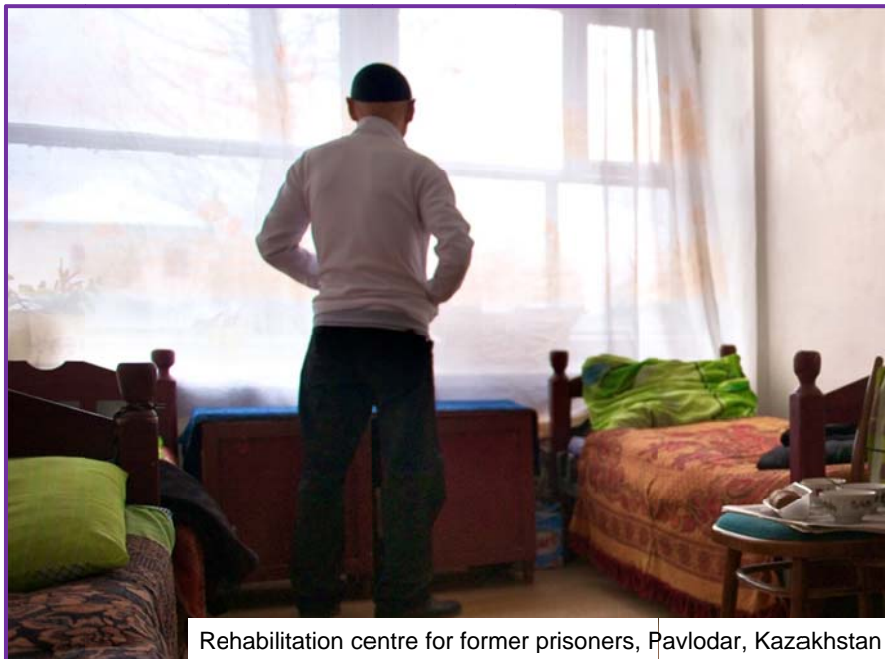**PENAL REFORM INTERNATIONAL**

Rehabilitation of ex-prisoners and protection of their human rights by mutual efforts of civil society and the state

Impact Evaluation

Rehabilitation centre for former prisoners, Pavlodar, Kazakhstan

Norwegian Embassy in Kazakhstan

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Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 Country background and context

In the 1990s, Kazakhstan had the third largest prison population in the world, which regularly exceeded official prison capacity limits. As a result, prison conditions were poor and the rights of prisoners were not protected. Root causes of the high prison population include repressive sentencing, poor use of alternatives to improvement, and a culture of imprisonment that is widely been termed as a 'crisis of punishment'. Addressing these root causes has been the focus of policy makers and civil society for many years. As table 1 demonstrates, there has been progress: Kazakhstan's prison population has steadily decreased year on year between 1995 and 2013.

Year	1995	1998	2001	2004	2007	2010	2011	2013
Prison population total	85,448	84,448	88,421	58,300	51,538	62,997	55,552	48,684
Increase/decrease		-1,000	+3,973	-30,121	-6,762	11,459	-7,445	-6,8
Prison population rate (per 1000 of population)	534	548	590	386	336	401	351	295

Table 1: Kazakhstan prison population 1995-2013
(Source: International Centre for Prison Studies)

Despite progress towards reducing the prison population, it is widely recognised that there are still major penitentiary problems to address. Such problems include a high morbidity rate of prisoners, poor health and hygiene standards, and general poor prison conditions. The International Centre for Prison Studies note that prison conditions in Kazakhstan are 'harsh and sometimes life threatening with facilities not meeting international health standards' (http://www.prisonstudies.org, Accessed 8/1/2014).

In the face of such problems, it is perhaps unsurprising that re-socialisation of prisoners and former prisoners have been a low priority for policy makers and civil society. Within the penitentiary system, limited support is provided to prepare prisoners for release. For example, prisoners typically do not have:

- A detailed sentence plan based on a needs assessment that outlines the programmes and support required. For example, admittance into a drug and rehabilitation programme or vocational skills training.
- Social and psychological support. The penitentiary administration employs a limited number of social workers and psychologists. The demand for social and psychological support far outstrips supply and as result the majority of prisoners do not receive the required support.
- Up-to-date vocational skills training that is matched to business needs. Vocational skills training in prisons are currently focused on manual skills such as metal and wood work. The Kazakhstan economy is increasingly becoming an information economy and such skills are not in demand. When they leave prison, prisoners are not equipped to secure a well-paid job and businesses are reluctant to employ them.

The situation when prisoners leave prison does not improve. Prisoners receive little support from the Government and often do not have the information they need to access services such as healthcare, assistance to find a job and assistance to find accommodation. Prisoners leaving prison are therefore very dependent on their family and friends. As a result, many former prisoners fail to find employment or accommodation and many of them reoffend. PRI's Central Asia Regional Director summarised the situation as follows:

Only half of former prisoners have good relationships with their families. They have no money and no one is there to meet them at the gate when they leave prison. The average term is 7.5 years in prison and they are not provided the support they require to return back to society. When they leave prison they are given an address and they go back to their criminal lifestyle. They become part of the criminal world because they are well supported by the criminal world. They repeat their crimes and the cycle continue. The Government is not supporting them. (Interview with PRI's Central Asia Director, 18 October 2013)

It is not surprising therefore to learn that the recidivism and reoffending rate in Kazakhstan is high. As of the first quarter of 2012, a total of 16,851 prisoners in the penal institutions had previous convictions (Baseline report, 2012: 11).

In Kazakhstan there are two state-funded rehabilitation centres. The Centre of Social Adaption and Rehabilitation of Former Prisoners in Pavlodar was established in March 2001.The centre is residential; former prisoners spend six months at the centre, which can be extended to 12 months if there is a social need. The centre caters for former prisoners between the ages of 20 and 63; it has capacity for 100 people. The centre is very formal and replicates similar routines and conditions of a typical Kazakhstan prison. For example, all administration staff of the centre are former police workers (Baseline report; 2012: 38).

The Centre of Social Adaption and Rehabilitation of Ex-prisoners in Shymkent was established in December 2011. The main purpose of the centre is to recover and secure the legal and social status of former prisoners. Unlike the centre in Pavlodar, the centre is not residential. As of July 2012, the centre had assisted 292 former prisoners (Baseline report, 2012: 48). The centre is more informal than Pavlodar; none of the staff members have police experience. This makes it easier for staff to develop a greater level of trust with the former prisoners. The baseline researchers visited the centre and they concluded in their report:

Ex-prisoners shared with us that they were treated with understanding, patience and respect. We observed that there is a special environment of trust and mutual respect between the customers and the staff of the centre. (Baseline report, 2012: 50).

In January 2011, the Government announced its decision to decentralise the rehabilitation system. Duties related to re-socialisation and rehabilitation of former prisoners, including the running of the rehabilitation centres, were handed over from the penal service to local municipalities (known as 'akimats').The timing was therefore ripe for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to focus on rehabilitation of formers prisoners by working with the local municipalities.

In 2011, in partnership with the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Penal Reform International (PRI) planned a reintegration project, entitled: 'Rehabilitation of ex-prisoners and protection of their human rights by mutual efforts of civil society and the state'. The two year project commenced in January 2012 and was focused on developing a rehabilitation system for ex-prisoners by working with central Government Ministries, local municipalities and civil society. It should be noted that this project focuses on working with prisoners after they are released and does not tackle the issue of preparing prisoners for release. Table 2 provides a detailed summary overview of the project.

1.2 Project description

Project Title:	Rehabilitation of ex-prisoners and protection of their human rights by mutual efforts of civil society and the state
Timeframe:	January 2012 to December 2013
Funding partner:	Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Impact:	Rehabilitation of prisoners to provide circumstances for full realization of their human rights after release
Outcome:	Rehabilitation-focused model of penal reform agreed and adapted by the Government and resources allocated for effective implementation including joint working with civil society organisations
Activities:	- Training workshops - Roundtable meetings, events and workshops - Lobbying and advocacy through bilateral meetings - Research to develop baseline report - Presentation of baseline report and evidence to project stakeholders - Promotional work through media (radio interviews and newspaper articles) - Provision of expertise and technical support to Office of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Internal Affairs, municipalities and civil society organisations - Administer and manage a small grants programme that involves five small grants to NGO. NGO's will use the small grants to deliver re-socialisation and rehabilitation services to former prisoners
Budget:	$238,840 USD
Project stakeholders:	*Government* - Office of the Prime Minister - Ministry of Internal Affairs - Ministry of Education and Science - Ministry of Labour - Ministry of Justice - Penal Committee of Kazakhstan *International organisations* - Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs - European Union *Civil Society* - Regional Centre for Informational Technologies - Committee on Monitoring of Criminal Justice reform and Human Rights - Kyzylorda regional society on protection of consumer rights - Credo - Sauygu *Rehabilitation Centres* - The Centre of Social Adaption and Rehabilitation of Ex-prisoners in the city of Pavlodar - The Centre of Social Adaption and Rehabilitation of Ex-prisoners in the city of Shymkent

Table 2: Summary overview of the project

2. Evaluation purpose and methodology

2.1 Evaluation purpose

This evaluation forms part of a series of evaluations being undertaken by PRI in a an effort to test and develop methods to rigorously assess and effectively communicate the medium-to-long-term impact of PRI's projects and programmes. See box 1 for a definition of impact evaluation.

> **Box 1: Defining Impact Evaluation**
>
> Stern et al (2012) define impact evaluation as:
>
> - Evaluating the positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects on final beneficiaries that result from an intervention;
> - Assessing the direct and indirect causal contribution claims of these interventions to such effects especially for the poor whether intended or unintended;
> - Explaining how policy interventions contribute to an effect so that lessons can be learnt

Much of PRI's work is essentially advocacy and policy-based which produce intangible outcomes (e.g. raised awareness) that are difficult to measure. Moreover, complex advocacy-based interventions do not lend themselves to traditional quasi-experimental impact evaluation designs.

PRI works primarily at enabling change at an institutional level (e.g. Government) and rarely works directly with its final beneficiaries (e.g. former prisoners). Moreover, most of PRI's work is project-based with defined timeframes of typically 2-3 years. Trickle-down changes which improve the situation of former prisoners do not fit neatly within these 2-3 year timeframes. Results take time to mature and evaluations are typically done at the end of a project. For example, as the theory of change for the project (Figure 1) demonstrates, service delivery to former prisoners is a long-term outcome that is dependent on increased political will of Government and municipalities and increased capacity of civil society.

This project has included a small grants programme that involves providing financial support to local NGOs so that they can provide services directly to former prisoners. To assess the impact of such services for former prisoners, this evaluation would need to be carried out 1-3 years after the project has ended to allow for the trickle-down effects to occur. At impact level, the evaluator would look at the extent to which former prisoners have rebuilt their lives and would ask questions such as: did they secure employment; are they included in society; do they have a healthy relationship with their family and friends? However, in 2-3 years-time it would be extremely difficult to assess PRI's contribution to such changes because of the number of external factors involved (e.g. other interventions and changes in the political and legal context), and PRI would miss the opportunity to draw lessons from the evaluation that can be incorporated into future project design.

As part of PRI's broader Evaluation and Learning Plan, PRI's Evaluation and Organisational Learning Adviser (Adviser) is undertaking a series of evaluations to identify, develop and test some impact evaluation models that could help to overcome some of the challenges described above. This evaluation represents the third in the evaluation series and the Adviser has adapted a rigorous quantitative research methodology known as Process Tracing.

