



UNIVERSITY  
OF CENTRAL ASIA

## UCA in the Kyrgyz Republic



*President Roza Otunbayeva of the Kyrgyz Republic and UCA Director General Bohdan Krawchenko review UCA's progress at the opening of the Naryn State Road Diversion, completed by UCA in 2010.*

### University of Central Asia – One University, Three Campuses

The University of Central Asia (UCA) was founded in 2000. The Presidents of the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan, and His Highness the Aga Khan signed the International Treaty and Charter establishing this secular and private University; ratified by the respective parliaments, and registered with the United Nations. UCA seeks to promote and disseminate knowledge and technology in the development of mountainous regions and their societies. The University brings with it the commitment and partnership of the broader Aga Khan Development Network to the Kyrgyz Republic.

UCA consists of the School of Professional and Continuing Education (the first operational division of the

University); and the School of Arts and Sciences (undergraduate), and the Graduate School of Development that will be launched when the campuses are built. The University provides three additional initiatives to build teaching and scholarly capacity in the region through its Central Asian Faculty Development Programme, the Aga Khan Humanities Project, and Research Programme. UCA has invested a total of \$75 million in education and infrastructure, of which \$24 million has been invested in the Kyrgyz Republic.

The purpose of this brief is to highlight some of the main achievements of UCA in the Kyrgyz Republic. It examines the University's operational divisions and future plans.

### Government Partnerships

In May 2010, the interim government announced a programme to train and recruit young people to join the civil service. UCA responded to their request by developing an innovative "Local Economic and Community Development" (LECD) programme implemented in partnership with the Academy of Management under the President of the Kyrgyz Republic at eight universities, reaching every oblast. Supported by 22 new textbooks published in Kyrgyz and Russian, the programme engaged 112 instructors who were trained by the School of Professional and Continuing Education and reached over 1,000 young people being considered for positions in the civil

service. The Certificate programme will be offered to other civil servants in 2011.

In June 2010, UCA, with support from USAID, facilitated discussions with mobilised youth on issues of public policy. Drawing on focus and working groups, the report included the perspectives of young people from various socio-economic backgrounds. The final report, "Giving Youth a Voice in Youth Policy", explored issues faced by youth. This initiative resulted in a database of some 150 youth organisations active both formally and informally in Bishkek and surrounding areas. This will help to increase connectivity and encourage youth involvement in society.



*SPCE Bricklaying / Masonry, Construction Carpentry, and Plastering and Tiling learners at the opening of Naryn's Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) Centre in 2007.*

## School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE)

The School of Professional and Continuing Education's (SPCE) aims to promote social and economic development, serving the immediate needs of the rural communities where the campuses are being built. This fulfils UCA's approach to reach the broadest spectrum of learners possible. The School is Central Asia's first provider of post-secondary, short-cycle education programmes, giving young people and adults professional and vocational qualifications in a flexible learning format that improve employment and income-generating opportunities.

In the Kyrgyz Republic, SPCE is located in Naryn and has a Learning Centre in Bishkek. SPCE has trained several instructors from Naryn. Four English instructors are certified by the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the IT specialists have been awarded certificates from the Microsoft IT Academy. High-lights of current programming include:

### Accounting

SPCE programmes give particular attention to the promotion of entrepreneurship. By 2009, 25 new businesses were established by SPCE graduates, including a construction company in Naryn. As of September 2009, all graduates of SPCE's Accounting Technology Certificate Programme – specialising in bookkeeping and corporate accounting – were gainfully employed.

### Applied Languages

SPCE has a unique Applied Languages programmes with courses such as English for Business, English for Youth, Business Russian, and English for IT. SPCE is a registered testing centre of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry Examinations Board, which provides internationally recognised English language certification.

### Entrepreneurship

UCA works closely with Government to tackle regional issues. In 2009, UCA signed a Memorandum with the State Agency on Migration and Employment of Naryn Oblast, promoting entrepreneurship as a means of reducing unemployment in the region.

SPCE is launching a Centre on Microfinance and Entrepreneurship, which will provide training to loan officers and microfinance institutions in Bishkek and Osh, including courses on Agricultural Microfinance. Early work began in February 2010 when SPCE and the Association of Microfinance Institutions of the Kyrgyz Republic held a course on the "Individual Approach to Microfinance".

In 2011, the Programme will expand to combine training and high-quality analysis to inform policy and practice throughout the region. By building the skills of entrepreneurs and capacity of financial institutions, this Programme aims to connect clients with appropriate financial services and promote the development of small and medium businesses.

