



## Update on Key Activities August 2006

### GLOBAL

CIPE launched its new and improved website. The website is more visually engaging and it has been reorganized to allow for easier navigation. There is also a redesigned events calendar.

John Sullivan and Alex Shkolnikov now have a regular guest column on the *International Business Times* news website. This month, their columns addressed the evolving world of corporate governance, recent elections in Mexico, the new leadership in Ukraine, the real estate boom in Moscow, and the transition to democracy in the Philippines. The articles are available at <http://www.ibtimes.com/columns/>

CIPE held a Spanish-language Economic Reform Roundtable with Mariano Curicama, Prefect of the Province of Chimborazo in Ecuador, who spoke about the Indigenous Enterprise Corporation of Ecuador. The program is attempting to bring indigenous enterprises out of the informal sector and is conducted with financial assistance from NDI and technical support from CIPE.

On August 24, Deputy Director for Programs Jean Rogers spoke at the "Taste of Equality" event, which was co-sponsored by NDI and IRI. The event addressed women's rights and the right to vote. Ms. Rogers discussed the role that CIPE plays in enfranchising women by providing them with the tools to become effective leaders, to organize themselves, and to begin representing their own interests.

The following publications and Feature Service articles were released and posted on CIPE's website:

- A Russian translation of "Russia's Business Associations: Who Joins and Why?" by William Pyle, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Economics at Middlebury College
- "Believe in the Poor: The Future of Microfinance," an interview with Santiago Ribadeneira, Executive President of Banco Solidario
- "Corporate Governance in Russia: Past, Present, and Future," adapted from a presentation given by Igor Belikov, Director of the Russian Institute of Directors, at CIPE on April 13, 2006
- A case study on CIPE's program in Montenegro, "Creating a Voice for Entrepreneurs in Montenegro," which traces the work of two organizations, the Center for Entrepreneurship and Economic Development and the Montenegro Business Alliance. Through their work, Montenegro has made rapid progress towards becoming a free-market democracy.
- A revised edition of CIPE's premier toolkit, the *National Business Agenda Guidebook*

### AFRICA

**Ethiopia** – As part of the Ethiopian National Business Agenda project, the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and the Ethiopian Economics Associations held focus group meetings in Harar, Addis Ababa, Dessie, and Mekele Ethiopia. Representatives discussed obstacles to economic growth faced by local business. The meetings are the first step in preparing a national business agenda for the country.

**Kenya** – The Inter-Region Economic Institute (IREN) continued to publish its online magazine, *The African Executive*. One article, "East Africa Capital Market Integration," discusses how integrating capital markets in East Africa would benefit everyone involved, including investors and private citizens.

**Kenya** – IREN held its First Africa Think Tank Leadership Training. Speakers at the training included James Shikwati, President of IREN, and Lawrence W. Reed, President of the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, one of the largest free market think tanks in the US. Topics included strategic planning, promoting free market ideas, organizational management, and “friend raising-not-fundraising.”

## **ASIA**

**Philippines** – CIPE Chairman Greg Lebedev and Executive Director John Sullivan participated in the Institute for Solidarity in Asia's "Mahal Ko ang Pilipinas" (I love the Philippines) Open Conference on August 30 in Manila. Sullivan spoke at the ISA Fellows event the night before the conference, and Lebedev delivered the closing remarks. The conference is part of ISA's ongoing project to improve governance in the Philippines by working with city governments and citizens' organizations to create scorecards for better public governance.

## **CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE**

**Romania** – CIPE Romania Program Manager Corina Schwartz has finalized the "2005 Media Report for CIPE Romania." The "Media Report" reflects the coverage by the media of the programs and activities undertaken by CIPE Romania and women business association partners from Romania and the Balkan countries. In 2005 the activities of CIPE Romania and its partners were featured in over 40 articles, interviews, and broadcasts by the media in Romania, Turkey, Serbia, and Albania.

