



knowledge without boundaries

# EIFL-PLIP

Improving lives and livelihoods through innovative public library services

## Library helping young people into employment East Kazakhstan Oblast Pushkin Library

IMPACT CASE STUDY

The Youth IT-Yurt service –

- Helped 55 young people find work, develop small businesses or improve their jobs.
- Encouraged 10 young people to enter colleges of further education.
- Inspired two local authorities to set up new e-learning centres in their areas.
- Won recognition – the East Kazakhstan administration has chosen the library to manage a major grant to create free internet access in 17 village libraries.

Over 37,000 young people living in East Kazakhstan region are unemployed. In Ust Kamenogorsk, the administrative centre of East Kazakhstan region, officials estimate that about 11,000 young people are unemployed – but librarians fear the number could be much higher because many unemployed youth do not register with the Employment Centre.

More and more jobs require IT (information technology) skills, but young people struggle to afford training. Also, many Kazakh exiles have returned home from other countries since 1991, when Kazakhstan became independent. Young from returnees speak different languages and feel disconnected from Kazakh life. Concerned about these issues, librarians designed the [Youth IT-Yurt](#) service.

A yurt – a traditional round tent used by Kazakh nomads – seemed like the ideal space for training that combines technology, language and culture, and so librarians found a yurt manufacturer and installed a yurt inside the library. With a grant of US\$15,000 from EIFL-PLIP to cover equipment and some operational costs for one year, the library installed 11 computers and wi-fi internet in the yurt. Computer training includes using the internet, social networking, and useful software skills: word-processing, accounting and web design. Trainees also attend job-seeking and confidence-building workshops.



*“Here, under the round dome of the yurt, young people share experiences and look for solutions to life’s daily problems like our ancestors did.” - Ms Bibigul Shagiyeva, Deputy Director of the library.*

*“At the library, I learned how to advertise my skills on the internet and to create a website. I sent out resumes and looked for a job online. Fortune smiled on me!” - Kuanysh Dyusupov, successful job-seeker.*



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In less than a year...

- 244 young people completed technology courses and job-seeking workshops.
- 70% of trainees used computers to write CVs, seek and apply for jobs.
- Pushkin Library attracted 2,000 new users – 12.8% of them unemployed youth.
- The Youth IT-Yurt service's webpage in the library website attracted over 9,000 visitors.

## The future

Future costs will be met by the library's budget.

Success has led to widespread recognition –

- The East Kazakhstan Administration has chosen the library to manage a US\$200,000 grant from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to fund internet and computers for 17 village libraries.
- The Culture Department in Zharma District has funded an e-room in rural Kalbatau library.
- Shygys village administration helped the library market the service to marginalized returnees from Uzbekistan, Mongolia and China. But to access the service, returnees had to commute to Ust Kamenogorsk. After seeing the benefits, the administration decided to open an e-learning centre in their own village.

The Youth IT-Yurt service has become a model for IT skills training, and the library is making a vital contribution to community development. The service is here to stay.

*“Everything was different in our new land (Kazakhstan). It was a difficult time for us, but thanks to this project, I have found a job as a secretary in Shygys village where I live.”*

*– Kamza Sayrangul, young returnee.*

The EIFL-PLIP grant was awarded in November 2011. A year later, the library assessed the impact of the service. Information presented here is based on the library's impact assessment. For further information, contact Ms Bibigul Shagiyeva at [director@pushkinlibrary.kz](mailto:director@pushkinlibrary.kz).

[EIFL](http://www.eifl.net) (Electronic Information for Libraries) is an international not-for-profit organization dedicated to enabling access to knowledge through libraries in more than 60 developing and transition countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. EIFL's Public Library Innovation Programme (EIFL-PLIP) supports libraries to implement community development projects. Learn more at [www.eifl.net/plip](http://www.eifl.net/plip). EIFL's Public Library Innovation Programme is supported by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

### Public libraries – partners in development

The deadline for the United Nations Millennium Development Goals – 2015 – is just two years away. Here's how Pushkin Library is helping achieve two important goals:

#### Goal 1 – Halve rural poverty

The library shows how, with limited additional resources, public libraries can improve the livelihoods of rural and marginalized urban communities – the people most at risk of falling into poverty.

#### Goal 8 – Universal access to ICT

Today, just over a third of Kazakhs use the internet. The Youth-IT Yurt service is helping people get connected through free internet access and training. Kazakhstan has over 4,000 public libraries. If they all had ICT and were offering training, that's thousands of newly skilled people every year.

*“I saw how people admire the library, and how participants are proud to use computers. And I thought – we will have the same library in our region!”*

*– Mr Amanzhol Dautov,  
Head of the Culture Department,  
Zharma District.*