

ANALYSIS OF KYRGYZSTAN'S ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS IN LIGHT OF ITS RECENT GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

This article provides an overview and analysis of public administration reforms attempted in Kyrgyzstan since 1991. The article's purpose is to generate insights for better understanding and responding to its governance challenges.

Keywords – corruption, governance, Kyrgyzstan, public administration, reforms

INTRODUCTION

For the last decade Kyrgyzstan's positive image of a country with flourishing prospects for democracy in the eyes of outsiders faltered. In the first half of the 1990s when it became independent from the former USSR, Kyrgyzstan was recognized in the international community as a flourishing democracy. Kyrgyzstan's first president Askar Akaev – a scientist and a relatively new face in politics – was seen as a champion of democracy among Central Asian countries whose leaders retained their positions from the previous regime.

For the last decade that image has been tarnished by several governance challenges including entrenched corruption and a host of political and economic problems. The first major sign of the tension stemming from such problems appeared during the 2005 public uprising that ousted Akaev from office. He was replaced by Bakiev, who came to power promising to fix all those problems. Bakiev did not keep his promise and he too was overthrown as result of a similar public uprising in April 2010, costing the lives of 86 demonstrators. The subsequent (and current) government led by president Otunbaeva inherited the governance challenges accumulated by her predecessors and has been trying to address them. Another major challenge came when inter-ethnic violence erupted in June 2010 in two southern cities, Osh and Jalabad. In these cities, especially in Osh, the long percolating ethnic tension fueled by powerful criminal and political interests left at least 400 people dead, ethnic relations ruined, and families devastated.

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Few comprehensive accounts of the governance challenges in Kyrgyzstan exist. The local and international coverage tended to focus mainly on political personalities and/or geopolitical issues. Yet, if one looked at these changes from the lens of Kyrgyzstan's public administration institutions, this downfall is not so surprising.

This article argues that Kyrgyzstan's governance challenges stem in large part from failure to understand and reform Kyrgyzstan's administrative system. Unfortunately much attention has been paid to internal and external political events and systems, instead of focusing on the actual accountability and capacity of the machinery of the government. A substantive reform of public administration institutions can no longer be ignored if the goal of building effective governance system is to be realized.

This work draws from different sources including official documents, personal observations, interviews with formal and informal opinion leaders and ordinary people, local and foreign media coverage of relevant news, independent observations and assessments of government officials and analysts, donors, consultants. These people were either interviewed by the author or shared their views elsewhere. Some experts who were interviewed asked to remain anonymous.

The article starts with an overview of reforms, followed by an account of key reforms summarized in chronological order. Administrative reforms undertaken in Kyrgyzstan for the last twenty years can be broken down into four distinct phases. The first phase is the period 1991 through 1996. In these early years of independence, in line with those who favored a smaller government, little attention was paid to reforming the administrative system beyond privatization and downsizing of government organizations. In the second phase – from 1996 through 2005 – significant efforts were undertaken to reform the administrative system. This phase, described in greater detail below, will be referred to as Akaev's reforms. It corresponds to the shift in emphasis from market to state institutions as key drivers of development. The third phase of reforms falls in the years from 2005 through early 2010, referred below as "Bakiev's reforms." In the early years of his presidency Bakiev delayed administrative reforms. In late 2009 and early 2010, Bakiev compensated for his initial slow pace by instituting radical measures, which actually triggered his overthrow. The last phase of reforms, which started in second half of 2010, is now under way. The next four sections review the key reforms in each of these phases and their outcomes in chronological order. The concluding section analyses them and draws implications for researchers and practitioners.

1991 – 1996: SMALL GOVERNMENT IS BETTER GOVERNMENT

During the initial period of reforms leading international donors shared an assumption that functional institutions would fill the "institutional vacuum" once the macroeconomic policies and reforms were implemented. The prevailing idea was that smaller and less intrusive government was better for businesses, which were considered to be the key driver of development.

Meanwhile, institutional capacity and accountability mechanisms of the new government were in poor shape to support those macroeconomic reforms. It lacked adequate human resources and institutional frameworks for building and maintaining a new political and economic system. The administrative system inherited from the Soviet regime relied upon planned economy and unyielding top-town political ruling by the communist party. The bureaucracy was not well-qualified and was poorly suited for developing policies for the new environment under democratic governance principles. The soviet human resources system, which ensured careful screening, selection, and training of the soviet cadres, disappeared. This gap gave way to a flourishing patronage which undermined the capacity and discipline within the bureaucracy. Another gap was in accountability mechanisms. In the past, national government had been controlled by and was accountable to the federal government in Moscow, but it evaporated with the dissolution of the USSR. In its place a weak mechanism of public accountability was established supposedly to keep elected officials accountable to the public, and to ensure that civil servants served the public. But this mechanism did not work; the legislative and constitutional changes did not alter the mindsets of the people, government officials, and civil servants who had inherited their offices from the previous regime. At the same time, the government bureaucracy suffered major brain drain of highly educated professionals to other countries and to emerging private sector, nonprofit organizations, and international development agencies.

Still, comprehensive administrative reform was not the top priority for aid donors or for the new leadership. At the time of Kyrgyzstan's independence, International Monetary Fund and other influential donors paid minimal attention to reforming government institutions not directly related to macro-economic functions of the government. Among the few government agencies that received the most attention and funding were the Central Bank and Ministry of Finance. These two entities received 20.3% and 13.2%, respectively, of total foreign assistance between 1992 and 2000 (UNDP, 2002). An exception among donors was the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP), which stressed the importance of improving the quality of the entire administrative system. UNDP invested eight million USD in government's capacity building programs and projects between 1993 and 1997 (Wandel, 1997).

Hence, reforms focused mainly on the private sector at the expense of government control, resulting in government downsizing and emphasizing rapid privatization. During the first five years the government managed to privatize 97% of trade, 80% of industry, and about 50% of other sectors of the economy formerly managed by the government.

In view of the capacity and accountability gaps mentioned above, former government officials and their allies both facilitated and took advantage of minimal oversight by appropriating public properties for themselves at a fraction of their values. Moreover, as the International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2000) belatedly acknowledged, in an atmosphere of partial and incomplete reforms in which neither the political system or competitive markets were functional, "vested interests" influenced and modified government policies to create persistent market distortions and generate rents for

themselves. These processes closely bound a newly emerging business sector and government elites together (ibid).

