



**Soros Foundation Kazakhstan
Strategy for 2014-2017**

1. SUMMARY

The biggest challenges Soros Foundation Kazakhstan (SFK) faces are the following:

- authoritarian regime cracking down on democratic values and institutions and increased uncertainty about the country's future political development following the transition of power;
- lack of endorsement of open society values, especially among youth, against a backdrop of increased religious extremism and other forms of radicalism.

Based on these challenges and taking into account the Foundation's own capacities and those of its partners, in 2014-2017 the SFK Board has chosen to focus on the following Fields: (1) **human rights monitoring and documentation**, (2) **budget transparency**, (3) **youth engagement for social change**, (4) **public interest media**; and Initiatives: (5) **public policy**, (6) **local budget accountability**, and (7) **social inclusion of people with mental disabilities**.

We assume that transition of power from President Nursultan Nazarbayev may occur during 2014-2017 or in the next strategy period, and we realize the need to prepare for the future political transition and seize the opportunities it may provide. We also understand that transition may go in different directions: it can set the field for more liberal reforms, but it can also result in attempts to preserve an existing authoritarian model, or even drive the country into unrest.

In our new strategy, we will focus our efforts on helping future transition to unlock its potential for democratic reforms by building independent policy capacity able to articulate democratic positions and principles forcefully. Until this happens, and should the transition unfold under a negative scenario, we will continue supporting, strengthening and protecting civil society activists, groups and initiatives that safeguard fundamental human rights and advocate for liberal policy reforms.

We will address the second challenge by playing an active role of an “enlightener”, building a critical mass of leaders and opinion-makers (“open society ambassadors”) able to confront conservative or radical ideologies. We will do this through supporting initiatives that teach youth critical thinking and encourage civic activism, and by strengthening mass media through supporting innovation and helping to preserve the space for freedom of expression. In both areas, previously neglected Kazakh-speaking communities will be a particular focus.

Capitalizing on our success in pushing forward revenue and budget transparency, we set an ambitious goal of translating transparency into accountability by establishing best practices of local budget accountability. At the same time, we will continue to support existing nationwide networks and coalitions, while encouraging them to move towards independence and sustainability.

We will also stand by one of the most vulnerable groups, advocating for the right of people with mental disabilities to live, study and work without exclusion from the society.

Over the years, we have built strong alliances with our partners: civil society activists and organizations; open-minded and liberal public servants; leading experts and journalists; youth activists and opinion-makers. As a part of the new strategy, we will expand the network of our partners by reaching out to new actors, including social movements that have been gaining force in Kazakhstan over the past few years.

2. FOUNDATION HISTORY AND CONTEXT

SFK was founded in 1995, along with other national foundations in Central Eurasia, to strengthen development of the emerging civil society, to promote democratic political and liberal socio-economic reforms, and to promote free exchange of ideas and knowledge among students and scholars. Over the past 18 years, SFK strategy and programmatic focus have constantly evolved.

In 1995-2002, in addition to our work on human rights, the foundation was heavily focused on legal reform, education support (scholarships, direct support to schools and policy reforms), public health initiatives (especially, harm reduction), arts and culture and NGO support. We exited from these fields completely in 2003 in response to changed economic and social context in the country which was no longer poor. Throughout 2003-2009, major strategic focus was made on revenue transparency and budget accountability. The same time period was characterized by serious political setbacks, hence the shift from legal reform to defending fundamental human rights. In 2010-2013 strategy, the foundation tried the role of a policy broker, attempting to bridge the gaps between the government and the civil society in areas where the government was still open to a dialogue. Unfortunately, the time has shown that the government is more ready to cooperate on the process than on the substance.

As the time for the new strategy approaches, Kazakhstan enters a period of major political uncertainty being on the edge of major political transformation. In the near to medium term, we can anticipate transition of power from aging President Nursultan Nazarbayev. Experts believe that at the moment chances are equal for the transition to follow either a positive or a negative scenario (and each of these scenarios can unfold in a variety of ways).

Under the positive scenarios a more democratic system will be built with top-down liberal reforms, as the new leader will need to balance the interests of many political actors. We see that moment as a beginning of the end of traditional Central Asian-style authoritarianism, an opportunity to reboot political reforms stalled in mid-2000s. Under that scenario our mission will be helping this transition to become our country's «second chance» to democracy.

Under any of the negative scenarios (conservation of the super-presidential system, oligarchy, or major civil unrest), our mission will be to consolidate and strengthen democratic and liberal forces that will provide strong resiliency to illiberal developments. The same approach will continue to work in case transition is delayed until later this decade.

We realize that authoritarian government is not the only threat to open society today. Since our exit from education, debates and arts & culture programs in 2004, our direct target audience has shrunk as we mostly worked with non-governmental organizations and civil society activists. Our assumption in mid-2000 was that open society values had spread far enough and that the «flat world» would help liberal ideas and values float and be freely exchanged. Unfortunately, we learned that educated Kazakhstani youth today is more pragmatic than idealistic, and that too many young people actually tend to trade civic and political rights for more tangible benefits. At the same time, economically and socially disadvantaged youth migrating from rural areas to big cities is increasingly prone to religious extremism or radicalism.

We address this challenge by creatively introducing key ideas of the open society and teaching critical thinking to young men and women. We would not be able to do this alone so our key partners on this path are youth activists and OSF alumni whom we view as «open society ambassadors». So, in addition to our roles of a donor, a partner and a broker we have also assumed the role of an «enlightener» in our strategy for 2014-2017.

SFK's strategy for 2014-2017 is built around this vision:

- We are laying the foundation for the future transition to unfold under the positive scenario by cultivating, strengthening and consolidating the public policy field which we see as an important medium in transmitting liberal values to both the society and the decision makers, by strengthening the media, by creating demand for national and local budget accountability, and by working with the young generation of civil society leaders;

- Until this happens, and should it not, our aim is to leave in place the individuals, institutions and citizen expectations which will act to safeguard fundamental human rights and prevent their erosion.

3. FEALTY TO FIELDS AND PLACES

FIELD: HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING AND DOCUMENTATION

Following years of support, the field of human rights remains a highest priority for the foundation, as the human rights community struggles to survive in a hostile environment, waiting for the country to open up following political transition. Therefore we see our role in supporting outstanding and courageous work of our leading partners, helping them become stronger and more effective defenders of fundamental human rights «under siege». The field consists of very few organizations: *the Kazakhstan Bureau on Human Rights*, *the Adil Soz Foundation for the Protection of Freedom of Speech*, *the Charter for Human Rights*, *the Aman Saulyk Foundation (a leading NGO focusing on health rights, social protection and prisoners' rights)*, *the Legal Policy Research Center*, and *Kadyr-Kasiet (the foundation for the protection of human rights defenders)*. We are prepared to provide grants for both institutional support and project funding where appropriate. We also plan to continue funding or co-funding scholarships, fellowships and internships. Our flexibility is especially important in light of the decreased funding from other independent sources, including OSF Programs and USAID, the country's biggest donor, which is cutting its funding for Kazakhstan by 27.5 per cent in 2014.