2.2 Research methodology

Process tracing is consistent with a theory-based evaluation design (see Box 2). Impact evaluation is an opportunity to test a programme's theory through the links in the causal chain. In terms of method, this tendency is close to 'process tracing' (George and McKeown, 1985; Collier, 2011), which is defined by Aminzade (1993) as 'theoretically explicit narratives that carefully trace and compare the sequence of events constituting the process'. These casual chains are typically represented graphically as a causal map.

> **Box 2: Theory-Based Evaluation**
>
> In order to explain we need theory to bridge the gap between data and interpretation of that data; and in the case of impact evaluation to bridge the gap between 'causes' and 'effect'.
>
> Theory-based evaluation is process orientated. It regards the programme as a conjunction of causes that follow a sequence. It follows a change pathway of a programme from its initiation through various causal links in a chain of implementation, until intended outcomes are reached. The process is built upon a 'theory of change' - a set of assumptions about how an intervention achieves its goals and under what conditions (Stern et al, 2012).

Process Tracing is a complex methodology in which a series of preparatory steps culminate in the identification, by key project stakeholders, of a set of targeted outcomes. These represent the most recent and important desired achievements of the project. Once these targeted outcomes are identified and clearly stated, data collection and analysis focus on determining the extent to which these targeted outcomes were realised and the importance of the projects contribution to those outcomes. Oxfam have developed a Process Tracing Protocol that outlines the key steps involved in the process. Drawing on the guidance provided by Oxfam's protocol, the Adviser facilitated a Process Tracing evaluation exercise that included the following steps.

1. Analysis of project documentation generated by PRI.
2. Work with the PRI Central Asia team to reconstruct a theory of change for the project.
3. Analysis of project activities (e.g. monitoring reports and baseline report) to develop a detailed understanding of the project.
4. Interviews with a range of stakeholders to identify and evidence (a) what targeted outcomes actually materialised; (b) the plausible causal explanations that underpinned the targeted outcomes; (c) PRI's contribution to the change.
5. Analysis of additional documentation (e.g. relevant reports produced by other agencies) and secondary data (e.g. Government statistics) to verify the qualitative data collected in step 4.
6. Draft a final report documenting the research process and key findings.

2.3 Data collection

Data collection is a key element of the Process Tracing method. To gather the information necessary to carry out this evaluation, the Adviser used the following data collection methods:

1. Analysis of project information generated by PRI, which included:

   - Project planning documents

- Annual monitoring report sent to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the end of Year 1
- Project baseline report

2. The Advisor attended the final project forum in Astana on 17 October 2013. The forum was entitled: 'Social reform of the prison system: employment, re-integration and vocational trainings'.

3. Semi-structured interviews on 18 October with key informants from the project, including:

- Saule Mektepbayeva, PRI Central Asia Regional Director
- Azamat Shambilov, PRI Project Coordinator for the project
- Skakov Aidarkan, university professor and member of the Working Group of the Criminal? Executive Code
- Almas Kanatov, baseline researcher for the project

4. A focus group discussion (17 October 2013) with the Directors and staff members of the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that participated in the projects NGO small grant programme. Five people attended the focus group and represented the following NGOs:

- Regional Centre for Informational Technologies
- Committee on Monitoring of Criminal Justice Reform and Human Rights
- Kyzylorda regional society on protection of consumer rights
- Credo
- Sauygu

3. Theory of change

Figure 1 outlines the theory of change for the project. In consultation with the PRI Central Asia Region, three target outcomes were identified to focus the evaluation:

- Target Outcome 1 – Increased awareness and access to evidence at central Government and regional municipality level
- Target Outcome 2 – Increased capacity of Government officials, akimats, NGOs and journalists on rehabilitation issues
- Target Outcome 3 – Rehabilitative, educational, social and vocational services provided to prisoners after release
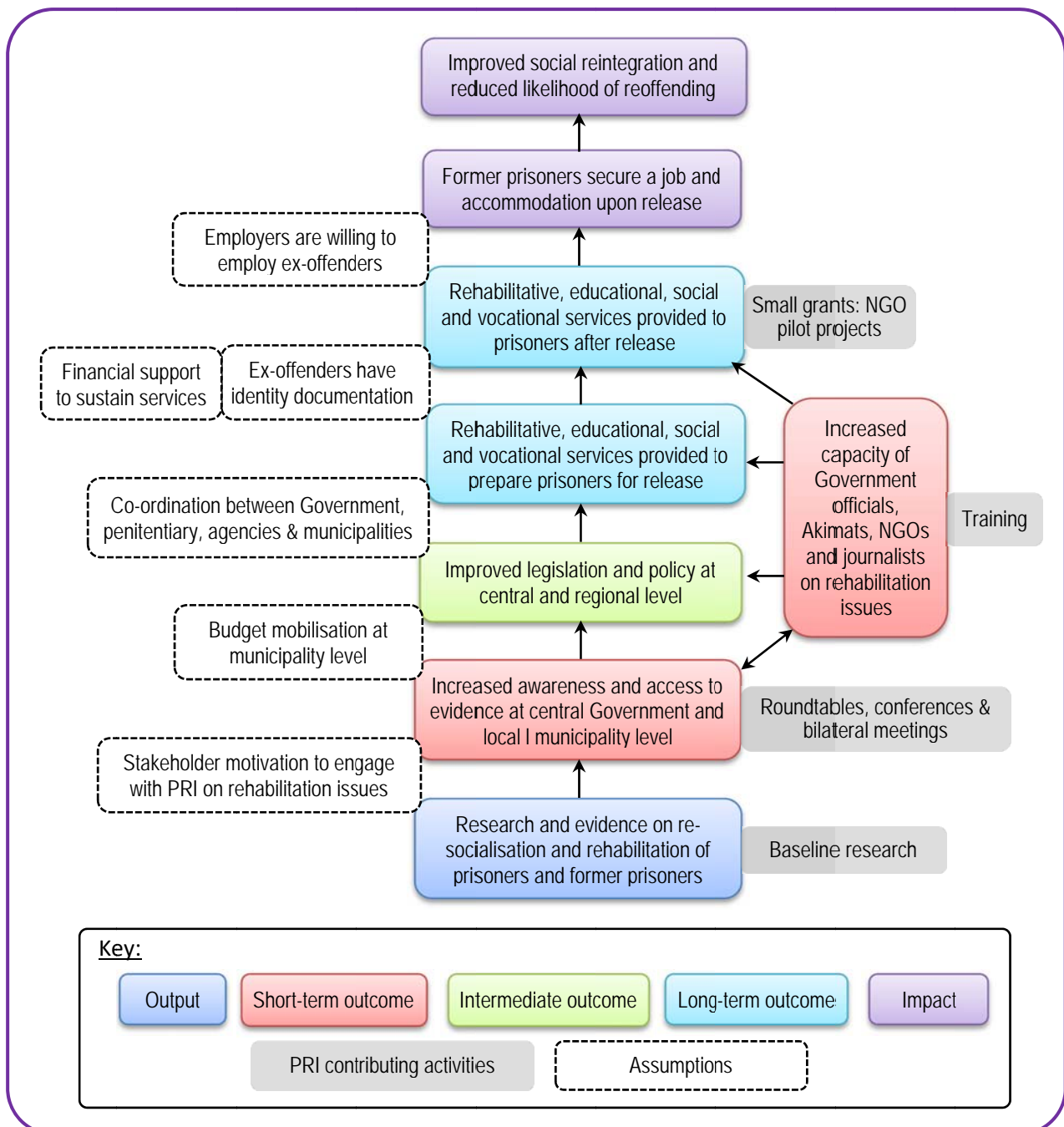

Figure 1: Theory of Change for the Rehabilitation of former prisoners' project

4. Results of the impact evaluation

4.1 Target Outcome 1: Increased awareness and access to evidence at central Government and regional municipality level

Extent to which the outcome materialised

The baseline report and interviews with key informants established that there was very little awareness about re-socialisation of former prisoners prior to the start of the project (January 2012). It is clear that before this project, re-socialisation of former prisoners was low on the agenda at both central Government and municipality level.

At the central level, PRI has focused its awareness-raising efforts on the Office of the Prime Minister (PM). Indeed, the Office of the PM has been a key partner for PRI. Throughout the project, PRI has kept the Office informed of upcoming meetings, roundtables and trainings. PRI had regular meetings with Office staff to present the baseline results and the outputs of the project events. The Office responded by putting pressure on the local municipalities and reminding them of their responsibilities with regards to providing re-socialisation services for former prisoners:

> During the project, PRI focused on working with the Prime Minister's Office and provided them with expert support on the issues of re-socialisation. In November 2012, the Prime Minister's Office gave an order to the municipalities requiring them to improve re-socialisation systems in the regions. (Mid-term narrative monitoring report, December 2012)

The Office of the PM helped PRI to engage with municipalities by sending formal communications asking them to attend an upcoming PRI roundtable or conference; to provide an updated progress report on what the municipalities have done with regards to mobilising their budget and providing re-socialisation services to former prisoners.
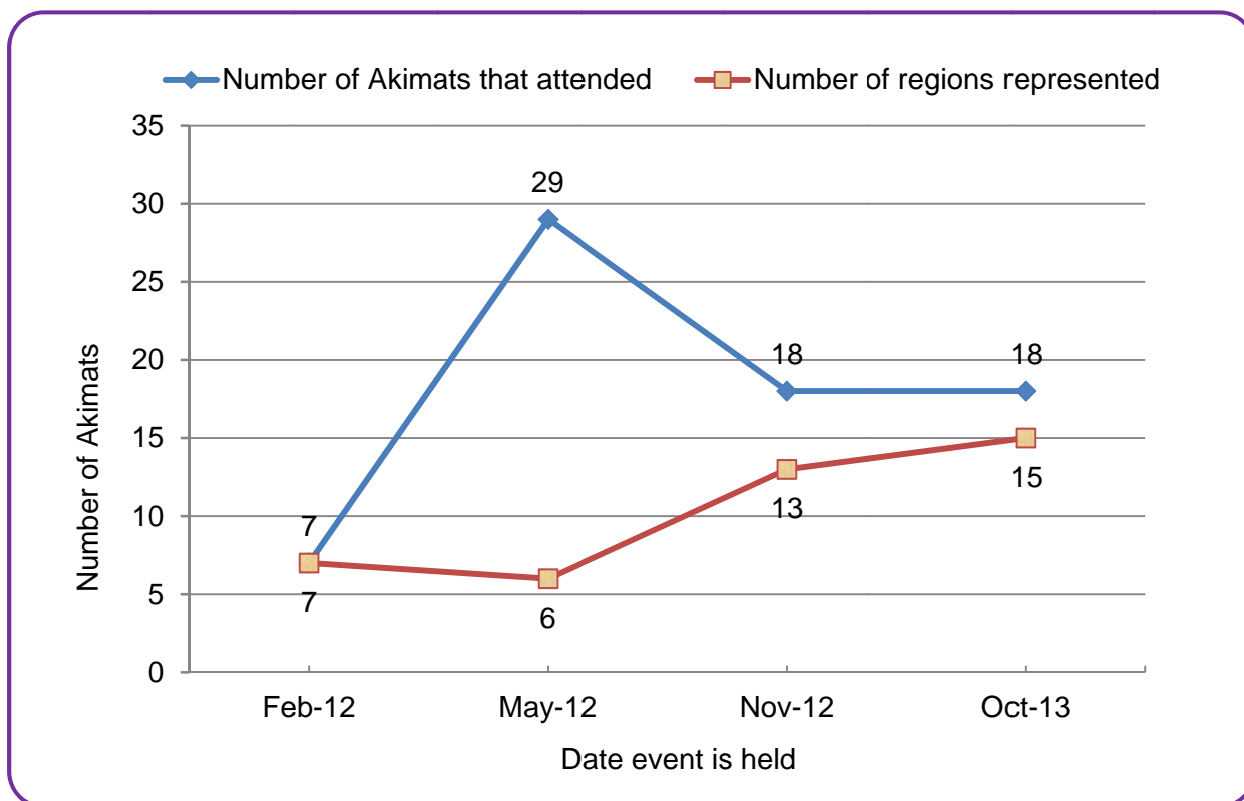

