

Open World Program 2015

Below, listed by country, are the Hosting Themes, each with an accompanying rationale and a general description of the types of delegates who will participate.

Armenia Themes

Accountable Governance

Accountable Governance – Local Administrators in Southern Armenia

Rationale: The U.S. Embassy in Yerevan has launched several programs in the strategic region of southern Armenia aimed at capacity building, economic development, and the furtherance of democratic values. Both the physical difficulties in reaching remote areas and the previous political leadership have presented challenges in finding appropriate partners in this region. In the course of designing and implementing its programs, the U.S. Mission in Armenia has identified promising young local leaders who have been responsive to the Mission's programming. The Open World program is intended to introduce these administrators to transparent, inclusive, and democratic models of local governance.

Target Group: Local government officials from key towns and cities in Southern Armenia that have been responsive to efforts at improving the capacity of governance in their locale.

Civic Rule of Law – General Rule of Law

Rationale: Consensus among American and Armenian legal specialists is that progressive legal reform in Armenia may be accomplished by the next generation of lawyers in that country. These young lawyers are less likely to be corrupted by the Soviet-approach of law that plagues Armenia, and they are open to new ideas. They also place a premium on ethics, both for judges and lawyers. Furthermore, they are more receptive to pro bono work. The Open World program will bring together a delegation of dynamic young lawyers to see how the law is practiced in the United States, and their program will include meetings with professionals representing all aspects of the judicial/legal system. Upon return to Armenia, these young lawyers will work with the U.S. Mission to run seminars and training sessions for other lawyers as the Armenian legal community, especially its young lawyers, is more disposed to listening about best practices from their own colleagues than from others.

Target Group: Young civil lawyers.

Social Issues – Expanding Social Inclusion in Armenia

Rationale: Having a disability carries an enormous stigma in Armenia, and many Armenians with disabilities are confined to their homes. The U.S. Embassy in Armenia organized a series of events that highlighted the core values of diversity and inclusiveness. In the course of planning and promoting these programs, it was determined that there is an opportunity to help shape how the government of Armenia develops and implements policies regarding disability issues. An Open World program would build on these efforts by demonstrating how the United States has worked to build an inclusive society that respects and values those with disabilities.

Target Group: Elected officials, government specialists, and NGO leaders working to advance the inclusion of people with disabilities in Armenian society.

Georgia Themes

Accountable Governance

Accountable Governance – Legislative Development

Rationale: U.S. policy in Georgia seeks to further that country's progress in strengthening its democratic institutions, especially the system of checks and balances between branches of government. In the last several years, leadership of the Parliament has changed hands, has re-located from the capital city of Tbilisi to Kutaisi, and its role and power relative to that of the President and Prime Minister is in flux. In Georgia, bills are either general or local in application. A general bill has countrywide impact, while a local bill applies only to a named city or county. Regardless of type, the great majority of bills involve proposals to change existing law. It would further the progress of Georgia's democratization to strengthen its legislative processes, and a delegation observing the legislative process in a mature democracy like the United States would be beneficial to those participating in an Open World program focusing on legislative development.

Target Group: Parliamentary staffers, advisors to Parliament, and legislative experts.

Accountable Governance – Municipal Development/Use of Public Space

Rationale: In the past year, the Georgian government strengthened the role of municipalities, and the U.S. Mission in Georgia is eager to work with newly enfranchised municipal public servants and those supporting municipal development efforts. Recent large scale projects have been initiated to rebuild historical towns and town centers, but important decisions about land use are often made without public scrutiny. Before the central government continues with ambitious development projects, local communities and municipal governments should have input and share their vision for such projects. Through Open World, delegates will observe how spatial planning and development issues are addressed by municipalities in the United States, and explore the role of the public in the process.

Target Group: Urban planners, representatives of municipalities, and leaders of civil society organizations working in the field of municipal development.

Accountable Governance – Women's Leadership

Rationale: Women are critically underrepresented in all levels of government and business in Georgia. There is great need for more women leaders in the country to better reflect the diverse population of the country. Having women leaders who play key roles in the country's leadership and direction, either on the national or local level, will advance gender equality in the country. Efforts aimed at empowering women and building their capacities to better understand their rights and responsibilities will enhance their access to social protection and economic opportunities.

Target Group: Women leaders from both government institutions and the private sector.

Civic Rule of Law – General Rule of Law

Rationale: The judicial reform agenda in Georgia is aimed at increasing transparency, accountability, and impartiality throughout the legal system, and in the courts. Key reforms include universal free access to laws and penal codes; inclusion of civil society and the private sector in the drafting of new legislation; limiting political influence in the judicial process; and,

strengthening the position of the defendant before the judge. Through Open World, a delegation of lawyers and legal professionals, including defense lawyers, will observe all aspects of the judicial process in the United States and benefit from discussions regarding the best and most applicable practices.

Target Group: Law school faculty, legal specialists from NGOs and the public sector, and lawyers.

Social Issues

Social Issues – Education Policy

Rationale: There has been an ongoing debate in Georgia among the Ministry of Education, the Parliament, Civil Society Organizations, Think Tanks, and academia regarding ongoing reforms in the field of education, particularly higher education. Improvements are being made in the system of higher education with the support of professors, administrators, and students, but a broader view of education systems would benefit those in Georgia working on higher education reform. Participation in an Open World exchange in this area will provide program participants with policy options to reach international standards in this sector.

Target Group: Ministry of Education officials, administrators/professors in the field of higher education, and representatives of Civil Society Organizations working in the field of education reform.

Social Issues – Social Inclusion

Rationale: Georgia's population is made up of many different ethnic groups, including Azeris, Armenians, and Kurds, with ethnic Georgians comprising the majority. Members of the country's minority groups often find themselves at the bottom of the social ladder, and many ethnic Georgians regard them with suspicion or even outright distrust. Georgia has gradually modernized its legal system and improved its compliance with international norms of human rights, including the protection of the human rights of ethnic minorities. More needs to be done to enable minorities to participate fully in Georgian community and economic life, including expanding Georgian-language comprehension. The U.S. program should expose participants to social-services delivery to ethnic minorities; national and community organizations dedicated to protecting civil rights; and programs for teaching English as a second language.