Our key partners in this field are OSF Central Eurasia Project (as SFK's view of the rights community's needs in Kazakhstan matches up that of CEP almost exactly), OSF Human Rights Initiative, Freedom House Country Office, the OSCE Center in Astana, the European Union and embassies (particularly the US, British, Dutch, Swiss and Norwegian). SFK will be playing a broker's role, facilitating donor coordination on human rights and assisting our civil society partners in raising additional funds.

Our partners recognize that the «generation gap» is one of the major internal challenges faced by the human rights organizations: with few exceptions (such as *the Kazakhstan Bureau on Human Rights*), human rights NGOs have been unable to attract youth as new leaders, experts or key staff. As a result, some organizations may cease to exist when their leaders retire, leaving whole areas of human rights work unattended (such as freedom of religion or belief). SFK will open the consultation with the human rights groups to identify the biggest problems they face and to find common solutions which can be addressed with SFK support.

In addition to long-serving professional human rights NGOs working on a classic Helsinki model, the past two years in Kazakhstan have been marked by the appearance and growth of grassroots social movements such as, *Let's Leave Houses to People*, *For Fair Maternity Payments*, etc. We believe that social movements as a form of civil activism for the protection of human rights and interests will gather significant momentum in the next few years. Focusing on concrete problems rather than around ideas or values, and relying on a variety of non-traditional approaches, social movements mobilize broad public support. At the same time they lack the depth or professionalism of traditional partners and we believe it is important to connect activists of social movements to leaders of professional human rights NGOs, as their collaboration will be mutually enriching.

Since other donors have been slow or cautious in working with non-traditional actors, SFK will take the lead in reaching out to them, helping them identify their needs and providing support as requested (e.g., training of key activists, small rapid response grants, etc).

SFK will also support the *National Bar Association* and *the Legal Policy Research Center*, two leading organizations working on access to justice, in their efforts to increase independence of legal defenders in Kazakhstan. The Bar is an important civil society institute standing for the protection of rights and interests of citizens, and at the same time in the past few years the government has dramatically circumscribed the independence of legal defenders by various legislative efforts. The situation may deteriorate further following adoption of the new Code of Criminal Procedure in 2015, and the Bar is actively seeking support to their advocacy efforts with the purpose of introducing significantly more progressive amendments to the Law on Legal Practice and the Code of Criminal Procedure.

FIELD: BUDGET TRANSPARENCY

In 2004, SFK pioneered the field of revenue and budget transparency by launching the Kazakhstan Revenue Watch Program. Since then we have built successful partnerships with the World Bank, the OSCE Center and the British Embassy, although SFK remains the only donor committed to systemic support of transparency-focused civil society organizations and activists. We are encouraged by the fact that transparency and accountability remains one of the few fields where the government demonstrates genuine interest in our initiatives and willingness to cooperate.

As part of our previous strategy, SFK has helped establish the revenue transparency movement in Kazakhstan (*coalition «Oil Revenues Under Public Oversight», association «Azamattik Kuriltay» (the "Civic Rally"), coalition «Aikyndyk» ("Openness")*) which led to Kazakhstan's endorsement of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and the consequent disclosure of payments made by the extractive companies to the government. For years we have been proactively leading the work on revenue transparency but by now we can acknowledge that this field is mature enough, so it is time for us to give partners the opportunity to pursue their own initiatives with our moderate financial and extensive expert support.

At this stage the priority for SFK is to make sure the data available through various technical revenue-focused initiatives are meaningful for citizens and help generate the broader debate about the public finances and the budget management in Kazakhstan. Here we will cooperate with the OSF Money and the Public Interest Program, the Revenue Watch Institute, the Publish What You Pay coalition and the International Budget Project.

SFK will also encourage our partners (*members of NGO association "The Transparent Tariffs", members of NGO Association «Azamattik Kuriltay»*) to draw lessons from civil society's experience of working with each other, the government and the private sector in the framework of EITI, and capitalize upon this accumulated experience to promote open governance in the electricity sector (the Electricity Governance Initiative, EGI). The work on EGI began in 2013 with support from both SFK and OSF Central Eurasia Project, and we will continue to support partners as they are eager to use the opportunities arising from the government's plans to finance a major modernization and reconstruction of the energy sector. On energy sector governance we are planning to cooperate with OSF Central Eurasia Project and the World Resources Institute.

We believe that now the central government has incentives and the capacity to commission independent evaluation of government expenditures on the social sphere from budget monitoring NGOs, and we saw examples of such cooperation in 2012-2013. At this stage we see our role in helping the *National Budget Network of Kazakhstan* (NBNK) to become a self-sustainable, self-developing community of budget monitoring practitioners modeled on the International Project Evaluators Network (<http://www.eval-net.org>) and helping them connect with the government. At the same time SFK will continue to support proposals from our partners to scrutinize government expenditures in some critical areas where the government falls short to support such activities itself.

FIELD: YOUTH ENGAGEMENT FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

When SFK piloted its Youth Initiatives program in 2010, we became the first donor in Kazakhstan offering youth a range of opportunities for self-realization as change agents and future civil society activists. In 2014-2017, SFK will remain committed to the task of youth activism and empowerment helping those who are not indifferent become active, responsible citizens, community leaders and open-society ambassadors. This is critically important in the society where a large proportion of the youth remains socially and economically disadvantaged, lacks trust to the authorities and the civil society and therefore is prone to religious and other forms of extremism or political apathy.

By supporting various grassroots initiatives SFK will encourage the youth to rely on themselves (rather than on the state or other actors) in addressing multiple social problems they face. Our support to this field is therefore founded on the belief that it is the youth's own responsibility to identify problems and solutions and to make the change happen.

The role of SFK is not to guide but to respond by providing youth activists with tools and funds required to deliver the anticipated change. Our primary partners here will be individual youth activists, their groups and artists (less, youth NGOs such as *Youth Information Service of Kazakhstan, Independent Generation of Kazakhstan*), and in 2014-2017 we are planning to extend our support beyond the big cities to smaller, faraway communities.

Historically SFK has been more focused on working with transitional age youth (aged 16-24) seeing it as more accessible and more independent. At the same time, school age is arguably the best time for the development of value-based activism, so in 2014-2017 we will be exploring what opportunities (if any) exist for us to reach out to the school-age youth.

In order to make youth activism genuinely values-based, SFK will complement its support to grassroots initiatives with projects aimed at raising awareness of the youth of open society values and developing critical thinking among the youth (e.g. by hosting and funding public lectures, TEDx events, debates, etc).

A particular focus will be made at our engagement with the Kazakh language speaking youth from the provinces.

FIELD: PUBLIC INTEREST MEDIA

In 2012 alone, plaintiffs claimed US\$30 million in defamation charges against the media. The pending amendments to the Criminal Code will increase fines up to \$33,300, which is 10 times more than before. The 2009 controversial amendments, which equated “all websites” to “mass media,” served as an additional legal ground for criminal prosecution.

