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



NEWSLETTER

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July - September 2023



BOMCA 10 IN FOCUS

Dear readers!

I invite you to read the 7th issue of the quarterly BOMCA Newsletter. It is an excellent way to learn about what this programme has achieved and what the plans are in our cooperation with the BOMCA Programme. Since 2003 BOMCA has contributed to promoting a number of strategic objectives which are important both for our Central Asian partners and for the EU. The core of the programme is to facilitate connections while enhancing border security for the region and for the EU.

BOMCA has been instrumental in sharing the best practices of the EU member states in Integrated Border Management and helped formulate and implement the strategic frameworks in this area. It has also assisted partner countries with the application of the EU Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP+) to facilitate trade. BOMCA has contributed to strengthening local expertise through training at the regional level among the law enforcement agencies. Through identifying and sharing best practices among our Central Asian partners this programme has promoted regional cooperation. In addition, it works to enhance the role of civil society in cross-border relations for peaceful co-existence and development. BOMCA is an excellent example of the EU's strategic and long-lasting commitment to the region.

On behalf of the European Union, I wish to thank the Governments of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan for their cooperation within the programme, and congratulate BOMCA on its 20-year anniversary which it celebrates this year.



Ambassador Terhi Hakala,
EU Special Representative
for Central Asia

Dear readers,

I am pleased to welcome you to this new issue of the BOMCA Newsletter. The newsletter presents us with a glimpse of the work completed in the past quarter.

BOMCA 10 now is reaching the middle of the implementation term, therefore it is the correct moment to look back and assess the project achievements. To date, the programme continued its work at both strategic and operational level, simultaneously working with multiple agencies, creating synergies with other international partners and projects in each of five countries across four thematic areas.

In the latest quarter, BOMCA enhanced the training and technical capacities of national counterparts, and provided its support to the border demarcation processes by sharing EU good practices and international standards. Moreover, BOMCA 10 has continued to support national agencies by providing capacity building activities in area of document security, detection and investigation of cross-border crimes. Aiming to further enhance the regional economic integration process, the Programme held activities in improving electronic submission and processing of documents for import, export, and transit using digital tools, introducing improvements in the relevant legislative acts in accordance with international standards, as well as contributing to the enhancement of veterinary and phytosanitary controls. In the area of trade facilitation, the Programme also strengthened risk management, as well as introducing new avenues for regional trade



General Guntis Pujats,
BOMCA Project Manager

through the EU GSP+ initiative.

BOMCA has accelerated its contribution in the area of technical support by providing various specific equipment which already has been deployed in the threatened border sectors, thus increasing the capacity of Central Asian border agencies to eliminate cross border violations.

In the meantime, BOMCA worked closely with the NGOs in implementing project grants, supported the residents living along the boundary lines by informing them about labour migrants' rights and raised gender awareness.

Between September and November, BOMCA is reviewing its achievements to date at the national and regional levels.

I remain thankful to our national counterparts for great cooperation, as without their full commitment and continuous support, this would not be possible.

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 July 1 till September 30, the Programme implemented 15 activities in the Central Asian region. Furthermore, BOMCA intensified work on procurement, while 8 projects granted to NGOs in Central Asia run at full speed. The infographics below visually reflect the array of the activities implemented and provide an overview of participation.

Implemented thematic activities

Project Implementation in the period: July 1 - September 30, 2023

NATIONAL ACTIVITIES - 14

REGIONAL ACTIVITIES - 0

CROSS-BORDER ACTIVITY - 1
TAJIKISTAN TOGETHER WITH
UZBEKISTAN

FORMAT OF THE IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES

OFFLINE - 15

ONLINE - 0

HYBRID - 0

BY GENDER

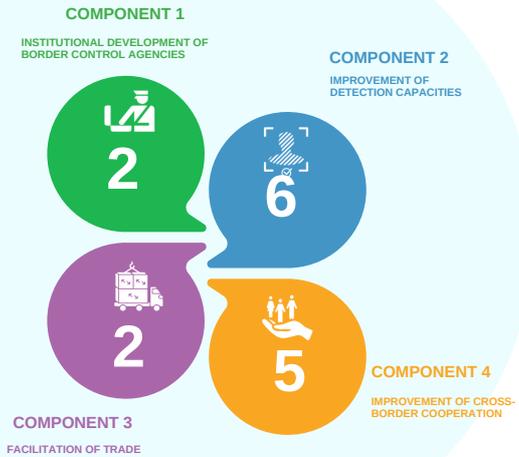


FEMALE - 67 (23%) MALE - 182 (77 %)

