



**INTERVIEW**  
**UNECE PPP Newsletter – Issue 3**

**Sharing information and experience: towards a better  
Cooperation on PPP development in Central Asia**

**Ms. Gulnara Kalikova,**  
Managing Partner at Kalikova & Associates Law Firm  
in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

*During the international PPP conference in Turkey (29-30 April 2010), a group of central Asian representatives came together and asked the UNECE Secretariat how to establish a knowledge and experience sharing facility on PPP in Central Asia. Ms. Gulnara Kalikova, Managing Partner at Kalikova and Associates in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, took part in the gathering and is eager to contribute to a better cooperation on PPP in the region. She hopes this initiative will be fruitful and have an important impact on the Kyrgyz Republic in the long-term.*

**1) How did you become a participant of the Istanbul event on PPP Challenges (29-30 April 2010) and what are your impressions of it?**

My colleagues and I at Kalikova & Associates law firm first heard about PPP in early 2009 when working on the Asian Development Bank (ADB) project on improvement of investment climate in the Kyrgyz Republic. PPP development was one of the components of the project. Although we were not directly involved in this part of the project, we became very interested in the issues related to PPP. We collected information on other countries' experience and followed up on the events in the PPP area. In autumn 2009, my colleagues took part in the PPP seminar held in the Kyrgyz Republic at which they met with the members of the UNECE Team of Specialists, Art Smith and Anthony Pearce. They mentioned the seminar in Istanbul and we decided to participate in it.

The seminar was very useful for the participants from Central Asian countries. The specialists from Turkey and other countries shared their experience illustrating the potential of PPP to contribute to economic development in any state. It was important that many participants discussed not only the successes but also the challenges of PPP and identified the issues requiring particularly careful approach when implementing PPP projects. Furthermore, the participants had an opportunity to become acquainted with each other and with PPP specialists from various countries around the world. I, as a representative of the private sector, was particularly interested in familiarizing myself with the International PPP Platform Turkey, the association of public and private companies promoting PPP ideas in Turkey.

For my colleagues and myself from the Kyrgyz Republic, PPP is a new concept. Frankly speaking, we do not have sufficient knowledge or experience in this area, but we have a great desire to make our professional contribution to the PPP development in the Kyrgyz Republic. We are confident that PPP can become one of the effective tools to promote economic development in the Kyrgyz Republic.

Today there is no public authority in the Kyrgyz Republic responsible for the PPP development in the country. However, based on my meetings with the officers of the Ministry of Economic Regulation, I can assure you that the PPP development will be put on the agenda of the most important issues of economic development of the country in the nearest future. My colleagues and I, as representatives of the private sector, will improve our knowledge of PPP and hope that we will be able to share it with the private and public sectors in the future. We are also looking for like-minded people in the area of PPP development among independent experts of the Kyrgyz Republic.

**2) During the Istanbul event on PPP Challenges (29-30 April 2010), a group of representatives from Central Asian countries decided to launch a regional initiative to promote PPPs. How does it intend to improve PPP practices in Central Asia?**

Obtaining knowledge at the seminar is important, but it is even more important and much more difficult to apply this knowledge in practice when we all return to our respective countries. During the event, all the participants from Central Asian countries discussed the need to keep in contact with each other after the seminar. Despite the differences in PPP policies adopted in our countries, we all need to understand what is happening in PPPs with our neighbours, learn and share positive and negative experiences, and hear the opinions of the colleagues from other countries.

This desire gave rise to the idea of creating an electronic platform which will help us share information and communicate each other's opinions. Thanks to the UNECE, such a platform was created on the basis of the UNECE PPP electronic platform literally several days after the Istanbul seminar. I reviewed the information posted on this PPP platform with great pleasure. There is no doubt that it significantly expands the sources of knowledge about PPP. Trying to collect information of such a quantity and quality alone would be very difficult. The participants from Central Asia only have to actively use this electronic platform to raise the level of their knowledge and share their experience.

I am sure that each of the Central Asian countries has something to share. For example, Tajikistan has positive experience in PPP projects. Kazakhstan has a public agency, Kazakhstan PPP Center, and can relate its own success story. The Kyrgyz Republic adopted the Law on PPP last year and though the Law received criticism from international experts, this experience can still be used as an example of what laws not to adopt ! The participants from Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have an excellent store of knowledge in the area of PPP and they have a lot to share with their colleagues from other countries. Generally, whether our communication will be frequent and fruitful, depends on our ability to take initiatives and be proactive.

