



UNIVERSITY  
OF CENTRAL ASIA

## **Building a University Town in Naryn**



An aerial photograph of a town nestled in a valley. The town is densely packed with buildings, many with blue roofs. A wide road runs through the center of the town. In the background, there are large, rugged mountains with some greenery on the lower slopes. The sky is clear and blue.

*Promoting the social and economic development of the town  
through a comprehensive, planned approach to improve  
the quality of life.*

*Naryn Town, Kyrgyzstan.*



Naryn City recently celebrated 150 years of its founding, and the next 50 years is likely to bring much more development and progress placing it among the top cities of the world. This brochure highlights the history and planning of the City, which we hope will be a source of encouragement for public and private investors and partners committed to developing the many opportunities Naryn has to offer.

In this regard, I hope that the plan prepared by the University of Central Asia contains interesting and up-to-date information about the city of Naryn, I believe that the brochure will contribute to the further expansion of cooperation between the Aga Khan Development Network and Naryn city.

I can say that today our city of Naryn, with its hundred and fifty year history, is on the path of development. The influence and the contribution of domestic and foreign investors on the development of our city have great importance. Among them I want to emphasize the role of Aga Khan Development Network as our main development partner. In recent years, with the support of the housing sector, a number of social, economic and strategic infrastructure projects have been successfully implemented, which have allowed us to step up the development of our city.

The establishment of the University of Central Asia indicates that in the future this small city will become a center of education and culture at an international level.

The master plan of the city of Naryn, developed with material support of the Aga Khan Development Network, will contribute to the further strategic development of the city of Naryn.

In addition, a number of social, economic and infrastructure projects have been implemented with the support of this Foundation, such as “School of Professional and Continuing Education”, “Diagnostic Center”, “Smart Park”, “First Microcredit Company”, “KICB”, “Mountain Societies Development Support Program (MSDSP KG), which have created favorable conditions for a comprehensive development of the population. On behalf of the people of the Naryn city, I express my deep gratitude to the Aga Khan Development Network for these wonderful projects.

I am confident that in the future the city of Naryn, located along the Great Silk Road, will become a strategically important city that will develop in all respects. The achievements of such tremendous goals depend on the activities of our state, our people, and the support of international partners. I wish that in the future, based on our cooperation with the Aga Khan Development Network, we will together implement a lot more projects.

With deep respect,

Emilbek Alymkulov,  
Governor of Naryn



## History of Naryn

The Naryn town is located in the Naryn Basin, on the left bank of the Naryn River, at the foot of the Tian Shan mountain range. It is at an altitude of more than 2,020 metres above sea level, and is south of the Balykchy railway station. It has been the center of the Naryn Oblast since the development of administrative divisions in 1971.

The Naryn Oblast is made up of five districts and two towns. The Naryn town has the largest population in the region, and has emerged as a fortified settlement on the trade route from Kashkar (China) to the Chui valley in Kyrgyzstan. Its two highways mark a significant crossroads connecting the North to South (Kyrgyzstan to China), as well as the East to West (Zhyluu-Suu and Dostuk). The roads are located at the axis of the town's development. The Bishkek-Torugart highway also passes through Naryn town. The Town is about 350 km from Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan's capital, and 176 km from the Balykchy railway station.

The Naryn river, one of the main rivers in Kyrgyzstan, is 535 km long, and exceeds 40 metres in some places. Several hydroelectric power stations have been constructed on this river, which provide electricity for most of the country. These include the Toktogul, Tash-Kumyr, and Kurpsai hydro-power plants.

## Naryn Master Plan

AKDN and UCA are partnering with the Naryn Town Municipality to work on the master plan for the Naryn area. A Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between Aga Khan Trust for Culture and the Naryn Town Municipality to commence a town planning exercise (2018 - 2020), where AKTC is providing a grant of over 4.4 million Kyrgyz soms for financing the cost associated with designing the Master Plan. This exercise aims to promote the social and economic development of the town through a comprehensive, planned approach to ultimately improving the quality of life of its inhabitants and visitors. Specifically, the planning process will help identify opportunities for economic growth, improved infrastructure, and support Government-led efforts to transform Naryn into a vibrant economic, touristic, cultural, and intellectual hub.