Nationally acclaimed journalism schools fall behind in providing a comprehensive hands-on training in newsgathering, verification of information and storytelling. A course in media literacy for journalists is non-existent. The university curriculum in communications law remains thin and outdated to equip journalists with relevant self-protection tools and strategies for minimizing the risk of their prosecution while covering politically and socially sensitive issues. Therefore, journalists either self-censor themselves from controversial topics, or fail to deliver information without falling into the trap of devastating lawsuits.

To address these issues, SFK will support a handful of long-standing flagship media NGOs, such as *Adil Soz, North-Kazakhstan Legal Media Center, National Association of Broadcasters, International Center for Journalism MediaNet, Kazakhstan Press Club* along with the emerging players, including: *Abai Aqparat* and *Support Center for Kazakh-language Journalists Minber*.

By relying on partners' expertise in court litigation, journalism training for early- and mid-career professionals; plus, their outreach to regional media, SFK will work toward raising journalists' awareness about the existing legal limitations to press freedom and will support relevant cutting-edge workshops in news reporting and storytelling across digital platforms along with supplementary trainings in computer-assisted reporting, data-driven journalism, etc. These efforts will help promote and improve the quality of local news coverage with the emphasis on issues of transparency, accountability and social justice, which often get overlooked by the mainstream national media due to their complexity and reporters' lacking professionalism to seek out and present information.

Because the Kazakhstani Internet is heavily in Russian, and Kazakh-language content amounts only to 12 percent of the local segment's share, SFK will set a strong commitment to support Kazakh-language new media in their pursuit to generate and deliver quality journalism content to broader audiences.

SFK will also support international training exchange and collaboration to provide opportunities for new and existing media to increase their sustainability, both journalistic and financial. By bringing deep talent and innovative knowledge into the region, SFK will help raise professional quality standards for Kazakhstan's developing media industry.

While implementing this four-year-long strategy, SFK will count on collaboration with its international partners that have deep local expertise in the field of media development: OSF-London Media Program, Internews Kazakhstan, OSCE Centre in Astana, UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office.

4. FOUNDATION CONCEPTS AND INITIATIVES

PUBLIC POLICY INITIATIVE

Kazakhstan is likely to face a political transition in the near to medium term. We assume that the process of transition/succession can present a window of opportunity – even should it be constrained – for some critical policy changes to be presented and discussed. Preparing for this policy and political dialogue needs to start in advance, so that key actors will have experience developing, debating and defending liberal policy proposals. At the moment the field of public policy in Kazakhstan is so small and underdeveloped that it actually needs to be built. ***SFK believes it can mobilize the resources and allies to launch a Public Policy Initiative, whose result will be the establishment of critical independent policy capacity able to articulate open society and democratic positions and principles forcefully both now and in the transition period.***

SFK's Public Policy Initiative will consist of three major components:

- Ensuring a cadre of young policy scholars exists, well trained in policy analysis, data visualization and communications;
- Ensuring that policy recommendations on the key topics related to democracy, transparency, rule of law, social inclusion, economic policy and the like have been developed, circulated and discussed;
- Ensuring that networks and platforms exist through which liberal scholars can present their ideas both to the decision-makers and the general public, meet peers from countries with relevant experience, and interact with the media, civil society and policy makers.

With our Public Policy Initiative we put an emphasis on developing capacity of individual researchers and building their loose networks rather than providing institutional support to research organizations. At the moment there are very few independent think tanks in Kazakhstan as there is limited demand for independent policy analysis; as the demand will grow in the future, we will leave it up to our grantees to decide whether they want to establish a new think tank, or join the existing one, or stay independent. We want to avoid some past mistakes when we helped establish institutions which were non-sustainable without our financial support.

Areas for policy analysis will be identified by SFK Board on an annual basis – following consultations with partners - and may include: analysis of various scenarios of political transition and their implications; economic reforms; migration policy, local self-government; public sector management; electoral reform; education reform; criminal and administrative justice. Some research issues will also be linked with programmatic and advocacy activities of SFK and its grantees, as we believe our interventions can be strengthened if they are supported or complemented by rigorous policy analysis of field data.

Development of the public dialogue on key challenges facing the Kazakhstani society is another important aspect of our Public Policy Initiative, and we see SFK fellows playing the role of liberal opinion-leaders in this dialogue through the means of various dialogue platforms, both existing and new.

We will engage OSF Scholarships Program alumni, PhD graduates from leading Kazakh universities and experts from the provinces (who often have difficulty in reaching out to policy makers and national media). Our major partners will be OSF Think-Tank Fund, OSF Education Support Program, OSF Scholarship Program, expert-oriented mass media in Kazakhstan, leading universities, and existing independent public policy research centers (both local and international).

Outcomes:

- An extensive network of policy experts, old and new, provides intellectual leadership in key policy areas;

- *Assessment:* evidence of regular publications/interviews on key policy topics; newly identified experts are recognized by both the government (who invite them for consultations) and the mass media (who regularly turn to them for comments);
- Where existing dialogue platforms fall short, new ones will have been established or supported (in the form of conferences, discussion clubs, blogs or even talk shows) to facilitate free exchange of ideas and policy proposals;
 - *Assessment:* experts acknowledge availability of dialogue platforms where they can express their ideas freely;
- A number of young experts (SFK fellows) have undergone additional training in policy analysis and communication (at tailor-made courses, through paid internship at leading think-tanks or universities) and produced a series of publications with recommendations on political, social and economic development of the country;
- If the political transition leads to a more liberal government, there is evidence that some recommendations on future political development of the country made by SFK fellows have been endorsed as policy decisions; if transition unfolds under a negative scenario, SFK fellows are prominent in opposing illiberal developments.

Potential Risks:

The main risks to our strategy are two: firstly, in working now to actively train liberal policy actors, we may be perceived as playing an opposition role to the current government, and we risk alienating important individuals in the current regime; secondly, policy actors trained by SFK and OSF may find more stable or lucrative careers in other sectors (e.g. as industry analysts) rather than risk being labeled as opposition figures. We intend to blunt the first risk by ensuring that training follows rigorous best practices – the kind that would be expected of any policy analysts – and that policy proposals associated with SFK are widely judged by international experts to show rigorous analysis and clearly supported recommendations; we accept that, even in these cases, SFK may face pressure and we are confident we can respond appropriately. We accept the latter risks and believe it is almost as important that major private sector players – particularly those active in international markets – have policy experts grounded in liberal political theories.

SOCIAL INCLUSION INITIATIVE

By 2018, SFK will achieve policy changes required to provide opportunities for people with mental disabilities to live, study and work without isolation from the society and will demonstrate practices of such social inclusion.