## **EURASIA**

**Kyrgyzstan** – The Bishkek Business Club (BBC) attended the Congress of Business Associations' annual general assembly. During the meeting, a presentation was made about the BBC-organized Tax Code Working Group. Assembly members participated in writing a letter to the President of Kyrgyzstan and the Kyrgyz Parliament, expressing the views of the business community pertaining to the Tax Code.

**Russia** – The Coalition of Business Association in the Altai region (created under the USAID-funded “SME Policy Advocacy” project) completed an analysis of the survey on the administrative barriers to SME development in the region. Having surveyed over 200 SME owners, the coalition project team came to the conclusion that regional legislation on trade, construction, and industrial production presents obstacles to SMEs. Respondents view increased business participation in the policymaking process on the regional level, increased transparency of the regional administration decision-making, and active participation of regional entrepreneurs in coalitions (both industry- and issue-specific) as ways to foster SME development in the Altai region.

## **LATIN AMERICA**

**Bolivia** – CIPE partner Fundación Milenio held an event at the Catholic University of La Paz with the former Vice President of Bolivia, Víctor Hugo Cardenas, to present the book *The Rent Seeking Trap*. More than 200 people attended the event in which the author of the book, Roberto Laserna, discussed the consequences of and alternatives to the current economic policy in Bolivia.

**Colombia/Regional** – The Instituto de Ciencia Política (ICP) started distributing a new issue of the CIPE-sponsored magazine *Perspectiva*. *Perspectiva* No.10 was launched at a forum on “Governance in Colombia after the 2006 elections” in Bogotá, Colombia. This event was co-sponsored by IRI, NDI, and the Good Governance Foundation of Colombia. More than 150 people attended, including academics, legislators, journalists, and university students. Issue No.10 focuses on how demographics and poverty are interrelated. It is currently being distributed in seven Latin American countries.

**Ecuador** – *Tribuna Liberal*, the Ecuadorian Institute of Political Economy's weekly television program, addressed the following topics in August: “The Roots of Economic Development in Guayaquil,” “Publicly Financed Credit: Positive and Negative Effects,” and “How to Promote Capitalism.”

**Haiti** – Senior Program Officer for Latin America and the Caribbean John Zemko traveled to Port-au-Prince to start an initiative with the Haitian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. CIPE consultant Roy Badaro is providing technical support to build the institutional capacity of the chamber through training of key staff in strategic planning, basic organizational management, and membership development.

**Venezuela/Regional** – The Venezuelan Association of Executives organized a seminar on "Corporate Governance in Family-owned Companies in the Construction Sector." This seminar took place at the Venezuelan Construction Chamber in Caracas and was co-sponsored by the Andean Development Corporation. More than 50 businesspeople, managers, and employees attended the event.

## **MIDDLE EAST/NORTH AFRICA**

**Egypt** – CIPE is continuing its institutional reform roundtables with the Federation of Economic Development Associations (FEDA). The 5th roundtable, entitled "Municipalities and the Democratic Reform," was held in Port Said governorate. FEDA presented a paper indicating numerous contradictions in the constitution. The roundtable was attended by 60 participants representing business associations and Egyptian regulators, as well as parliamentarians from the ruling National Democratic Party. At the end of the conference, FEDA announced its position against postponing the municipal elections and the appointment of governors as well as the urgent need for a change in Egypt constitutional framework.

**Iraq** – CIPE partner the American Society for Kurds (ASK) continued to broadcast its radio show on multiple radio stations throughout Kurdistan. Topics included "The Role of Women in Economic Development" and "Marketing in Kurdistan."

**Iraq** – CIPE partner KEDO held an entrepreneurship training program in Baghdad from August 29-31 targeting Solimaniya University students. The training was conducted by Dr. Yaseen Rasool of Saladdin University, Mr. Musa Tawfik of Solimaniya University, and Mr. Husam Barzinji of KEDO. The three-day training course was attended by 25 students and focused on work-plan development, the importance of a marketing plan, financial and project planning, project management, and business ethics. The event was covered by Zagors satellite channel, Kurdistan Satellite channel, and Radio Nawa.

