



# USAID TRADE CENTRAL ASIA ACTIVITY

## OVERVIEW

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Trade Central Asia (TCA) activity is a catalyst for improving region-wide trade connectivity. This initiative focuses on harmonization of customs and border procedures, increasing public-private dialogue on trade and investment, improving cross-border firm-to-firm connectivity, and addressing gender-relevant trade issues.

## GOALS

### GOAL ONE: HARMONIZATION OF CUSTOMS AND BORDER PROCEDURES

#### Description

The Activity works with border agency leadership to design policy, legal, regulatory reforms, and institutional strengthening within their organizations to improve the cost and time needed to move goods across borders. Its objectives include compliance with international standards, particularly the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement.

#### Key/Anticipated Results

Simplified regional trade for Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan through

- The development of a Central Asian agreement on exchanging pre-arrival information.
- The digitalization of Customs services.
- Support for Turkmenistan's and Uzbekistan's World Trade Organization (WTO) accession process.

## **GOAL TWO: INCREASING PUBLIC-PRIVATE DIALOGUE ON CROSS-BORDER TRADE AND INVESTMENT**

### Description

The Activity incentivizes leading national private sector trade-related associations to cooperate as a coalition of self-interested entities reaching across borders to share information, raise awareness, and identify and advocate for trade reforms.

### Key/Anticipated Results

- Support for regional trade dialogue, hosting the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Central Asia Trade Forum.
- Training members of over 100 private sector associations from all five Central Asian countries on engaging government stakeholders in dialogue on trade issues.

## **GOAL THREE: IMPROVING FIRM-TO-FIRM CONNECTIVITY**

### Description

The Activity strengthens the ecosystem of trade promotion service providers that deliver certification, marketing, finance, transport/logistics, and other export-related services.

### Key/Anticipated Results

- Co-hosting the annual Bactria Food International Export Forum in the Tajikistan Khatlon region in 2022, 2023 and 2024.
- Helping over 50 of Central Asia's small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to improve their export capacity by engaging local consultants through the Trade Promotion Service Providers initiative.

## **GOAL FOUR: STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE OF CENTRAL ASIAN ECONOMIES THROUGH TRADE**

### Description

The Activity supports Central Asian exporters in reaching new markets in the Caucasus, Europe, the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia, and the U.S., in addition to accessing non-traditional industries such as garments. In particular, the activity helps increase trade along the Trans-Caspian Corridor.

### Key/Anticipated Results

- Promotion of the use of the Trans-Caspian Trade Route by Central Asian exporters.
- Increased Central Asian countries' trade to new international markets, generating export contracts worth \$80 million with partners in the Middle East, Caucasus, and Europe.
- Helping increase the efficiency of the Caspian seaports and helping the Government of Kazakhstan develop a national strategy to increase containerized cargo trade and transit.

## **WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT**

- USAID published the digital and print publication of the 'Women Artisans of Central Asia: A Lookbook Journey.' This 'Lookbook' showcases stunning items produced by 50 Central Asian women artisans.
- TCA supported activities of the Central Asia Women in Logistics and Transport (WiLAT) association in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

**IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD:** October 2022 – September 2026

**BUDGET:** \$34 Million

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