Poorly informed and hastily designed reform interventions, such as privatization, conducted with limited capability, transparency, accountability, and oversight of government actions, facilitated emergence of covert corrupt networks. The power, reach, and influence of such networks quickly strengthened. Here is how Valeri Dill, one of the former members of parliament, explains the emergence of organized crime networks in Kyrgyzstan (translation from Russian):

During the early 1990s when privatization started most officials took advantage of this opportunity to divide public property. In Kyrgyzstan thus emerged mafia, a criminal group, intent upon accumulating capital and robbing the country. Soon, the key profitable spheres in the economy — the energy sector, mining industry, alcohol industry, and tax inspections — came under the control of the president's family and the people close to it. This mafia group rearranged the system of collection of income. In every ministry, in every large enterprise at the top were people who controlled financial flows... This criminal structure suppressed smaller businesses and prevented the emergence of a middle class... This covert network corrupted the current first family, as well as most public representatives who do not even know their own duties. They came to power to serve themselves and the people who helped them come to the power, and they were reluctant to pass laws limiting the interests of the mafia. The government was decapitated: the real decisions were made beyond the walls of the "White House" (Dill, 2007).

The narrative summarized above reflects shared perceptions of the ordinary public and businesses.

In sum, this hasty attempt at reforming government paved the way for institutionalized corruption. Business elites learned to use political offices to influence economic and regulatory policies, to create favorable conditions for their businesses as well as secure immunity from persecution. Many government officials, similarly, came to see their government job as a tool for promoting their own economic interests, especially in view of extremely low salaries and high staff turnover.

1996-2005: AKAEV'S ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

Since the middle of the 1990s, aid donors began to push for stronger reforms of the state administration, pressured by a combination of several factors. These factors included increasing evidence of negative side effects caused by the previous wave of reforms, revealing the need for effective government to enable the private sector. Furthermore, donors also noticed that the governments with better institutions used development aid more effectively, while in countries with poorly functioning government institutions aid was subject to frequent misuses. Increasing worldwide concern with security issues, as well as humanitarian and environmental crises drew attention to the role, capacity, and quality of governmental institutions. The widening income gap between countries and between individuals, especially in the poorer countries, and other pressing social issues

such as education and health also played a role in broadening the meaning of development itself. The adoption of the Millennium Development Goals, which targeted the reduction of poverty, also drew donors' attention to sustainable development strategies and capable government institutions that would promote not only economic growth, but also the social and political development.

The major impetus for this wave of administrative reforms in Kyrgyzstan came from the World Bank's *National Poverty Reduction Strategy* (NPRS) and *Comprehensive Development Framework* (CDF) initiatives. These initiatives intended to help the recipient governments take ownership of the process by setting their own development priorities and strategies, and using them to coordinate donor aid. Kyrgyzstan's authorities prepared the country's NPRS with the World Bank's assistance. The NPRS served as the basis for the country's development blueprints, the *Comprehensive Development Framework* (CDF)¹ for 2000-2010 and *Country Assistance Strategy* (CAS) for 2003-2006. These documents were to guide donor assistance to target poverty by strengthening government institutions that could secure a favorable business environment, allowing businesses to generate income and reduce poverty.

The three priorities of the CDF/NPRS were formation of an effective state, building a fair society, and promoting sustainable economic growth. The formation of an effective state, according to the NPRS, entailed a smaller and a more professional, inclusive, decentralized state apparatus responsive to the private sector and civil society. Other essential objectives stated in this document included curbing corruption, building democratic institutions, and improving the effectiveness and integrity of the state through greater transparency and professionalism in public administration, public expenditure management, and the legal system.

The largest monetary fuel for administrative reforms was provided through the World Bank's Governance Structural Adjustment Credit (GSAC) (\$7.78 million), accompanied by the Governance Technical Assistance Credit (GSTA) (\$20 million). The latter was designed to assist the implementation of the GSAC from 2003 through 2008. These projects were based on the country's development blueprints mentioned above to help the government improve the public sector's transparency and responsiveness and to increase efficiency and accountability in the public sector.

To meet these objectives the government concentrated its effort on reforming the civil service system, to change government machinery using functional reviews and introducing information and communication technologies, and to initiate decentralization reforms, as summarized below. The key initiatives within each component of reforms are reviewed below followed by a summary of their outcomes.

Civil service² reforms

The main efforts in civil service reform were confined to legislative measures which attempted to define and establish structures and rules for a civil service system. The 1993 constitution established the principle of a de-politicized civil service for the first time, and a series of initiatives in the civil service system intended to implement the constitutional provisions were initiated in the second half of the 1990s. In 1996 a

presidential decree (equivalent to law in terms of legal status) established the Agency for State Service Reform and promulgated an accompanying document (*polijenie*) on State Service. The latter did not distinguish political and administrative positions, which undermined merit-based hiring principle. Two other presidential decrees – one on the *Reorganization of the Central Public Administration* and another on *Measures on Further Improvement of State Administration Structures of the Kyrgyz Republic* – reduced twenty-one ministries into fourteen (Murzaev, 2003). However, as Dykenbaev and Hansen (2003) observed, approximately the same number of new government bodies were created.

To improve the capacity of the civil service the president's 1997 decree established an Academy of Management (<http://www.amp.aknet.kg>) and based at the former Bishkek International School of Management and Business. Since 2004 the Center for Training, Retraining, and Improving Qualification of Cadres was established at the Academy. The center provides training annually for more than 3,000 civil servants and employees of local/municipal self-governance bodies. The Academy has received technical assistance from various donors, including UNDP and European Union's Technical Assistance for the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS), as part of their programs on improving the quality of governance. Initially the Academy placed its alumni in government jobs, but this practice was shortly discontinued.

In 1997, the National Public Administration and Civil Service Commission was established under the president's office. In 2000 it was renamed as the National Council. The National Council was in charge of preparing proposals on public administration and civil service reform to secure donor funding and other kinds of assistance. The Civil Service Commission's most important document was the *1998 Strategy of Administrative Reform*. The Strategy identified a need for legislation outlining the targets of administration reform, slimming down administrative machinery, optimizing ministries' and departments' organizational structures and size, delegating authority to local administrations, improving management of public enterprises, and creating a system of training for civil servants.

The next important step in civil service reform was the adoption of the 1999 *Law on the State Service*, based on the president's earlier decree, and the *Strategy of Administrative Reform*. TACIS program supported this legislative change, but it took six years for this law to be adopted by the parliament. The eventual law reaffirmed principles of competence and professional ethics as the basis for professional public service, provided classification of public offices, and defined the formal ranks, basic rights, duties, and social guarantees of civil servants. The law also outlined legal guarantees for protection of civil servants. However, as with the president's earlier decree, the law did not clearly distinguish political and non-political offices and state bodies, elected and appointed public servants, and civil and military services. This further complicated implementation of the merit-based hiring principle in civil service. In addition, the principles of de-politicization, neutrality, stability, and continuity introduced by this law were undermined by the concentration of major decision-making powers in the hands of the president. The frequent replacement of civil servants was (and still remains) a common practice. Almost every new political appointment triggers a commensurate

replacement of a civil servant in a given agency or unit. Such a highly politicized recruitment process and career system, coupled with high staff turnover seriously hinders continuity and competence in the civil service.