Figure 2: Akimat attendance trends at roundtable and forums held in Astana

Figure 2 suggests that this strategy has worked. As the project progressed there has been a steady increase in (a) the number of akimats that attended PRI roundtables and conferences on re-socialisation; and (b) the number of regions represented. This provided PRI with an opportunity to engage with municipalities and to encourage them to take responsibility for providing services to former prisoners. Qualitative evidence suggests that compared to the beginning of the project, there has been an increase in awareness at the municipality level:

> In the first three months of the project, there were bilateral meetings with state officials and Akimats in the regions. The akimats had no idea about re-socialisation and rehabilitation of ex-prisoners. There was zero awareness at the beginning of the project; it didn't event enter their mind that they should be working on re-socialisation issues. As the project progressed there has been a domino effect: the ice started to melt and there have been many small changes that have added up to a bigger change. As a result, awareness has been raised on the issue. (Interview with Almas Kanatov, 18 October 2013)

In terms of awareness about re-socialisation of former prisoners, the baseline for this outcome was very low. Overall, qualitative evidence supplied by key informants during the evaluation process, suggests that awareness about re-socialisation of former prisoners has increased at both the central and regional level. For example, one key informant noted:

> The re-socialisation of ex-prisoners is a very important project for Kazakhstan. Awareness has been raised about re-socialisation issues. The project has created a dialogue between Government, municipalities and civil society on the subject of what will happen now that prisoners have been released. The project has raised awareness about international standards and has bought international experience to Kazakhstan. (Interview with Skakov Aidarkan, 18 October 2013)

However, because awareness during the beginning of the project was so low, much work still needs to be done to increase awareness on re-socialisation issues across the different levels. More work needs to be done to raise awareness and to get buy-in from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the awareness raising work within the regions needs to continue.

Causal explanation

The theory of change below (Figure 3) illustrates a detailed theory of change for outcome 1: Increased awareness and access to evidence at central Government and regional municipality level. As Figure 3 shows, PRI's advocacy strategy at the central level was to focus on Office of the PM. When the project application and plan was written in 2011, the Ministry of Justice had responsibility for the central coordination of the prison administration and re-socialisation issues. In August 2011, responsibility was transferred from the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of Internal Affairs. A recent PRI evaluation of its European Union funded torture prevention programme noted that this was a controversial decision:

> The decision was justified by the lack of capacity in the Ministry of Justice to ensure proper supervision of the prison administration system. The act was unanimously condemned by local and international human rights monitors, as well as by members of the academic community. It led to the worsening of the situation in prisons. The government however has no plans to place the system back under the authority of the Ministry of Justice. (Kanev, 2013, p. 20)

This had an impact on the rehabilitation of former prisoners project. PRI had key contacts and a good working relationship with the Ministry of Justice. However, PRI's relationship with the Ministry of Internal Affairs was less established and it therefore had less influence to target key state officials to increase their awareness about the re-socialisation of former prisoners. Moreover, the Regional

Director of PRI's Central Asia office noted that the Ministry of Internal Affairs was unwilling to engage and reluctant to take responsibility for rehabilitation issues.
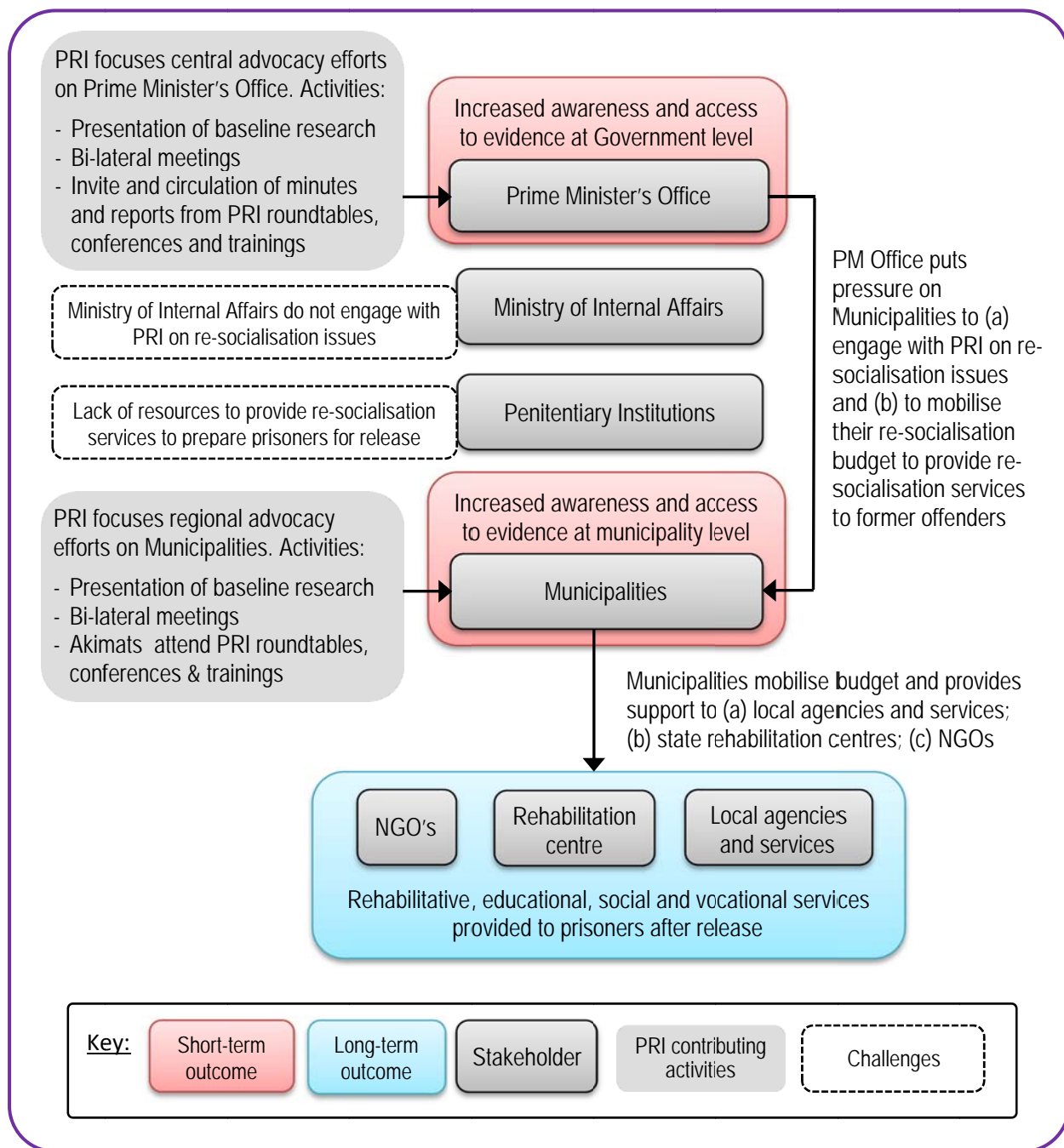

Figure 3: Increased awareness and access to evidence theory of change (Target 1)

On 10 January 2011 duties related to social reintegration and rehabilitation of former prisoners were handed over from the penal service to the local akimats (Mayor's Office). This reform was not widely covered by the mass media but it had serious implications for Kazakhstan's penal policy. Three rehabilitation centres for former prisoners were closed. These centres were located (a) the city of Pavlodar, (b) the South Kazakhstan region, and (c) the East Kazakhstan region. In practice, the limited scope of assistance provided by the state had effectively ended (baseline report, 2012: 4). However, gradually some akimats started working with the prison colonies and former prisoners. For example, in the cities of Pavlodar and Shymkent the rehabilitation centres for former prisoners were reopened. However, support provided by the akimats remained inconsistent. A budget line for re-

socialisation was transferred from the central government budget to the local municipality budget. Each municipality now has a re-socialisation budget line. However, as the baseline researcher noted, municipality awareness of these budget lines is low:

> We need to work with akimats on a step-by-step basis. They don't even know they have a budget for re-socialisation and rehabilitation work. They have support from Government. It is not a big deal to include re-socialisation and rehabilitation in the Republican budget and to allocate it to a local budget line. (Interview with Almas Kanatov, 18 October 2013).

Indeed, the municipality re-socialisation budget lines have largely remained unspent. PRI therefore created this project to focus on raising awareness of akimats by working with them to ensure they realised their responsibilities with regards to providing re-socialisation services to former prisoners. For example, in early 2012 the new Mayor of Shymkent (Southern Kazakhstan) outlined his plans to close the state-funded rehabilitation centre for former prisoners. The Mayor viewed the centre as an unnecessary expense and was unaware of his responsibilities with regards to the re-socialisation of formers prisoners. Staff of the rehabilitation centre communicated its fears to PRI and asked PRI for help. PRI responded by holding a roundtable in Shymkent. After the roundtable, PRI sent a delegation – an international expert from Norway and PRI's Central Asia Regional Director – to meet with the Mayor. The delegation outlined (a) the case for re-socialisation of former prisoners; (b) the municipalities' responsibilities for delivering services to former prisoners; (c) the important role of the Shymkent rehabilitation centre. The Mayor responded by pledging financial support to the rehabilitation centre and the centre has continued to operate. This was one of the most tangible results of the project and shows that PRI's advocacy strategy worked.

The Project Coordinator noted that, subject to funding, other regions are now planning to open rehabilitation centres. For example, there are plans to open a rehabilitation centre for 100 former prisoners in Astana (interview with Azamat Shambilov, 18 October 2013). Budgets for rehabilitation centres should be available with the amendment to the criminal code.

At the central level, in response to the transfer of authority from the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, PRI decided to change its advocacy strategy to focus on working with the Office of the PM. This change in strategy was justified on three grounds: (a) the PM Office had more authority than the Ministry of Internal Affairs and can therefore put pressure on the Ministry of Internal Affairs to take responsibility and engage on re-socialisation of former prisoners; (b) the PM Office had the power to directly influence the Municipalities; (c) PRI had a good working relationship with the PM Office. As the previous section and the theory of change (figure 3) demonstrated, this change in strategy was the correct decision because the PM office put pressure on the municipalities and ordered them to take responsibility for the rehabilitation of former prisoners.

PRI should be commended for having the foresight and flexibility to change its advocacy strategy. Moreover, PRI skilfully executed its advocacy strategy and achieved some impressive results in such a short timeframe. PRI had a two-pronged advocacy strategy focused on Office of the PM and the municipalities. To reinforce the above results, PRI engaged directly with the municipalities by involving them in the baseline research; conducting bilateral meetings; and inviting them to trainings, roundtables and conferences. As the previous section and Figure 3 demonstrated, the result of this two-pronged approach led to an increased awareness at the municipality level.