The latest Master Plan for the Naryn municipality was developed by the Kyrgyz Research and Design Institute of Urban Planning in 1995. It preserved the continuity of the decisions made in the previous Master Plan prepared in 1979 by the "Kyrgyzgiprostroy" State Design Institute. It determined a strategy of urban development in Naryn up to 2000, and no further work has been carried out on the master plan since 2000.

The Master Plan for Naryn Town will be spatial in character and will reflect strategic planning of the three-dimensional urban fabric and municipal services. It is aimed at promoting a higher quality of life for Naryn residents through improvements in the quality of open space, promotion of sustainable economic growth, as well as improved infrastructure, housing, and architecture. The Master Plan will further integrate the town with the University of Central Asia's Naryn campus, and other educational, civic and tourist facilities. The Plan's concept proposes an improvement of the settlement system, locations of key city facilities, high-quality job creation, and the formation of prerequisites for the sustainable and mutually beneficial development of Naryn town and district. The State Institute of Urban Planning and Architecture of the Kyrgyz Republic is working on the development of the master plan, and aim to complete the project by 2020.



*Drawing of Naryn Campus Masterplan.*

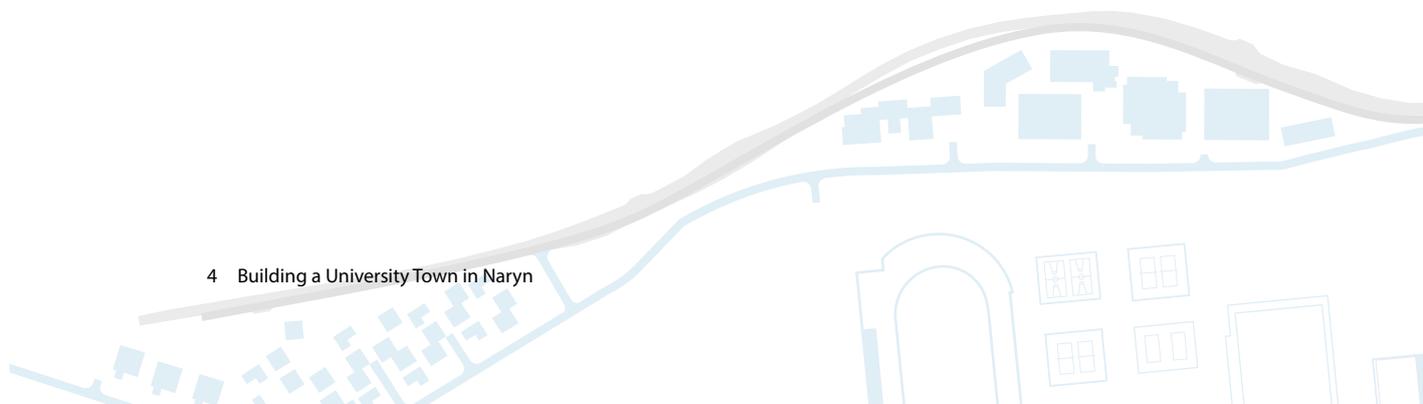
## Building a University Town in Naryn

Economic development is at the heart of the University of Central Asia's (UCA) development strategy, which strengthens existing enterprises and promotes the establishment of new ones.

UCA was founded in 2000 as a private, not for profit, secular university through an International Treaty signed by the Presidents of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan, and His Highness the Aga Khan; ratified by their respective parliaments and registered with the United Nations.

The Presidents are the Patrons of the University and His Highness is the Chancellor. UCA's mission is to promote the social and economic development of Central Asia, particularly its mountain communities, by offering an internationally recognised standard of higher education, and enabling the peoples of the region to preserve their rich cultural heritage as assets for the future. UCA brings with it the broader commitment and partnership of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN).

UCA's undergraduate programmes are located at its residential campuses in Naryn, Kyrgyzstan (launched in 2016), and Khorog, Tajikistan (2017). The Tekeli campus in Kazakhstan is expected to start classes in 2022. UCA's School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE) also has a Town Campus learning centre in Naryn.





