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**BOMCA | БОМКА**  
BORDER MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME IN CENTRAL ASIA | ПРОГРАММА СОДЕЙСТВИЯ УПРАВЛЕНИЮ ГРАНИЦАМИ В ЦЕНТРАЛЬНОЙ АЗИИ



# NEWSLETTER

## ISSUE 6

April - June 2023



## BOMCA 10 IN FOCUS

Dear BOMCA Newsletter readers,

It is a great pleasure for me to provide a short introduction to this issue. BOMCA programme does not need a detailed presentation: it is one of the biggest running projects that the European Union has in Central Asia, with over 60 M EUR allocated during its lifespan. It is also one of the longest running EU interventions (and certainly the longest one in the region): 2023 marks its 20th Anniversary.

BOMCA is testament of the positive spirit of cooperation between the European Union and Central Asian countries and more recent years have shown, once more, that border management remains a key factor for the stability and development of countries and regions.

Since beginning of the current phase in 2021, BOMCA has paid significant efforts to implement capacity building activities at national and regional levels and support them with procurement of state of the art border management equipment. It is now the time for all agencies involved to capitalise on the recommendations that came from all these activities and see how they can be implemented in the national and regional contexts.

Based on what we can see so far, it is evident that BOMCA continues to play a leading role in strengthening regional border security cooperation, building upon international and European standards. The project and its team will continue to enhance the ability of border agencies to embrace modernisation in border management, migration governance and trade facilitation policies in Central Asia.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express gratitude of the EU to the national and international partners for the proactive cooperation and positive participation within the BOMCA Programme.



*Mr. Cosimo Lamberti-Fossati,  
Cooperation Manager  
of the European Union Delegation  
to the Kyrgyz Republic*

Dear reader,

In front of you is our new, 6th issue, of the quarterly programme newsletter. BOMCA has been steadily reaching mid-term of its implementation and by this important mark a number of efforts invested into its three pillars of work - capacity-building, procurement and grants - have become increasingly tangible. While this short newsletter does not aim to grasp the scope or depth of these developments in full, it should give a reader an overview of the progress and highlights in the period between April – June.

Multiple milestone developments took place under all three main pillars BOMCA works on.

The programme continued its capacity-building activities, in particular in strengthening and polishing of skills as well as in advancement of the relevant procedural and legal changes. This work stretched across all four thematic areas and it was accomplished through activities in Central Asia and visits to EU MS both either at the country or regional levels.

In the past quarter the programme reached a milestone in its work with NGOs under thematic component 'Improvement of cross-border cooperation', where nine thematic projects were launched for 6-12 months period.

Under the last pillar, advancement of technical capacities, procurement of technical equipment to support ad hoc and mid-term national priorities intensified. Short-term needs requested in this quarter are largely finalised. Procurement of equipment under mid-term needs advanced and hand-over of the initial portion of equipment to support mid-term needs is expected as of third quarter.



*Ms. Veronika Goncharova,  
BOMCA Project Manager*

Finally, 2023 marks a jubilee year for BOMCA, its 20th anniversary, and in the past quarter several events in the region to commemorate this partnership of the European Union in Central Asia took place.

Thanks to the team efforts, this Newsletter also presents a new format, enhanced with visuals and links, which I certainly hope you will enjoy reading!

## ABOUT BOMCA 10

Since its launch in 2003, the various phases of the Border Management Programme in Central Asia (BOMCA) funded by the European Union with the contribution of Latvia and Lithuania have focused on capacity building and institutional development, developing trade corridors and the facilitation of trade, improving border management systems and eliminating drug trafficking across the Central Asia region.