Target Group: NGO leaders, government officials, and legislators working in the area of societal inclusivity; leading minority-group representatives working on this issue.

Kazakhstan Themes

Accountable Governance

Accountable Governance – Alternative Energy/Green Business

Rationale: Environmental protection and the development of renewable energy technologies are among Kazakhstan's top priority sectors in the development of that country. The country is currently lagging behind in this area and will need to invest heavily in greener energy technologies. The most likely prospects for development in the renewable energy sphere are in hydropower, wind, and biomass technologies. The Open World program will provide opportunities for participants to meet with experts from U.S. companies, government representatives, and entrepreneurs that promote renewable energy use and green business practices.

Target Group: Government officials and policy experts responsible for energy policy and the development of renewable/alternative energy resources; entrepreneurs involved in green business practices; and, environmental NGO activists

Accountable Governance – Consumer Protection

Rationale: In recent years, the trafficking of counterfeit goods has grown, and by some estimates represents nearly 30% of all pharmaceutical sales in Kazakhstan. As a result, the government is grappling with how to meet its obligations in the international trade arena as well as ensure the safety of all its citizens, but consumer protection agencies are only in their developing stages. This Open World program will introduce participants to the role of consumer advocates and government entities in the protection of consumer rights, product safety, and the protection of intellectual property rights especially in the realm of counterfeit goods and the illegal trafficking of pharmaceuticals. It should also examine the nexus between law enforcement and consumer advocates working to protect populations and industries from counterfeit and inferior products.

Target Group: Government officials, consumer advocates, business leaders, NGO leaders and others involved in protecting consumers and the intellectual property rights of a wide range of industries, including pharmaceutical.

Accountable Governance – Entrepreneurship/Innovation

Rationale: Entrepreneurs are playing an increasingly important role in the economy of Kazakhstan, and they are looking for successful business models and examples of public-private partnerships. The Open World program will focus on strategies to establish and promote business entrepreneurship. Programming activity should include advice from leaders in their field, and should focus on increasing the participants' competency and effectiveness in creating and growing small businesses. The U.S. program should also include meetings with successful business leaders to introduce participants to effective public and media strategies for business, and to conduct roundtable discussions on strategic planning for business development.

Target Group: Emerging business leaders and government officials tasked with improving the business environment in Kazakhstan.

Accountable Governance – Environmental Protection/Energy Efficiency

Rationale: Kazakhstan is a rapidly growing country. Astana itself is a recently planned city that grapples with environmental issues associated with such rapid growth such as environmental degradation and inefficient energy consumption. Across Kazakhstan, cities large and small have to develop their capabilities in waste management, recycling and smart energy consumption. This Open World program will explore innovative ways to address urban and rural community environmental issues such as air and water pollution, sanitation and waste management, and energy policy and practices. Participants will examine how “smart” technologies, green building design, and other sustainable approaches to urban and regional planning can lower energy costs and mitigate environmental degradation, and how environmental and quality of life factors have become major considerations in urban and regional planning and management in the U.S.

Target Group: Urban planners, architects, local government officials, NGO stakeholders, and journalists reporting on urban environmental issues.

Civic Rule of Law – Mediation and Arbitration

Rationale: Kazakhstan has implemented a program of judicial reforms that includes mediation outside of the court system. This Open World program would build on a long-term program of the American Bar Association in Kazakhstan, and will examine the role of mediation and arbitration in the U.S. judicial/legal system. The visit will give participants the opportunity to look at judicial reform, specialty courts and court management procedures, and will include discussions of alternative dispute resolution practices, mediation, and judicial ethics and training.

Target Group: Lawyers, judges, academics, court administrators, officials from the Ministry of Justice, and other legal professionals.

Kosovo Themes

Accountable Governance

Accountable Governance – Agro-business Development

Rationale: The U.S. Mission's top priority in Kosovo is to encourage private sector-led economic development, and it has made significant investments in encouraging increased development of small businesses in Kosovo's agriculture sector. Kosovo is now home to many agricultural businesses, small and large, seeking success in a competitive market. By engaging U.S. agricultural businesses to see how they operate, agro-business leaders from Kosovo will gain skills needed to develop their enterprises further; building a strong foundation for Kosovo's future economic growth.

Target Group: Both government and private sector leaders working to support agro-business development and growth in Kosovo.

Accountable Governance – Community Economic Development

Rationale: Most of Kosovo's municipalities rely on centralized efforts to create jobs, increase the tax base, and generate/allocate revenue. They lack the capacity to market their municipalities and attract employers. Those that understand job creation strategies look outside of Kosovo for foreign investment instead of developing homegrown approaches to encourage and facilitate local entrepreneurs and business development. Demonstrating domestic economic development strategies to key municipal leaders will help local leaders improve their capacity to raise revenue and better serve their citizens.

Target Group: National and municipal leaders working to promote investment and growth in the country, particularly at the local level.

Accountable Governance – Municipal Budget Management/Auditing

Rationale: Due to a general lack of technical training, Kosovo's municipal managers struggle with basic tasks such as budget management. All of Kosovo's municipalities will shortly be in crisis mode as they struggle to manage a central government-directed 25% wage increase with no increase in revenues or central government support. Financial managers within most municipalities do not understand the importance of accurate and detailed reporting of their budgeted expenditures, leading to improper bookkeeping and the possibility of fraud. Exposure to best practices in budget execution and auditing will develop municipal financial managers' skills, strengthening their ability to keep their municipalities running and their budgets transparent.

Target Group: Municipal budget managers, and possibly, national level leaders responsible for municipal development strategies.

Accountable Governance – Young Women Leaders

Rationale: The political, economic, and cultural empowerment and increased participation in leadership by women in Kosovo is a priority of the U.S. Mission. In Kosovo, women remain significantly underrepresented in elected positions and are only beginning to emerge as leaders in its still-nascent civil society organizations. Participation in the Open World program will provide a select group of emerging female leaders the opportunity to develop their leadership skills and exchange ideas with their American counterparts on breaking Kosovo's "glass ceiling."