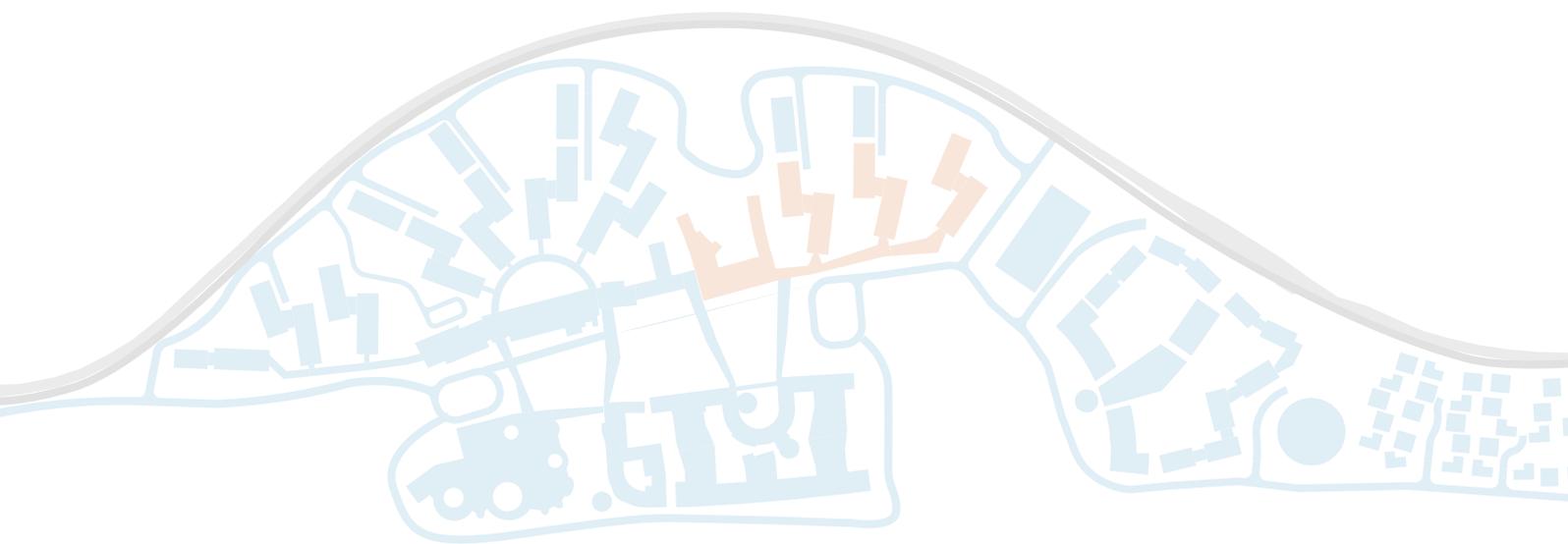
*UCA's Naryn Campus (Phase I) was launched in 2016.*

## Campus Construction

During the first phase of the Naryn campus construction from 2014-2016, UCA created more than 700 jobs in Kyrgyzstan, of which 80% were Naryn residents. Similarly, with over 100 permanent new faculty and staff jobs at UCA's Naryn Campus, over 80% are filled by local residents.

These include important positions in facilities management, catering, mechanical and electrical systems, maintenance, security, cleaning, gardening, materials supply, laundry, transportation, leisure and sport facilities, and medical services.

When all phases of construction in Naryn, Khorog and Tekeli are completed, UCA is expected to generate more than 350,000 days of employment, with an economic impact of over US\$750 million.