OVERALL OBJECTIVE

**Enhancing security, stability, and sustainable growth in the region, as well as supporting cross-border cooperation and improving living conditions for people living in border areas of Central Asia**

BUDGET



**21 650 050**

DURATION



**April 2021 - September 2025**

### COMPONENT 1

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF BORDER CONTROL AGENCIES



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Adopting international security standards, integration of best practices and/or compliance with integrated border management models where applicable



### COMPONENT 2

IMPROVEMENT OF DETECTION CAPACITIES

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Enhancing detection, coordination and investigation effectiveness within and between Central Asian countries



### COMPONENT 3

FACILITATION OF TRADE

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Harmonizing institutional, technical and normative practices related to the facilitation of legitimate flows of people and cargo across borders



### COMPONENT 4

IMPROVEMENT OF CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

Improving living conditions in border areas through local economic development, with a focus on human rights, gender equality and vulnerable groups (such as women, children and victims of human trafficking)

# BOMCA 10 PROGRESS IN A NUTSHELL

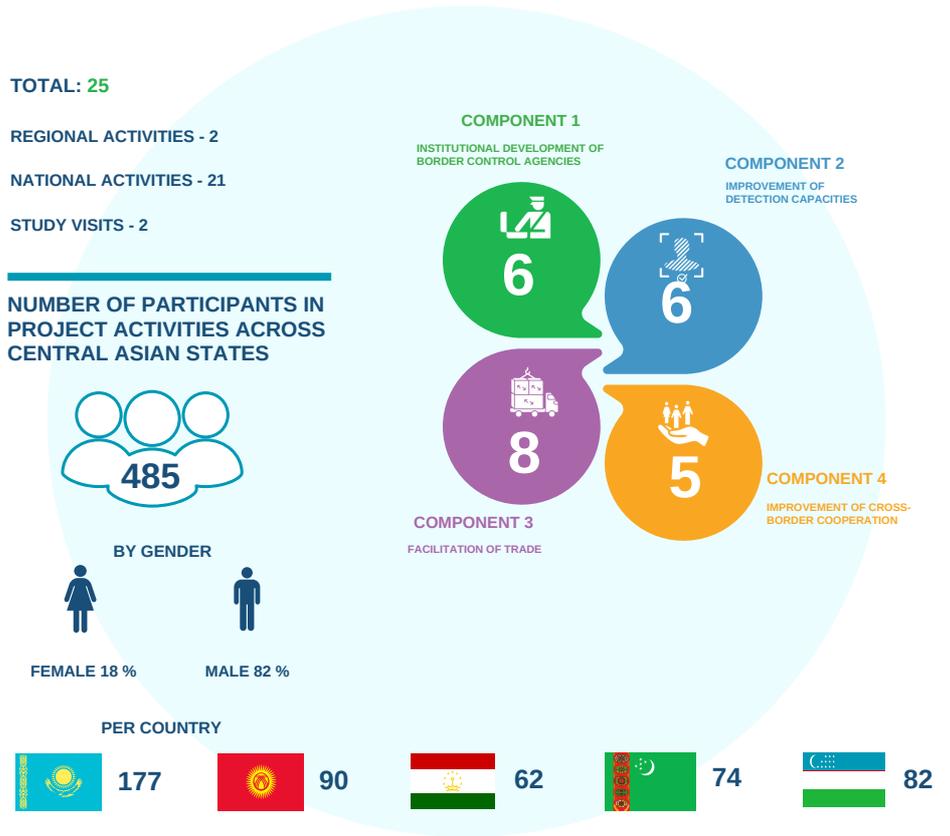
## Project implementation timeline



From April 1 till June 30, the Programme implemented 25 activities in the Central Asian region. Furthermore, BOMCA launched its grants project and intensified work on procurement.

The infographics below visually reflect the array of the activities implemented and provide an overview of participation.