Target Group: Emerging women leaders in Kosovo from the government and private sector working to enhance the role of women in Kosovar society.

Social Issues – Minority Relations at the Municipal Level

Rationale: One of the U.S. Mission’s top priorities in Kosovo is to ensure the fair treatment and integration of all communities into the social and economic fabric of that society, including its Serb, Bosniak, Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian minorities. Unfortunately, local authorities do not always support this goal, and show indifference or outright hostility towards minority communities who often live in enclaves that are poorly integrated with municipal structures. By visiting U.S. communities that face their own minority issues, municipal leaders will be able to develop better strategies for engaging minority communities and ensuring they become integrated into their municipalities and in society as a whole.

Target Group: Municipal leaders in communities that serve minority populations, and leaders of ethnic minorities that are working for inclusion into society.

Kyrgyzstan Themes

Accountable Governance

Accountable Governance – Alternative Energy Sources/Water and Hydropower

Rationale: The Kyrgyz Republic is a mountainous country and 90% of its power is generated by hydropower stations. As an upstream country, the Kyrgyz Republic is obligated to provide irrigation water for downstream countries as set forth in a series of bilateral agreements.

Therefore, it is important for the country to thoroughly plan its water usage for power generation, a task which is becoming more critical as climate change affects the volume and timing of snow melt. The key is to train mid-level specialists in government agencies and in energy companies in the area of power-generation planning and effective management of water resources in areas that the United States has expertise in. The Colorado River management agreement, for example, could serve as a model for this effort.

Target Group: Mid-level government officials and energy company representatives involved in water management.

Accountable Governance - Border Management

Rationale: Central Asia's tangled borders are a legacy of poor Soviet demarcation and the intentional mingling of ethnic groups resulting in growing tensions between countries and peoples. An Open World program looking at the issues of border management will be aimed at training border officials, specifically those responsible for official border crossings, in the smooth documentation and vehicle processing of citizens traveling into and out of Kyrgyzstan via land along its borders with Kazakhstan, China, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. Special focus will be given to the maintaining of security, document fraud and counterfeit spotting, vehicle search techniques, and customer-service oriented philosophies and efficiency.

Target Group: Border security and customs officials.

Accountable Governance - Elections Management

Rationale: A number of very important elections will be taking place in Kyrgyzstan in the coming year and officials are ill-prepared to meet the challenges of voter registration, protection of voter confidentiality, and the smooth administration of polling stations. Professional competence, the security of the voting environment, and transparency in the balloting process will be essential to creating trust in democratic processes in the Kyrgyz Republic. Strengthening the knowledge of local administrations will help the voting process go smoothly and build confidence in this young democratic republic's ability to peacefully transfer power with a minimum of fraud, corruption, or voter coercion. Through Open World, government officials that manage the elections' processes will observe how voting is handled, from the time of voter registration to the processing of ballots.

Target Group: Local administration and government officials involved in the voter registration and elections processes.

Accountable Governance – Local Water Management/Dry Climate Irrigation

Rationale: The government of Kyrgyzstan, with donors' assistance, has made some progress in improving its irrigation water management capability, particularly in the agriculture sector.

However, the country lacks institutional capacity in the management of water supply, flow, and

usage, and this creates a lack of publicly-available access to consistent and comparable water data, which could lead to conflicts between upstream and downstream communities in the country and beyond. This year's drought is a striking example of the problem. For water management reforms, mid-level water managers from the Department of Water Management must understand the fundamentals of the effective irrigation of water resources, such as demand management and access to irrigation water data. The Open World program will provide examples of expertise in water demand management and ways to reduce the amount of water consumed by the agriculture sector.

Target Group: Mid-level water sector managers.

Accountable Governance – Parliamentary Staffers

Rationale: In April 2010, following the overthrow of the President, the interim government wrote a new Constitution establishing Kyrgyzstan as a parliamentary democracy. In order for the new parliament to establish itself as an effective legislative body, highly-skilled parliamentary staff members are needed. The U.S. program should acquaint parliamentary staffers from Kyrgyzstan with the workings of legislative bodies in the United States, on both the federal and state level, and discuss such issues as best legislative practices and processes, transparency in legislation, and coordination between legislative staffers.

Target Group: Young parliamentary staffers, with a focus on those in leadership positions.

Moldova Themes

Accountable Governance

Accountable Governance – Capacity Building for Government Spokespersons

Rationale: Government spokespersons from government ministries and agencies in Moldova play a crucial role in conveying the messages from their ministries/agencies and maintaining positive public relations with the press and other stakeholders. Teamwork, cooperation, and friendly relations are necessary for successful communication and accountability. This Open World program will expose government spokespersons to ways of working effectively with the press, cooperating with their counterparts, and representing their office. Participants will meet with representatives from local, state, and national government press offices to see how others respond effectively to journalist inquiries and how they work with the media in general. They will gain a deeper sense of understanding as to how to effectively and successfully run a press and media relations operation.

Target Group: Government spokespersons, press officers, communications advisors.

Accountable Governance – Economic Development – Effective Economic Analyses

Rationale: Moldova signed the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with the European Union on June 27, 2014. A major aspect of the Government's agenda in the coming years will be the implementation of the DCFTA. There is a lack of quality economic information, analyses, and accountability coming from Moldovan think tanks and civil society organizations. This makes it difficult for the public to understand what the DCFTA entails, and it makes it more difficult to hold the Government accountable in its implementation of the DCFTA. Programming aimed at providing members of think tanks and other civil society organizations in Moldova the opportunity to see how similar organizations in the United States analyze economic issues and policies, such as the North American Free Trade Agreement, would help ameliorate these problems.

Target Group: Representatives from Moldova's civil society focusing on economic issues as well as advisors in the Moldovan government focusing on economic issues.

