



USAID's Safe Migration in Central Asia activity provides opportunities for returning migrants to use their skills at home. Zinat, who has a severe hearing impairment, sews clothing in her home in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, after working as a migrant laborer. Photo credit: Maxim Shubovich for USAID

SAFE MIGRATION IN CENTRAL ASIA ACTIVITY FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND

USAID's Safe Migration in Central Asia (SMICA) activity strives to prevent trafficking in persons (TIP), protect survivors, and promote safe migration. It uses evidence-based practices and cross-border connections to strengthen the accountability and effectiveness of governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector as part of USAID's Asia-wide assemblage of counter-trafficking interventions. SMICA is a five-year (2020-2024) activity operating in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Each year, millions of Central Asians leave their homes in search of better job opportunities. Many are at risk of labor and sexual exploitation. These migration outflows, coupled with governments' raised awareness about migration and human trafficking, present a window of opportunity to create better systems to support migrants, reduce their vulnerability to labor exploitation, and protect trafficking victims.

SMICA collaborates with local and international organizations, governments, and civil society organizations to connect and weave individual country approaches into cohesive regional strategies. SMICA strengthens bilateral and multi-country systems to promote rights-based migration and counter trafficking in persons (CTIP).

GOALS

Goal one: To strengthen bilateral and multi-country strategies and actions to promote rights-based migration and counter trafficking in persons

Goal two: To reduce vulnerability of at-risk populations to all forms of trafficking

Goal three: To improve and expand identification and assistance to trafficked persons

Goal four: Improve prosecution for crimes related to human trafficking (Kyrgyz Republic only)

KEY RESULTS

- Reached 31,714 individuals through training and education on safe and responsible migration.
- Trained, provided technical assistance, or strengthened the capacity of 2,887 service providers in providing victim-centered and trauma-informed services.
- SMICA's partner NGOs identified 488 trafficked persons and provided services to more than 13,000 migrants and potential migrants, including 849 TIP survivors.
- Conducted capacity strengthening for 345 judges and prosecutors and introduced a self-paced video course on applying a victim-centered approach to cases in their training academies.
- Engaged 179 private sector companies in actions to address CTIP and promote safe migration by introducing standards for human rights in business, such as supply chain due diligence to ensure supply chains are free from forced labor.
- Launched the "Safe Airports" initiative by installing interactive electronic information booths in the international airports in Uzbekistan (Termez, Namangan, Qarshi, and Tashkent); Turkmenistan (Ashgabat International Airport); and Kyrgyzstan (Manas International Airport). The kiosks provide pre-departure information on destination countries for Central Asian migrants.
- In collaboration with international partners, conducted intersectoral training for law enforcement, criminal justice actors, NGOs, media professionals, and social service providers in communities throughout the region.
- Offered expert technical assistance and support, playing a pivotal role in the development and enhancement of 16 critical anti-TIP policies, laws, and international agreements.
- Actively engaged and provided support to 20 NGOs in advocacy efforts addressing CTIP and safe migration issues.
- Aided 21 stakeholder organizations, including government bodies, private sector entities, and social service providers to enhance safe employment practices, labor migration processes and repatriation and reintegration procedures for trafficked persons.

IMPLEMENTATION PERIOD: September 1, 2019 – August 31, 2024

BUDGET: \$16.31 Million

CONTACT: Irina Mitrofanova, Democracy and Health Office, USAID/Central Asia, imitrofanova@usaid.gov