



CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT PROGRAM IN CENTRAL ASIA FACT SHEET

Building a vibrant and responsive civil society in Central Asia.

The USAID-funded Civil Society Support Program in Central Asia is a five-year, \$18 million program implemented by Eurasia Foundation to cultivate a vibrant and responsive civil society throughout the region, including Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, and build a new generation of forward-looking civil society leaders (2019-2024).

OBJECTIVES

The Civil Society Support Program in Central Asia centers on four inter-related objectives:

- Foster a cohort of civically responsible young leaders
- Strengthen civil society's role in promoting greater public transparency and accountability
- Enhance civil society's ability to quickly respond to emerging opportunities
- Build the capacity of civil society organizations to be financially viable and responsive to constituents.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP

- 163 participants from Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan
- 48 competitors in a participant-organized debate tournament
- Eight online courses and more than 200 consultations and 85 coaching sessions
- 25 youth leadership grants with a value of more than \$62,000 awarded

In recent years, young people across Central Asia have become more civically engaged than previous generations, using social media to advocate for and advance civic initiatives. However, there is a need for to foster such engagement with activities like mentorships, trainings, and small grants to lead community projects. In 2020, USAID's Civil Society Support Program launched the Central Asia

Youth Leadership Academy (CAYLA) for civically responsible young leaders who share goals, values and passion for positive change in their communities, enrolling 163 young civic leaders from Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. CAYLA members studied foundational skills in community engagement and leadership via interactive and engaging online activities. At each step, CAYLA members have had the opportunity to network with their peers, civic leaders, established CSOs and local government officials to share lessons about what works in community-level initiatives.

POLICY, RESEARCH, AND ADVOCACY

- 39 participants from Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan
- 15 proposals developed for collaborative policy analysis on budgeting processes
- Six transparency advocacy grants awarded
- Five policy research projects awarded

The Civil Society Support Program Policy Research School (PRS) offers mentoring, workshops, on-the-job training and peer-to-peer exchanges for CSOs, think tanks and independent researchers that build needed capacities for participation in policy development and the role of watchdogs in monitoring the public sector. PRS engaged its members in an advanced budget advocacy curriculum tailored to the policy areas of highest priority for them and aimed at improving ongoing advocacy initiatives and designing future campaigns on the budget process. The Civil Society Support Program also awards grants (more than \$188,000 in 2020) to support advocacy and research projects in Central Asia that strengthen civil society's role in promoting transparency, public accountability, and policy research.

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

- 12 Innovative Solution (formerly Open Door) Grants awarded

The Civil Society Support Program is designed to provide civil society actors with the resources they need to strengthen their work and address the priorities of their communities. To allow civil society to identify where they see the greatest need for investment, CSSP provides resources through ongoing, flexible grant competitions (more than \$81,000 awarded in 2020) to solicit and support timely project ideas and promote positive citizen participation and social innovations. Projects funded promote transparency and accountability, revitalized, inclusive communities and opportunities and protections for all.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

- Research paper published on the feasibility of social entrepreneurship in Uzbekistan
- 38 CSOs from Central Asia enrolled in the Institutional Development Program
- 16 Institutional Development Experts trained on and using the Civil Society Support Program Institutional Assessment Toolkit

Civil society organizations perform diverse and important tasks in Central Asian countries, and the Civil Society Support Program develops the skills, tools, and capacities of such organizations to diversify their funding sources and increase engagement with their constituents. Thirty-eight CSOs from Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan joined the Institutional Development Program in 2020. To support an evidence-based approach for capacity building in Central Asia, the Civil Society Support Program developed an Institutional Assessment Toolkit that its experts use to conduct tailored assessments and provide training in targeted areas for growth. In 2021, the Civil Society Support Program will offer Institutional Development Grants (average \$15,000) to help CSOs address capacity gaps and better pursue their organizational missions.