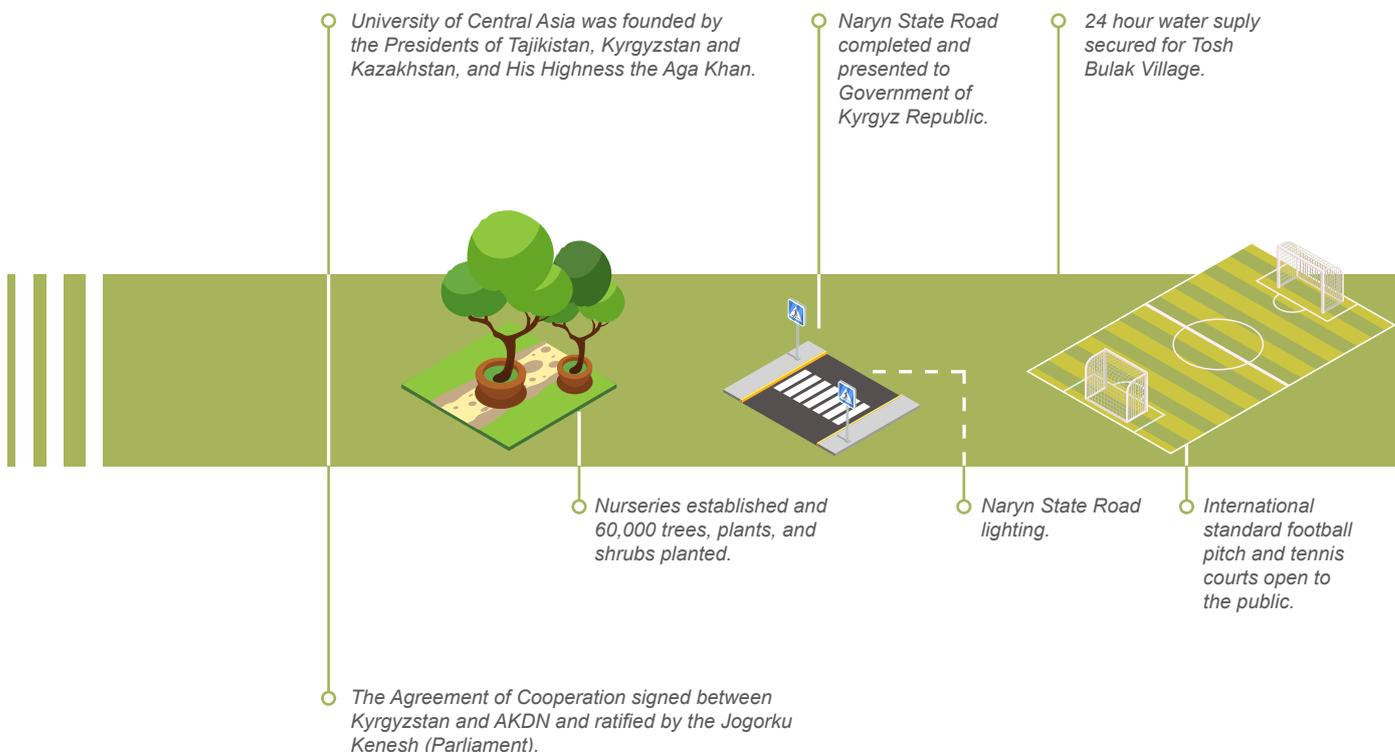


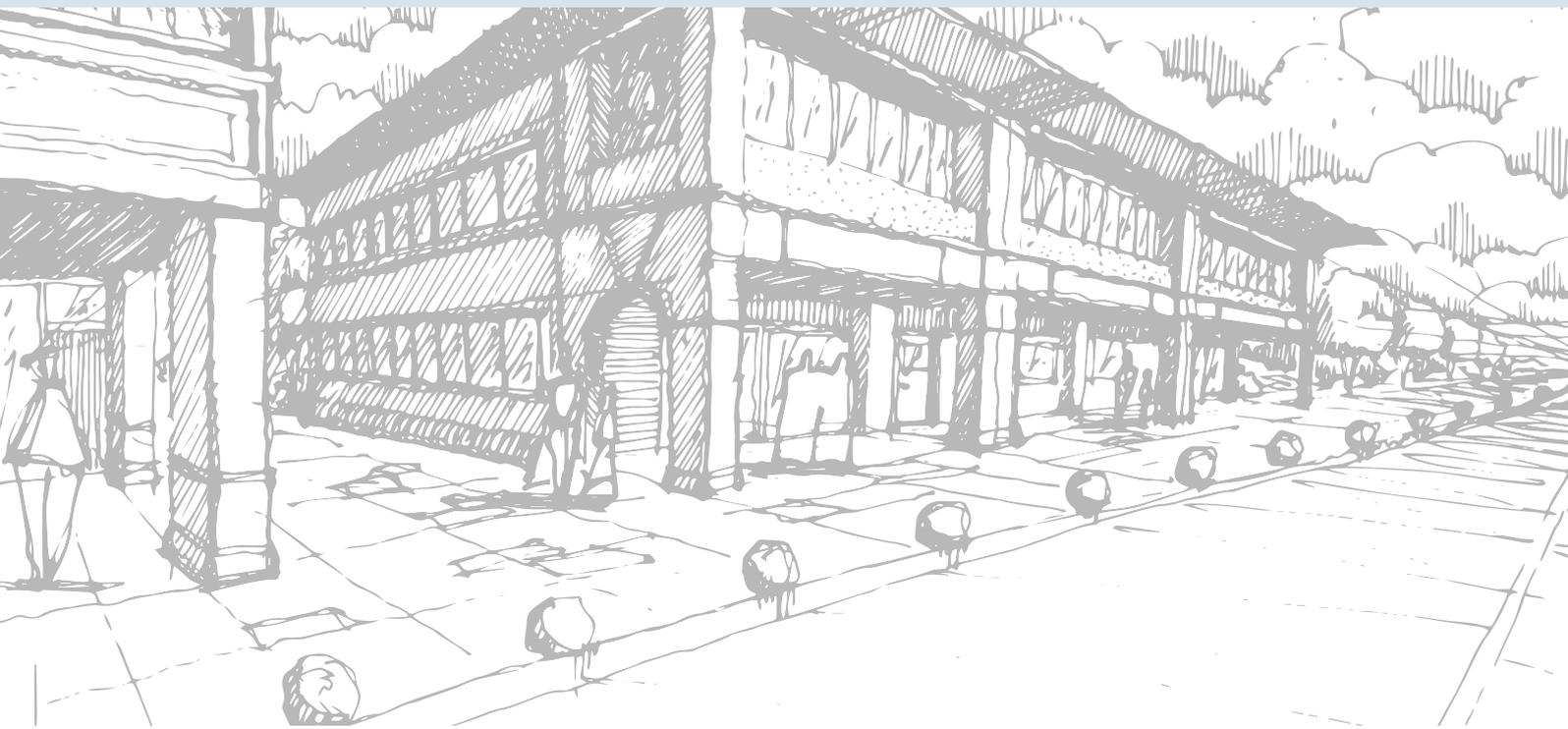
## Town Development

In addition to offering undergraduate students an international standard of academic experience and facilities, the University of Central Asia is partnering with the local government and other Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) agencies to develop the Naryn region into a vibrant university community and give a much-needed boost to the local economies.

This framework includes AKDN initiatives for social sector development in education, health, hospitality, tourism, enterprise and rural development. Included are the economic and social benefits derived from UCA's campus operations, and opportunities offered by its various development programmes.

Prior to UCA's campus construction, the University strengthened infrastructure and connections to the broader region by constructing a three-kilometre Naryn-Baeotovo diversion road complete with pedestrian footpath, street trees and lighting, and handed it over to the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. UCA also provided 24-hour water supply and paved the access road to Tosh-Bulak village, planted 60,000 trees, plants and shrubs, and stabilised the Naryn riverbank.





Seyitaaly Jakypov Park in Naryn town was rehabilitated by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and inaugurated.

The Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS), formally launched its Medical and Diagnostic Centre in Naryn.

Launch of an international five star Serena Hotel in Naryn Town.

Naryn Campus Phase I launched for inaugural class of 71 undergraduate students (capacity 150 students).

Aga Khan Hospital



Archaeology dig begins with permission of Kyrgyz Ministry of Culture and supported by UCA.

Launch of the Aga Khan School.

Residential Building

UCA and Aga Khan Education Services in conjunction with the Naryn municipality are planning to establish an Early Childhood Center (ECD) in Naryn Town.