PRI's contribution

The previous two sections show that PRI has made a significant contribution to raising awareness about re-socialisation of former prisoners at the central level (Office of the PM) and the municipality level. As PRI's Central Asia Regional Director notes: 'the only source of information for the Prime Minister's Office on rehabilitation and re-socialisation issues is PRI.' (Interview with Saule

Mektepbayeva, 18 October 2013). Table 3 provides summary information of the activities carried out by PRI and their associated outputs and outcomes under the increased awareness outcome.

Activity	Outputs	Outcome
Presentation of the baseline research at PRI roundtables and trainings throughout 2012.	The baseline report, which contained recommendations to the Ministry of Interior, was presented at: - Roundtable, Feb 2012 - Roundtable, May 2012 - Forum, November 2012 - Roundtable, Feb 2013	Contributed to increased access to evidence on re-socialisation and rehabilitation of ex-prisoners. During the various meeting, the baseline researcher (Mr Suergey) presented the budget of the rehabilitation centre in Pavlodar and the idea of setting up similar rehabilitation centres. The presentation helped to inspire other regions to consider opening a rehabilitation centre
Roundtable in Astana, 'Forgotten by society: re-socialisation of ex-prisoners' (28 February 2012)	50 participants attended the roundtable. Participants represented: Ministry of Interior, Penal Committee Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Labour, General Prosecutor Office, international organisation, akimats and local NGOs.	Based on the discussion of the roundtable, recommendations to public authorities were developed and submitted. The roundtable attracted public interest and was well covered by the mass media (5 TV channels and several newspapers. Overall it helped to raise public and state awareness on the issue of re-socialisation of ex-prisoners.
Roundtable in Shymkent, 'Re-socialisation of Ex-prisoners in Kazakhstan: Effective Methods of Coordination of the Powers of State Agencies' (23 May 12)	29 participants attended the roundtable. Participants were mainly from local Government; 6 regions were represented. An international expert from Norway – Andreas Skullberg – gave a presentation on the Norwegian experience.	After the roundtable, PRI sent a team to visit the mayor of Shymkent on a mission to prevent the closure of the rehabilitation centre in Shymkent. The team were successful – the centre has remained open and now receives even greater support from the Mayor and local authorities.
National Forum in Astana, 'Re-socialization of ex-prisoners: with the mutual efforts of akimats, prison service and civil society organizations' (13 November 2012)	92 participants attended the forum. Participants represented: NGOs, Members of Parliament, akimats (Mayor of city), ex-prisoners and international organisations	As a result of the National Forum on re-socialisation, MPs wrote an official note to the Prime Minister (PM) of Kazakhstan on the current situation of re-socialisation and employment of prisoners and ex-prisoners. This helped to raise the issues of re-integration at a national level. Also, the Ombudsman of Kazakhstan made a statement to the PM on employment of prisoners and ex-prisoners.
Roundtable in Petropavlovsk (North Kazakhstan), 'Regional context of re-socialization of ex-prisoners' (27 February 2013)	35 participants from Northern Kazakhstan – municipalities, NGOs, prosecutors and penal service	Before this roundtable, Akimats from Northern Kazakhstan were not engaged with the project. They would regularly send junior staff to attend PRI events. However, this roundtable helped to increase the Akimat's awareness about re-socialisation issues. After the roundtable, Akimats themselves started to attend the project events.
National Forum, 'Social reform of prison system: employment, re-integration and vocational trainings' (17 October 2013)	107 participants from various Government Ministries and Departments, Akimats, Ambassadors, International organisations, civil society, ex-prisoners.	The conference was well attended by all the main stakeholders which helped to increase engagement with Ministries, local akimats and civil society on re-socialisation issues. This was the only project event where the Ministry of Labour took part. After the event, MPs frequently raised the issues of employment before and after release. In the re-drafting process of the new Criminal Executive Code, MPs and the General Prosecutor Office has proposed to improve the function of employment in prisons

		and after release. The MoL have arranged a meeting with NGOs working on re-socialisation of former prisoners.

Table 3: PRI's Awareness Raising Activities

Before the project began it was clear that there was little awareness about re-socialisation issues at the central and regional level and that there were very few actors involved in raising awareness on re-socialisation issues. Local NGOs have been focused on delivering re-socialisation services but have found it difficult to engage and raise awareness at a central level. Moreover, the change of authority from the central penitentiary service to local akimats happened relatively recently (January 2011) and therefore awareness at the municipality level was very low when this project began. This project has given local NGOs working on re-socialisation issues a platform to engage at a regional and central level. During a focus group discussion with NGO recipients of the small grant scheme, it was noted:

> Through this project PRI has enabled us to participate in large-scale roundtables and conferences in Astana. This has given us the opportunity to raise our profile, engage and raise awareness with donors and government officials at both the central and municipality level. (Focus group discussion with NGO small grant holders, 17 October 2013)

In terms of attribution of the result – increased awareness of re-socialisation of former prisoners at central and regional level – a very large percentage can be attributed to PRI. It also should be acknowledged that local NGOs contributed to this result, particularly at the regional level and that PRI helped them to do so by inviting them to roundtables, trainings and conferences.

4.2 Target Outcome 2: Increased capacity of Government officials, municipalities, NGOs and journalists on rehabilitation issues

Extent to which the outcome materialised

The evaluator used Kirkpatrick's model of learning to evaluate the capacity building and training results of the re-socialisation of former prisoners' project (see Appendix 1). As the final column of Table 4 demonstrates, PRI did not consistently collect data from the training participants before, during and after the training programme. As a result, there is little evidence to support the claim that there has been an increase in capacity of government officials, municipalities, NGOs and journalists on the issue of re-socialisation of former prisoners.

Data Collection	Purpose	When	Kirkpatrick Level	Key Questions	Was this done?
Learning Needs Analysis survey and pre-training course assessment	To set a baseline and to establish desired outcomes of the learning in terms of individual challenges	Before the training	Establishes a baseline to measure participant satisfaction, learning and behaviour change	- What are the main expectations for the training? - What is the state of participants' knowledge, skills, experience and attitudes?	No evidence that this was done before any of the training programmes
End of session feedback sheets	To monitor the course, to adjust the course design and answer questions	During the training	Level 1 – participant satisfaction	- What should we do more of - What should we do differently? - What new things should we include?	No evidence this was done during the training programmes
End-of-course evaluation questionnaire	Linked to pre-course assessment. To evaluate the outputs of the training.	End of training	Level 1 and 2 – participant satisfaction and learning	- What have I learnt? - What will I do differently? - What does my organisation need to do to help me to apply my learning?	Was done for the municipalities training.
Post-course assessment questionnaire, focus group discussions and interviews	Aligned to end-of-course evaluation. To evaluate the outcomes of the training	6 months after the training	Levels 2 and 3 – learning and behaviour change	- How are the participants applying their learning? - What are they doing differently? - What obstacles are they encountering? - What support is working well and is more support needed?	Project co-ordinator phoned some participants informally to receive feedback. This was not documented

Table 4: Strategy for monitoring and evaluating training programmes

However, interviews from key informants do suggest that capacity has been developed:

> I think the work of PRI has a big influence on penal reform in Kazakhstan. For us, it is important to learn from the experience of the UK and Norway on alternatives, probation and community service. The training courses of this project have provided such experience through international experts such as Martin Seddon. (Interview with Skakov Aidarkan, 18 October 2013)

> The training sessions and roundtable discussions have helped to establish the concept of a new Probation Service for Kazakhstan – what it is and what it should be. If this is implemented, it well help to coordinate the rehabilitation of prisoners before and after release. (Interview with Skakov Aidarkan, 18 October 2013)

Such comments suggest that the international experience and best-practice provided through international resource persons were of particular value for the trainees. However, lack of documentation and systematic follow-up before, during and after the training courses make it difficult to assess the extent to which knowledge, skills and capacity have been increased through this project.

Causal explanation

The project theory of change (Figure 1) shows that increased capacity of Government officials, municipalities, NGOs and journalists is a critical outcome that supports several other outcomes, including: (a) increased awareness and access to evidence at central and regional level; (b) improved legislation and policy at central and regional levels; (c) rehabilitative, educational, social and vocational services provided to prepare prisoners for release; (d) rehabilitative, educational, social and vocational services provided to prisoners after release.

Figure 5 (next page) provides a more detailed theory of change for the capacity development outcome and shows how different training programmes were targeted at different stakeholders. It is clear that the training plan of this project was well thought out with a targeted strategy aimed at different stakeholders with different learning needs. Table 5 provides detailed information of the target group, training focus and intended outcomes of each training course. The theory of change (Figure 5) shows how these training activities translate into tangible changes for: journalists (media coverage); Government officials and policy makers (legislative amendments); Akimats (mobilisation of regional re-socialisation budget); NGO's (service delivery); and rehabilitation centres (service delivery).

Increased media coverage and public awareness on re-socialisation of former prisoners
Re-socialisation of ex-prisoners is at an early stage of development in Kazakhstan. As the previous section established, there is limited awareness of re-socialisation issues. Public, government, municipality and civil society support is important therefore to ensure that re-socialisation services are delivered to former prisoners. Throughout the project, PRI have made a concerted effort to involve the journalists to ensure that project is well covered in the media. For example, on 25 January 2012, an opening press conference for the project was organised for journalists. 18 journalists attended the press conference, which resulted in 30 media publications. Similarly, PRI organised a press conference prior to each project roundtable and conference. Such press conferences helped to increase the media coverage of the project, which in turn helped to raise public awareness of re-socialisation of former prisoners.