As an additional note, I would like to point out that during the seminar our Kazakhstani colleagues announced the Astana Economic Forum to be held in July 2010, where the PPP Center of Kazakhstan will organize group discussions. I have already registered for this seminar, at which I hope to meet with the participants of the Istanbul seminar.

**3) What are, according to you, the next steps to be taken in order to make this initiative successful?**

It would be helpful, for the beginning, if Central Asian participants shared their PPP experience (policy, regulation, current projects, and sectors of economy having potential for PPP projects). I believe that each of us would be interested in asking questions to be answered by specialists from other countries. I, for instance, would like to hear recommendations of colleagues from other countries on which steps the non-public sector representatives can take to promote PPP ideas in their countries.

**4) Who in the Kyrgyz Republic can become a user of the information contained in the electronic platform?**

Since at present, the Kyrgyz Republic has no authorized public agency for PPP, it would be more difficult to involve public authorities in the participation of the electronic platform. But I am sure that as soon as the government appoints the body responsible for PPP, this platform will find support from the representatives of public authorities. With the development of PPP in the Kyrgyz Republic, the range of independent experts in PPP will expand, which will lead to the growth of interest in the platform.

## **5) How to increase the PPP expertise of Central Asian specialists?**

I think it is necessary first of all to form a more stable group of interested specialists in each country, who will deal or are interested in dealing with PPP in a long-term perspective. In my view, such group can consist of representatives of both the public and private sectors specializing in various areas of expertise. Perhaps it will be difficult and take a certain amount of time to form such group of specialists but the goal is justified, since these very specialists may become the messengers of PPP ideas in Central Asia. The higher the level of their knowledge and experience is, the more effectively their influence on the formation of PPP policies and projects in their countries.

Central Asian specialists may increase their PPP expertise by exchanging information through an electronic platform and seminars. Other ways to promote PPP can be to organize training on practical PPP challenges, invite international specialists who can help select, develop and implement PPP projects. Participants can analyze and gain PPP experience by taking internship in other countries (in public authorities or companies implementing PPP projects). It is possible to use other ways as well, but in the beginning, it is more important for the majority of Central Asian countries to simply deepen their knowledge of PPP.

## **6) Which steps did the Kyrgyz Republic undertake to develop PPP?**

In addition to adopting the PPP Law, provisions for the PPP development were made in the development strategy for 2009 – 2011. Also, as part of these initiatives, a number of respective amendments were made to the legislation governing health care, transport, communications, electric power, forestry, physical culture and sport. Respective ad hoc working groups were formed by the Ministry of Economic Regulation and the Ministry of Transport and Communications. The ADB has played a major role in PPP promotion in the Kyrgyz Republic. As far as I know, this project was carried out by an ADB consultant Vladimir Bohun who developed recommendations for our government. We hope that the time will come when all these recommendations will be fulfilled by our government.

**Note by the UNECE Secretariat**

*Other regional bodies have been launching initiatives through PPP units and agencies, namely:*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>Area of operations</b>	<b>Activities</b>
<b>EU (EPEC)</b> <a href="http://www.eib.org/epec/">http://www.eib.org/epec/</a>	Luxembourg	EU member states and candidate states	PPP Policy	PPP Taskforces provide practical and operational guidance to members
<b>RCC</b> <a href="http://www.rcc.int">www.rcc.int</a>	Sarajevo	RCC members under the leadership of the Croatian PPP Unit	PPP Promotion in Southeast Europe	A regional network of PPP Units should help improve knowledge sharing, identify training needs and cooperate with other relevant international organizations
<b>World Bank Institute (WBI)</b> <a href="http://wbi.worldbank.org/wbi/">http://wbi.worldbank.org/wbi/</a>	Washington D.C.	Countries of the Southeast Europe and Mediterranean (SEM) region (3 other regional initiatives were launched)	PPP Capacity building	Knowledge sharing happens through practitioner networks, during global forums (PPP days), training programs and other events
<b>UNECE TOS PPP<sup>1</sup></b> <a href="http://wbi.worldbank.org/wbi/">http://wbi.worldbank.org/wbi/</a>	Geneva	The TOS draws on a broad range of international PPP experts	PPP Expertise	The TOS is in charge of the redaction of the PPP Toolkit that will provide guidance on best practice; events and conferences are based on its expertise

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<sup>1</sup> So far the UNECE is the only regional body to have gathered an international network of PPP specialists.

The UNECE Secretariat would be very thankful for any comments or suggestions on how to help encourage the Central Asian initiative on PPPs. Please send us your thoughts at [ppp@unece.org](mailto:ppp@unece.org).

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