The GSAC and GSTA also facilitated adoption of the *Strategy of the Reform of State Service*, passage of the new *Law on State Service* in 2004 (which replaced the 1991 law), and creation of the Agency on State Service. The *Strategy of the Reform of State Service* created the Council on State Service. The Council on State Service was charged with determining the strategies for developing the state service and coordinating cooperation among government bodies. The Agency on State Service was designated as a working body of the Council on State Service to implement the *Law on State Service* and develop relevant bylaws necessary for its implementation. The Agency was also made responsible for improving civil servants' qualification by providing training, evaluations, and tests, and collecting and analyzing income declarations from state servants.

The 2004 *Law on State Service* addressed several drawbacks of the previous legislation. First, it established a clearer division between the civil service and political offices. The law also made competitive hiring in the civil service compulsory. In addition, the law introduced the concept of *stats secretaries*, the highest administrative positions in government bureaus, whose job was to secure better implementation of civil service legislation and target the high staff turnover in civil service. The *stats secretaries* were to be appointed to respective government agencies by the prime minister upon recommendation from the Council on State Service.

What outcomes did these changes generate? Much of the progress was limited to producing and rewriting various types of legislative documents and strategies, and to establishing different functionaries to oversee their implementation. While the legislative documents saw some progress, implementation of those documents and strategies was minimal or superficial at best. Moreover, the reforms affected lower levels of government, and ignored the highest levels where key problems had their origins, such as duplication among the various functions of the president, prime minister, and existing ministries.

Donors concluded that overall civil service reforms failed to generate expected positive changes in the administrative system. The World Bank's 2002 "Governance and Service Delivery in the Kyrgyz Republic," based on the 2001 nationwide survey³ concluded that very little improvement had been achieved through these reforms. The report noted that many challenges remained: competitive hiring for civil service was still an exception rather than the rule; civil servants' salaries were very low; and the system still lacked transparency with regard to conflict of interest. Little had been done to address the roots of problems of civil service, such as poor administrative expertise/capacity, excessive politicization of the administrative system, unlawful and inadequate interference of executive authorities in economy, and the lack of transparency.

Functional reviews

Functional reviews of the government agencies and ministries were seen as one of the promising tools for improving effectiveness of public administration. The purpose of functional reviews is to identify which functions specific government organizations should carry out, and which ones should be decentralized, devolved, or privatized. The reviews aim to identify and eliminate duplicated and redundant functions to secure a more efficient use of organizations' resources. These reviews were considered essential and timely, given the transition of the administrative system from planned to market economy.

Several donors have been involved in promoting functional reviews both by conducting pilot projects as well as by training the staff of the ministries to conduct such reviews on their own. In line with the obligations the government accepted with the World Bank's GSAC and GSTA credits (mentioned above), UNDP worked on a joint project with UK's Department for International Development (DFID) to improve the state governance system, focusing on functional analysis of several government organs both at central and local state administration levels. The European Commission's TACIS program also supported functional reviews in some ministries.

A comprehensive overview and analysis of functional reviews was generated in a 2001 report titled *Functional Analysis of Organs of Executive Branch in Kyrgyzstan* by UNDP-sponsored Working Group of the National Council on State Governance and State Service Reform. This report highlighted the common problems in several of the government ministries which underwent functional reviews, and proposed suggestions for reforms of the state governance. These problems included the following: First, the qualifications of the state servants and the structural organizations of the ministries did not adequately support the stated ministerial functions. Many ministries had up to three overlapping departments dealing with the same financial and budgetary matters, whereas others had only one department dealing with three different functions with very limited resources. Allocation of human and other resources was uneven. Second, clear subordination principles within the ministries did not exist. Third, labor division across "horizontal" departments was unclear. Fourth, coordination among ministries was inadequate; the president's and prime ministers' offices (both of which have departments corresponding to the main functions of main ministries) did not provide such coordination. Fifth, the ministries lacked clerical/administrative support (which had been laid off due to staff cuts to save funds), and it was detrimental to the work of the organization because highly-educated specialists were overburdened with low-skilled tasks.

The report's set of recommendations included the need to create separate human resources, financial, and legal departments with clear division of labor and specification of functions in each ministry and across main agencies; delegation of some of the functions of the prime minister's and president's offices to line ministries; legislation to establish clear subordination principles across all ministries; inventorying intra-ministerial rules to secure clear division of labor; creating new coordinating structures

for general functions; and the need to cease cutting administrative/clerical staff to save funds, which actually reduced the productivity and increased waste in ministries.

What outcomes did these initiatives generate? According to local analysts and insiders, although the functional reviews were presented by government as a major achievement, it had limited impact in facilitating substantive improvements. For example, not only was the entire *Functional Analysis of Organs of Executive Branch in Kyrgyzstan* report ignored, but the project itself was closed down by the president's office.

Several reasons explain this failure to implement substantive reforms through functional reviews. For one, political leadership did not have ownership and buy-in. Coordination within government as well as between government and donors was problematic. In addition, although letting the ministries conduct their own functional reviews was a good idea for improving internal organizational capacity, there was a lack of effective monitoring and evaluation, and recommendations for elimination of unnecessary functions were not implemented. Furthermore:

Horizontal functional analysis was carried out rather shallowly leading to irrational distribution of functions between ministries and sub-departments and unfair distribution of human resources between state bodies and within them. Analysis of functions of local state administrations and local self-government bodies was conducted only in pilot regions and its results did not receive adequate evaluation. Financial mechanisms allowing for implementation of functions delegated to self-government bodies were not thought through and developed (Omuraliev, 2005).

In sum, similar to the civil service reforms, functional reviews were much talked about but had limited impact upon improving the actual work of the government machinery.

E-governance reforms

Unlike civil service reform and functional reviews, e-governance reforms had more traction both in terms of policy changes and their implementation. Among the first and the most important policy documents guiding e-governance reforms was the *Policy Paper on Informatization (Konseptsiya Informatizatsii)* adopted by the government in 1994. This document laid out the basis for development of information and communication technologies (ICT) in public administration. The next document, the *Konseptsiya on Legal Informatization* was approved by the president's decree in 1997. It intended to provide transparency and access to legal information. The Ministry of Justice was to register normative-legal documents and implement this policy document. The 1998 *Konseptsiya of Informatization Development*, approved by the president's Decree generated a new impetus to e-governance reforms in Kyrgyzstan. Specifically, it stipulated the development of legislative bases in ICT, establishment of corporate networks in the ministries and agencies, implementation of the State Computer Network project, formation of national information resources, and access to ICT by organizations and citizens. The key policy document on electronic government is the *National Strategy Development of ICT in the Kyrgyz Republic*. The main goal of this document is to form an information society and e-government in Kyrgyzstan. The strategy was

developed with input from various government agencies as well as from private and non-profit sectors and foreign experts.