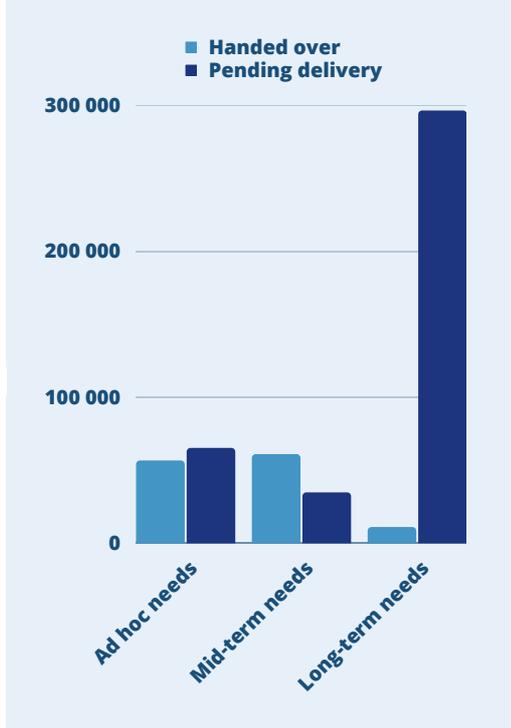
## Implemented thematic activities



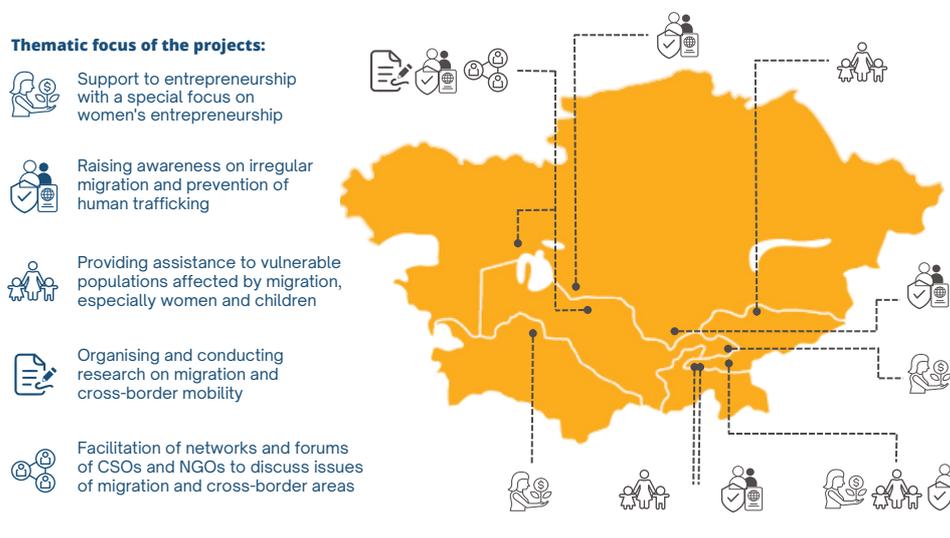
## Procurement progress



## Procurement status



## Grants implementation



# THEMATIC ACTIVITIES IN FOCUS



## COMPONENT 1 INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF BORDER CONTROL AGENCIES



In the past quarter Component 1 continued to strengthen capacities of the border agencies to verify authenticity of the travel documents, two workshops were held in Turkmenistan, conducted by the national trainers. Profiling methodology was another topic addressed by the national trainer during an online session for the entire region. This was done in the context of the agreed action plan on the training cooperation in the region. Another successful example of this training cooperation was a workshop on the management skills conducted by Kazakh trainer in Tajikistan. IBM strategic planning was addressed in Kyrgyzstan, where updating of the strategy is on the agenda. In Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan workshops on management of mass influx of mixed migration flows, including irregular migrants, aimed at strengthening Kyrgyz and Tajik border agencies in contingency planning and advancing the operational state of preparedness of the latter should developments require.



## COMPONENT 2 IMPROVEMENT OF DETECTION CAPACITIES



In April – June 2023, Component 2 main efforts focused on finalising activities for crime intelligence officers and investigators of cross-border crimes such as trafficking in human beings (THB) and smuggling of migrants. Throughout the last quarter, BOMCA experts completed a series of national workshops dedicated to the investigation of these crimes. Introduction of new methods for investigating trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling as well as in-depth analysis of the investigations, examples from practice, discussion about complexities of investigation of such crimes, and possible solutions at the pre-trial investigation stage, have expanded understanding and capabilities of law enforcement authorities to combat these serious crimes.