Years of our work, together with other donors, on social inclusion have led to important improvements in lives of most groups of the disabled people in Kazakhstan. At the same we have to recognize that people with mental disabilities (mental health challenges and cognitive disabilities) still remain one group most discriminated on their rights, most vulnerable and most excluded from the society. Existing legislation (*the Code on Public Health and Public Health System, the Law on Social Protection of People with Disabilities, the Law on Special Social Services, the Law on Education*) and policies (*State Program “Healthy Kazakhstan” for 2011-2015*) provide a general legal framework for social inclusion but do not take into account special needs of the people with mental disabilities.

We feel it is a shame that other donors working on social inclusion usually overlook this group – probably, realizing the challenges to overcome: strong adherence of medical and educational professionals to outdated approaches and stigmatizing and discriminatory attitudes of the public. As a result, the overwhelming majority of adults with mental disability receive treatment in closed psychiatric institutions (in Almaty, the country’s biggest city with the population of over 1.5 million, 800 patients receive treatment in closed institutions and 1,200 more people are waiting for the new facilities to be built) while children attend special education facilities or stay home. Even if more schools start providing opportunities for inclusive education of such children by 2020, adults or teens who will have missed this opportunity now have no alternative but to be placed into a closed institution or stay home.

In 2014, Kazakhstan will ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and in 2015 the work on the new 5-year state health policy will begin. We are planning to seize these opportunities to mobilize other donors (such as UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP) and disability rights organizations around mental health disabilities in order to achieve a meaningful change in terms of policies, their implementation and public perceptions of disability and mental health challenges. Over the past decade the disability rights movement has become increasingly vibrant and influential in Kazakhstan, so SFK can build a strong coalition of partners to push this concept forward. Another opportunity which SFK is planning to pursue at the local level is the institute of disability rights advisors to local governors to be established in Kazakhstan in 2014.

We will make use of the Latvian experience of successful development of flexible education standards to advocate for such standards to be developed and endorsed in Kazakhstan. This will remove practical barriers for children with mental disorders to study with their peers at ordinary schools.

In 2014-2015, we will be laying the foundation for future advocacy for deinstitutionalization by supporting emerging community-based mental health services across the country. We will help the Pavlodar-based alternative mental health service center “Alrami” (www.alrami.kz), currently being the best practice in Kazakhstan, to transform into a resource center for other enthusiasts of deinstitutionalization.

On this path, we will work in close cooperation with OSF Mental Health Initiative (expert support), OSF Education Support Program (expert support and co-funding), local NGOs including human rights and disability groups, alternative care centers, and parent associations.

Outcomes:

- Early in the strategy period, persuasive evidence will have been collected, analyzed and presented to policy makers to support recommended policy changes.
- By the end of the strategy period, national healthcare, education and social protection laws and policies will have removed barriers to / encourage appearance of resource centers, alternative home and community-based services for people with mental disabilities;
- By the end of the strategy period, flexible education standards and performance evaluation system will have been adopted with mainstream schools becoming able to issue different types of education certificates.

Potential Limitations

We understand that it is easier to achieve policy changes than to shift care from hospitals to communities as we will need to overcome skepticism of medical and education professionals as well as low public tolerance towards people with mental disabilities. We are going to address the first challenge by mobilizing other influential donors and bringing international leading experts. The second challenge will require systemic work with the mass media that will learn about success stories from all over the globe.

LOCAL BUDGET INITIATIVE

Outstanding work of budget monitoring NGOs supported by SFK over the past several years has led to increased transparency of the budget system of Kazakhstan at the national level: in 2012, Kazakhstan improved its Open Budget Index (OBI) score (48% against 38% in 2010) and the year before we had become the first post-Soviet country to produce the national-level Citizens Budget (a non technical version of the national budget for citizens). Unfortunately, significant improvements in transparency and accountability at the national level have not been matched at the sub-national level where citizens still experience difficulty in accessing budget information and influencing budget decisions which have direct impact on their rights or interests. At the same time, more than 60% of government expenditures take place at the sub-national level: education, healthcare and many other key spheres are fully financed from the local budgets.

The Open Local Budget Index jointly developed by SFK and the National Budget Network of Kazakhstan (NBNK) measures local budget transparency, accountability and public participation in the

budget process at the sub-national level. It therefore can be used as an effective motivator for local authorities to create a more open environment which allows for better access to budget information and for more active consultations with the public on major budget decisions.

One major impediment to greater accountability of local authorities has long been Kazakhstan's local governance system: until 2013 all mayors and governors were appointed by the President. We believe that amendments to the electoral law endorsed in 2012, open a window of opportunity for SFK to promote greater budget accountability and involvement of citizens in the budget process at the lowest level: districts, villages and small towns. We are also encouraged by the central government's aspiration to increase efficiency of budget expenditures at all levels, so we are planning to capitalize upon our past experience of successful collaboration with the Ministry of Finance (on Citizens' Budget).

In close partnership with the NBNK we want to use our accumulated capacity and existing windows of opportunity to set up a benchmark for local budget transparency, accountability and public participation and help spread the best practice broadly. ***SFK will have established the best practice of transparent, accountable, and inclusive budget governance at the local level in Kazakhstan and will have this practice spread broadly by 2018.***

For this purpose we will help local authorities in the pilot constituencies to communicate and visualize budget information, hence making it more accessible and comprehensible for the community members. We will help newly elected local mayors and members of local councils learn the best international practice of citizens' engagement in the decision-making processes, and will develop practical guidelines for organizing effective budget hearings. At least one constituency will be from oil-rich western Kazakhstan where extracting companies provide co-funding to social programs of local authorities. Community members in the pilot constituencies will use social audit as a tool to evaluate the quality of public services and to influence budget decisions in an informed way.

Outcomes:

- By 2015, exemplary citizens budgets will have been developed in 5 pilot constituencies whose administrators were elected in 2013, and effective budget hearings will have been conducted there with the support from SFK/NBNK and received abundant and professional media coverage.
 - *Assessment:* Strong evidence that some recommendations made by the citizens during budget hearings have been endorsed and taken into account while planning the budget;
- By the end of the strategy period, more local mayors and governors will follow the best practice established in the pilot constituencies: they will be producing citizens budgets and will conduct regular budget hearings following standard procedure developed by SFK/NBNK and approved by the government;
 - *Assessment:* OLBI as measured in 2015; results of the monitoring by NBNK.
- Transparency, accountability and inclusiveness of the local budget process will have increased across the country as the Agency of Public Service Affairs adopts the use of Open Local Budget Index (OLBI) and social audits for formal performance evaluation of local administrators.
 - *Assessment:* OLBI and social audit have been included as tools into the state system of public service performance evaluation; OLBI and OBI ratings as measured in 2015 and 2016 respectively.

Our major partners will be the *International Budget Partnership* and the *National Budget Network of Kazakhstan*. We will also rely on the expert support of the OSF Think Tank Fund (especially, on data visualization) and OSF Money and the Public Interest programs.

Potential Limitations

We understand that we will have to overcome political inertia of local level officials, their adherence to the command and paternalistic governance system («we decide») Therefore, we see the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Regional Development and the Agency of Public Service Affairs as our important allies in this process, so one important task will be to demonstrate them usefulness of

suggested practices and approaches – from the point of view of more effective and efficient budget governance.