E-governance reforms have been supported by UNDP, World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and other donors through grants, credits, and technical assistance, to provide training and equipment for developing and establishing information systems and networks. UNDP helped the government to set up the largest unified network – Information System of Public Administration (ISPA) – which connects 44 ministries and other central government bodies and their local subdivisions. Beyond the unified network, almost all ministries and government agencies have their own local networks. As of 2001, the public administration system had 5000 personal computers, and 20% of those (i.e. 1000 computers) were connected to the ISPA network (Myrzaev, 2003). The ADB provided credit for establishing an Information System in the Ministry of Education and Culture that connects the Ministry with its subdivisions in the *oblasts* and *rayon*. The World Bank, in cooperation with the state Property and Investment Fund via State Agency on Registration the Property Rights, financed the Computer Land Cadastre and Cadastre on Property and their Owners (ibid).

The governmental Internet-portal (<http://www.gov.kg>) was established within the State Computer Network. This Internet-portal links several public institutions, providing users with information on their activities, staff, and contacts. In future, the portal is expected to offer simple services such as consulting and licensing and more interactive features.

No comprehensive evaluation of e-governance reform in Kyrgyzstan exists to this date. Integration of ICT in public administration in Kyrgyz Republic is highly decentralized. Although the Department of Informatization within the Ministry of Transport and Communications is in charge of implementing the government policy in this field, it does not have its own budget to implement its mandate, let alone to carry out training, monitoring, and evaluation of ICT use in public administration on regular bases.

Decentralization reforms

A series of decentralization reforms resulted in a confusing system which even experts and legislators find difficult to comprehend. The current system combines legacies of the previous Soviet regime adapted to accommodate national political agenda following Kyrgyzstan's independence. Although the old and new governance regimes are based on different logics, they share lack of concern for local ownership and capacity. The vertical layers of governance systems at *rayon* (similar to county), *oblast* (province), and national levels were inherited from the previous regime that wanted to secure maximum top-down control over the republics. There are two parallel structures at both *rayon* and *oblast* levels of government, that constitute local governance system in Kyrgyzstan. One structure is the local *state* administration, whose heads are appointed by the president and represent the central government. The other structure contains the actual local *self-government* bodies, which include heads of the local executive body (*ail okmotu*) and the local councils (*kenesh*); both are elected directly by residents of the respective territorial units. The co-existence of the parallel self-governance and central state administrative structures at *rayon* and *oblast* levels reflects the desire of the

national government leaders to appear democratic while retaining their grip on local political, administrative, and economic resources. Currently there are seven *oblasts*, 42 *rayons*, and 472 *ail okmotu* for the country of 5.1 million residing in a territory of about 200'000 sq. km.

Decentralization reforms also produced a flood of legislative initiatives. Following independence, collective and state farms (*kolhoz* and *sovhoz*) disintegrated. They once served as agricultural-economic production units and provided local infrastructure and basic services during Soviet Union rule. Akaev's 1996 decree established "local self-government" executive bodies (*ayl okmotu*) for villages corresponding to the territories of the old collective and state farms. Transfer of collective farm administrative responsibilities to the newly formed local executive bodies was continued through a series of other laws including the 2001 *Law On Local Self-Government and Local State Administration* and 2002 *Law On Communal (Municipal) Property*.

In 2002 a *National Strategy for Further Decentralization* was adopted with UNDP's assistance. The Strategy intended to reform the inter-governmental finance system and the units of sub-national government. This was done through adoption of the *Law on Financial and Economic Basis of Local Self-Governments* in 2003. The law further delineated fiscal authorities and responsibilities of state and local self-governments, and established limited financial autonomy for local self-governments, including collection of local taxes and noninterference by rayon administrations in local self governments' fiscal management.

In addition to the three tiers of sub-national governance bodies (*oblast*, *rayon*, and *aiyl* (village) levels), the 2002 *Law on Local Self-Government and Local State Administration* added a provision for another tier: community-based organizations (or citizens' voluntary associations), which could register at the Ministry of Justice as nonprofit organizations and operate at grassroots level under local self-government bodies. Local self-government bodies can now collaborate with and delegate to these organizations certain responsibilities pertaining to service delivery and management of local resources (including property), on a contractual basis.

While decentralization reforms led to the creation of 472 local *ail okmtu* (self-governing bodies) in villages, towns, and cities, local self governments' jobs are inhibited by several factors. There is a high level of overlap in functions, responsibilities, and authority among organizations in these four tiers of sub-national governance bodies, as well as among local state administration and local self-governance bodies. Even officials themselves are often confused about who carries out which functions. Moreover, the delegated responsibilities by the center, which increased the tasks of the local self governments, were not accompanied by increased capacity, funding, and political and administrative authority. The budget is redistributed by the national government and also filtered through *oblast* and *rayon* levels of territorial state administrations before reaching to local self-government bodies. According to the convoluted legislation local self-government bodies are ought to retain 90% of the locally collected budget. But in average they retain only about 10% (Mukanova, 2008). As a result, the reforms made things more difficult for local self governance bodies by diluting responsibility and accountability both at horizontal and vertical levels.⁴

In sum, local governance reforms are yet to address the urgent problems in local governance, some of which have been created by the reforms. Such problems include: limited authority and capacity of local self-governance bodies to collect and allocate local revenues; layering of the local governments at *oblast*, *rayon* and *local* levels for such a small country; and competing and overlapping functions of local and national level bodies of the ministries and agencies. The following excerpt from the former head of the Chong Tash *ail okmotu* (in Issyk Kol *oblast*) about dealing with the new system conveys the frustrations of local self governments:

He couldn't solve a single problem of the village due to various reasons – lack of money, lack of skills, lack of knowledge, intense control by the finance department and other state agencies. His activity was reduced to endless trips to the rayon state administration at his own expense to submit a bunch of papers. He is not motivated anymore to be elected again (Mukanova, 2008, p. 210).

In 2004, one year prior to his ouster, Akaev passed a *Reform Strategy for the Kyrgyz Republic's State Governance System*. The official rationale for adopting this Strategy was the need to streamline reforms and secure better coordination among the agencies implementing reforms. The unstated rationale was that it was Akaev's attempt to regain the support of the donors who were becoming disillusioned by such undemocratic tendencies in the country as the 2002 killings of several demonstrators by the government forces, and the 2003 referendum initiated by the president designed to strengthen his own authority. The Central Expert Group, created under the National Council on Good Governance (established on July 25, 2003), was in charge of overseeing implementation of the *Reform Strategy*. The Expert Group was to take over the responsibilities of previous bodies overseeing the reform of state governance. The National Council was transformed into the Consultative Council by the president's October 25, 2004 decree to expand the membership of the council to include members of international donor agencies. But this Strategy did not have a long life.