*12,000 patients have visited the Diagnostic Centre since its opening in 2016.*



*The Park is a joint project of the Naryn Oblast Administration and AKDN .*

## Health

In May 2016, the Aga Khan Health Services (AKHS) opened a Medical and Diagnostic Centre providing healthcare to Naryn residents and UCA students, faculty and staff.

Licensed by the Ministry of Health, the Centre offers reliable and affordable services in gynaecology, obstetrics, cardiology, family medicine, paediatrics, dentistry and ophthalmology.

It is equipped with modern diagnostic equipment, comprehensive laboratory services and a well-stocked pharmacy. The facility has been very much welcomed by the Naryn residents who previously had to travel to Bishkek for diagnostic services.

## Recreation

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) has supported the rehabilitation of the Seitaaly Jakypov Park to provide an attractive urban community space for leisure, play and exercise, with free WiFi connectivity.

In view of the increasing number of people visiting the Seitaaly Jakypov Park, and the absence of a café in the neighborhood, the construction of a cafeteria in the Park has been proposed by UCA to the Naryn Municipality.

It is the Naryn Municipality and AKDN's aim to provide visitors of the parks with a café adjacent to the park that would serve food and beverages all year round. The proposed café will include outdoor and indoor seating areas, a bank (ATM) machine, food preparation and toilet facilities.



*UCA and AKES in conjunction with the Naryn municipality are planning to establish the Early Childhood Center in Naryn Municipality by 2021.*



## Education

UCA and Aga Khan Education Services in conjunction with the Naryn municipality are planning to establish an Early Childhood Center (ECD) in Naryn Town.

Naryn ECD aims to promote positive interactions for improved learning and development for children attending other types of local ECD programming.

Teacher training and mentoring through professional development of community members and weekend parent programming will support increased access to quality ECD across the region. Key to the programme's development will be to target and monitor cognitive and social emotional development, health and growth potential, as well as nutrition, to provide responsive teaching and learning.

## Campus Initiatives

In the development of UCA's Naryn campus, the University implemented several projects related to the environment, recreation, health, culture, and education for the Naryn community.

### Outreach Programmes

UCA's undergraduate students are now promoting recycling on campus and in the Naryn community, have organised community clean-ups, led workshops on protecting the environment in collaboration with Naryn State University students, and are also implementing a composting project. UCA plans to expand this project and install recycling (paper, plastics, cardboard) containers in local government offices and high schools, to reduce waste and promote the protection of the environment.



*The Sports Dome can be configured for tennis, basketball, volleyball and football year-round.*

## Sports

In 2012, UCA opened a public football and tennis facilities on its campus and hosted an inaugural football tournament on Kyrgyz Republic Independence Day.

The size of the football pitch and artificial surface tennis courts are of international standard. They were physically built by residents of Naryn Town and Tosh Bulak village and managed by UCA's construction team. Every year, UCA hosts a football tournament for teams from Naryn Town and surrounding communities to celebrate Kyrgyzstan's Independence Day.



*Free blood pressure tests were provided during the Health fair.*

## Health Fair

UCA organised Health Fairs for the Naryn community at the Naryn Campus in 2017 and 2018.

Aimed at increasing awareness about healthy lifestyles, it was organised in collaboration with UCA's undergraduate students, the School of Continuing and Professional Education, the Naryn Diagnostic Center with support from the Aga Khan Health Services, the Naryn Town Sports Committees, and other international and local community organisations.

The Health Fair offered sessions on how to maintain a healthy diet, and the importance of good nutrition. Naryn residents also participated in master-classes on first aid, making artwork from eco-friendly materials, as well as an outdoor healthy foods fair.



*The Aigyrzhal-2 archaeological site is located on UCA's Naryn Campus.*

## Culture

As part of its commitment to preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of Central Asia, UCA is supporting an archaeological excavation on the Naryn campus site since 2012.

It was first led by Kubat Tabaldiev, Professor at the Kyrgyz-Turkish Manas University. Over three years, Tabaldiev's team have discovered interment sites, memorial fences, petroglyph drawings and artefacts spanning the Stone, Bronze, early Iron and Middle Ages, indicating continuous settlement by different communities for over 5000 years.

