



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**KAZAKHSTAN**

## SUCCESS STORY

# Local Leader Makes a Difference

### USAID alum creates successful social programs for his community



Photo: Community Connection

Alexei Kulikov (left) discusses his projects with other community leaders at a workshop in Almaty.

***“USAID opened lots of opportunities for me. Although I had so many ideas and skills, I would not have been able to realize them if I did not participate in the USAID program,” said Alexei Kulikov.***

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

Alexei Kulikov, 30, always wanted to make a difference in his community, and a USAID study tour in the U.S. gave him the tools to accomplish this dream.

Kulikov works as a trainer at a Social Fund Pomosh' (Help), a nongovernmental organization focusing on youth issues in Kostanai Oblast in northern Kazakhstan. In 2006 he participated in the USAID Community Connections program which brought community leaders from Kazakhstan to Tucson, Arizona for a study tour designed to familiarize them with youth projects in the United States. During this three-week study tour, Kulikov and his colleagues from Kazakhstan had an opportunity to observe the work of American youth organizations and attend specialized seminars on a variety of topics related to their work.

Since returning home, Kulikov has put the information and skills acquired on this USAID program to work for his community. One of the first results from his trip was a two-month training course Kulikov created for unemployed youth to prepare them to search for work, write resumes, and interview successfully. Kulikov drew inspiration for this course from his visit to a Tucson youth unemployment center. After the pilot run of the training course, 39 of 40 participants found work, and the Kostanai Oblast Municipality pledged to fund future trainings.

“Thanks to the training, I have achieved my dream,” said Dinara Shukizhanova, 21, who got her dream job as a financial specialist for the government after attending the workshop. “Without it, I would have waited for a long time...or maybe even never gotten this job!”

Kulikov also designed a project to combat smoking and alcohol abuse among teenagers in Kostanai, using resources that he brought from Tucson organizations and translated with the help of local volunteers.

Kulikov attributes much of his success to his participation in the USAID program. “USAID opened lots of opportunities for me. Although I had so many ideas and skills, I would not have been able to realize them if I did not participate in the USAID program,” he said.

Kulikov’s latest project focuses on replicating a teamwork session conducted by an outdoor leadership program he witnessed in the U.S. “I hope to create more successful social projects in the future,” he said.