Overall, administrative reforms during Akaev's time were reduced to producing and counting the *outputs* – such as the numbers of laws passed, the number of ministries that underwent functional reviews, and so on. And there were just too many legal documents – laws, decrees, and provisions – that even some of the high level officials in charge of implementing them could not keep track of these changes. But the analyses of *outcomes* of administrative reforms were hard to pin down.

As summarized by the UNDP, “despite many changes in the structure of the Government and public administration organs, both at the central and regional levels, they remain largely non-functional and ineffective” (2004, p.20). Despite some positive changes, administrative reforms initiated during this period have been unsystematic and mostly cosmetic due to poor capacity, weak oversight, and lack of discipline in government organizations. Much of these reform initiatives were developed mainly to satisfy donors so as to continue receiving assistance funding, and implementation was not always a priority. A more important reason why implementation and effectiveness of reforms was hindered is that political leadership did not want to jeopardize its power base by granting controls to bureaucracy or by establishing a merit-based civil service. The same held true for removing the local state administration bodies off the backs of

local self-governments, which also would lessen the central government's control. Introducing greater accountability and transparency was anathema to politicians who much preferred playing by their own rules in the dark.

Meanwhile, beneath this rhetoric of reforms and progress, the actual work of the government has significantly deteriorated in the fifteen years of independence. Government's delivery of basic public goods and services, especially in terms of rule of law and social and economic conditions, diminished increasingly, while corruption flourished. The 2002 survey of the population by the Center of Study of Public Opinion (Ilibezova, 2002) found that 74% of the respondents thought that corruption in government became worse compared to what it was during the days of the Soviet Union. Two-thirds of the respondents did not trust the law enforcement bodies; 78% felt that they were unprotected in the face of rude and unpunished behavior of the law enforcement bodies. Meanwhile, 37% of the population and 50% of the respondents from law enforcement bodies believed the imperfections in legislation created conditions for corruption. Moreover, 70% of all respondents agreed that it was impossible to solve any problem without bribery. According to another survey⁵ conducted by the International Republican Institute (IRI) in April 2005 following the March revolution, the top three biggest failures of the former president Akaev were government corruption (according to 27% of respondents); his relatives' influence in politics (27%); and selling state property for personal gain (21%). Institutionalized corruption, coupled with the breakdown of the economic and welfare net made the abuses of state authority even more severe for the public. The manipulation of the parliamentary elections in 2004 by Akaev's network to further increase its power became the straw that broke the camel's back.

These developments shed light on the so-called "tulip revolution" that erupted in March 2005, causing Akaev to flee to Russia. Public frustrations had been accumulating for more than a decade, as the government increasingly faltered in providing basic public goods and services. This revolution was primarily a public response to the deterioration of public administration, continued misuses of power, and usurpation of government authority and public resources by a narrow circle of people surrounding the president and his family. It was a revolt against poor social and economic conditions, and against the way government operated and was used.

2005-2010: BAKIEV'S ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

Kyrgyzstan's second president, Kurmanbek Bakiev, rose to power on his promise of improving government to better serve the country's people. He promised to redress all the key problems that had led to the public uprising – i.e., altering the constitution to restore balance of powers, fighting corruption, improving social and economic conditions, and reforming the civil service by introducing a merit-based system.

Did Bakiev deliver on his promises? Initially, administrative reform was given only lip service. In the first four years of his presidency, between 2005 and 2009, Bakiev consistently mentioned the need for state governance reform and criticized the previous president for failing in this area. Yet he did not propose any cohesive, specific measures

for state governance reforms. Moreover, he dismantled some of the initiatives of his predecessor. Specifically, he liquidated the Consultative Council and its working groups in charge of overseeing the implementation of the 2004 *Reform Strategy for the Kyrgyz Republic's State Governance System*. The 2004 Reform Strategy, the 2000-2010 *National Comprehensive Development Framework*, and other related initiatives of the former president were forgotten. Political appointees, experts, and civil servants who worked on administrative reforms prior to the revolution and developed expertise and experience were replaced by new people loyal to the president but not always qualified for the job. In November 2005, the new government also conducted a large-scale reorganization resulting in abolishment of 228 administrative entities, reorganization of another 714 agencies, and layoff of 5,539 staff; the claim was that these measures created 279 million soms (\$6.25 million) in savings (Bekbolotov, 2006).

Meanwhile, although donors continued their aid assistance, they grew increasingly skeptical and critical of the new president's policies. Some donors reduced their involvement to technical matters.⁶

In 2007, Bakiev introduced a new *National Development Strategy for 2007-2010* (NDS-1), revised in 2009 as the *National Development Strategy for 2009-2010* (NDS-2⁷). The Ministry of Economic Development and Trade coordinated the drafting of NDS-2 by involving experts from other ministries and independent experts. The NDS-2's key strategic goals were (1) increasing the quality of economic development; (2) improving the quality of state governance; (3) improving the quality of life; and (4) increasing the quality of the environment.

NDS-2 appears to have been written primarily in response to aid donors and to those who increasingly criticised the president for curtailing reforms. However, none of the listed reforms were substantive enough to improve the system. For example, NDS-2 mentioned several "accomplishments" in administrative reform but they were only repetitions of old accounts of functional reviews, budgetary reforms, and local governance reforms.

Among the new reforms the document lists the 2007 elimination of the *rayon* and *oblast* levels from the budget system to favor the central government and local *ayl okmotu*. In 2008 the *rayon* level was reintroduced into the budgeting process. Justification for eliminating *rayon* and *oblast* levels from the budget was based on the lack of clear delineation of authority and functions between local self government bodies and local state government, as well as the lack of self-government organs' capacity to carry out social economic forecasting. The revised NDS-2 document does not explain why reintroducing the *rayon* level was the best solution to address these shortcomings. The 2008 *Law on Local Self Governance and Local State Administration* still did not address the problems of duplication of functions.

NDS-2 also claimed as an achievement of administrative reforms the collection of income declarations from 98.4% state employees in political and special state positions to the Agency on State Service. In fact, these declarations are a mere formality, because there are no penalties for not filing them; even those that are filed do not always reflect the real incomes of officials and state servants.⁸ NDS-2 also announced formation of a

new reserve of cadres comprised of 67 graduates of universities and 89 current civil servants. The Agency on State Service also opened a testing center for state servants using \$65,000 from the World Bank. The testing center was expected to facilitate, among other things, open and competitive selection to state service, as well as exams of state servants for evaluation and promotion purposes. Last, on the subject of administrative reforms NDS-2 referred to the limitations of the *Law on State Service*, mentioning its failure to cover political positions and its lack of indicators by which to measure the *Law's* effectiveness. Another new *Law on State and Civil Service* would be legislated to remedy these limitations.