5. CONTRIBUTIONS TO SHARED FRAMEWORKS

At the time of this strategy submission Soros Foundation-Kazakhstan does not have any fully developed contributions to shared frameworks. However, SFK Board considers **Transparency and Accountability, Youth, Inclusive Education and Migration** as fields where effective shared frameworks can be developed with our contribution – at either regional (Eurasia) or global level.

6. OTHER SIGNIFICANT COLLABORATIONS

In addition to OSF Programs (listed as partners in Sections 3 and 4), in 2014-2017, SFK will develop further cooperation with sister foundations in Central Asia and the Caucasus: in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, Georgia and Armenia. We share much in common, have long experience of collaboration (both the foundation and the civil society partners) and are eager to learn from each other. Our main topics for cooperation will include migration, energy and budget transparency, tolerance, civic activism and mobilization. Considering Kazakhstan as part of a broader Eurasia region, we are also planning to deepen our (already ongoing) collaboration with the Open Society Forum – Mongolia and with the Russia Program (especially, on the Public Policy Initiative).

In our advocacy focused on human rights, we rely much on the advice and support from OSF offices in Washington and Brussels, with which we are in close, almost daily communication.

Over the course of the new strategy implementation, we also intend to build partnership with civil society organizations in Pakistan and India, both countries having strong civil society and having much useful experience to share on accountability

Our close partners from among international organizations include the World Bank, RWI, PWYP, IBP - on revenue and budget transparency; UN OHCHR Office, the OSCE Center in Astana, USAID, Delegation of the EU to Kazakhstan, GIZ, UNESCO, UNDP, Embassies of Netherlands, USA, UK, Norway – on a broad range of human rights issues and topics. Joint activities and shared funding with these actors help us strengthen the impact in key areas of operations.

7. INTERNAL ORGANIZATION PLANS

The new SFK strategy requires some changes to the existing programmatic structure to accommodate the new thinking in terms of distinguishing Fields and Concepts.

Support to the Fields will be provided by program coordinators experienced in grant-making and project management.

Pursuit of Concepts will be done by program directors/coordinators with extensive experience of program management and expertise on the topics. Additional support to Concepts will be provided by a shared Policy Advisor and a shared Program Assistant.

Work on both Fields and Concepts will be overseen by the Director of Programs

Please refer to the Work Plans in Attachment 1 and tentative Organizational Chart in Attachment 3 for details.

Attachments:

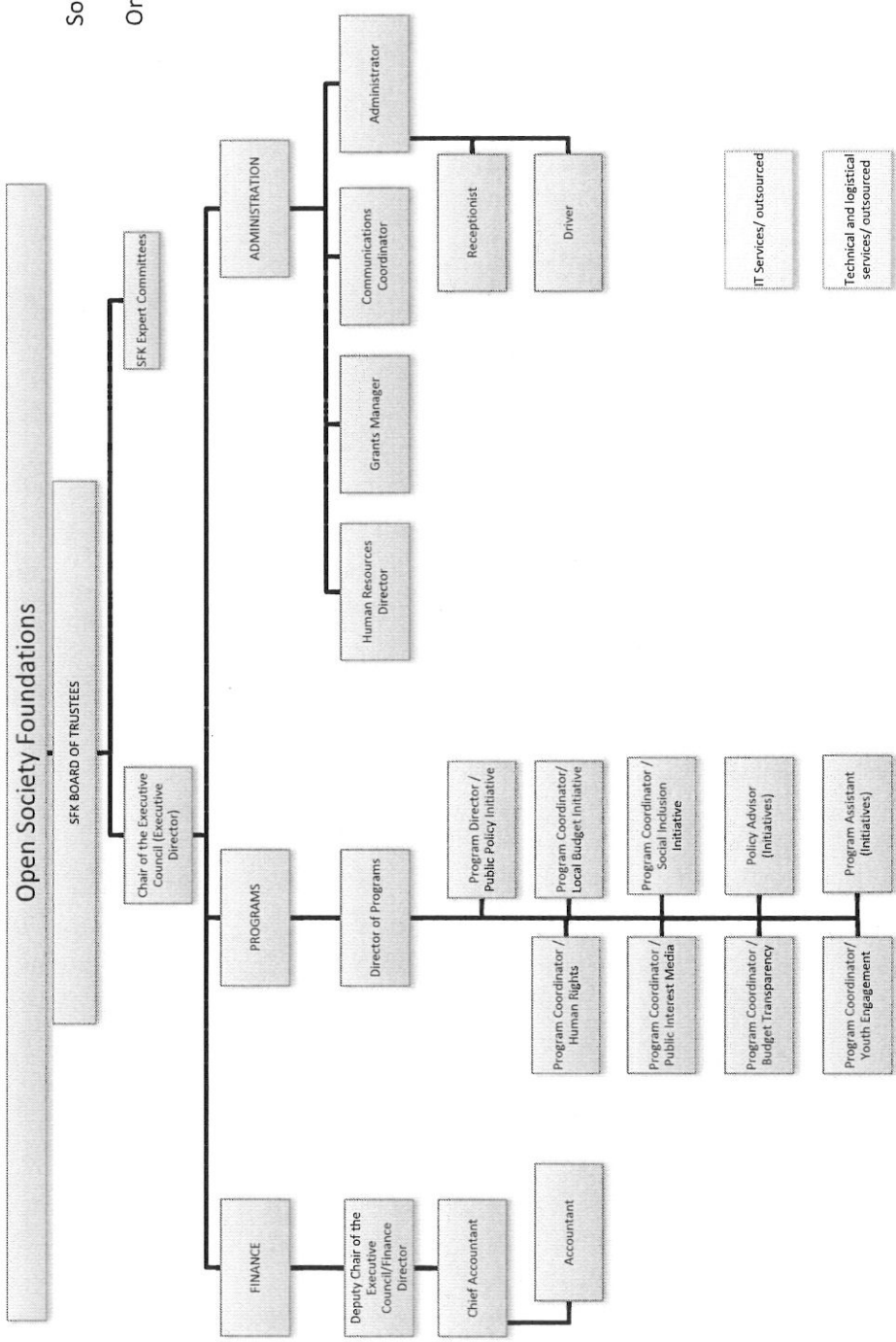
Attachment 1. Work Plans for 2014;

Attachment 2. Strategy and Budget Overview 2014;

Attachment 3. Tentative organizational chart for 2014.