PER COUNTRY



TOTAL: 249

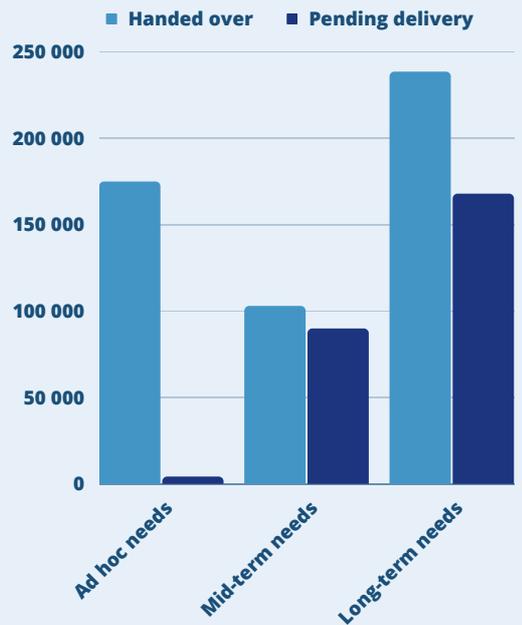


Procurement November 2021-September 2023



*TO SUPPORT ACTIONS ON RECOMMENDATIONS
**TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Procurement status

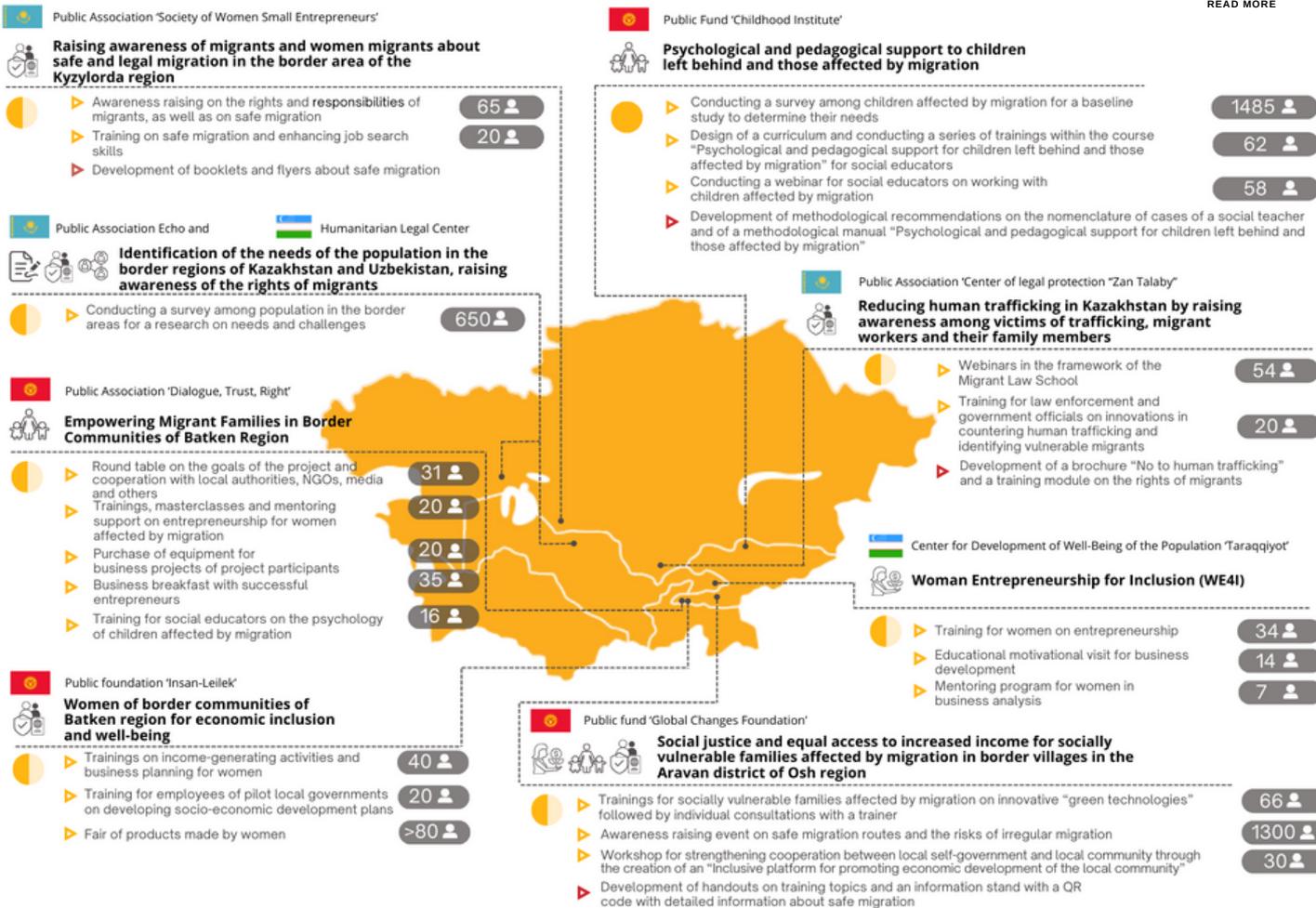


Procurement progress

Throughout July – September 2023, under its procurement pillar, the project intensified its work on the advancement of technical capacities to support ad hoc, mid-term as well as long-term priorities of the national beneficiaries. Short-term needs requested in the previous and this quarter were mostly finalised. The assets purchased based on ad hoc requests by the national counterparts included: various ICT, phytosanitary and K9 equipment transferred to multiple state agencies of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, to further strengthen the technical basis of respective agencies. Procurement of equipment under mid-term needs also advanced in this quarter included the handover of distance learning equipment for the Customs Institute in Uzbekistan, as well as contracting of K9 dogs and specific equipment for all 5 countries for the next round of K9 training courses planned in EU member states in 2024. Within the rubric of addressing the long-term needs of the beneficiaries, during this quarter the project completed delivery of ICT and other specialised equipment for customs authorities in Kazakhstan, handed over document security and passport verification devices for the border guards in Uzbekistan, and procured and fully equipped a BCP mobile unit along with incinerators for the phytosanitary and veterinary services in Kyrgyzstan. The project is in the final stage with intended procurement of specialised forensics software for the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Tajikistan, ICT equipment for multiple state agencies in Turkmenistan, and passport reading devices for the Border Service of Kazakhstan, with the delivery of respective items expected in the next quarter.



Central Asian NGOs working in border areas: key activities in the implementation of projects



Thematic focus of the projects:

- Support to entrepreneurship with a special focus on women's entrepreneurship
 - Raising awareness on irregular migration and prevention of human trafficking
 - Providing assistance to vulnerable populations affected by migration, especially women and children
 - Organizing and conducting research on migration and cross-border mobility
 - Facilitation of networks and forums of CSOs and NGOs to discuss issues of migration and cross-border areas
- Project status:**
- Project implementation is in progress
 - Project is completed

Women affected by migration from Batken and Batken region attending training on income-generating activities



Women from the border areas of Fergana and Andijan regions of Uzbekistan receiving training in entrepreneurship development



Participants of one of a series of trainings on innovative "green technologies" for socially vulnerable families affected by migration in border villages of the Aravan district, Osh region, Kyrgyzstan

THEMATIC ACTIVITIES IN FOCUS