In his speech on July 27, 2009, following the presidential election, which he won through extensive manipulation of government institutions and mobilization of informal networks, the president Bakiev finally announced his plan for state governance reforms. This plan itself included a number of radical measures which were supposed to streamline public administration and machinery of the government. In September 2009, the president announced the beginning of the first phase of the state governance reforms (*reformi upravleiya*). The key proposed change was the division of government organs into two distinct systems: one that promotes economic development and another that would secure smooth/effective functioning of the government.

According to president's reform policy, a special fund would be created to promote economic development. Its administrators would be in charge of attracting investments and promoting innovations to ensure the country would become effectively integrated into global economy. To ensure a favorable investment climate for businesses, the government would strengthen its protection of private property and limit bureaucrats' encroachments in business by developing a more streamlined legislation. A Consultative Council would be formed to discuss operational questions and deal with approbation of laws related to business interests.

To ensure effective functioning of the government, the responsibility of *pravitelstvo* (i.e., the prime minister's office and ministries), duplication among the branches of power would be removed; strict regulation of government organs would be ensured; personal accountability of all officials and bureaucrats would be increased; and the size of the bureaucratic apparatus would be optimized. To prevent the bureaucracy from derailing these reforms ("we know how fast and easily bureaucracy can derail any type of reforms") public oversight of officials' activities at all levels would be ensured. The reforms were to emerge from dialog with society, which would ensure reasonable relations among society, government and business. The president noted that mechanisms for regulating such processes were being developed, including the *Memorandum on Interaction of Government with Nongovernmental Organizations*, along with other mechanisms for promoting dialog among government, youth and business. All such "disparate fragments would be combined into a cohesive system."

Bakiev declared that reforms would embody the principles of public oversight, dialog, effectiveness, efficiency, and elimination of duplication in state governance as proclaimed in his speeches. His website had an even longer list of such principles, including standardization of the governance process ("limit subjective influences"),

“minimization of political risks,” and “balance of interests of different social groups and structures.”

At this time Bakiev was quick to enact a set of reforms that surprised many observers, not only because the actual changes went against the stated goals and principles of the reforms, but because using those changes he openly attempted to institutionalize his private ambitions to expand his family’s grip on government resources. For example, “to promote economic development” in the country, he established a new Central Agency on Development, Investments, and Innovations (*Centralnoe Agentsvo po Razvitiuy, Investisiiyam, i Innovatsiiyam*), CADII. The president appointed his son, Maxim Bakiev, to lead this agency. Maxim is best known for alleged involvement in covert economic activities within Kyrgyzstan and beyond.



CADII meeting featuring Maxim Bakiev at the center and former prime minister Daniar Usenov on his right. The photo was provided by the press service of the former President Bakiev.

Instead of reducing the duplication of functions in government and reducing the size of the government bodies, CADII actually duplicated the functions of existing government agencies and ministries. Despite its stated commitment to increase public oversight and accountability of officials, CADII had a dubious corporate structure and dubious accountability mechanisms both of them outside the government’s and legislature’s oversight. The government funds CADII received were managed by a private consulting company MGN Consulting, whose head was subsequently issued an arrest warrant for his key role in perpetrating major fraud in Italy.

Yet another step in reforming state administration did not fit either part of his stated agenda (i.e. promoting economic development and smooth functioning of the government): creation of a new special armed division “Arstan” (“lion” in Kyrgyz) in

charge of providing security to top officials. This division was formed from “*Pantera*” (“panther”) – a special division of the National Service of Government Protection (formerly the National Guard). Bakiev's youngest brother was appointed its commander. Arstan and the National Service of Government Protection came under exclusive control of the president. Local media and observers explained these moves as the president's attempt to prevent future overthrow of the government by public demonstrations.

Bakiev's reforms also finally touched on the long-standing problem of duplication of functions at the highest level of government, but not as one might have expected, given his earlier promises. The president's office (*administratsiya*) dominated and duplicated the prime minister's and line ministries' functions, and determined policies that other government agencies and the legislature were expected to endorse. This served to undermine the independence of other government organizations, create confusion and inefficiencies, and erode the principle of checks and balances. Instead of solving the legacy of problems, Bakiev's new changes merely reframed the title and tasks of the president's office. In place of the president's *administratsiya*, there emerged an even more powerful Institute of the President. This Institute encompassed the president's apparatus, secretariat, and state councils on defense, security, and law and order.

What were the real outcomes of Bakiev's reforms? Administrative reforms were downgraded in importance. According to a World Bank summary, “public administration reform that threatened the power patronage and rents of senior officials was systematically opposed and manipulated” (2007, p.23). Earlier small accomplishments have been reversed. Administrative reforms came to be used to further the political and economic ambitions of a narrow group of individuals. Extensive patronage networks, very low salaries, replacement of experienced civil servants by people loyal to the president following the March 2005 revolution, inconsistent and frequent changes in legislation, political instability, and endemic corruption stood directly across the path toward establishing a professional merit-based civil service (ibid).

Bakiev's eventual, radical steps toward implementing administrative reforms met with significant criticism and cries for caution among media and opposition parties. Many perceived these reforms as attempts by the president, his family, and cronies to formalize and further consolidate political and economic power. The President was also criticized for violating the constitution. In response, Bakiev initiated a new set of constitutional changes after the fact to legalize the changes he had already made.

The president's last measure to appear as a democratic reformer was a convention of the nation-wide *kurultai* – a meeting of 750 of the “most deserving representatives of the public” – to discuss the key issues of the society and generate recommendations to the government on March 23, 2010. The president had already “booked” 150 seats. The remaining 600 representatives were to be nominated at large through public meetings in villages and cities. Critics saw this as another staged performance to imitate democracy, while the real decisions to be made elsewhere. As a result, the attempt to make governance reform a participatory process died the same lingering death as other reforms. As covered by the local media, at-large attendees of the *kurultai* were the usual

suspects – the same group of teachers, retired officials, and elderly pensioners, (so-called “*dejurnie aksakali*” translated as elderly in-duty) the government had regularly used to affirm support (including elections) and validate its decisions. The opposition parties held their own *kurultai* around the same time.

These changes were reflected in the quality-of-governance scores. In the World Bank’s Worldwide Governance Indicators for 2008, Kyrgyzstan was among the three worst performers on the scale for corruption control, compared to other former Soviet republics, even when the best performers – the Baltic countries – were excluded (World Bank, 2009). Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index (CPI) shows that Kyrgyzstan ranked 118 in 2003, and by 2009 its rank had dropped to 162.