Open Society Foundations

Soros Foundation Kazakhstan
Organizational Chart for 2014



2014 WORK PLAN FOR Soros Foundation Kazakhstan

Field: Human Rights Monitoring and Documentation

Fields or Places	Primary Beneficiary	Amount	Supporting Staff	Sig. deviations in case of H or L budget approval
Priority #1: Human Rights Monitoring, Documentation and Advocacy	Kazakh International Bureau on Human Rights (KIBHR), Adil Soz Freedom of Speech Foundation, Aman Saulyk Foundation (social and economic rights), NGO Kadyr-kassiet (security of human rights defenders), Legal Policy Research Center, Charter for Human Rights (criminal justice).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Institutional support of KIBHR and UPR-related advocacy campaigns (\$60,000) * Advocacy on social and economic rights (\$35,000); * Institutional support to NGO Kadyr-kassiet enabling it to transform into regional center for the support of HR defenders (\$35,000); * Unsolicited grants to other HR organizations (\$55,000) 	Aizhan Oshakbaeyeva, Program Coordinator. <i>Close Cooperation with OSF's Central Eurasia Project and Human Rights Initiative</i>	We will reduce grant fund for unsolicited grants in a Low Budget Scenario.
Priority #2: Building Capacity of Human Rights Activists and Defenders	HR NGOs (new and old), individual HR defenders and activists, activists of grass roots movements, lawyers, bloggers and journalists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *1 capacity building training for KIBHR and its regional branches (\$50,000); *2 skill-building trainings on monitoring/documenting and effective advocacy for non traditional actors and grass roots movements (\$30,000), *travel grants: participation in domestic and international conferences (\$20,000); *a pilot Human Rights Fellowship Project aimed at young and prospective human rights leaders (\$30,000), * Unsolicited grants to carry out tailor-made training programs aimed at regional HR groups (\$30,000) 	Aizhan Oshakbaeyeva, Program Coordinator. <i>Close Cooperation with OSF's Central Eurasia Project and Human Rights Initiative</i>	The KIBHR training will only be for the KIBHR senior management and Almaty office and we will fund only 1 skill-building training for non-traditional actors in a Low Budget Scenario. We will organize 2 guest lectures at Kazakh universities by leaders of the international Human Rights Movement in a High Budget Scenario.
Priority #3: Strengthening the Bar in Kazakhstan	National Bar Association, Almaty Bar Collegium.	One grant to the National Bar Association enabling them to lead an effective advocacy focused on the Law on Legal practice (\$30,000) .	Aizhan Oshakbaeyeva, Program Coordinator.	Our support to the National Bar Association will not include a study tour in a Low Budget Scenario. We will increase grant amount for the National Bar Association enabling them to take part in a bigger number of working group meetings in a High Budget Scenario.

Fealty to Fields

2014 Work Plan For the Soros Foundation Kazakhstan

Field: Budget Transparency

Field Priorities	Primary Beneficiary	Amount	Supporting Staff	Significant deviations in case of H or L budget approval
Priority #1: Electricity Governance Initiative	Coalition "Transparent Tariff" (7 NGOs)	1 Grant (\$50,000; Q1) to the Coalition on the second phase of EGI implementation: EGI report publication and presentation, advocacy through meetings with state and sector officials, participation in working groups.	Anna Yan, Program Coordinator	Participation of the Coalition members in the international EGI meetings and events will not be supported in a Low Budget Scenario (\$35,000). Capacity building for the Coalition members will be covered in a High Budget Scenario (\$65,000).
Priority #2: Revenue Watch	Dialogue platform on EITI; Coalition "Oil revenues - under public oversight!"; Association «Azamattik Kuriltay» (the "Civic Rally"); Coalition «Aikyndyk» ("Openness")	* Unsolicited grants (\$30,000; Q1) to Kazakhstan's members of the Publish What You Pay campaign; * Grants competition (\$30,000; Q1-2) to raise public debates around country's revenues from the extractive sector.	Anna Yan, Program Coordinator	Grants fund available to PWYP members will be reduced in a Low Budget Scenario (\$40,000). No deviations between Medium and High Budget Scenarios .
Priority #3: Budget Monitoring Initiatives	National Budget Network of Kazakhstan (NBNK); NGO "Center for local governance development"; NGO "Aman-saulyk" (social and economic rights); NGO "Angel"; NGO "Active youth of North Kazakhstan"	* 1 institutional grant (25,000, Q2) to NBNK to support their transformation into a sustainable professional network specializing on budget analysis; * Grants (\$100,000; Q1-4) to support projects aimed at budget monitoring & evaluation of government expenditures at national and subnational levels.	Anna Yan, Program Coordinator	No deviations between Low or High Budget Scenario .

Faalty to Fields

2014 Work Plan For the Soros Foundation Kazakhstan

Field: Youth Engagement for Social Change

Field Priorities	Primary Beneficiary	Amount	Supporting Staff	Significant deviations in case of H or L budget approval
Priority #1: Youth and Social Inclusion: Civic Engagement, Democratic Participation, Nondiscrimination	Youth NGOs: Public Foundation "Youth Information Service of Kazakhstan", Regional East Youth Public Association, individual youth activists, grass-root youth movements. <i>Priority will be given to Kazakh-speaking youth from rural areas</i>	* Grants Fund of \$100,000 to support active participation of youth in the social life of local communities.	Saule Meirmanova, Program Coordinator	We will reduce an amount of Grants Fund in a Low Budget Scenario. We will be able to support extra research on local youth needs/challenges/trends in a High Budget Scenario.
Priority #2: Social Innovation and Dialogue / Youth Art for Social Changes	Youth activists, grass-root movements, bloggers, young artists, performers and etc. <i>Priority will be given to Kazakh-speaking youth and youth from regions.</i>	* Individual Grants (total of \$30,000) for social innovations projects; * Individual Grants (total of \$35,000) for social art projects; * A regional conference for Kazakh speaking ICT professionals, bloggers, web-sites owners (\$20,000)	Saule Meirmanova, Program Coordinator	Grants Fund for individual grants will be decreased in a Low Budget Scenario. We will add an international guest-speaker/workshop for ICT conference in a High Budget Scenario.
Priority #3: Skills Development and Capacity Building of Kazakh-speaking youth, youth from rural areas, and youth activists	Youth NGOs (Foundation for Social and Cultural Development "TÖBE", Shakhmardan Yessenov Foundation), youth activists, grass-root movements Priority will be given to Kazakh-speaking youth from rural areas and those who currently work for civil society organizations	* Grants for skills development and capacity building trainings (\$40,000); * Grants for skills building trainings on civic education for school-aged youth (\$40,000)	Saule Meirmanova, Program Coordinator	No deviations between Low or High Budget Scenario.