### Information Technology

Since 2007, SPCE is a registered Microsoft IT Academy and Certiport Testing Center, which offers Essential and Advanced Certificates for IT professionals. In 2009, SPCE became a registered testing centre for the International Computer Driving License (ICDL) in computer literacy. The curricula and exams are offered in Kyrgyz and Russian languages. ICDL certificates are internationally transferrable and increase the learners' proficiency and employability.

Since May 2010, SPCE has offered the ICDL Programme. Courses started in Naryn, where, with USAID funding, UCA conducted professional development courses in ICDL for teachers from 48 secondary schools in Naryn Oblast. In October, the Ministry of Education designated five schools in Naryn Oblast where ICDL will be implemented as a pilot at Grades 7 and 8 during the 2010-2011 academic year. SPCE also provided the schools with Kyrgyz-language learning resources.

In summer 2010, SPCE held a number of corporate courses. The School, together with the Naryn Oblast Committee on Employment and Migration, provided a corporate, short-term course on computer technology to the Migration Committees in Jumgal District. In addition, SPCE together with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) implemented two short-term, corporate courses for staff of the Advising and Information Centres within the Ministry of Labour and Employment on basic IT skills.

### Tourism

SPCE's engagement in tourism ranges from developing ecotourism to promoting Kyrgyz traditional culture by offering training programmes for community based tour operators. Following the signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation with the State Agency for Tourism, SPCE delivers high quality training programmes tailored for individuals in the tourism sector. The School also organised a roundtable on "Developing Ecotourism" which attracted more than 120 participants including government officials, representatives from the national tourism industry and local yurt operators.

### Community Outreach

To ensure that it reaches a diversity of individuals and communities throughout Naryn Oblast, SPCE established an Outreach Programme to engage villages which lack access to SPCE programmes.

In 2009, the English in the Villages (EiV) programme helped more than 600 school children to engage in additional English courses and improve their knowledge through the SPCE curriculum and textbooks. In Naryn Oblast, EiV is currently operational in 14 villages. In early 2010, SPCE successfully piloted both the Maths in the Villages and IT in the Villages programmes, with support from USAID.

In 2010, SPCE and MSDSP, with support from the World Bank, held a short-term course on “Training Veterinarians in Business Planning Basics”, for private veterinarians in Naryn Oblast. The trainers, which included two SPCE instructors, trained 122 veterinarians on generating business ideas, writing business plans, calculating cash flows, and presenting business plans to assist them in their work.

### Technical and Vocational Education Training

Since 2007, SPCE has offered Basic Level Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes in: Bricklaying / Masonry, Construction Carpentry, and Plastering and Tiling. These programmes are designed to address the need for skills

### Research Programme

The Research Programme was established in 2008 to position UCA as a centre of academic scholarship to promote sustainable development of the region. It has begun to make significant contributions by supporting several initiatives including research fellowships and grants to Central Asian and international scholars; developing knowledge bases and networks; and engaging regional and international partners in research projects.

In the Kyrgyz Republic, research topics span themes on cultural heritage, educational reform, and pasture and natural resource man-

upgrading taking into account that majority of TVET students are unemployed and need a means of generating income. The TVET programme addresses this through an apprenticeship model for learners. This enables them to earn income while receiving on-the-job experience to ensure their skills are relevant in the local job market. It has developed short courses on seismic construction techniques (supported by a guide and video) offered in Kyrgyz and Russian languages.

Sixty of the 84 graduates of the construction apprenticeship programme were employed by UCA on the main campus construction site.

agement. In addition, to enhance capacity in research skills and tools, UCA is working with several partners including the Centre of Development and Environment at the University of Bern, Kyrgyz Slavic University, Tajik Agrarian University, University of Salzburg, and others to develop Geoinformatics and GIS skills in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. UCA also serves as a regional host for key networks, including the Central Asian regional Coordination Office for the Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research North-South, the Central Asian nodes of Mountain Forum / Mountain Partnership, and the Mountain Partnership Consortium.

### Central Asia Faculty Development Programme (CAFDP)

The Central Asia Faculty Development Programme (CAFDP) offers support for individuals from the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan, to pursue doctoral and master’s studies with the intent that upon completion they will serve as UCA faculty for five years, contributing to research and teaching.

The University aims at having at least 80 percent of its faculty comprising Central Asian nationals with international experience and recognised credentials. CAFDP is developing its Partner Universities Programme through which students receive full financial assistance to pursue advanced graduate degrees at UCA’s

partner institutions. UCA has official agreements with the Asian Institute of Technology, Carleton University, German Academic Exchange Services (DAAD), Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, Michigan State University, University of Alberta, University of Bern, University of Cambridge, and University of Exeter.