To reinforce this media work, in March 2013, PRI organised a training programme for journalists. The training focused on increasing their knowledge and skills on the following topics: criminal justice reform in Kazakhstan; the current situation in Kazakhstan prisons; techniques for bringing penal reform and human rights of prisoners to the public's attention. The training course topics were therefore quite generic and were not tailored specifically to the re-socialisation of former prisoners. It is unclear the extent to which: journalists knowledge and skills were increased; and how the training had an impact on wider results of the project – for example, did journalists use these skills to write articles about re-socialisation of former prisoners?
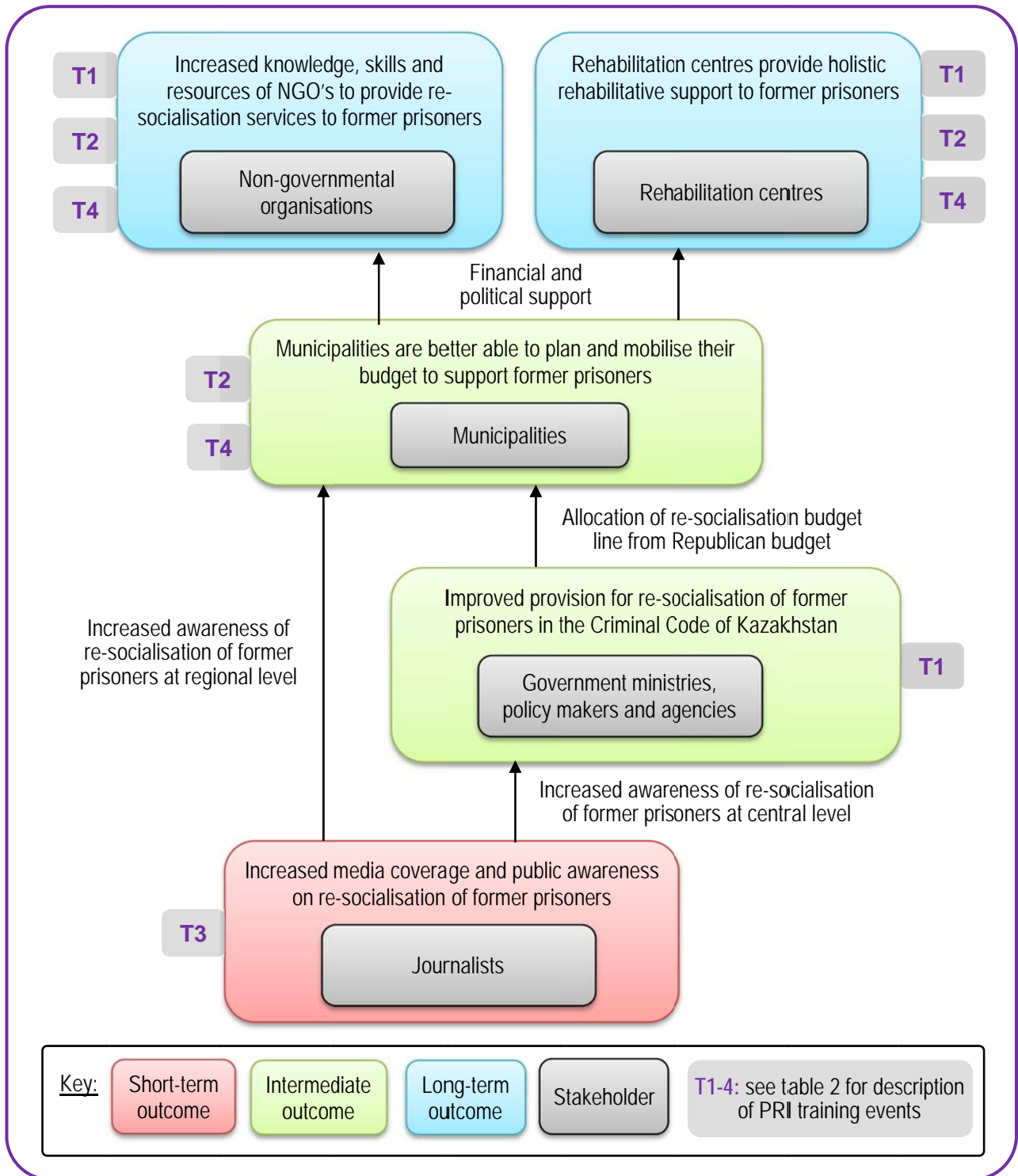
Figure 5: Increased capacity theory of change

Improved provision for re-socialisation of former prisoners in Criminal Code of Kazakhstan
Article 176 and 177 of the Criminal Code of Kazakhstan focuses on assistance to prisoners awaiting release. Article 178 of the Penal Code states that 'the Akimat of the district should assist the former prisoner in employment and living arrangements as well as in other social welfare issues'. It is clear then that Criminal Code needs to be more specific and detailed in terms of outlining the municipalities' responsibilities with regards to re-socialisation of former prisoners. Indeed, the project coordinator noted that one the main reasons why municipalities are reluctant to take

ownership of re-socialisation is because of the lack of legal basis for re-socialisation of former prisoners. The coordinator noted that the criminal code should be bought up-to-date and there should be a separate national plan on re-socialisation of former prisoners (Interview with Azamat Shambilov, 18 October 2013).

The Criminal Code of Kazakhstan is currently being redrafted and PRI is part of the working group that is responsible for redrafting the code. The baseline research report, trainings and roundtables have given PRI a good understanding of the problems and challenges of the current re-socialisation system. As a member of the working group responsible for drafting the Criminal Code, PRI is in a unique position to use and feed the learning gained from this project into the drafting process. The PRI Central Asia Regional Director noted: 'we can use what we have learnt to try to rebuild the re-socialisation system when we review the redrafting of the Criminal Code." (Interview with Saule Mektepbayeva, 18 October 2013).

Municipalities are better able to plan and mobilise their budget to support former prisoners
Municipalities were a key target stakeholder for this project. It therefore makes sense that two of the training courses were focused on training municipal representatives to better able to plan and mobilise their budget to support former prisoners. Interviews with key informants suggest that these practical training courses have made a good contribution to this result:

> The biggest achievement of this project has been the increase in awareness, political will and capacity of municipalities to allocate their budget and provide re-socialisation services for former prisoners. (Interview with Saule Mektepbayeva, 18 October 2013)

> Before the project, municipalities believed that re-socialisation was an unnecessary line in their budget; they were unaware of their responsibilities. The training courses and roundtables have helped to overcome this: Akimats are now aware of their responsibilities and are beginning to use the budgets to provide services to former prisoners. (Interview with Azamat Shambilov, 18 October 2013)

Increased knowledge, skills and resources of NGOs to provide re-socialisation services
NGOs are key stakeholders in terms of delivering re-socialisation services to former prisoners. This project has supported NGOs by (a) providing direct financial support through the small grants programme; (b) involving NGO staff in the roundtables, trainings and conferences. Representatives from NGOs participated in three of the four training courses delivered through this project. A lack of documentation and follow-up of the training courses however, make it difficult to assess the extent to which such training has increased the participants' skills and knowledge.

Rehabilitation centres provide holistic rehabilitative support to former prisoners
Staff of the rehabilitation centres participated in two of the training courses (see T2 and T4 in table 5 below). A lack of monitoring and evaluation of the training courses means that it is difficult to assess the extent to which these training courses increased staff capacity to better deliver rehabilitation services to former prisoners.

PRI contribution

Table 5 provides a summary overview of the training that was delivered through this project.

	Training Details	Target group	Focus of training	Intended outcome
T1	Rehabilitation of prisoners and protection of their human rights by mutual efforts of civil society and the state (18 April 2012 - Astana)	30 participants from: Government ministries and agencies; Municipal representatives; NGOs	A general training focused on introducing the concept of re-socialisation and sharing of good practice examples from other countries	To raise awareness and to create a dialogue between the state, municipalities and civil society on re-socialisation of former prisoners
T2	Municipalities learn how to work with ex-prisoners (23-24 July 2012 – Shuchunsk, Northern Kazakhstan)	15 municipal representatives from 12 regions of Kazakhstan	Training of municipal representatives and NGOs in the methodology of planning work with former prisoners, including how to plan local budgets	Municipal representatives are better able to plan and mobilise their budget to support former prisoners
T3	Features of methods of enlightening human rights topics (12-13 March 2013 – Astana)	21 journalists from 5 different regions of Kazakhstan	To train journalists on criminal justice reform, the current situation in Kazakhstan prisons and techniques for bringing penal reform and human rights of prisoners to the public's attention	Increased media coverage and public awareness of re-socialisation of former prisoners
T4	Municipalities learn how to work with former prisoners (16-17 April 2013 – Astana)	27 municipal representatives from 15 regions of Kazakhstan; 18 NGO representatives	Training of municipal representatives and NGOs in the methodology of planning work with ex-prisoners, including how to plan local budgets	Municipal representatives are better able to plan and mobilise their budget to support former prisoners

Table 5: PRI's re-socialisation of former prisoners training activities

In summary, PRI had a good training strategy for this project that was focused on developing the capacity of government officials, municipalities, civil society and journalists. The training strategy reinforced and complemented the other activities of this project. Interviews with key informants suggest that the trainings: (a) were delivered to a high standard; (b) effectively utilised international experts to provide good practice examples from other countries; (c) raised awareness and knowledge on the re-socialisation of former prisoners in Kazakhstan. However, unfortunately, PRI failed to collect data from the trainee participants before the course, during the course, or after the course. As a result, there is limited evidence available to assess the extent to which the participants' knowledge and skills were increased through this project.

4.3 Target Outcome 3: Rehabilitative, educational, social and vocational services provided to prisoners after release

The provision of re-socialisation and rehabilitative services to former prisoners is a key ingredient of the projects theory of change (Figure 1). Indeed, without the assistance of governmental and non-governmental services and programmes, it is difficult for the impact to be realised. The importance of care following a period of imprisonment should not be underestimated. The Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners make it clear that the duty of society does not end with a prisoner's release (rule 64): 'there should, therefore, be governmental or private agencies capable of lending the released prisoner efficient aftercare directed towards lessoning of prejudice against him and towards his social rehabilitation'.

In Kazakhstan, a number of aftercare services are currently being offered to former prisoners by both governmental and NGOs. To support this service provision, the project administered a small grants programme for NGOs. Five NGOs in different regions of Kazakhstan (see Figure 6) received a small grant from PRI. Each NGO received approximately $8,000 USD to implement a pilot project focused on service provision to former prisoners. The small grants programme commenced in March 2012 and ended in October 2013 (approximately 18 months).
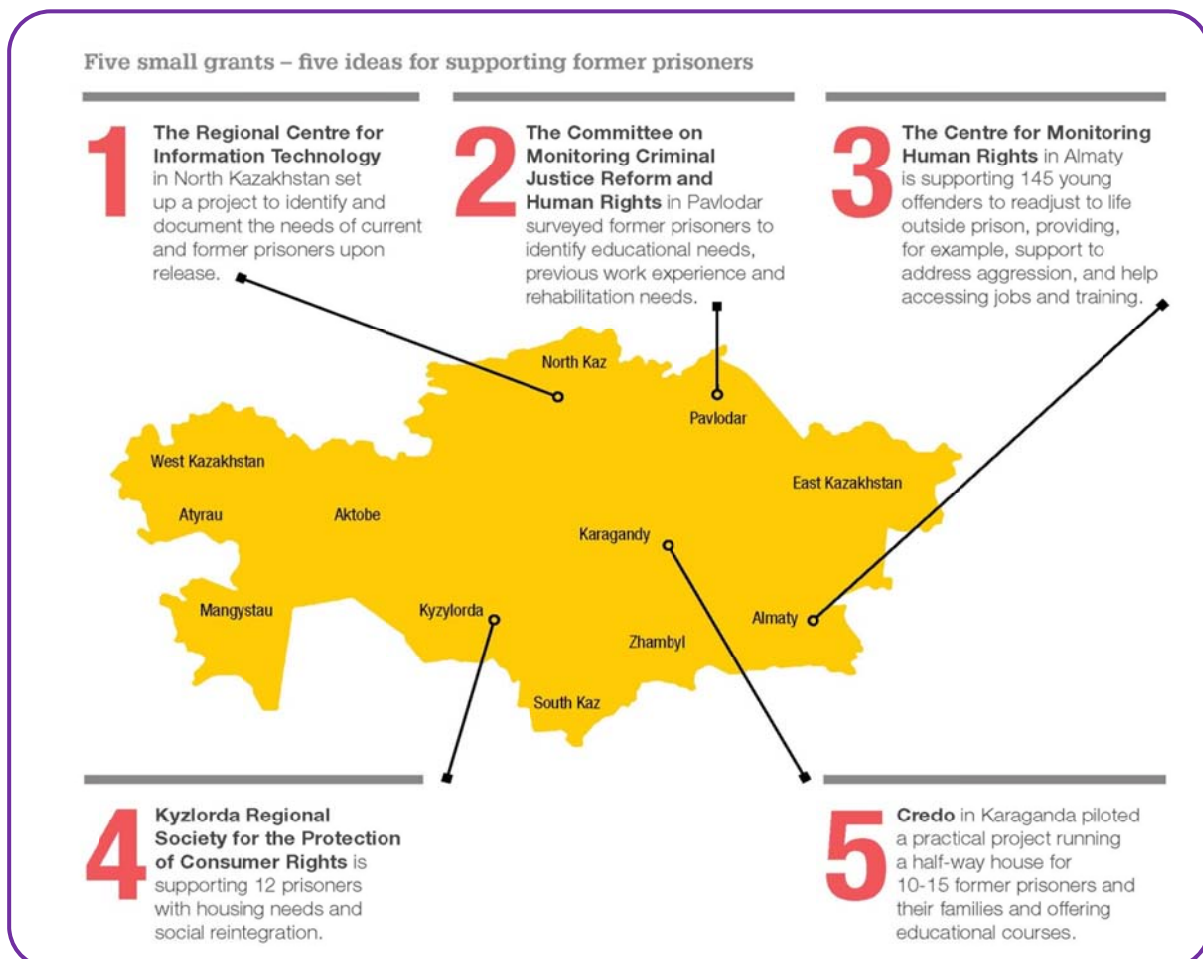

Figure 6: Overview of the NGO small grants programme (source: PRI; 2012: 29)

The baseline report (2012) provided a detailed overview of each project and PRI's mid-term monitoring report (2012) provided a progress report. The evaluator met with a staff member of each of the NGOs on 17 October 2013 and conducted a two-hour focus group discussion. The NGOs are

currently compiling their final report which will provide details of the final outputs and outcomes. Without having access to the final reports it is difficult to do a summative evaluation of the NGO grants programme. This section will therefore provide a brief mid-term evaluation of the small grants programme using the baseline report, mid-term monitoring report and focus group results.