Accountable Governance – Economic Development – Marketing of Produce through Producer Organizations

Rationale: International donors have worked to improve the opportunities for fruit and vegetable growers in Moldova to sell their produce beyond Moldova and Russia. However, few Moldovan producers are generating enough production at a sufficiently high quality to enable them to successfully market their produce in the European Union. Therefore, it is important for producers in Moldova to organize producer associations in order to aggregate their production, standardize the quality of the produce, and seek higher value markets. A program for key leaders of the relatively new producer organizations in Moldova's fruit and vegetable sphere could help Moldovan producers improve their level of professionalism and expand their collaboration and marketing efforts. The U.S. program would include visits to similar organizations in the United States to explore such issues as identifying markets, successful branding, aggregating produce from many producers, sorting and grading, finding buyers, negotiating contracts, and serving the needs of their members.

Target Group: Leaders of various fruit and vegetable producer associations, including crop-specific associations and broader fruit and vegetable grower and exporter organizations.

Civic Rule of Law

Civic Rule of Law – Interagency Border Security

Rationale: Moldova has benefited from significant donor efforts to improve its border security, specifically programs meant to inhibit the illicit trafficking of nuclear and radiological materials. One of the key long term systemic problems with regard to border security is interagency coordination. As several key institutions, such as the Border Police and Customs Service, are within different ministries, it is difficult at an institutional level for these agencies to cooperate. Given the importance of border security, a program exposing officials from Moldova to methods of interagency coordination on border security in the United States would provide first-hand knowledge of how to better and more effectively coordinate these efforts in Moldova.

Target Group: Officials from the Border Police, Customs Service, and Emergency Services Division.

Civic Rule of Law – Combating International Crime

Rationale: The program will address issues of international crime including corruption, money laundering, and financial crimes; trafficking in drugs, persons and arms; cyber-crime; smuggling; and the relationship between transnational crime and terrorism. Participants will examine the broad range of policies, operational strategies, and the network of federal, state, local and private-sector institutions working to combat international crime and guarantee the integrity of cross-border commerce in the United States. Participants will be provided with first-hand exposure to cooperative interagency and private sector efforts that may be used to strengthen domestic and international partnerships to combat cross-border criminal activity in Moldova.

Target Group: Law enforcement professionals working on anti-drug and human trafficking issues, major crimes, and, financial crimes.

Mongolia Theme

Accountable Governance – Role of Media in a Democracy

Rationale: The media sector in Mongolia faces many challenges. Largely a rural nation with a nomadic tradition, it can be difficult for some segments of the population to access information. With new media laws currently being prepared, Mongolia's media professionals and organization will benefit through open discussion of such issues as self-regulation and self-censorship; developing editorial guidelines and code of ethics; source and whistleblower protections; and best practices for local media outlets. One issue of particular importance for media representatives in Mongolia is the handling of libel and defamation lawsuits that inhibit the development of an independent media. Developing the expertise and preparedness of media lawyers to defend reporters and media outlets should be one area that Open World programming should focus on.

Target Group: Journalists, reporters, editors, media executives, media lawyers, and media representatives involved in community media/radio in rural areas; civil rights and freedom of expression commissioners and activists; and, government officials involved in media regulation and developing media related legislation.

Russia Themes

Accountable Governance

Accountable Governance – Environment

Rationale: Russia relies heavily on its natural resources for government revenue. While pursuing high levels of oil and gas, mineral, and wood extraction, the government has taken some environmental protection measures, but much more can be done. Several sub-themes to be explored by participants in the area of environmental protection are: protection of endangered species (fauna and flora), forest management (includes fire prevention), effective environmental action by citizens and non-governmental organizations, pollution control, sustainable development of green cities, and the promotion of eco-tourism.

Target Group: Environmentalists, researchers, foresters, and firefighters.

Accountable Governance – Natural Disaster Preparedness

Rationale: Ever since the meteor event in Chelyabinsk and disastrous floods in southern Siberia and the Far East, the importance of emergency preparedness has come to the forefront for Russian citizens. It is difficult for the national government to react quickly to disasters in lightly populated areas as Russia is such a vast country. Since America is also prone to natural disasters in both urban and rural areas, there is much to share between American and Russian professionals who work on issues of disaster preparedness in terms of best practices and effective methods to prevent, contain, and/or recover from tragic events.

Target Group: Citizen activists, national emergency planners, and local responders.

Accountable Governance -- Sister City Projects

Rationale: Agreements, both formal and informal, between American and Russian sister cities/regions have long existed. Many of the cities that still maintain such relations were formed during the Soviet era in the seventies and eighties, and in the early days of the Russian Federation in the nineties. In the early years, exchanges of ideas, letters, publications, teachers, youth, cultural artists, and athletes were the most popular. As these partnerships matured, the focus changed to sustainable development of economic and human resources, and trade. In an effort to further positive and constructive relations between our countries, we invite American sister cities to submit project proposals for hosting professionals from their Russian sister city/region in 2015. The Center will support exchanges of specialists with specific programmatic goals, and not simply sister city/region visits.

Target Group: Sister city/region delegations engaged in ongoing results oriented projects.

Accountable Governance -- Economic Development -- Entrepreneurs

Rationale: Global Entrepreneurship Week in Moscow demonstrated that local startup projects can coexist in economies dominated by state enterprises. The latest government partners for entrepreneurs in Russia are municipal governments with the support of the country's leadership in Moscow, which is working to promote the creation and growth of small businesses. Surveys demonstrate that financial strategies, skills development, and tax credits are essential for the fostering of new businesses. More research, mapping of patterns and trends, and input from entrepreneurs is needed for the creation of effective policies and programs designed by government leaders to promote small business development in Russia. Furthering innovation

and entrepreneurship in education is also an effective way to further develop a successful small and medium business landscape in Russia. Open World programming in this area will focus on economic stimulus programs aimed at fostering small and medium businesses such as business incubators. In addition, Open World will feature groups consisting of leading women entrepreneurs that will concentrate on leaders and programs in the U.S., working to increase women's participation in this area.

