



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



USAID'S FUTURE GROWTH INITIATIVE FACTSHEET

USAID's Future Growth Initiative spurs productive economic activity across Central Asia to increase local competitiveness, create new jobs, and improve incomes for Central Asia's growing workforce.

ACTIVITY COMPONENTS :

1. Enterprises – Fostering competitive industries through expansion into new target markets (regionally or globally) to increase sales and exports while attracting local and international investment.
2. Employment – Developing entrepreneurship and a capable workforce through targeted trainings to create new jobs or improve current ones.
3. Enabling Environment – Creating conditions for jobs and investment by supporting policy change through public-private dialogue, analysis, and application of global standards.

ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE:

- Nearly 7,500 local entrepreneurs, women, and youth from Central Asia have participated in virtual and in-person trainings. Through targeted and accessible capacity building, a new generation of entrepreneurs have acquired the skills needed to support the region's economy growth. International experts and mentors from Europe and the U.S., as well as representatives of multinational companies such as Mastercard, UPS, PayPal, VTEX, and E-commerce Institute, engaged with local participants to foster new skills and share the latest trends in business development, e-commerce, fundraising, and the scalability of business concepts (**3,632** or **48.6 percent female participation**).
- With USAID assistance, Kazakhstan's largest retail chain **Magnum** launched an e-commerce

project and attracted digital technology specialists. USAID’s matching grant enabled the company to launch an e-commerce application, develop software products, and open an online platform connected to physical stores. As a result, Magnum entered the online market and opened 68 additional stores linked to the mobile application. The expansion created **1,736** new jobs, including **863** in the e-commerce department. **Thirty-eight percent** of total new hires are under the age of 25, **38** percent are women, and **one percent** are people with disabilities. The remaining **873** new jobs (**533** men and **340** women) were based in the online stores and shops.

- USAID partnered with the EU-supported International Trade Center to create the eBay Central Asia Hub and train 20 entrepreneurs from Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan to establish online stores. As a result, 18 participants launched online stores with a total of 462 listed products and a combined 60 sales in their first five months. The sellers received tailored, one-on-one onboarding support. Through the eBay Hub, entrepreneurs across Central Asia – 80 percent of whom are female – have gained access to new customers worldwide and are leading the way in regional e-commerce transformation.
- With USAID support, Kazbeef, Kazakhstan’s leading meat producer, prepared for the Global GAP certification and in November 2021 became the first company in the country to be certified. These new standards place greater responsibility on both Kazbeef and its suppliers, contributing to a more sustainable value chain. A mutually beneficial relationship between Kazbeef and farmers leads to greater consumer confidence in product quality and increasing sales.
- USAID facilitated nearly **200 business-to-business meetings** and **176 letters of intent** were signed through a regional tourism road show for tourist companies in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan in November, 2021. The event was jointly organized by the Kyrgyz Association of Tour Operators, the International Finance Corporation, and USAID’s Future Growth Initiative. The primary objective of the road show and related business meetings was to establish long-term regional partnerships to explore the existing tourism potential in neighboring countries and create new cross-border tourism products in demand by foreign tourists.
- USAID collaborated with tourism agencies Panjakent Intour and Javokhir Tour in Tajikistan and the Association of Private Tourist Agencies and Muynak Orzular Oroli in Uzbekistan to expand their tourist offerings. To date, **ten local guesthouses** have opened with USAID support, creating or improving **467 jobs** (40 percent of which are held by women). Javokhir Tour, Panjakent Intour, and Moynaq Orzular Oroli produced nearly **30 new tourist routes**, promoting many of the region’s most underdeveloped areas and making local tourism more competitive.
- To establish new sales channels for Turkmen handicrafts, USAID’s Future Growth Initiative partnered with local consulting company Orlan to organize the “Handmade Export 2021” program, empowering artisans and handicraft traders to sell handmade products through global e-commerce marketplaces, including eBay. Twenty-five program participants completed a rigorous six-month training program with the support of dozens of industry experts in online market research, quality product photography, and product listing and promotion. As a result, **16 artisans** opened their own eBay stores, listing more than **100 products** primarily targeting North American buyers.
- With USAID support, Kazakhstan’s leading dairy producer Adal implemented an enterprise resource planning (ERP) system in 2021 that has since streamlined and improved work for its

current **354 employees** – nearly half of whom are women, one-third are youth, and five percent are people with disabilities. The ERP system enables employees to accomplish more in a shorter time, leading to increased productivity.

- USAID also provided technical assistance to Agro Kush in the Kyrgyz Republic, a poultry supplier which supports the complete poultry production cycle from egg incubation to delivery of finished products to consumers. With USAID assistance, the company recruited five consultants to improve product quality and increase competitiveness, enabling Agro Kush to implement international food safety standards ISO 22000. In July 2021, Agro Kush launched a broiler poultry farm in the Balykchy district of Issyk-Kul region, creating **250 new jobs**.
- USAID facilitated **\$8,170,000** in investments for Arnur Credit, a microcredit company in Kazakhstan. The funds will be used for digital transformation to increase access to financing for Arnur clients. In total, USAID facilitated **\$28,908,000** in investment across **19 companies** in Central Asia in the period from June-December 2021.
- USAID worked with the Association of Private Tourism Agencies of Uzbekistan to build skills and management competencies among residents of rural regions working in the community-based tourism sector. With USAID support, **ten new guesthouses** have opened across the Jizzakh, Samarkand, and Bukhara regions of Uzbekistan since June 2021, hosting nearly **1,000 local and foreign visitors** until October 2021. Thirty-five local residents, primarily women, have gained employment through new jobs created by the guesthouses.
- In Uzbekistan, USAID-led workshops organized by the International Women’s Public Fund Sharq Aoyli trained **1,030 women and girls** on various e-commerce tools. In addition to seminars, Sharq Aoyli hosted two-day trainings on business fundamentals for aspiring female entrepreneurs and rural craftswomen. The project covered **15 districts** and **seven cities** in the Tashkent region of Uzbekistan.
- USAID directly supported six policy milestones in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan to improve the business environment. The Government of Kazakhstan adopted amendments to the **Tax Code** on investment tax benefits and 70% reduction in value-added tax (VAT) for new light manufacturing enterprises, and a government decree on zero import duties for raw materials and components, including accessories, fabrics, and threads (adopted June 11, 2021). The Government of Tajikistan included USAID’s recommendations on a number of legal regulations for **light industry and food** production (adopted September 2, 2021). In Uzbekistan, USAID’s recommendation on the creation of a **Tourism Safe Fund** for outbound tourists entered into force in August 2021. On November 17, 2021 the Government of Uzbekistan adopted the regulation on improving the administration of **e-commerce** procedures. In November 2021, the Government of Uzbekistan approved a new regulation, saying that new laws initiated in the country shall pass a mandatory **gender legal expertise** to ensure the principles of equal rights and opportunities for women and men.

PERFORMANCE PERIOD:

October 2019 - September 2024

CONTACT:

Anar Yesdauletova, Project Management Specialist
USAID Central Asia
Email: ayesdauletova@usaid.gov