As the project theory of change shows (Figure 1), service provision to former prisoners is a long-term outcome that is very dependent upon (a) increased financial resources; (b) increased political will of municipalities and state authorities; (c) increased capacity of NGOs; (d) increased co-ordination between Government Ministries, Government Agencies, Penitentiaries?, municipalities and civil society. This evaluation has established that: (a) there are limited financial resources available for services to ex-prisoners; (b) there are variable levels of political at either the central and regional level; (c) limited capacity of local NGOs to provide services; and (d) low levels of co-operation and coordination between stakeholders.

Through this project, there has been an improvement in all of these areas, particularly political will. However, it will take many years to make substantial progress in all areas. Consequently, it is too early to evaluate whether this outcome has been realised. We should not expect large-scale provision of services and support to former prisoners for many years. This section will therefore focus on (a) what the current situation is in Kazakhstan with regards to assistance provided to prisoners after release; (b) analysis of the relevance of the services provided through the small grants programme; (c) progress update of the main outputs and outcome of the small grants programme so far.

Current situation in Kazakhstan

PRI has recently commissioned a research study of women prisoners in Kazakhstan (PRI, 2014). The research involved a survey of 288 women prisoners. The research analyses support requirements women prisoners needed to build a new life following release (Table 6). The NGO small grants programme is more generic: four of the projects focus on both female and male former prisoners and one of the project focuses on child offenders. The support requirements highlighted in Table 6 were not linked to directly to the needs of women's prisoners (e.g. the Bangkok Rules) and can be taken as a generic list of support requirements that are not gender specific. In other words, both male and female former prisoners need employment, housing and treatment for health problems. It should be noted the research is focused on women and is therefore not a representative sample that can be applied to all former prisoners in Kazakhstan. However, the research is relevant for this project because it gives a snapshot of the types of support required and services received

Employment	59%
Housing	43%
Treatment for health problems	33%
Reunification with child / children	30%
Reunification with family / spouse	25%
Financial support for education / training	22%
Child care support	15%
Access to legal advice	12%
Counselling / therapy for mental health	9%
Counselling / therapy for substance abuse	8%
Assistance with return to home country	7%
Protection from violence	7%
Counselling / therapy for trauma survival	4%

Table 6: Support requirements to build a new life needed following release (PRI, 2014)

The women prisoners identified a number of ways in which they would need support on their release from prison. The most common support they expressed was for help with finding employment – half of women in Kazakhstan highlighted this as a priority. Around 40 per cent of women required support with housing and a quarter stated they needed support with treatment for health problems. Several of the identified needs reflect the social isolation endured by women prisoners - a fifth of women indicated that support to reunite with their family and spouse would help them rebuild their lives; 37 percent wanted support to reunify with their child or children (PRI; 2014). However, the list is not exhaustive.

Table 7 shows that just three per cent of women received assistance following release. Very small numbers of women said they received help from NGOs or from governmental social services. Table 7 shows the type of assistance received.

	Healthcare assistance	7%
	Assistance with finding employment	5%
	Skills training	4%
	Psycho social support	3%
What assistance did you receive upon release?	Counselling for mental health / addiction	3%
	Education	2%
	Legal advice	1%
	Housing assistance	1%
	Financial	1%
	Other	1%

Table 7: Type of assistance provided to former women prisoners (PRI; 2014)

The findings shown in Table 6 and 7 demonstrate that much more support is needed to help former prisoners build a new life and to prevent reoffending. The services listed in Table 7 are similar to those identified by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) handbook on the prevention of recidivism and the social reintegration of offenders. The UNODC handbook identifies the following aftercare and re-entry assistance:

- Job market re-entry assistance
- Lodgings and financial assistance
- Access to health care and social security
- Family support
- Substance abuse interventions

The services outlined in Table 7 and those identified by the UNODC handbook were compared to the results of a similar survey published in the project baseline report. The results of the baseline report showed similar results with the notable absence of assistance in obtaining identity documentation. In Kazakhstan, many former prisoners do not have identity documentation or have an outdated USSR passport. This poses a serious risk to their reintegration into society after release because they need identity documentation to access the government services that are listed in Table 7.

The baseline research also found upon release that prisoners often did not know what services were available and recommended that NGOs provide information on the services that are available for former prisoners. NGO's participating in the small grants programme provides a 'social passport' or a 'card of social support' which provides key information on accommodation, health care, employment and education. Such information support helps to improve the uptake of services upon release.

Relevance of the services provided through the small grant programme

To assess the relevance of the small grants programme, Table 8 compares the services listed in Table 7 (with the addition of identity documentation and information on availability of services) to the services that are provided through the small grants programme.

Service	Number of NGO's that provide this service	Participating NGO's that provide this service
Healthcare assistance	1	Kyzylorda regional society on protection of consumer rights
Assistance with finding employment	2	(1) Regional Centre for New Information Technologies; (2) Credo
Skills training	2	(1) Credo;(2) Kyzylorda regional society on protection of consumer rights
Psycho social support	2	(1) Centre for monitoring of human rights; (2) Credo
Counselling for mental health/addiction	0	
Education	0	
Legal advice	1	Committee on Monitoring of Criminal Justice reform and Human Rights
Housing assistance	2	(1) Credo; (2) Kyzylorda regional society on protection of consumer rights
Financial	0	
Identity documentation	2	(1) Committee on Monitoring of Criminal Justice reform and Human Rights; (2) Credo
Information services	4	(1) Centre for monitoring of human rights; (2) Committee on Monitoring of Criminal Justice reform; (3) Regional Centre for informational technologies; (4) Kyzylorda regional society on protection of consumer rights;

Table 8: Services provided by small grant programme NGO's

Table 8 shows that 73% of the prioritised services identified are being delivered through the small grant programme. This demonstrates that the services provided through the programme are highly relevant compared to the findings shown in Table 6 and 7. It can be concluded therefore that the services provided through the small grants programme is providing the support needed to help former prisoner build a new life that helps to prevent reoffending. Table 8 also shows that there is an important role for Government Agencies and private companies. Formal educational, health services and counselling are traditionally provided through Government Agencies. The provision of legal and financial assistance suggests there is also a role for banks and legal firms. It is clear that NGO's view their role as an information service provider and match maker to ensure they supply former prisoners with the information and support they need to access Government services.

Moving forward, it is important that the NGO's collect data and continue to track what happens to their beneficiaries after they leave the programme. For example, are they employed, have they secured accommodation, have they reoffended? Such data will provide NGOs and policy makers with the evidence required to assess impact. This information can also be used to assess what works and what doesn't work with regards to support to former prisoners.

Progress update of NGO small grant programme

Project 1: The Centre for Monitoring of Human Rights

PRI's grant has enabled the Centre for Monitoring of Human Rights (Table 9) to pilot an anti-aggression programme for juveniles. The Centre adapted the Aggression Replacement Training programme that has been piloted in other countries. It is a 10-week cognitive behavioural multi-component intervention designed to target youths aged 12 to 17 years old who display aggressive and violent behaviour. The programme is centred on skill building and group discussions to increase participation and exchange of learning. Children participate in the programme during their summer holidays. The Centre employs six state-trained psychologists to run the programme (Focus group discussion, 17 October 2013).

Project Title	The Centre for Monitoring of Human Rights
Implementing NGO	Sauygu
Location	Almaty
Project Overview	The centre is focused on working with juvenile offenders. The centre is piloting an anti-aggression programme that includes art and puppet theatre therapy. The centre has recently extended its activities to focus providing human rights training for prison staff. The centre also creates a 'social passports' for juveniles which includes documentation and information on accommodation, health care and education.
Project Objectives	The centre has six objectives: - Involvement of psychologists to engage with staff and juvenile offenders - Increased dialogue with the state on former juvenile offenders - Increased involvement of civil society - Transfer of good practice from other countries - Increased awareness for staff at the Penal System Department
Project Activities	- Psychological anti-aggression programme for juvenile offenders - Social passports for juveniles – documentation and information on accommodation, health care and continuation of study - Research which included a survey of 93 juveniles and legislation analysis - Results of research used to publish a brochure, entitled: 'Helping ex-prisoners' - Human rights training for staff of juvenile detention facilities
Outputs	- 107 children have participated in the anti-aggression programme (Focus group discussion, 17 October 2013) - 93 juvenile offenders completed the survey (Baseline report)
Outcome	When they enter the anti-aggression programme, the children take a test to assess their level aggression through a scale rating. They repeat the same test at the end of the programme. The test results show that the programme has successfully reduced levels of aggression in the children that have participated in the programme. (Focus group discussion, 17 October 2013)

Table 9: The Centre for Monitoring of Human Rights

As the outcome in Table 9 highlights, the initial results of the project are encouraging. During the focus group discussion, the Chair Person of the Centre claimed that test results show that the programme has consistently reduced the levels of aggression for the 107 children that have participated. Subject to funding, the Chair would like to extend the anti-aggression programme to target adult offenders and prison staff. Overall, it seems that this is an innovative programme and it will be interesting to examine the evidence (e.g. test results) that is provided in the final report.

Project 2: Committee on Monitoring of Criminal Justice reform and Human Rights

This project focused primarily on providing an information service to prisoners leaving prison. The staff of the project have a good relationship with the local prison and have obtained a list of the prisoners that are awaiting release. Staff work with the prisoners to create a 'card of social support' which provides information about prisoners' educational levels, work experience and support needs to reintegrate well back into society.