Target Group: Leading policymakers working to improve the entrepreneurial environment in Russia and to develop dynamic and young entrepreneurial leaders, and women business leaders.

Social Issues

Social Issues – Pluralism and Integration

Rationale: The Russian Federation is home to 185 ethnic nationalities and the four major religions (among others): Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism. Each nationality and faith seeks to preserve its language and traditions. With exposure to globalism, Russia is now in the process of exploring what constitutes Russian culture, values, and norms. The Ministry of Culture is in the process of collecting input in this regard from regional leaders, organizations, and individuals. Participants under this theme will meet with their counterparts in the U.S. to discuss both positive and negative societal and economic consequences of policies affecting minorities, and strategies for the integration of minorities into broader society allowing for the meaningful inclusion of minorities in all aspects of community life.

Target Group: Experts in ethnic minority policy, community leaders interested in interreligious dialogue, and advocates for inclusion of minorities in society.

Social Issues – Substance Abuse

Rationale: Opium and heroin arrives from Afghanistan and other countries, and cocaine and synthetic drugs make their way into Russia from various European countries. Nearly half a million drug abusers are officially registered in Russia, but currently there are only about 25,000 inpatient beds for treatment. Registered abusers are denied driver's licenses and face employment discrimination. The average life expectancy of an addict is between four and four and a half years of active addiction. In addition, alcohol consumption in Russia still remains one of the world's highest. The amount of alcohol consumption and its consequences (such as car and industrial accidents) has been a significant cause for early deaths in men. In addition to deaths, the social cost of Russian alcohol abuse includes high rates of theft, assault, rape, domestic violence, divorce, child neglect, and orphaned children. Misuse of alcohol by pregnant women causes high rates of fetal alcohol syndrome. Worker productivity is also negatively affected. A U.S. program exploring responses to substance abuse and addiction will introduce participants to the work of non-governmental organizations, and their techniques in treating substance abuse and advocating for programs promoting the prevention of abuse. The participants will also explore how governments, mostly at the local level, also support community efforts at combatting substance abuse and addiction problems.

Target Group: Policymakers and specialists working to treat and prevent substance abuse.

Social Issues – Engaging Troubled Youth

Rationale: Emotional and/or behavioral issues among youth are universal and are not unique to one nationality or culture. Whether the cause is internal/organic or external/environmental,

societies struggle to provide education, health care, structure, and guidance to young people who deviate from normal behavior. The ultimate goal for such youth is for them to lead productive lives. In the U.S., professionals from Russia who work with children with behavioral problems will visit educational facilities and group homes, and explore public and private programs designed for youths engaged in behavior that is harmful or potentially harmful to themselves and others.

Target Group: Specialists (counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, educators) and policymakers who work to improve the lives of troubled youth.

Tajikistan Themes

Accountable Governance

Accountable Governance – E-government

Rationale: Tajikistan seeks to modernize and reform its public administration practices, in part by using e-governance to foster transparency and efficiency. In the United States, delegates will be introduced to the E-Government Act of 2002, and will see how different levels of government (sometimes in partnership with private entities) provide information electronically to the public, how personal privacy is safeguarded, and how government conducts its business virtually.

Target Group: Government officials involved in creating e-government systems, and information technology administrators establishing an e-governance infrastructure.

Accountable Governance – Local Tax and Service Delivery

Rationale: Traditional neighborhood associations in Tajikistan often take the lead on dealing with local issues. The associations are not directly answerable to the President, and their heads, who are locally elected, are among the only leaders in Tajikistan with any real ability to affect change in the community. The U.S. program will offer participants a positive model for the development of local level government. In particular, it will focus on the administration of local government institutions, collection of tax revenue, and how government serves citizens.

Participants should discuss best practices in governing and examine methods of ensuring government transparency, the development of regulations to implement laws after they are passed, and codes of ethics for government officials.

Target Group: Municipal level government officials

Accountable Governance – Women Leaders

Rationale: Women are playing an increasingly important role in Tajikistan as business leaders and entrepreneurs, and are looking for successful models of women leadership in modern societies. The Open World program for this theme will focus on strategies to establish and promote women-owned businesses. Programming goals should include increasing the effectiveness of women's activity and competency in the economic sphere by observing and discussing leadership skills and ways to overcome gender discrimination. In addition, participants should be introduced to effective styles of communication, and look at various methods of strategic planning for business success.

Target Group: Women business and government leaders, and women leaders of organizations and educational institutions working for the advancement of women in business.

Accountable Governance – Young Diplomats

Rationale: The rising generation of diplomats from Tajikistan has little or no experience working with representatives of the countries of the European Union or the United States. The future generation of officials engaged in foreign relations will have a minimal understanding of western institutions. By participating in the Open World program and gaining exposure to many aspects of U.S. governance and culture, young diplomats from Tajikistan will acquire a more global perspective. This program should focus on democratic processes in the United States, the significance of citizen participation, and the importance of civic activism, as well as exploring American diversity and how it contributes to a dynamic and resilient political system.

Target Group: Young diplomats.

Accountable Governance - Youth Empowerment Programs

Rationale: This theme is designed for individuals who work with and motivate young people to take a more active leadership role in their respective communities. By examining the role of community based organizations and educators that encourage young people to participate in community-building activities, this program will illustrate the impact of positive and constructive youth-oriented projects. The local host community will provide first-hand exposure to volunteer activities through site visits to organizations that promote leadership, creativity, and responsible citizenship, particularly those spearheaded by young volunteers.

Target Group: Youth counselors, community leaders, social scientists, educators, and members of the media involved in promoting civic activism among youth.

Rule of Law – Legal Defense and the Law

Rationale: Lawyers in Tajikistan can greatly benefit from an opportunity to enhance their knowledge and observe the best practices for the litigation of various disputes, including those resolved through the adversarial process. The program will provide leading lawyers from Tajikistan with exposure to American legal institutions and the opportunity to observe court cases having to do with complicated matters, such as those pertaining to civil and religious rights.