In 2014, a Russian team led by archaeologist Yuriy Sergeevich Khudyakov found a 7th century Turkic kurgan (burial site), graves and artefacts dating to the Stone Age and organic residues from the Mesolithic and Neolithic eras. A team of Japanese archaeologists from the National Research Institute of Cultural Properties and Waseda University also joined the efforts of the regional scholars to excavate and preserve the archaeological sites and artefacts at UCA's Naryn campus site as part of a 4-year project.



*UCA undergraduate students organised a math tournament among Grade 10-11 students in Naryn. The top three winners received prizes amounting to 5,000 Kyrgyz soms.*

## Education

UCA's undergraduate students and faculty are actively involved in the Naryn Community, through English language and math teaching at local schools and an orphanage. They are also conducting computer and communication skills workshops for youth in the Naryn community.

In addition, UCA students have organised a Math Olympiad for local high school students to increase the analytical abilities of the students in the community and provide them with an opportunity to test their skills and knowledge.

As part of UCA's Communication and Media major at the Naryn Campus, work is in progress to set up a TV studio in conjunction with Naryn TV. The studio will prepare media materials on different topics related to UCA's contribution and impact in town development. There are also plans to produce short programmes on the "Untold stories of Naryn" to raise awareness of the challenges and potentials in the community, and to attract financial resources to solve these issues.



SPCE Building in Naryn, Kyrgyzstan.

## Short-cycle Professional Education

The University of Central Asia's School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE) provides post-secondary, short cycle professional education in Naryn, covering a broad range of skills such as entrepreneurship, English, mental math for children, business planning, and Information Technology. These are provided in a flexible learning format that improves graduates employment and income generating opportunities and opens pathways for lifelong learning.

SPCE in Naryn opened in 2011. The current facility is equipped with state-of-the-art learning technologies, two computer laboratories, four classrooms and a well-stocked library. Its central location in town gives easy access to SPCE courses and its graduates (25,000+) are participating and winning international competitions.

SPCE Naryn was recognised by the Naryn Mayor as the Best Partner organisation in 2018 and is a member of the Naryn Regional Government Public Council of Education. SPCE Naryn also offers English classes to learners from vulnerable and low-income families (aged 14-17), Naryn State University faculty, teachers from Naryn town schools, and local healthcare providers who closely work with the Aga Khan Diagnostic and Medical Centre. SPCE English graduates have been recognised at Town, Oblast, and Republican level Olympiad competitions, and have been accepted into international scholarship programmes.

Since 2012, UCA has offered an Academic Achievement Programme, with the aim of preparing learners for the rigorous requirements of the academic curriculum of regional and international universities. Students begin preparation from Grade 7 and complete the programme in Grade 11. Forty-five students have completed the programme in Naryn as of 2018, and 11 have enrolled at UCA's undergraduate programme. SPCE signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Republican Institute for Professional Development of Pedagogical Staff under the Ministry of Education of the Kyrgyz Republic in 2018. The agreement enables UCA to deliver the International Computer Driving License certificate programme, an advanced computer literacy qualification, to 50 schools in Kyrgyzstan within the framework of the "Youth Initiative" project, which will further operate as ICDL test centres. SPCE is now training 75 Information Technology Instructors from these secondary schools of Kyrgyzstan according to ICDL standards. The project is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).



*Chubak Jakypov (right) from Naryn, A graduate of SPCE's Small Business Management programme, developed a business plan to establish a poultry farm.*

## Entrepreneurship Programme

Programmes and courses on business and entrepreneurship allow graduates to develop a source of income for themselves, create employment, and launch their own enterprises.

These cover social entrepreneurship, business-planning, social marketing, computer literacy, teambuilding, goal-setting and presentation skills.

SPCE has also conducted a “Change the World Around You!” contest with the Coca-Cola Foundation which provides training to youth to implement businesses focused on social development. SPCE Naryn also acts as an official Cambridge Assessment English center and offers internationally recognised teaching qualifications and confirms English proficiency of its students.



*Amina Orozobekova (in photo, third from left), age 7, won first place at the International Mental Arithmetic Competition in Dubai (UAE).*

## Mental Math

Since 2016, SPCE has delivered mental math courses to over 700 learners in Naryn.