Project Title	Committee on Monitoring of Criminal Justice Reform and Human Rights
Implementing NGO	Committee on Monitoring of Criminal Justice reform and Human Rights
Location	Pavlodar region (North-East Kazakhstan)
Project Overview	The project focused on creating a 'card of social support' for former prisoners. This card contains information about prisoners educational levels, work experience, and needs to adapt to society.
Project Aim	To develop recommendations on improving the existing practices in preparation of prisoners for release and develop a model for interaction of state stakeholders and civil society organisations in offering social assistance to ex-prisoners in need of support in their reintegration into society.
Project Activities	- Develop a survey to identify prisoners needs - Visited four correctional institutions - Analysis of local legislation - Assist ex-prisoners to obtain Identification documentation (e.g. passport) - Assist ex-prisoners by creating a 'card of social support' which contains information about prisoners educational levels, work experience, and needs to adapt to society - Assist ex-prisoners in inheritance claims
Outputs	- Surveyed 50 prisoners expecting release (Baseline report) - 78 ex-prisoners have received a social card through the project (Project monitoring report, May 2012)
Outcome	- Results of the survey showed that prisoners had knowledge and were aware of the organisations they would need to refer to after release. The project concluded that information awareness activities in penitentiary institutions of the Pavlodar region are appropriate. Survey showed that many prisoners need help finding a job and accommodation upon release (Baseline report, 2012) - Of the 78 former prisoners that received a social card, the vast majority did not need any special social support because they have kept good family relations and social connections (Baseline report, 2012) - The project has successfully helped former prisoners take advantage and use existing services that are provided by the state. For example, enrolment in a computer literacy course has enabled former prisoners to develop their computer skills and to use the e-government web site. The e-government site has given them access to employment and housing opportunities. (Focus group, 17 Oct 13)

Table 10: Committee on Monitoring of Criminal Justice Reform and Human Rights

This project is rather conservative compared to some of the more innovative projects of the scheme. However, the project does address two major problems: (1) lack of coordination between Government agencies and municipalities means that many prisoners that leave prison do not have information about the services that are available to them; (2) many prisoners do not have identity documentation and therefore struggle to access services. This project tackles these two problems directly and as the outcome in Table 10 suggests, the information and documentation services provided through this project has helped former prisoners to access existing Government services.

Project 3: Return

The Return project is a half-way house (School of Reintegration) that offers temporary accommodation to former prisoners. Residents receive vocational training in horticultural and entrepreneurship; they are taught how to self-sufficiently run a rural household. For example, they keep hens, rabbits and grow their own food. The entrepreneurship training teaches them how to start their own business and they provide advice on how to get access to starting capital, e.g. micro-finance. The School has the capacity to house up to six former prisoners at any one time and employs social workers and psychologists to work with former prisoners.

Project Title	Return
Implementing NGO	Credo
Location	Volniy township of Abay region (East Kazakhstan)
Project Overview	The School of Reintegration is a half-way house that offers temporary accommodation to former prisoners. Those that stay at the School are taught how to run a rural household so they can become self-sufficient. This includes horticultural skills and entrepreneurship training. Former prisoners that leave the School have the knowledge and skills to start their own business or to run a self-sufficient household.
Project Aim	To establish the 'School of reintegration' for prisoners to attend after release from a penitentiary institution to enable them to become part of the social and economic life of the region.
Project Activities	- Offer temporary accommodation to former prisoners - Educational lessons for residents- running a countryside household - Develop and publish mythological materials for ex-prisoners on the themes taught at the school - Built a facility for fostering hens - Recover identity documentation for former prisoners - Media work
Outputs	- 72 former prisoners have been assisted through the project - 45 former prisoners have been received vocational training - Vegetables and greens were produced and used for catering purposes - Short-video of project was broadcasted on the Kazakhstan-Karaganda TV channel
Outcome	Limited information is available on the outcomes of the project. However, during the focus group discussion, Credo's Director noted: "we have given former prisoners a place to stay and have provided them with training. Some of our clients have gone on to start their own business; others have used their skills to find a job." (17 Oct 2013)

Table 11: Credo

Analysis against the services listed in table 8 shows that Credo provides five services that are critical for building former prisoners lives after release: (1) housing; (2) assistance with employment; (3) skills training; (4) psycho social support; (5) identity documentation. The project has ambitious plans to expand:

> We have recently secured funding through the Japanese Embassy. We have bought an island and we plan to build a rehabilitation centre on the island. Our aim is become self-sufficient, e.g. grow our own food so that we do not have to rely on donor funding. Self-sufficiency is a lesson we want to pass on to former prisoners. (Focus group, 17 Oct 2013)

Information with regards to the outcomes of the project are limited at this stage. It will therefore be interesting to read their final report to see what has been achieved.

Project 4: Regional Centre for informational technologies

This project is focused on developing a regional information centre for prisoners and former prisoners. Services include: recovery of identity documentation; assistance to find employment; support with legal issues. The Centre has established a relationship with seven prisons to facilitate their re-socialisation work.

Project Title	Regional Centre for informational technologies
Implementing NGO	Regional Centre for informational technologies
Location	Petropavlovsk, North Kazakhstan
Project Overview	This pilot project is working on documentation of current and former prisoners. The Centre has established a relationship with seven prisons to facilitate their re-socialisation work
Project Activities	- Social survey of former prisoners (prisoners already released) - Social survey of prisoners preparing for release - Publication of brochure - Documentary film - Working meetings with organisations working on rehabilitation issues - Seminars with prisoners and their relatives to discuss re-socialisation issues - Developed a re-socialisation kit for ex-prisoners - Develop a database of former prisoners who served sentences in the region - Local municipality helped them to identify suitable job vacancies for ex-prisoners
Outputs	- 40 former prisoners participated in a social survey - 300 prisoners preparing for release participated in the social survey - Consultation support provided to 5 former prisoners - 8 working meetings with organisations working on rehabilitation issues - 13 seminars with prisoners and 3 meetings with relatives of prisoners
Outcome	- Results of survey showed that employment is not seen as a top priority problem by former prisoners. 5% of former prisoners were referred to departments of employment when they sought a job. 43% of prisoners preparing for release said that they were planning to establish their own independent business. 94% had already identified where they would live and 70% were clear about employment. 90% rely on the help of their families and friends. - Helped one former prisoners find employment and offered social support to four former prisoners

Table 12: Regional Centre for Information Technologies

This project had a good start by conducting research and agreeing a memorandum of cooperation on re-socialisation assistance with the Penal System Department and individual heads of penitentiary institutions in North Kazakhstan. However, since then the project has provided support to a very small number of people. In the baseline report the Director of the project noted:

> In terms of the real help extended to prisoners, you can see we have done much less: we consulted five former prisoners who were referred directly to us. As a result of this, we helped one former prisoner find employment and offered social support to four (page 19)

During the focus group discussion the Director noted that the main challenge has been the low number of former prisoners that are referred to the Centre. The project aims to increase referrals by; developing and distributing booklets and leaflets; providing individualised responses through letters and emails; advertising their services through the media; arranging meetings and workshops with former prisoners. It will be interesting to read the final report to find out if these strategies have been successful.

Project 5: Kyzylorda Centre of Re-socialisation

The Kyzlorda Centre of Re-socialisation is a half-way house that provides temporary accommodation that provides vocational training, information and social support to prisoners that have recently been released from prison. Former prisoners therefore undertake a phased release programme that helps to prepare them for the outside world. The former prisoners stay at the Centre until they are ready to rebuild their lives in the outside world. This is typically between 6-12 months. During the focus group discussion, a staff member said of those that leave the Centre, some have been successful and others have not. He noted that they have to make their own choices and that sometimes they make the wrong choices (17 October 2013). The Centre focuses on changing the behaviour of the former prisoners by providing them with social support and modelling positive values and behaviours.

Project Title	Kyzylorda Centre of Re-socialisation
Implementing NGO	Kyzylorda Regional Society on Protection of Consumer Rights
Location	Kyzylorda region, Akzharm township
Project Overview	The Centre is a half-way house that provides temporary accommodation and social support to prisoners that are recently released from prison. The former prisoners undertake a phased release programme to prepare them for the outside world. The former prisoners live in a countryside house.
Project Objectives	- Organisation and provision of social support to former prisoners and assistance in provision of social and household living conditions - Develop the social and cultural capital of former prisoners - Refer former prisoners to specialist support and services
Project Activities	- Temporary accommodation provided to former prisoners - Work-based activities centred on greenhouse and workshop production - Development of a brochure that contains information on social services available for ex-prisoners - Seminar for project stakeholders to discuss issue of employment, prevention of tuberculosis and establishing social contacts
Outputs	- At different stages of the project, 8-16 ex-prisoners resided as the Centre - All former prisoners staying at the centre have worked in the greenhouse or workshop. They have received wages, which have been deposited into their bank account
Outcome	- 6 former prisoners were released from the Centre on early release conditions. These ex-prisoners were reunited with their families and found employment. - 2 former prisoners returned to the colony-settlement in Tartugai township because they required medical treatment. - The former prisoners staying at the Centre have not re-offended during the project timeframe - The former prisoners at the Centre have: (a) Increased their vocational skills; (b) Increased their knowledge of contacts for services in the area - Eligible former prisoners staying at the centre had their pension and disability certification issued during the re-socialisation stage before release

Table 13: Kyzylorda Centre of Re-socialisation

One of the most interesting aspects of this project is that a former prisoner works at the Centre on a full-time basis. During the focus group discussion, he noted: "because of my criminal background, the former prisoners are more open with me. I have a good connection with them; they often ask to talk to me in confidence. We are on the same level, it's definitely an advantage." (17 October 2013)

5. Conclusion

The government decision in 2011 to decentralise responsibilities relating to re-socialisation and rehabilitation of former prisoners in Kazakhstan created an opportunity for civil society to engage with regional municipalities. Municipality awareness of their responsibilities to provide rehabilitation support to former prisoners was extremely low in 2011. Budgets remained unspent, municipalities were reluctant to take responsibilities and former prisoners received limited support. The timing was therefore ripe for PRI to develop and implement a project that focused on rehabilitation and re-socialisation of former prisoners. With this context in mind, the design and timing of this project was very good.

At the beginning of the project, PRI carried out comprehensive research into the rehabilitation and re-socialisation situation of prisoners in Kazakhstan. This included a focus on what happens before release (prisoners) and after release (former prisoners). The baseline report covered all the regions of Kazakhstan and provided three important functions (a) it provided an up-to-date analysis of the current situation in Kazakhstan (baseline); (b) it generated evidence for policy makers and civil society organisations working on rehabilitation issues; (c) a number of recommendations were developed for the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Using the evidence contained in the baseline report, PRI carried out a dual advocacy strategy focused on the Office of the Prime Minister (central) and municipalities (regional). The advocacy strategy was effectively implemented and helped to increase awareness and political buy-in at the central and regional level. Indeed, this evaluation has established that the first outcome – increased awareness and access to evidence at central Government and local municipality level – did materialise during the project period. Increased awareness and political will is an intangible income that is difficult to measure. It is therefore difficult to establish the extent to which the outcome occurred. However, interviews with key informants did establish that awareness has been raised to a significant extent. Moreover, PRI is the only organisation working on rehabilitation issues at both a central and regional level. It is therefore safe to conclude that awareness was increased because of the activities carried out through this project.

To complement the advocacy strategy, PRI provided training and capacity support to Government Ministries, municipalities, journalists and civil society. The training strategy was tailored towards targeted stakeholders. However, it was perhaps the weakest aspect of the project because there is a lack of monitoring data and evidence to show how capacity has been developed. At times it was difficult to establish what the trainings were trying to achieve in terms of developing the capacity, skills and knowledge required for effective rehabilitation support to former prisoners.