Target Group: NGO activists and managers who practice law in the field of civil rights, and whose practice is focused on vulnerable groups in society, including children, women, and minorities.

Social Issues

Social Issues – Domestic Violence Prevention and Services

Rationale: In Tajikistan, many women are the victims of verbal, emotional, and physical abuse, and in most cases they are not able to escape from their abusers. Society usually expects them to endure it, and there is little public information regarding the problem of domestic violence. Many victims are underage girls in rural regions who have been forced, or are about to be forced, into arranged marriages. The delegates in this program will be exposed to programs, policies, and practices aimed at ending domestic violence, assaults, and stalking. Delegates should have meetings at organizations that provide services for victims of domestic violence, and they should be exposed to the full range of legal proceedings in domestic violence cases, from the initial report to the legal resolution of such incidents.

Target Group: Members of Parliament, prosecutors, attorneys, police, NGO workers, and lawmakers working to improve the condition of women subject to abuse.

Social Issues – Health Care for Women

Rationale: The public health system in Tajikistan is antiquated and ill serves the population. Health care administrators have little management experience and guidance, and still rely on practices used during Soviet times. The health care system in Tajikistan offers little in the way of specialized or innovative care, especially with regard to maternal and child health. Health practitioners from Tajikistan will benefit from visiting maternity wards and clinics, prenatal care

facilities, and public and private organizations involved with promoting maternal and child health in the United States.

Target Group: Government officials in charge of public health programs, health practitioners involved in maternal and child health provision, and NGO leaders involved in maternal and child health sector reform.

Turkmenistan Themes

Accountable Governance

Accountable Governance -- Economic Development – Entrepreneurship

Rationale: The leadership of Turkmenistan understands the need for economic diversification and the development of a vibrant private sector. State-directed loans to small and medium enterprises have contributed to rapid growth in the private sector, but since this growth is not market driven, it may not survive on its own. In order to better understand the principles of small business development and economic diversification, government officials, policymakers and entrepreneurs from Turkmenistan working in the area of economic development will participate in Open World to explore, with their American counterparts, key issues having to do with private ownership, business management, financing, competition, pro-business legislation, the regulatory environment, and local government policies that support the business community.

Target Group: Government officials, policymakers, and private entrepreneurs.

Accountable Governance – Economic Development – Tourism

Rationale: Turkmenistan is an isolated country with an undeveloped tourism industry, despite its exciting tourist destinations. The President of Turkmenistan has expressed his intention to develop the country's tourism industry and has focused that effort on building a resort on the Caspian coast rather than developing the country's infrastructure around its national heritage monuments. The country will also be hosting the Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games in 2017, and is unprepared for the thousands of tourists that will descend on the nation's capital Ashgabat. Through exposure to the tourism industry in the United States, government officials will better understand the marketing and resources needed to attract tourists, and the country will be better prepared to handle the unprecedented influx of visitors in 2017.

Target Group: Government tourist officials, and representatives of the Tourism Committee of Turkmenistan, and its local affiliates throughout the country.

Accountable Governance – Food Safety Standards

Rationale: The government of Turkmenistan is considering pursuing membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO). Currently, its sanitary and phyto-sanitary standards do not meet WTO requirements. This Open World program will introduce government officials to regulations that guide food safety and animal and plant health, and will provide guidance and instruction on key provisions of the WTO that relate to agriculture and to the protection of fish, forests, wild flora, and wild fauna.

Target group: Ministry of Agriculture officials.

Accountable Governance – Sports-related Non-Governmental Organizations

Rationale: With a quarter of the population under the age of 14 and a median age of 25, Turkmenistan is pursuing policies aimed at promoting a healthy lifestyle among its youth, with an emphasis on sports and fitness. For this Open World program, managers from sports-related NGOs will see how the public and private sectors work in communities in the United States to provide young people with opportunities to stay mentally and physically fit, so they can have live healthier and more productive lives. A special focus on funding streams (grassroots fundraising)

and capacity building will be useful, since many sport organizations in Turkmenistan derive their funding solely from the state or from international donors.

Target Group: Managers of NGOs promoting sports and health among the youth.

Accountable Governance – Sports Journalism

Rationale: Recently a sports-focused television channel was established in Turkmenistan, and the government has requested assistance in training its sports journalists in advance of its future role as host of the 2017 Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games. Local sports journalists in Turkmenistan have very little interaction with the rest of the world and have little experience writing or commenting authoritatively on players, teams, and leagues. The proposed program is a rare opportunity to expose state journalists from Turkmenistan to Western journalism standards, while giving them tools to improve the quality of sports journalism in the country.

Target group: Government officials and media professionals in the field of sports journalism.

Civic Rule of Law -- Combatting Trafficking in Persons (TIP)

Rationale: With unemployment rates high and people seeking employment abroad, the population of Turkmenistan is vulnerable to trafficking in persons, including forced labor and sex trafficking. The Government of Turkmenistan is making efforts to reduce trafficking in persons, but is not making significant progress in identifying and protecting victims, and its officials have penalized some trafficking victims for acts committed as a result of their being trafficked. This Open World program will give the government tools to review its approach to TIP, and improve its standing in the annual TIP reports, in which it generally falls short.

Target group: State Migration Service and State Border Service officials.

Ukraine Themes

Accountable Governance

Accountable Governance – Decentralization

Rationale: With the election of a new President with a significant majority and conflict in the southern and eastern parts of the country, Ukraine is working to develop a more decentralized government. Regional and local governments are still highly dependent on the central government's budget allocations. District, municipal, and village authorities and legislators need to be better prepared to take on and handle those government functions that are usually carried out at the local level in successful democracies. These officeholders need to improve staff hiring and training procedures; learn new budgeting, planning, and service-delivery practices; and promote economic development effectively - and they need to become more proactive, responsive, and accountable. Open World programming in the field of federalism will emphasize the legislative process, administrative capacity-building, transparency, service delivery, financing of government services, media relations, community development, environmental management, and public-NGO partnerships. Both government and NGO officials will benefit from seeing U.S. models of public/NGO cooperation on the Open World program.