Table 1: Changes in Kyrgyzstan’s Corruption Scores

| Year | Rank | Score |
|------|------|-------|
| 2009 | 162 | 1.9 |
| 2008 | 166 | 1.8 |
| 2007 | 150 | 2.1 |
| 2006 | 142 | 2.2 |
| 2005 | 130 | 2.3 |
| 2004 | 122 | 2.2 |
| 2003 | 118 | 2.2 |

Source: Author, 2010. The table was compiled from the Transparency International’s CPI for years 2003-2009.

The International Republican Institute’s (IRA) surveys conducted from 2005 through 2009 also lend support to the observation that the quality of governance worsened over this time. The IRA survey for 2009 found that the three most important issues facing Kyrgyzstan were unemployment (54% of all respondents mentioned this issue); economic development (29% mentioned); and corruption (20% mentioned). The same survey found that the biggest three mistakes of Bakiev’s governance were power cuts, corruption, and increased crime rates. The 2009 IRA survey that compared how public perceptions of corruption changed between 2006 through 2009 also supports this observation. The survey found that in 2006 61% of the respondents considered corruption in the country to be high and 30% corruption to be average, in 2009 68% thought corruption was high and 26% thought it was average.

Perhaps the most daunting legacy of Bakiev’s presidency was the further criminalization of state institutions: criminal groups and officials closely collaborating to use state institutions and resources for illegal activities and private gain. While it is alleged that during Akaev’s presidency his family engaged in extensive corruption by selling and re-selling government institutions and most political offices as a source of “rent,” Bakiev’s family took this one step further. Bakiev’s son Maxim was widely alleged in engaging in *raiderstvo* – extensive use of state institutions and resources, such as tax and prosecutor’s offices, to take over successful and promising businesses. Bakiev’s brother,

Janysh Bakiev, allegedly used the security services he headed, especially in the South,⁹ to profit from drug trafficking. It has been also alleged that president Bakiev abolished the counter narcotics agency altogether to make his brother's job easier.

Deeply dissatisfied with these worsening conditions, the public took to the streets one more time, in April 2010, and ousted Bakiev from office. He was given political asylum in Belarus, but his family members were not willing to surrender their newly obtained sources of power and income.

2010 – PRESENT: THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS

A new temporary government consisting of the opposition leaders was formed following the April 2010 public uprising. These new leaders selected Ms. Roza Otunbaeva – one of themselves – as president to provide leadership to the transitional government. The key tasks of the transitional government included resuming the government's normal functions, adopting a new constitution that defined a better balance of power among the branches of government, and securing free and fair parliamentary elections.

The temporary government carried out the second and third tasks well. The new constitution that established parliamentary regime was carefully crafted with participation of a wide range of stakeholders and was adopted in a nationwide referendum at the end of June 2010. The new constitution also helped to secure a level of legal stability in the country and legitimacy for the government and president. Otunbaeva's temporary mandate was extended until the end of 2011. In October 2010 the transitional government also managed parliamentary elections. Political observers noted that it was the first time government institutions and their personnel were not mobilized by any of the candidates to influence voters' choices.

Delivering on the first promise – that of resuming the government's functions, especially ensuring law and order and economic recovery – turned out to be the most challenging of the three tasks, because the new government inherited a host of daunting governance challenges. The fundamental challenges the new government faces today arise from worsening economic conditions, extreme corruption, and criminalization of the state institutions described above. These challenges continue to undermine the already weak legitimacy and capacity of the state. If these challenges were not daunting enough, the June 2010-outburst of inter-ethnic clashes in the South has caused further damage to the country's economic and political stability. The June outburst further exacerbated major rifts existing between ethnic groups in this multi-ethnic country. Officials of the transitional government alleged that Bakiev's family was behind the organization of this violence – that his son and brothers used their resources and influence with remaining government officials and with criminal and other informal networks in the South, to fuel the ethnic conflict and thus sabotage the new government. Some analysts imply that Bakiev's family also may have wanted to reestablish control over the drug trafficking routes and other profitable illegal businesses which served as a major source of their income.

In summary, currently the new government is constrained by very limited resources as it tries to provide public goods and services and get the country out of economic and social-ethnic deadlock. Donors have been responsive to the transitional government's requests. At the donor conference in July 2010 they pledged to invest significant resources to help the government cope with the economic crisis and to rehabilitate the South.

Administrative reform was not a priority of the transitional government, which dissolved when the newly elected parliament put together a new cabinet in the end of 2010. Still, president Otunbaeva, has been attempting to prepare ground for such reforms. The early initiatives for administrative reform during the interim include a number measures, among them training staff for local government. This task was carried out by the University of Central Asia in collaboration with a number of other institutions including the Academy of Management. The president also established a Council of the Civil Servants Fund consisting of representatives of government agencies, private and public educational institutions, and think tanks. The Council's task is to develop proposals for improving the quality of governance and attracting educated and uncorrupted young professionals to civil service, including those educated abroad. Donors supporting this initiative are reported to have pledged \$8 million.

The current situation also harbors favorable conditions for addressing governance challenges. First, the new constitutional changes allow parliament to establish a more effective control of the bureaucracy. Effective parliamentary control, if established and implemented well, in combination with the measures discussed below, could make bureaucracy less susceptible to manipulation by one person or his/her family in the future. United States Agency for International Development has been most involved in improving the capacity of the new parliament.

Second, the April 2010 public uprising and the June 2011 violence in the south mobilized active citizens to collaborate with the government in delivering public services during critical times. For example, during the demonstrations in April 2010 and during the violence in June 2010, there emerged a nation-wide movement of *drijinniki* – organized groups of ordinary citizens who protected public and private property from thieves and gangs to reinforce overstretched police forces.

Building on such new developments administrative reforms could make bureaucracy more transparent, accountable, and effective as active citizens continue to be attracted to collaborate in delivery of public services. Greater public involvement could also save resources, strengthen the weak legitimacy of the government, and potentially transform both public and bureaucratic attitudes. President Otunbaeva shares this vision when she emphasized, in her July 2010 address, the need for government to engage in greater partnership with civil society organizations toward facilitating self-governance.

ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

How did the “island of democracy” – as Kyrgyzstan was once called – found itself facing such deep governance challenges? One of the main conclusions from this overview and analysis of the administrative reforms in Kyrgyzstan over the last twenty years, is that the governance system that emerged after independence strayed because reformers and their advisors overlooked the role of a public administration system. Even when administrative reform belatedly made to the donors’ and government’s agenda, the original mistake by those in charge of the money was to accept a flurry of reform paperwork as the actual accomplishment, rather than focusing on real results of legislation directed toward making desired changes.