2014 Work Plan For the Soros Foundation-Kazakhstan

Field: Public Interest Media

Field Priorities	Primary Beneficiary	Amount	Supporting Staff	Significant deviations in case of H or L budget approval
Field Priority #1: Media Professionalism	Journalists selected through an open call (<i>priority will be given to reporters from Kazakh-language and/or regional media</i>)	5 six-months-long fellowships allowing journalists to pursue in-depth long-form multimedia reporting projects with the emphasis on issues of transparency, accountability and social justice (\$10,000, Q3-Q4)	Dariya Tsyrenzhapova, Program Coordinator	We will be able to award 7 fellowships + 1-month internship at a news outlet in the CIS region for 2 journalists in a High Budget Scenario (\$20,000)
	Leading regional media, selected through an open call	5 grants to foster media's transition to digital platforms (redesign of existing websites, launch of digital apps, etc.) (\$30,000, Q1-Q3)	Dariya Tsyrenzhapova, Program Coordinator	We will be able to award 3 grants only in a Low Budget Scenario (\$20,000). We will be able to award 5 grants + 3-day multimedia journalism seminar in Almaty for 10 journalists from the in-project newsrooms with local trainers in a High Budget Scenario (\$40,000)
	NGO Kazakhstan Press Club (as a project implementor). Early- and mid-career journalists + app developers, a total group of 15 to 20, including 10 participants from the region (non-Almaty residents)	A grant to run a Boot-camp for digital media start-ups (production grants; plus, five week-long hands-on training modules, including multimedia storytelling, data journalism, computer-assisted reporting, investigative journalism, media literacy for journalists, web-design, strategic communication, media management, content monetization, etc.) (\$80,000 + \$35,000 production grants; Q1-Q4)	Dariya Tsyrenzhapova, Program Coordinator Possible co-funding from the OSF-London Media Program, USAID, NED, other donors.	No deviations between Medium, Low and High Budget Scenarios
Field Priority #2: Media Regulation, Transparency and Accountability	Adil Soz Freedom of Speech Foundation, North Kazakhstan Legal Media Center, National Association of Broadcasters of Kazakhstan, Support Center for Kazakh-language journalists Minber, Center for International Journalism MediaNet, Abai Aqparat, etc.	Grants for monitoring and advocacy efforts, both local and international, in the following areas: amendments to media legislation, Internet regulation, state procurement for media's news coverage (promote new media content policies to foster transparency and accountability). Grants to provide journalists training in communications law, free legal aid in criminal charges against defamation, incitement of social hatred, etc. (\$85,000; Q1-Q4)	Dariya Tsyrenzhapova, Program Coordinator	In the High Budget Scenario the grant fund will cover of up to four year-long project-based initiatives with the emphasis on monitoring and advocacy.
	Leading media annual conferences with 200 participants each, include: Media Kuryltai and Internet Central Asia	Co-funding of 2 multi-stakeholder conferences with country's leading industry professionals, government officials, and international experts to discuss media legislation, journalism education, market trends and challenges. (\$25,000; Q2, Q4)	Dariya Tsyrenzhapova, Program Coordinator	We will only be able to support one of the forums in a Low Budget Scenario (\$20,000). We will be able to cover travel expenses of one guest speaker at the conference in a High Budget Scenario (\$30,000)

Fidelity to Fields

2014 Work Plan for the Soros Foundation Kazakhstan

Establish critical independent policy capacity able to articulate open society and democratic positions and principles forcefully both now and in the transition period

Public Policy Initiative

Goals-2014	2014 Milestones /Outcomes	Activities	Sig. deviations in case of H or L budget approval	Supporting Staff & Main Collaborators
Goal #1: Ensuring a cadre of young policy scholars exists, well trained in policy analysis, data visualization and communications	Pool of young policy analysts	1.1 Conduct 3 trainings for identified promising policy scholars (10 SFK fellows) on policy analysis and effective communication strategies (\$100,000; Q1-4)	High budget: select 12 fellows, diversified regional vs central selection). Low budget: conduct 2 trainings for up to 10 fellows	SFK Staff: Bota Ayazbayeva, Program Director; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired). Collaborators: OSF Think Tank Fund, KIMEP University Central Asian Studies Center (CASC)
		1.2. Commission policy briefs on topics identified by SFK Board from SFK fellows under the extensive mentorship from leading experts (\$5,000; Q3-4)	High budget: hire 2 mentors - 1 local and 1 international experts.	SFK Staff: Bota Ayazbayeva, Program Director; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired). Collaborators: OSF Think Tank Fund, KIMEP University Central Asian Studies Center (CASC).
		1.3 Set up a panel of distinguished (local and international) policy experts to review fellows' papers, question key methodological and analytical assumptions, and provide feedback (\$5,000; Q4)	High budget: hire 6 experts - 3 local and 3 international experts.	SFK Staff: Bota Ayazbayeva, Program Director; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired). Collaborators: OSF Think Tank Fund, KIMEP University Central Asian Studies Center (CASC).
	A group of young policy scholars who demonstrate the best quality of their research work have been selected for a paid internship	1.3 Start planning paid internship for 2015 at some leading think-tanks or universities in Central/Eastern Europe, Turkey or South-East Asia	High budget (2015): select 5 interns. Low budget (2015): select 2 interns	SFK Staff: Bota Ayazbayeva, Program Director; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired). Collaborators: OSF Think Tank Fund

and Initiatives

Concepts	<p>Goal #2: Ensuring that policy recommendations on the key topics related to democracy, transparency, rule of law, social inclusion, economic policy and the like have been developed, circulated and discussed</p>	<p>Evidence-based policy documents have been prepared, evaluated by the panel of experts and presented</p>	<p>2.1 Commission 2 policy papers from experienced policy analysts (SFK Senior Fellows) on key topics identified by SFK Board (\$30,000; Q2-4)</p>	<p>High budget: 3 policy researches supported - 15,000 each</p>	<p>SFK Staff: Bota Ayazbayeva, Program Director; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired). Collaborators: OSF Think Tank Fund, OSF Central Eurasia Project's GWU/SIPRI fellowship project.</p>
			<p>2.2 Organize a conference/roundtable discussion for SFK Senior Fellows to present their policy recommendations (\$35,000; Q4)</p>	<p>High budget: conduct 2 separate events with diversified regional participation. Low budget: shift to 2015</p>	<p>SFK Staff: Bota Ayazbayeva, Program Director; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired).</p>
	<p>Goal #3: Ensuring that networks and platforms exist through which liberal scholars can present their ideas, meet peers from countries with relevant experience, and interact with the media, civil society and policy makers</p>	<p>Better understanding of challenges and opportunities</p>	<p>3.1 Carry out mapping of existing dialogue platforms and develop a plan for creating new platforms (including multimedia online platforms and offline platforms) (\$5,000; Q 2-4)</p>	<p>Low: this activity will be excluded</p>	<p>Grant to one of the experts to conduct such research; Bota Ayazbayeva, Program Director.</p>
			<p>3.2 Establish partnership with leading analytical media outlets where SFK fellows can provide commentary and publish their papers (Q1-4)</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>SFK Staff: Anton Artemyev, Executive Director; Bota Ayazbayeva, Program Director; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired).</p>
			<p>3.3 Establish a multimedia online dialogue platform in partnership with one of the leading media outlets where liberal ideas can be presented and discussed (\$100,000; Q 2-4)</p>	<p>No deviations between the High and Low budgets.</p>	<p>Grant to one of the leading online media outlet - TBD in 2013; Bota Ayazbayeva, Program Director.</p>

2014 Work Plan for the Soros Foundation Kazakhstan

By 2018, to achieve policy changes required to provide opportunities for people with mental disabilities to live, study and work without isolation from the society, and to demonstrate practices of such social inclusion.