Target Group: Regional and local legislators, mayors, municipal administrators, policy experts, public services providers, media representatives, and election officials.

Accountable Governance – Economic Development – Agricultural Development

Rationale: The U.S. Mission in Ukraine currently has project activity aimed at supporting the agriculture sector in Ukraine to increase the country's contribution to global food security. Ukraine's fertile soil and large land resources have the potential to contribute significantly towards feeding a world that, according to the United Nations, will need to produce 70 percent more food by 2050. Project activity in Ukraine is aimed at government organizations, NGO leaders, and local governments/community leaders working to improve the agricultural sector in Ukraine.

Target Group: Agricultural leaders from the government and private sector working to create a more productive, inclusive, and competitive agricultural industry.

Accountable Governance – Legislative Development

Rationale: Ukraine has gone through several years of political turmoil, and the balance of power between the executive and legislative bodies on both the national and local level are still being defined. Regional and local legislatures in Ukraine, while limited in their authority, create laws that both establish greater local governmental autonomy and provide a legal structure for basic public services at the local level. While the scope of local self-government is limited, large-scale reformation of local government (that would require new constitutional changes) is a regular agenda item in the politics of Ukraine. Through Open World, Ukrainian legislators will observe the legislative process at all levels of governance, and gain better understanding how legislators work in a mature democracy. Legislative issues such as how legislatures work to further reforms in governance, ensure the provision of social services, and support education reform will be among the topics of these delegations.

Target Group: Legislators and legislative staff from all levels of government working on government reform.

Accountable Governance – NGO Development – Energy Independence and Efficiency

Rationale: In April 2014, a coalition of 35 Ukrainian mayors sent a letter urgently requesting assistance from the United States to increase the energy efficiency of their buildings, district heating systems, and transportation networks in order to reduce dependence on imports of natural gas from Russia. Ukraine is currently the second most wasteful country in the world with energy. If Ukraine were only as energy efficient as the average country in Europe and developed its biomass and other renewable energy sources, it would almost completely eliminate its need to import Russian natural gas. This transition needs to be based on a comprehensive energy strategy that includes smart exploitation of indigenous energy resources, modernization of infrastructure, aggressive development of alternative sources of energy, effective approaches to improve energy efficiency, and strong progress on market reform and good governance. The U.S. program on this subject would introduce NGO leaders working to improve Ukraine's energy strategies to effective efforts at energy efficiency and smart exploitation of natural resources.

Target Group: NGO leaders in the energy field working on alternative energy resources and energy efficiency, and striving to achieve energy independence.

Accountable Governance – NGO Development – Environmental Protection

Rationale: Ukraine's environmental problems include the nuclear contamination that resulted from the 1986 Chernobyl accident, which affected some ten percent of its land with unsafe levels of radiation. Unsafe amounts of polluted water, heavy metals, organic compounds, and oil-related pollutants are routinely released into the country's air and water reserves. In some areas of the country, the water supply contains toxic industrial chemicals up to ten times the concentration considered to be safe, and pollution to the country's air and water needs to be ameliorated, as does the country's need to improve methods of municipal waste management and recycling technologies. For such programming, Ukrainian environmental experts will observe effective environmental conservation practices in the United States, and they will discuss openly with their American colleagues problems faced by both countries and potential solutions to them.

Target Group: Leaders of organizations in the field of environmental protection; environmental

activists; and, media representatives who work in the field of environmental reporting.

Accountable Government – NGO Development – Media and Community Outreach

Rationale: Ukraine has many dedicated NGO leaders who are being challenged to develop better-managed and more vibrant organizations. Further development of the NGO sector, in the Maidan era, is vital to Ukraine’s progress toward firmly establishing a democratic system with a strong advocacy and voluntary sector. In the past few months, a whole new class of community leaders has developed in response to the fragile conditions caused by a country under siege. In addition, electronic news outlets and blogs have become a mainstay of sources of public information. Open World exchanges can improve NGO and new media leaders’ administrative, outreach, advocacy, and fundraising skills, and can help these leaders formulate strategies for providing leadership, outreach, and service in the community. Programs should enable delegates to observe firsthand how the nongovernmental sector works in the United States and how NGOs cooperate with the government, the private sector, their local communities, and each other to serve citizens and communicate. Delegations should visit successful NGOs, including interest/advocacy groups. They should also examine NGO fundraising activities, member recruitment, public relations, legislative advocacy, outreach methods, and program and financial management practices. Delegations also should visit government agencies that fund or otherwise collaborate with NGOs, and should investigate all aspects of government-NGO relations.

Target Group: Board members, directors, high-level staff, and key volunteers of NGOs and new media representatives that are working to galvanize the citizenry and to build communities. Leaders involved in community-services delivery, and government officials and legislators who work with members of the NGO community to further enhance communities.

Accountable Governance – NGO Development – Protection of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP)

Rationale: Due to the recent annexation of Crimea and the unrest in the South and East of Ukraine, there has been a significant increase in the number of refugees and IDPs that are in great need of relocation strategies and sustenance, with a great number of these IDPs being Crimean Tatars. The Open World host for this programming will demonstrate U.S. policy toward refugees and IDPs, and will openly discuss the debate in this country regarding policy and implementation issues, with the goal of sharing best practices and finding commonality in response to this issue in both countries.

Target Group: Government and NGO leaders working on refugee and IDP issues, and members of the leadership representing those that are displaced in Ukraine.

Civic Rule of Law – General Rule of Law

Rationale: Rule of law is one of the foundations of a civil society. Ukraine is seeking to further develop the administrative and support infrastructure of its courts, as well as the professionalism of lawyers and other legal professionals. The government of Ukraine is currently working to strengthen the accountability and transparency of key judicial institutions; promote Ukrainian legislative and regulatory compliance with international and European standards; bolster the professionalism and effectiveness of the Ukrainian legal profession; and, support civil society organizations in advocating for and monitoring judicial/legal reform efforts. In addition, in recent months, a new breed of lawyers has appeared; those working to defend the rights of activists and those involved in the Maidan movement. Appropriate activities for such delegations

include observing court proceedings and press briefings; meeting with judges and court administrators; and, visiting family and juvenile courts, law schools, law firms, corrections facilities, media outlets, legal advocacy NGOs, and representatives of state legislatures.