In the early years of independence administrative reform and serious gaps in government capacity and accountability were ignored. Reformers were absorbed by efforts to establish a democratic regime at national and political levels, but they forgot that the government bureaucracy – the civil service – also required changes. Investment to improve bureaucracy was meager at best. The bureaucratic machinery of the government inherited from the Soviet Union ran on relatively strict accountability mechanisms and meticulous training, recruitment and advancement systems. After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, both accountability and capacity of the bureaucracy eroded. Bureaucracy became weakly accountable to the political officials, but politicians were not accountable to their public. Instead of addressing these gaps, the reformers (both donors and local leadership) rushed to privatize government assets. In lack of transparency and accountability, the reforms contributed to paving the way to institutionalized corruption. This accountability gap enabled presidents and their cronies to systematically and continuously use the public administration system and new reforms to serve their own private interests.

Even when administrative reform became a priority for donors and governments by the second half of 1990s, the resulting efforts were primarily confined to policy changes. Those changes did not translate into practice and did not lead to substantive improvements in bureaucracy’s quality and work. Political leadership was not concerned with implementation of those changes, or with improving the civil service to enable implementation of government’s decisions. Why? For one, there were no incentives to produce policy documents. Implementing policy changes was not rewarding; donors paid for making policy changes, not for policy implementation. The government was happy to produce, revise, and reproduce policy documents at any time aid was at stake. When donors finally started demanding results, top political officials had no intention of acting on key administrative reforms primarily because making the bureaucratic system meritocratic and transparent would degrade it as a resource of political rents for private gain.

This case illustrates the key problem in administrative theory as reflected in leading scholars’ works. Max Weber warned that the administrative machine is malleable for

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“anybody who knows how to gain control over it” (1922). Once bureaucracy is in place, it becomes self-reinforcing and increasingly resistant to change and replacement. This case offers a slightly different perspective on Weber's observation: once bureaucracy is captured by unaccountable political officials, the latter become increasingly resistant to reforming the bureaucratic system. In this regard, Fred Riggs's observation is even more relevant: the main distinction between effective democratic states and the rest is that the former are able to bring their administrative machines under-control of a *responsible and representative* polity, whereas in the latter the administrative machines often serve the ruling elites (1996).

As this overview of administrative reforms undertaken in Kyrgyzstan since 1991 shows, any effort directed toward administrative reform was narrowly focused upon tweaking the components of bureaucracy (such as civil service reform and functional reviews), rather than making the bureaucracy accountable for its actions, or lack of actions. This overview also suggests that donor incentives, especially during Akaev's regime, did play a role in promoting reforms, but donors' premises were flawed – they readily accepted reform outputs (laws, provisions, and organizational changes) instead of outcomes. This had the effect of neutralizing any impact on changing targeted behavior and practices.

At least three implications for practitioners and researchers can be drawn from this case. First, donors and government need to learn from their earlier mistakes. They should not allow more visible economic and political reforms overshadow administrative reforms, as they did in the early 1990s. Regarding administrative reform, new governments need to emphasize not only their policy changes, but equally the implementation of those changes. The focus should be on bureaucratic accountability and capacity-building in bureaucracy.

Second, changes need to address not only problems of external oversight and technical capacity, but also foster an environment that calls for each civil servant's integrity to ensure that government serves the public instead of serving private interests of select few. This normative dimension of reforms has been ignored, but without normative changes reforms are not likely generate sustainable improvements. Corruption – the key challenge undermining effectiveness of the government – cannot be eradicated without normative transformation. Donors could have more impact if they eschew working with government to rewrite laws, and instead facilitate more participatory procedural policies and help with education of civil servants. In addition, donors need to adjust their benchmarks toward measuring actual outcomes of reforms and away from counting the outputs.

Third, the model of “old public administration” (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000), which aid donors and government uncritically accept and promote, is losing its relevance in the contemporary world. This model presumes that professional, politically neutral, technical public administrators can ensure that a government will be insulated against popular caprices and hence can deliver government services through top down and rigidly controlled mechanisms. This case illustrates that this model of bureaucracy can have major negative implications for democracy and long-term development, in that this model leaves bureaucracy vulnerable to lasting abuses when political officials are not

accountable to their public. Moreover, this model is bound to face increasing challenges throughout the world, as the responsibilities of government grow more complex due to rapid social, economic, political, and technological changes. In Frederickson's (1999) words, the "disarticulation of the state" – associated with the declining salience of government jurisdictions with changing notion of space, fuzziness of borders, growing asymmetry between governed and those who govern, and erosion of the capacity of the jurisdictions to contain and manage social, economic, cultural and political issues – calls for new models of public administration. Hence, reformers need to develop and articulate an alternative model of bureaucracy that accommodates new assumptions more suited to the realities of today and tomorrow. A promising newer model is emerging, as we learn new lessons about participatory administration and effective policy implementation practices.

NOTES

- 1 CDF is the World Bank's framework — a "holistic long-term strategy" based on the principles of cooperation and transparency — that puts "countries in the driver's seat" in owning and directing development, to strengthen governments' effectiveness in poverty reduction and to secure better coordination between stakeholders in the development process.
- 2 In Kyrgyz and Russian languages, the official documents refer to state service rather than civil service. "Civil service" in literal translation means civilian (non-military) service. In this article civil service and state service are used interchangeably.
- 3 This evaluation was based on surveys of 1,000 citizens, 400 enterprise managers, and 350 public officials, conducted by the Kyrgyz survey research firm M-Vector in 2001.
- 4 The degree of power dynamics is also significantly affected by personalities at respective local self and state governance bodies. Some local self-government leaders interviewed by the author have been able to carve out more authority than others.
- 5 1,500 participants of the survey selected from around the nation were interviewed face-to-face. The survey was funded by USAID and carried out on behalf of IRI by SIAR-Bishkek. Baltic Surveys / The Gallup Organization was responsible for the design, coordination, and analysis of the survey.
- 6 UNDP for example, continued promoting greater use of information-communication technologies in government through trainings and other initiatives. In October 2007 UNDP along with the Ministry of Transportation and Communications announced a competition among government agencies for the best website. Out of 14 participants, the Ministry of Justice website (www.minjust.gov.kg) was found to be the winner, as it provides free public access to all legislative documents. The Ministry of Finance website (www.minfin.kg) was recognized as the second best.

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- 7 The main changes to the later version of the document were clarification of the links between inputs and the indicators of monitoring of outcomes; wholesale analysis and assessment of challenges and risks; and added measures for improving effectiveness of state governance, including that of judiciary and law enforcement bodies.
 - 8 The head of the State Service Agency Cholponkul Arabaev recently informed Azattyk news agency that the Agency is drafting a new law to ensure that those who provide misleading or wrong information in their income declarations are punished (Elkeeva, 2011).
 - 9 The southern city Osh is one of key transit zones on the “Northern Rout” through which drugs are transported from Afghanistan to other counties.

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