## COMPONENT 3 FACILITATION OF TRADE



Component 3 continued a series of activities to strengthen capacities of customs, veterinary and phyto-sanitary training institutions. The next seminar in the series of activities on implementation of the e-learning methodology and using e-learning platform was held in Tajikistan. Exchange of trainers continued in the region. National trainers from Kazakhstan trained Turkmen counterparts on customs risk management, while Uzbek colleagues shared with Kyrgyz colleagues their experiences on cargo scan image analysis. Training standardisation for the customs officers was addressed at the regional level, where following regional workshops methodological



recommendations for creating a structure of customs competencies necessary for a systematic approach to advanced training of customs officers were produced.

In Kazakhstan BOMCA 10 continued to build capacity on application of different transit regimes focusing on legal basis necessary for rapid border crossing and advanced, effective and trade-friendly customs controls and other advantages of the national customs legislation and practices, as well as using different types of guarantees. In Tajikistan BOMCA analysed current implementation of the GSP scheme and provided recommendations for further improvements.



## COMPONENT 4 IMPROVEMENT OF CROSS- BORDER COOPERATION



In the second quarter of 2023, Component 4 supported Kyrgyz migration authorities with the enhancement of diaspora policies through the study visit to Germany, provided a platform for exchange of good practices in the management of external migration among Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Kazakh migration-related agencies as well as contributed to the reinforcement of border communities resilience through capacity-building activities for local and state authorities in the provision of psychological support to people living in the border areas and in the protection of children's rights.

Moreover, the Central Asian NGOs, selected for funding under the BOMCA First Call for Proposals, started implementation of their actions aimed at support of population in the border areas.

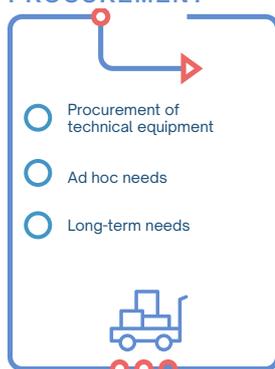


## UPCOMING ACTIVITIES IN JULY-SEPTEMBER

### CAPACITY BUILDING



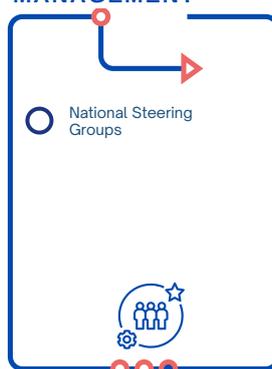
### PROCUREMENT



### GRANTS



### MANAGEMENT



# FEATURED STORY



## STRENGTHENING CHILD PROTECTION IN THE UZBEK BORDER REGIONS

Vulnerable children affected by migration processes and residing in the Central Asian border regions are one of the beneficiary groups of the BOMCA 10 Component 4. Children living in the border areas have special needs that need to be ensured by a strong child protection system at local level. With local authorities playing a key role in child protection in Central Asia, with Uzbekistan being no exception, the Programme organised a seminar for central and local authorities entitled "Child Protection in the Uzbek Border Regions" on 20-21 June 2023.



The seminar was co-organised with the Committee for Women and Family Affairs, under the Ministry of Employment and Poverty Reduction. The cornerstone of the activity was to take stock of the follow-up actions to the Concluding Observations to the 5th Periodic Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Uzbekistan. The institutions involved in the child protection system in Uzbekistan at a central level, therefore, had a chance to update each other on the progress made. A special emphasis was placed on the cooperation with the local authorities and how their role in the child protection system can be further strengthened. 14 participants representing regional administrations, khokimiyats, who arrived in Tashkent especially for the activity shared their experiences on practical case management, as well as the challenges and needs of children that they encounter in their work.



The seminar methodology included group work and SWOT analysis on the child protection system and the role of local authorities in country, the results of which will be analysed in the upcoming Recommendations for Strengthening Child Protection in the Uzbek Border Regions. The document targets policy makers, as well as child protection community working in Central Asia, and in particular in Uzbekistan, and can be further used for policy programming and capacity-building.

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Contact us at  
[bomca@icmpd.org](mailto:bomca@icmpd.org)



[WWW.BOMCA-EU.ORG](http://WWW.BOMCA-EU.ORG)

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