Social Inclusion Initiative

Goals-2014	2014 Milestones /Outcomes	Activities	Sig. deviations in case of H or L budget approval	Supporting Staff & Main Collaborators	ESP (OSF)
Goal #1: Prepare persuasive evidence of the long term benefits of the policy of social inclusion for further advocacy	1. The research findings on the cost-effectiveness of the inclusive education policy in the long-term perspective are available.	1. In collaboration with ESP to hire an international expert for the development of concept/framework/methodology of the research, and conduct 2 trainings for WG members (local experts) (\$6,000)	<p>High budget: 5 WG members, 5 geographical regions are covered, 2 trainings for WG members conducted.</p> <p>Low budget: 4 WG members, 3 geographical regions are covered, 1 training for WG conducted.</p>	<p>SFK staff: Ainur Shakenova, Program Coordinator; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired).</p> <p>Collaborators: ESP, international expert, Inclusive Education Coalition members.</p>	6,000 - Expert's travel expenses
		2. Establishment of the Working Group, and facilitation of its activities (\$25,000)			
		3. Publication of the research (\$7,000)			4,000 - translation costs
		4. Planning advocacy campaign for 2015-2017 based on the research findings			
		1. Development of the concept and framework of the analysis (with assistance of the international expert). (\$4,000)			
	2. Analysis of current policies, assessment of quality and access to social rehabilitation/integration within and outside the big psychiatric institutions for people with mental disabilities in Kazakhstan are available.	2. Awarding one grant to a local NGO to carry out the analysis. (\$20,000)		<p>SFK staff: Ainur Shakenova, Program Coordinator; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired).</p> <p>Collaborators: International expert, NGOs</p>	

Goal # 2: Share/promote best practices of social inclusion of people with mental disabilities.	1. Resource center on developing of alternative services for people with mental disabilities has been established.	1. Support creation of a resource center on sharing best practices of community-based alternative services. (\$35,000)	High budget: 4 courses for 10-12 participants. Low and Medium budget: 3 courses for 10-12 participants.	SFK staff: Ainur Shakenova, Program Coordinator; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired). Collaborators: ESP, international experts, grantee - Alrami Club House (Pavlodar city), individual experts	5,000 - individual travel grants
	2. Expertise on mental health/deinstitutionalization and inclusive education issues in RoK	2. Travel grants for experts working in the field of inclusive education and deinstitutionalization (\$25,000) 3. Support several online platforms on inclusive education/deinstitutionalization (existing website www.inclusion.kz) (\$5,000)			
	3. The network of alternative service centers has been broadened and strengthened.	4. Announce open grant competition on providing alternative services to people with mental disabilities / case studies on successful stories from parents/parental groups on social inclusion, etc (\$55,000)	High budget: more applications supported (or same number with higher budget). Low budget: less applications supported (or same number with lower budget).	SFK staff: Ainur Shakenova, Program Coordinator; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired). Collaborators: local government bodies, regional NGOs	10,000 - case study
Goal # 3: Advocate for flexible education standards/performance evaluation system within mainstream schools as a basis for inclusive education	1. Creation of the Analytical Group on flexible standards under the aegis of the National Center of Special Education	1. Study-tour for KZ experts to the country where flexible educational standards already successfully implemented (e.g. Latvia) (\$25,000) 2. Develop a policy paper on flexible education standards/performance evaluation (\$18,000)	High budget: site-visit for at least 8 stake-holders conducted. More participants in the conference. Low budget: site-visit for 5-6 stakeholders. Less participants in the conference.	SFK staff: Ainur Shakenova, Program Coordinator; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired). Collaborators: ESP, international expert, Inclusive Education Coalition members.	5,000 - study-tour 10,000 - international expert 10,000 - conference
	2. The ongoing debate on the need for flexible education standards in KZ	3. Organise a conference/public hearing on the issue of flexible education standards (\$15,000) 4. At least 3 op-eds on the subject in leading national papers			

2014 WORK PLAN FOR Soros Foundation Kazakhstan

Establish the best practice of transparent, accountable, and inclusive budget governance at the local level in Kazakhstan

Local Budget Initiative

Goals-2014	2014 Milestones /Outcomes	Activities	Sig. deviations in case of H or L budget approval	Supporting Staff & Main Collaborators
Goal #1: Visualization of local budgets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Non-technical versions of local budgets developed and broadly debated in 5 pilot constituencies. * Availability of a citizens budget at a local level is considered as best practice welcomed by the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Regional Development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Joint (SFK+grantee) initial meetings with communities to identify their needs on specific budget information (\$5,000; Q1); 1.2. 5 project grants to NBNK to develop and promote citizens budgets at the local level (\$35,000; Q1); 1.3. Convene a national conference on local budget transparency and accountability (\$20,000; Q4). 	<p>We will be able to support more conference participants from across Kazakhstan in a High Budget Scenario (\$65,000). We will support a small-scale conference in a Low Budget Scenario (\$55,000)</p>	<p>SFK staff: Askar Kushkunbayev, Program Coordinator; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired). Collaborators: NBNK members</p>
Goal #2: Local governance and public participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Local authorities in 5 pilot constituencies are trained in best practices of public participation. * Budget hearings held in 5 pilot constituencies have been recognized as open and effective by experts. * Universal recommendations on effective budget hearings at the local level have been developed and presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Trainings on effective public participation for local authorities and community members (\$25,000; Q3); 2.2. Study tour to Poland for a group of local authorities and activists from 5 pilot constituencies (\$30,000; Q1); 2.3. Expert support to local authorities from 5 pilot regions, production of the report with universal recommendations and its presentation in Astana (15,000; Q4); 	<p>We will be able to receive contribution from an international expert in a High Budget Scenario (\$72,000). We will organize a smaller-scale presentation of universal recommendations in a Low Budget Scenario (\$68,000).</p>	<p>SFK staff: Askar Kushkunbayev, Program Coordinator; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired). Collaborators: NBNK members</p>
Goal #3: Implementation of the social audit and Open local Budget Index (OLBI) tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Social audit has been used as a means for the evaluation of local government effectiveness. * OLBI and Social Audit have been presented to the Administration of the President as tools for the assessment of local government effectiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1. A study tour to India for a group of civil society partners to learn best practices of social audit implementation (\$20,000; Q-3); 3.2. Grants competition to implement social audit in Kazakhstan (\$90,000; Q-3,4) 3.3. Advocacy aimed at the Agency for Public Service Affairs and the Administration of the President (\$20,000; Q1). 	<p>We will be able to increase funding for advocacy in a High Budget Scenario (\$133,000). We will invite Indian partners to Kazakhstan instead of a study-tour in a Low Budget Scenario (\$127,000).</p>	<p>SFK staff: Askar Kushkunbayev, Program Coordinator; Saule Kalikova, Policy Advisor; Shared Program Assistant (to be hired). Collaborators: NBNK members</p>