



CENTRAL ASIA INFORMATION INTEGRITY ACTIVITY (CAIIA)

OVERVIEW

The Central Asian media environment is increasingly infiltrated by disinformation and divisive narratives from external and internal actors. As Central Asian countries reclaim their national identities, independence and sovereignty, a historic opening has been created for media, civil society, and policy makers to work together to create healthier, more resilient information spaces.

Implemented by Internews and partners, including Zinc Network, the CAIIA program will assist media and civil society of Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to effectively recognize and address disinformation. CAIIA will also support national, local and independent media to meet audience needs, in national languages, and will work with governments and other institutional actors to advance information policies, strategies, and legal responses that strengthen information integrity.

GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The USAID-funded CAIIA program aims to enhance efforts by Central Asian countries to maintain and strengthen the integrity of their information space and build societal resilience against disinformation, through the following objectives:

CAIIA DETAILS

- ✓ OCTOBER 2023 – SEPTEMBER 2028
- ✓ REGIONAL ESTIMATED COST: \$12 MILLION
- ✓ FOCUS COUNTRIES: KAZAKHSTAN, TAJIKISTAN, UZBEKISTAN

OBJECTIVE ONE

Local information diversification and counter-disinformation efforts strengthen society's ability to develop, disseminate, access, and use information more effectively as informed citizens.

OBJECTIVE TWO

National and local media produce balanced, factual, and unbiased reporting on domestic and international affairs relevant to local audiences that strengthen the information integrity of Central Asian countries.

OBJECTIVE THREE

Central Asian countries advance information policies, strategies, and legal responses that strengthen information integrity of Central Asian countries.

ANTICIPATED RESULTS

A clearinghouse of knowledge on media and disinformation in Central Asia: CAIIA will map the local disinformation landscape; build an understanding of local audiences, their media consumption practices, and their vulnerability to dis- and misinformation; and identify paths to growing education and content in local languages. These efforts will ultimately build toward a media sector that better serves audiences' needs.

Localizing content, coverage, and training to provide reliable and engaging alternatives to disinformation: The public of Central Asia is more interested than ever in having media and other content meet them where they are, in the languages they speak at home. For Kazakh, Tajik, Uzbek, and minority languages, CAIIA will bring together experts to analyze how these languages are evolving in the modern digital world, promote innovative creators who work in their local languages, educate trainers in these languages, and provide spaces where educators, media professionals, and others can gather and discuss the future of their languages which in turn means the future of the content they consume and produce.

Diversifying and distributing the content to reach broader audiences with verifiable information on issues of social importance: Media will benefit from innovative formats, journalistic standards, taking on under-covered topics, increased capacity to publish more quality content to better target audiences and advertisers. CAIIA will address these needs through co-designed workshops, tailored training and mentorship, networking for journalists across the region, and drawing creators together across borders to publish work that resonates in several media spaces.

Opening space for free press and speech; reducing the influence of disinformation at a systemic level: By working closely with civil society and government partners in Central Asia, CAIIA will connect media and the public with legislators and reform processes. Building on previous programs and established relationships, CAIIA will support organizations, which analyze and advocate for legal reforms and bills, to educate the media sector about the effects of their national regulations and how to work with them to advocate for change. Given the critical importance of national and regional solutions to disinformation, CAIIA will also connect expertise and national efforts to initiate and adopt anti-disinformation policies and strategies to enhance media literacy.