Target Group: Lawyers, independent legal experts, legal scholars, legal activists, and judicial administrators.

Social Issues

Social Issues – Education – Secondary and Higher Education and Innovation

Rationale: Ukraine is a highly literate society with a strong and proud history of education at all levels, although the level of education in metropolitan areas is generally higher than that in rural areas. The country has made it a priority to ensure equal access to a quality education for rural and low-income students and to enhance the professionalism of educators. In addition, it has recently passed a very forward looking and progressive law on higher education. Open World has been an active supporter of progressive education reform efforts in Ukraine working to improve the Ukrainian Center for Educational Quality Assessment and the Ukrainian Standardized External Testing Initiative by fielding delegations to research and observe best practices in the United States. In addition, the program has hosted lead university administrators and professionals. Open World delegates from the federal, regional, and local levels, together with their American counterparts, will examine the United States' education system and the many models it provides for preparing young people for their future. Programs will also be aimed at discussing best practices in educational testing methodologies. In addition, delegates will explore the community college as an effective model for remedying knowledge and skills gaps created by a changing global economy. Finally, some delegations under this subtheme will explore the role of universities and research institutions in promoting innovation and entrepreneurship, and the role of public-private partnerships in developing educational models that foster research and innovation.

Target Group: Federal, regional and local executive-branch officials and legislators involved in education policy, and reform; administrators of institutions of higher education; educators in leadership roles; NGO leaders; journalists; and, education professionals active in promoting standardization in testing and transparency in education. This theme will also include higher education professionals who are looking at issues relating to fostering research, innovation and entrepreneurship in academia.

Social Issues – Health – Perinatal Care

Rationale: The government of Ukraine has made a significant effort in the past several years to reform the system of maternity and childhood protections through the creation of a network of high quality health care institutions in the field of obstetric and neonatal care (perinatal centers), which are provided with innovative technologies and modern equipment. This national project's goal is to improve the demographic situation in Ukraine and reduce maternal and infant mortality and disability in Ukraine by improving the quality and accessibility of medical care for mothers and newborn infants. Through the Open World program, participants can experience first-hand perinatal practices in leading institutions in the United States and can exchange knowledge with their colleagues about best practices in the field.

Target Group: Practitioners and administrators from Ukrainian perinatal centers, and activists working to improve perinatal care in Ukraine.

Social Issues – Health – Public Health Policy and Practice

Rationale: The Ministry of Health of Ukraine is the executive branch body responsible for general public health, and the sanitary and epidemiologic protection of the population. One of the main focuses of the Ministry of Health has been responding to the HIV epidemic, one of the worst in Europe. Also, health care facilities in Ukraine are in an extremely poor state. Medical equipment and facilities are in short supply compared to the high demand. All services, including doctors and nurses are now quite expensive which makes health care not always a feasible option for the ordinary citizen. The doctors and nurses who work in the health care field are not always fully trained to world standards. In addition, due to the recent strife in Ukraine, there is a great demand for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and emergency medical treatment capabilities, and Open World is soliciting proposals in these specialized fields as well.

Target Group: Ukrainian health professionals that are involved in the provision or the administration of health services at the national and local levels, with some focus on HIV treatment efforts. Also, while not determined at this time, Open World's 2015 programming in this sphere may include up to four groups looking at PTSD and emergency medical care.

Social Issues – Health – Telemedicine

Rationale: The Ukrainian Ministry of Health and the donor community has recently launched Ukraine's first telecommunications network for supporting the medical field. Such a broad-based telemedicine network offers more affordable medical services to residents of regional centers, and to patients travelling from remote areas to regional hospitals for consultations. The economic feasibility of implementing such a telemedicine systems is based on the more efficient and effective use of human and material resources. Telemedicine systems reduce the distance between doctor and patient, and doctor and doctor. It also provides an opportunity to solve a major development problem: the provision of a more equitable access to the benefits of modern medical knowledge and high-quality medical consultations. Open World will build on its past two years of effective programming for telemedicine administrators and experts from Ukraine to be responsive to Ukraine's need to further develop this critical sector that results in the provision of responsive health care.

Target Group – Medical practitioners and administrators working to further the effective use of telemedicine practices in Ukraine.

Social Issues – NGOs – Protection of Children's Rights

Rationale: Ukraine has a large number of children in institutional care or who receive special services, the responsibility for whom is scattered between the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Social Policy. The government has developed several national strategies and state programs aimed at de-institutionalization of orphans and children deprived of parental care and the creation of alternative forms of care for them. In addition, in Ukraine the rights of children are not clearly defined, and efforts are needed to develop child-friendly services and systems to increase awareness of violence against and abuse of children among the judiciary, law enforcement personnel, health and social work professionals, educators, and other relevant professionals and the public.

Target Group: NGO leaders working to further the rights of children, including professionals with expertise working with children facing violence or other violations of their rights.

Parliamentary Programs

In addition to the above thematic programs, Open World is also soliciting expressions of interest/capability statements for up to two delegations of parliamentarians (possibly parliamentarians and staffers in one delegation), one each from the countries of Moldova and Mongolia. Through this program, Open World is seeking to match delegations from these countries with key counterparts in the U.S. Senate, the House of Representatives, and in state governments. These delegations may be defined by the committees the members serve on or by subject area. Currently, these delegations are not yet defined for specifics, such as date of travel, number of members, and duration of program.

The proposed illustrative programming should identify a Member of Congress who would be responsible for some aspect of the delegation's program (preferably in Washington, D.C. and in the Member's state or district). It should also include proposed high-level meetings in Washington, D.C. with other Members of Congress, executive branch officials, congressional staff and policy experts, and in-depth discussions with a variety of political, civic, and business leaders in the relevant state/district.