemination – Kyrgyz CEN's TV Program on Community-driven Development (Dimitry Vasilkov)

10:00 – 10:15 Coffee Break

10:15 – 11:15 Working Groups

Participants will divide themselves into 4 Working Groups based on the 4 issues mentioned above. Each Working Group will be responsible for selecting a facilitator to moderate discussion and a rapporteur who will present the results of the discussion back to the plenary. Each Group will be asked to respond to the following questions:

- Why is this type of activity important in enhancing people's understanding of community empowerment?
- What are some specific examples of what the CEN could do in this area?
- Who are these activities targeted towards?
- How will this work add to what has already been done in the region and how will it contribute to achieving the objectives of the CEN?

The Working Groups will be as follows:

Group 1: Analysis and Research Group – Activities include manuals, case studies, books, surveys, development of new analytical tools, etc.

Group 2: Training and Action Learning Group – Activities include workshops, train-the-trainer workshops, on-the-job/project learning, mentoring, etc.

Group 3: Networking Group – Activities include linking networks together, coordination meetings, national or sub-regional conferences, e-mail discussions, websites, exchange programs, etc.

Group 4: Media and Dissemination Group – Activities include TV programs, newsletters/bulletins, radio shows, distributing summaries of meetings, e-newsletters, etc.

11:15 – 12:00 Reporting Back from Working Groups

Rapporteurs from each Working Group will each make a 5-7 minute presentations summarizing the results of their discussions, answering the questions provided. Discussion will follow. (Rapporteurs will also be asked to provide a written summary of their Group discussions.)

Chair: Saodat Bazarova, World Bank, Tajikistan

12:00 – 1:15pm Lunch

1:15pm – 2:15pm - Evaluating Community Empowerment Training

This session will examine the extent to which National Networks are, or could be evaluating the quality and appropriateness of existing training modules for communities. A special focus would be placed on the indicators needed to evaluate training on CDD, their definition, appropriateness, validity, application, etc. Questions which participants would be asked to discuss include:

- What is being done to assess the needs of various stakeholders to receiving community empowerment-related training and what role is CEN playing in this?
- Are the National Networks developing new training modules or implementing old ones? How were the modules selected and why?
- Is there a need for new modules which do not currently exist? If so what?
- What role can CEN play in evaluating various modules offered by various training institutions and how would this be done?

Chair: *Mary McNeil*

Commentators - Two participants will be asked to begin the discussion by providing answers to the above questions. These individuals are:

- *Davlatov Kiommidin*, Director, Center “Razvitie”, Tajikistan
- *Charles Buxton*, INTRAC Central Asia Programme Manager, Kyrgyz Republic
- *Yasin Dadashov*, General Director of the Community Development Initiative Group (CDIG), Azerbaijan

2:15 – 2:45pm - Support to Community Development Initiatives/Projects

Chair: *Jan Pakulski, Senior Social Development and Civil Society Specialist, World Bank*

This session will focus on ways in which the CEN activities can support other large-scale community development activities such as Social Funds, reconstruction projects, sectoral projects (i.e. education, agriculture) etc. The session will begin with four 5-minute presentations on briefly describing 4 large-scale projects which will then be the focus on Working Group discussions. These projects are as follows:

1. Village Investment Project, Kyrgyz Republic (Elmira Ibraimova)
2. National Association of Social Investment Fund, Tajikistan (Akmal Dodojanov)
3. Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, Azerbaijan (Rauf Aliyev)
4. Aral Sea Basin Program, Uzbekistan (Olga Ogay)

2:45 – 3:00pm – Coffee Break

3:00 – 4:00pm – Working Groups

Participants will divide themselves into 4 Working Groups based on the 4 projects presented above. Participants are encouraged to participate in Working Groups based on their interest in the topics, not necessarily the country the project is located in. Each Working Group will be responsible for selecting a facilitator to moderate discussion and a rapporteur who will present the results of the discussion back to the plenary. Each Group will be asked to respond to the following questions:

- What value would the managers of these projects see in the CEN in terms of learning from the experience of others?
- What have the activities such as CEN “Stocktaking/mapping” Steering Group contributed in terms of valuable information for project managers?
- What are good examples of ways in which the CEN is concretely supporting the effectiveness of community empowerment projects?

The Working Groups will be as follows:

Group 1: Village Investment Project, Kyrgyz Republic (Resource Person: Elmira Ibraimova)

Group 2: National Association of Social Investment Fund, Tajikistan (Resource Person: Akmal Dodojanov)

Group 3: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, Azerbaijan (Resource Person: Rauf Aliyev)

Group 4: Aral Sea Basin Program, Uzbekistan – (Resource Person: Olga Ogay)

4:00 – 4:45pm – Reporting Back

Rapporteurs from each Working Group will each make a 5-7 minute presentations summarizing the results of their discussions, answering the questions provided. Discussion will follow. (Rapporteurs will also be asked to provide a written summary of their Group discussions.)

Chair: Jan Pakulski, Senior Social Development and Civil Society Specialist, World Bank

4:45 – 5:00pm – Wrap-up and Next Steps

Highlights of the day’s discussion and next steps.

Chair: Erik Johnson, World Bank Institute

Presenters:

- **Each National Network Coordinator** will be asked to make a 5-minute presentation outlining ideas which have emerged from this Conference which they will work on when they return back to their country.
- **Marcos Mendiburu** will comment on the use of videoconferencing as a way of enhancing regional networking and knowledge exchange.