The Mental Math programme is offered to students aged 6 to 14, and has 10 levels. The first 6 levels focus on addition and subtraction, and the last four on multiplication, division and square root equations. The School also launched a mental math Olympiad in 2018 for students aged 6 to 16 years old in Naryn, which will be held annually.

SPCE's methodology of teaching mental math focuses on the development of two sides of the brain. Besides solving mathematical equations, children simultaneously read poems, draw, play instruments, which develops their concentration, attention, photographic memory, logical and critical thinking.



*Dr. Damira Omuralieva, Rector of Naryn State University, and Dr. Bohdan Krawchenko, UCA's Dean of the Graduate School of Development, sign a partnership agreement.*

## Mountain University Partnerships

UCA is collaborating with higher education institutions in the region through a Mountain Universities Partnership (MUP) programme. It aims to help mountain universities improve their research capacity, as well as academic programmes and services, which are serving the bulk of the population in mountainous areas.

The overriding goal of MUP is to support four mountain universities including Naryn State University (NSU), Khorog State University (KSU) (Tajikistan), Badakhshan University (Afghanistan) and Karakorum International University (Pakistan).

Within MUP, UCA's Institute of Public Policy and Administration (IPPA), NSU and KSU are collaborating on a Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) research project in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. UCA's IPPA is helping build research capacity of KSU and NSU, through delivering trainings and mentorship on research design, and quantitative and qualitative methods. This will allow the project participants to gain indispensable knowledge and skills on questionnaire design, as well as data collection and analysis.



*Naryn school directors in a session on designing an education improvement plan for their schools.*

## UCA - Education Improvement Programme

Launched in September 2017, UCA's Education Improvement Programme (EIP), engages 20 secondary schools in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. Of the 20 schools in Kyrgyzstan, five are located in Naryn.

Working with education ministries, district education officers, and school staff and within the framework of the national curricula, EIP aims to improve student learning outcomes in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM), Information Communication Technology, and English. It also aims to develop competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication, required for full participation in economic, social, and cultural life in the 21st Century. A situational analysis was conducted to identify the status of schools, teacher's needs, and to frame a strategy for education improvement with an emphasis on the professional development of school leaders and teachers. As part of this strategy, EIP conducts ongoing professional development programmes for school directors and teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills. In cooperation with the Naryn Department of Education, the Methodological Center and Naryn State University, UCA will also implement additional activities to improve the learning outcomes in Naryn town schools.

## Naryn Projects by Different Stakeholders



Construction of a sports complex under Gazprom-Kyrgyzstan's "Gazprom for Children" project; total investments – KGS 254 million; commissioned on 25 October 2018.



Construction of "Jashtar Parky" public garden; total investments – KGS 2,242 thousand (funds from the local budget, and funds raised by respective campaign); commissioned on 21 September 2018.



Construction of a children's playground, and installation of street lights in RTS neighborhood (UNDP project); total investments – KGS 3 million; commissioned on 27 December 2018.



Installation of street lights in Naryn; total investments – KGS 3,688.6 million (funds from the local budget, and funds raised by respective campaign, which was held in Naryn in 2018).



“Rehabilitation of Water Supply and Sewage Networks in Naryn” project; total investments – EURO 6.2 million (including 2 million credit from EBRD; 3.2 million grant from the Swiss Government; and 1 million additional grant).



Creation of a milk processing facility of “Umut & Co”; total investments – USD 1.5 million; currently is being reconstructed.



For tourism promotion purposes a USAID’s project installed street signs and city maps, so as to help tourists navigate in the city during their walking tours. The signs are made of special light-reflecting materials, so they can be read in nighttime.



Under its 2018-2020 Country Strategic Plan, the WFP UN in the Kyrgyz Republic will continue to work on improving food security, decreasing poverty, and increasing social protection, so as to ensure sustainable economic growth and social development of the country. The program rehabilitated the water supply and irrigation systems in Naryn, having invested KGS 9 million into this initiative.



*A three-kilometre Naryn-Baotovo diversion road built by UCA.*



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