**Palestine** – The Center for Private Sector Development held a televised debate on corporate governance on August 30, 2006. The debate lasted more than 75 minutes, and it was characterized by a lot of interaction between all participants. The contracting firm (Watan TV Corporation) has also been commissioned to screen the tape on local TV stations in all West Bank and Gaza districts. At the conclusion of the debate, all five participants agreed that the kind of issues raised will provide highly useful information for the business community and could become an effective component in the effort to modernize corporate governance in Palestine.

**Yemen** – CIPE partner the Yemeni Female Media Forum held a national economic journalism training program from August 12-15 in Sana'a. The four-day training was attended by twenty journalists from Yemeni newspapers and magazines. The topics discussed included trade, inflation, fiscal policy, and transparency. The principal trainer was Mr. Salem Wahby of *Al-Ahram* newspaper of Egypt.

**Yemen** – CIPE partner the Yemeni Polling Center (YPC) held a seminar on the 22nd of August in Sana'a. The seminar focused on discussing the results of YPC's recent survey on bribery in Yemen. The event was attended by representatives from various Yemeni political parties, academics, and journalists, and was covered by Yemeni newspapers and magazines as well as regional newspapers.

## **SOUTH ASIA**

**Afghanistan** – The Afghanistan International Chamber of Commerce (AICC) launched its National Business Agenda at an event attended by more than 150 private sector, government, and international representatives. Minister of Finance Anwarul Haq Ahady was the keynote speaker, and Minister of Agriculture Obidullah Ramin and First Deputy Minister of Commerce Zanidin Zia also attended. High-

ranking U.S. Embassy and USAID officials were in attendance as well, as were representatives from the German Cooperation Authority, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank.

**Afghanistan** – CIPE held a week-long in-service training for its Tashaboz entrepreneurship teachers that included specific instruction in entrepreneurial skills, leadership and instructional techniques. Ten teachers participated as did Dr. Amin Nadjibi, Advisor to the Minister of Education.

**Afghanistan** – The Afghan Finance Company held its second week-long technical assistance workshop for the Afghanistan International Chamber of Commerce's business development specialists. These specialists, from Kabul, Herat, Mazar e Sharif, Jalalabad, and Kandahar, are working directly with the business communities in their respective cities to prepare business plans, provide access to finance, and develop marketing strategies.

**Afghanistan** – CIPE, AICC, and Afghanistan Women's Business Federation (AWBF) leaders attended the inauguration of a new women's association called the Afghan Businesswomen's Association. Saraya Parluka, AWBF Chairperson, gave the keynote address.

**Afghanistan** – The Afghanistan International Chamber of Commerce and CIPE co-sponsored a National Private Sector Conference on Chamber Reform on August 12. The conference's purpose was for the private sector to identify Afghanistan's preferred chamber of commerce system.

**Afghanistan** – CIPE and Afghanistan Women's Business Federation (AWBF) representatives met with the Minister of Women's Affairs to brief her on the AWBF's activities. The Minister expressed her support.

**Bangladesh** – The Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry held the first National SME Women Entrepreneurs Forum on August 8 in Dhaka. Prime Minister Khaleda Zia attended the event, along with the Minister of Commerce and Industry and several other prominent members of the government. Four sessions were held during the day, allowing the attendees to discuss important issues, including access to finance, business regulations, marketing, infrastructure, and information technology. The day closed with the Prime Minister's announcement that a bank will be created to serve the needs of women entrepreneurs running SMEs.

**Pakistan** – On August 6, CIPE Pakistan staff met with the committee revising the Trade Bodies Ordinance 1961. The Prime Minister's cabinet, after approving the committee's proposal to create a new Trade Bodies law, has requested that the committee draft new legislation to be placed before the Parliament for approval. With the assistance of a consultant, the committee will draft a new ordinance, which will detail the proposed legal and organizational framework, including laws and rules under which trade bodies would function in Pakistan.