From 2008 to 2010, UCA invested over \$345,000 in the CAFDP. In addition, host universities have dedicated over \$440,000 to the Programme. Ten out of the twenty recipients of the CAFDP scholarships have been from the Kyrgyz Republic.

### Aga Khan Humanities Project (AKHP)

Established in 1997, AKHP was created to explore abiding issues facing the individual and society from a multidisciplinary humanities perspective and to foster the development of critical thinking and academic writing skills.

Inherited from the Aga Khan Trust for Culture in 2007, AKHP maintains an extensive network of regional and international scholars and has established partnerships with universities in all three founding countries.

AKHP courses are offered at 34 universities and selected secondary schools in the region engaging some 158 instructors and over 6,500 students annually.

AKHP has promoted curriculum and pedagogical development through long-term partnerships with state universities.

Special attention is paid to faculty training through regular workshops on the curriculum materials and modern pedagogical methods. Between 2008 and 2009, ten workshops were conducted in the Kyrgyz Republic.

In the Kyrgyz Republic in 2008 and 2009, 22 trained instructors from 12 different universities who provided courses based on the AKHP textbooks to over 2,000 students. AKHP’s Kyrgyz Republic office is in Osh.

“The creation of UCA is an important step in developing education and research opportunities in Central Asia; and for me, it has changed my life’s direction. Since the 1990s when I completed my studies, there has been progress in the spheres of economic theory, applied research, and information technology. Going back to University is a chance for me to update and enhance my knowledge. My research analyses poverty – an important Central Asian issue – which I hope can influence future government policies.”

– Kanat Tilekeyev, PhD candidate, University of Giessen, Germany





*Campus view of Naryn, Kyrgyz Republic. The forecasted total investment over the coming years will be in excess of \$250 million.*

## Facility development update

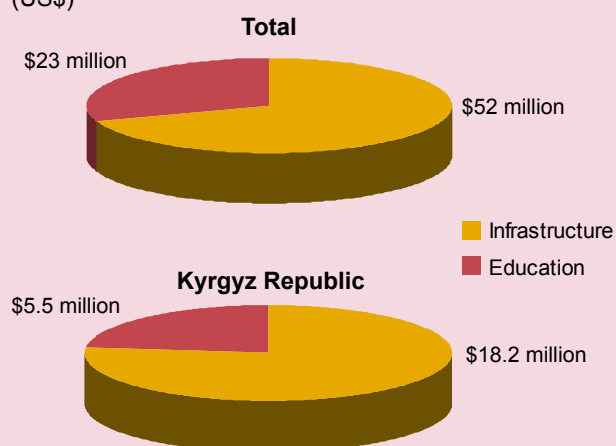
UCA is building a university campus on a 252 hectare site at Naryn which will provide state-of-the-art educational facilities for over 1,200 students together with faculty and staff. The campus has been designed by the world-renowned Japanese architect Arata Isozaki. All students and most staff and faculty will reside on the 125,000 square metre campus and the facilities will also include a library, auditorium, athletics centre, executive development centre and an early childhood development and community centre.

The total UCA investment in the main campus and town campus projects in Naryn up to the end of 2009 was more than \$16 million of which almost \$7.5 million was spent on construction. The forecasted total UCA investment in main campus and town campus projects in Naryn will be in excess of \$250 million over the coming years.

The transfer of ownership of the campus land to UCA was completed in late 2004. Considerable work has been carried out on the Naryn campus site. In 2010, Her Excellency President Roza Otunbayeva attended the opening of the Naryn State Road Diversion, which borders the Naryn campus and replaces the former state road. Access roads to neighbouring villages have been constructed and geohazard defence (green walls) and site levelling and grading will continue into the next year. Nurseries have been also established to propagate shrubs and trees for major landscaping that will be carried out as an integral part of the campus development.

In 2009, a total of 168 people, including 156 Kyrgyz nationals, were directly employed in construction related works in Naryn. At least 50 additional Kyrgyz nationals are being provided indirect employment.

## UCA Investment (US\$)



## Reach

- 170 trained instructors used the AKHP curriculum across 35 universities in the region reaching 6,600 learners
- 9 International University Partnerships
- 24 CAFDP scholars
- 25,000 SPCE learners
- 400 employees (more than 95% Central Asian nationals)
- Average of 400-450 employed in construction annually

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