The baseline research, advocacy and capacity building helped to establish the groundwork required for Government and NGOs to provide effective support services to former prisoners. Indeed, it is important to note that the impact – improved social reintegration of former prisoners and reduced likelihood of reoffending – will only be reached if services and support are provided to prisoners after release. The NGO small grant programme was therefore extremely important because it ensured that services and support were provided directly to former prisoners. An initial assessment of the NGO small grant programmes suggests that they are effectively providing the relevant services that are required to help prisoners rebuild their lives after being released from prison. At present it is not possible to evaluate the impact of the small grants programme because it will take time for the result to occur. It is important that PRI and the NGOs continue to monitor the progress of the former prisoners after they have left the programme.

It should also be noted that rehabilitation services provided to prisoners before release are a vital ingredient for successful rehabilitation. A project focused on rehabilitation support provided in

prisons is a huge project in itself and therefore PRI was right to focus its attention on former prisoners. The baseline report, advocacy and capacity work have to a certain extent paved the way for a future PRI project that is focused on developing an effective rehabilitation system within prisons. Such a project would be a natural complement to this project. However at the same time, it is very important that PRI continues to work on rehabilitation of former prisoners. This project has really just scratched the surface in terms of developing an effective rehabilitation system in Kazakhstan. PRI needs to build on the groundwork that has been laid and secure more funding to continue its work on rehabilitation and re-socialisation of prisoners before and after release.

6. Lessons learnt and recommendations

6.1 Project design and monitoring

Identifying and communicating a clear theory of change	
Lesson	The project design was strong and appropriate in terms of its underlying theory of change and its set of activities. However, the project plan could have been stronger in terms of presenting the hierarchy of objectives. The theory of change presented in this evaluation report was reconstructed retrospectively by the evaluator. In future, it would be good if a clear theory of change with robust results statements was presented at the beginning of the project in the project plan. This will be useful for (a) communicating the project to external stakeholders; (b) developing appropriate and robust indicators; (c) using those indicators to track change.
Recommendation	When planning new projects, the PRI Central Asia region should map a theory of change for the project which shows a clear hierarchy and logic between the activities, outputs, outcomes and impact. The theory of change should be incorporated into the concept note and project proposal and should be used as a communication tool with donors and partners.

Developing and using robust indicators to guide monitoring	
Lesson	The indicators in the project plan were particularly weak. Indicators were not aligned to the result; were often expressed as statements rather than indicators; and did not have a target. Indicators were not used to guide monitoring. PRI should ensure that future projects have robust indicators that are aligned to the result and have a target. Indicators should guide monitoring. Data should be collected on a regular basis to track the indicators. This will help PRI establish whether it has achieved the desired the change.
Recommendation	Once the theory of change is agreed with all stakeholders, PRI should then formulate robust indicators at the output and outcome level. The project coordinator should collect data to track the indicators and should record the data in a document, spreadsheet or database.

This should encompass monitoring against: (a) the output indicators to show that the project is being efficiently implemented and reaching its targets; and (b) the outcome indicators to show what changes have materialised. Output monitoring should be more about numbers and should be updated on a regular basis (every 1-3 months). Outcome monitoring will be a combination of numbers and narrative and can be done less often (every 6-12 months). The mid-project donor report should provide an update on what has been achieved compared to the indicators and targets. |

Monitoring and evaluation of training events	
Lesson	Monitoring of training and capacity development activities were a particular weak point of the project. Data and evidence was not available to show that the training events had increased the knowledge, capacity and skills of the trainees. It was therefore very difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the training courses and it was not possible to discern whether the outcome had materialised.
Recommendation	Compared to advocacy and the small grants programme, monitoring and evaluation of training is relatively straightforward. PRI should routinely collect data from the trainee beneficiaries before the training, at the end of the training and 4-6 months after the training. This will enable PRI to evidence that: (a) the content was relevant for the trainees; (b) the trainees were satisfied with the training; (c) the trainees learnt and understood the training content; (d) as a result of the training, the trainees changed their behaviour and applied what they learnt to their day-to-day work. PRI's Evaluation and Organisational Learning Adviser should work with project coordinators to help them do this.

6.2 Advocacy strategy

Develop and communicate a learning case study of PRI's advocacy strategy	
Lesson	The design and implementation of the advocacy strategy was a particular strength of the project. The advocacy strategy was strong because: • Good timing – decentralisation provided a unique window of opportunity to work with the municipalities. • Robust evidence – PRI carried out extensive research into the rehabilitation situation of prisoners before and after release. PRI successfully communicated the results of the baseline report during the project forums and roundtable, which enhanced the credibility of its advocacy. • Flexibility – the advocacy strategy was constantly adapted to changing circumstances. For example, switching focus from the Ministry of Justice to the Office of the Prime Minster (PM). • Good understanding of power relations - PRI carried out a dual advocacy strategy targeted at the Office of the PM and the municipalities. PRI understood that the Office of the PM had the power to influence and apply pressure to the Ministry of the Internal Affairs and the municipalities. • Effective media work – PRI worked closely with the media throughout the project by holding press conferences prior to events and holding a training course for journalists. This helped to raise the profile of the project and reinforced PRI's advocacy strategy.
Recommendation	The advocacy strategy of this project should be turned into a learning case study and shared with the other PRI regions. The learning case study can also be used to support future project applications. The PRI Central Asia team should continue to use this advocacy strategy for future rehabilitation and re-socialisation projects.

6.3 Rehabilitation and re-socialisation of prisoners and former prisoners

	Create future rehabilitation and re-socialisation projects
Lesson	When this project began in 2012 the baseline was very low in terms of the political will to provide effective support to prisoners before and after release. Indeed, with the exception of the two state-run rehabilitation centres and a few small-scale civil society programmes, very little rehabilitative support was provided to prisoners and former prisoners. This project has helped to improve the situation and there is now more political will at the Government and municipality level. Moreover, revisions to Kazakhstan's Criminal Code should provide more resources for Government, municipalities and civil society to mutually work on rehabilitation of prisoners before and after release. PRI's expertise and experience should be used to support this process.
Recommendation	PRI should use the evidence provided in the final project report and this evaluation report to design and submit new project proposals related to rehabilitation of prisoners before and after release. This project has focused on rehabilitation of prisoners after release, future projects should focus on rehabilitation of prisoners both before **and** after release.

6.4 NGO small grants programme

	Internal discussion on sustainability, monitoring and evaluation of small grant programmes
Lesson	Some of PRI's projects contain an NGO small grants element and others do not. For this project, a small grants programme was required because it is not possible to achieve impact without the provision of services and support provided directly to former prisoners. However, the impact of the small grants programme cannot be measured at the end of the project because it takes time for the result to occur. A former prisoner may spend 12 months at a half-way house and receive various support services from the NGO, including vocational training and psycho social support. To evaluate the effectiveness of this support, it would be necessary to wait for example 1-2 years to see how the former prisoner has rebuilt his or her life. With regards to the evaluation of NGO small grant programmes, this raises several questions for PRI related to the timing, purpose and method of evaluation.
Recommendation	PRI should have an internal discussion about the design, sustainability, monitoring and evaluation of its small grant programmes. The following questions can help guide the discussion: • How can PRI add value to the small grants programme beyond direct financial support? For this project, PRI's added value was the fact that it involved NGOs in the other project activities: they participated in the forums, roundtables and trainings. This gave the NGOs a national platform to engage with other stakeholders and to raise their profile with potential donors. • How can PRI increase the sustainability of its small grants programmes? When PRI's financial support ends, there is a real danger that the NGOs will be forced to close down the project unless additional funds are raised.

	• How can PRI support the NGOs to help them to develop a robust evidence base? For pilot projects there should be a strong link between innovation, learning and evaluation. M&E is particularly important for pilot projects because it helps to answer the following questions for policy makers and donors: does this work? Should this project be expanded and is it worth funding? However, the NGOs have limited capacity in terms of knowledge to systematically collect data at the output and outcome level. • When, how and by whom should the small grants programme be evaluated? PRI should consider commissioning a small impact evaluation of the small grants programme 1-2 years after the programme has ended. However, such an impact assessment is dependent on the NGO developing a monitoring system to collect the data, e.g. tracking what happens to former prisoners when they leave the programme.

7. References

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Appendix 1 – Kirkpatrick's model of learning

Effective measurement of training programmes requires a co-orientated monitoring and evaluation strategy that is focused on collecting data from the trainee beneficiaries on a number of different levels at different stages of the programme (see Table 4).
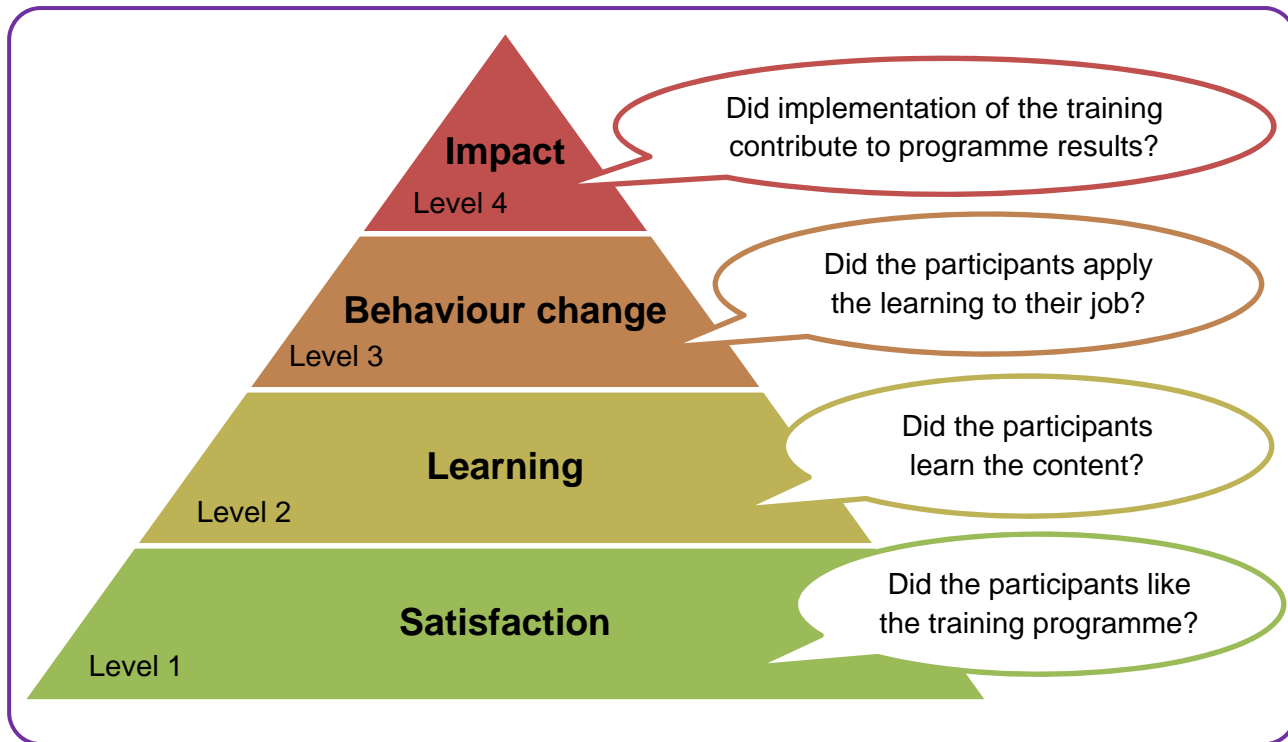

Figure 4: Kirkpatrick's model of learning (Kirkpatrick, 1959)