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CENTRAL ASIA MEDIA PROGRAM (MEDIACAMP) FACT SHEET

OVERVIEW

The USAID-funded Central Asia Media Program (MediaCAMP) aims to develop a more balanced information environment in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to increase openness among youth and adults for differing ideas, opinions and perspectives and in turn increase their engagement in civic participation. The five-year, \$15 million program is implemented by Internews and runs from October 1, 2018 through September 30, 2023.

GOALS

GOAL ONE

Improve media's capacity to provide balanced, informed and unbiased reporting on key policy and public interest issues.

GOAL TWO

Increase media and information literacy among youth and adults so they become more critical consumers and producers of information;

GOAL THREE

Improve the legal enabling environment for media.

KEY RESULTS

- MediaCAMP has provided grant funding and fellowships for 295 local content production projects. Partner media, journalists, and other content producers have published over 4,185 pieces of content in Kazakh, Tajik, Uzbek, and Russian on important and under-covered issues like gender-based violence, poverty, education, the environment, youth, and people with disabilities, many in collaboration with CSOs. The project has trained 2,830 media professionals across the three countries.
- In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, MediaCAMP supported 37 rapid response media projects to produce vital news content about the public health situation, reaching approximately 23.9 million views. Critically, this support also allowed media outlets to continue operating during the pandemic-induced economic crisis.
- MediaCAMP has brought together hundreds of media practitioners, educators, CSO representatives, and government officials from across Central Asia for 20 major regional events that served as educational and networking platforms, strengthening ties between regional media and establishing mutual standards of professional and ethical journalism, media literacy, and freedom of expression. This includes the annual region-wide Central Asia Media Festival and Journalism Award, which has inspired healthy competition among the five countries.
- To address local media's lack of resources to hire permanent correspondents outside of their own city, MediaCAMP facilitated the creation of a network of more than 220 citizen reporters in 35 cities, towns, and districts across Kazakhstan and Tajikistan, who produced over 1,300 pieces of content on pressing local social issues for 25 media outlet partners. In many cases, their materials triggered actions by local authorities to resolve reported problems.
- Over 10,500 youth, adults, and seniors from the three target countries have improved their ability to evaluate information critically and increased their resilience against mis- and disinformation by participating in media literacy activities, including media literacy schools, festivals, and trainings at Media and Digital Literacy (MDL) Houses.
- The project has promoted 13 positive changes to legislation in Kazakhstan and three in Tajikistan, and improved the capacity of five media associations (2 in Kazakhstan, 3 in Tajikistan) to serve as support networks for the media community, which has led to more transparency and openness, and built a stronger and more resilient independent media community in both countries.
- Project partners have offered 1,264 legal consultations to media and content producers (428 in Kazakhstan, 318 in Tajikistan, and 518 in Uzbekistan), providing pre-publication legal vetting and helping journalists protect themselves from undue harassment and frivolous lawsuits.