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## **EXPERTS, CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS TO DISCUSS IMPROVEMENTS TO STATE SOCIAL CONTRACTING LAW**

**ALMATY, KAZAKHSTAN** — USAID and Counterpart International are organizing a round table to discuss the State Social Contracting Law. The round table will take place 9:30 - 13:30 on June 7 at the Kazzhol Hotel, 127/1 Gogol Street, Almaty, in the Altyn Adam Hall. Counterpart International is implementing the USAID-supported Kazakhstan Civil Society Strengthening Program.

“The idea of state social contracting is to support socially beneficial activities through civil society organizations (CSOs). Since 2005, when the State Social Contracting Law was adopted, the government has released significant funds to support activities by CSOs. In 2011, 2 billion tenge were allocated from the national budget and 1 billion tenge was allocated from local budgets. But do these funds always support socially relevant projects?” asked Marat Aitmagambetov, Director of Counterpart International in Kazakhstan.

Roundtable participants will discuss: Does the public have the opportunity to control spending of public funds allocated for state social contracting? Is the public involved in the selection of activities to receive funding? Does the selection process meet requirements of objectivity, impartiality and openness? Is there an external independent evaluation of the projects’ effectiveness and usefulness? Are CSOs satisfied with the State Social Contracting Law and would they improve the law and its implementation?

The round table will be attended by representatives of central and local government agencies, international organizations and CSOs. Participants will develop recommendations for government agencies involved in implementing state social contracting.

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