COMPONENT 1 INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF BORDER CONTROL AGENCIES



In the past quarter, Component 1 conducted a national workshop on border delimitation and demarcation, with the participation of the Tajik Ministry of Foreign Affairs and law enforcement agencies to share EU Member States' and CA experiences in the area and to inform about the competencies and roles of each involved state agency in the state border delimitation/demarcation process. As a result, national beneficiaries acknowledged the imparted good practices, modern tools, methods of border demarcation processes, and best practices on negotiation and solving of border disputes.



COMPONENT 2 IMPROVEMENT OF DETECTION CAPACITIES



In July – September 2023, Component 2 main efforts focused on the improvement of detection capacities, considering that detection of cross-border crime and investigation of those crimes are to some extent linked to the protection of fundamental rights, BOMCA experts completed a series of national workshops on human rights and gender sensitivity. Lawyers and experts from the State Border Guard Service under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania and the Lithuanian Red Cross familiarized border guards and law enforcement officers from all Central Asia countries with human rights, gender issues, and indicators of sexual harassment and gender sensitivity.



COMPONENT 3 FACILITATION OF TRADE



Component 3 continued the strengthening of customs officials' capacities in Central Asia. In the past quarter representatives of the State Customs Service and State Frontier Service of Turkmenistan were introduced to elements of modern control methods when conducting inspection of vehicles, cargo and goods transported across the state's land



border. In Uzbekistan BOMCA 10 assisted the Customs Administration of Uzbekistan in capacity building on application of different transit regimes and different types of customs guarantees in European Union Common transit countries and provided recommendations for further improvement and balancing the interests of economic operators with proper customs controls.



COMPONENT 4 IMPROVEMENT OF CROSS- BORDER COOPERATION



Throughout July-September 2023, Component 4 supported three educational institutions of Kazakhstan working in the area of border management and customs, in building the capacities of teaching staff in providing training on gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as analysing the current situation of labour migrants' rights protection in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, and providing the platform for discussion of best practices applied so far and for the development of joint solutions. Furthermore, a training course for



Tajik NGOs took place to enhance their skills in project management and fundraising for more effective implementation of projects in the border areas. In the past quarter, first grants monitoring missions were conducted, aiming to strengthen the capacities of NGOs who had received grants in the framework of BOMCA to in the projects' monitoring and reporting.





STRENGTHENING K9 CAPACITIES OF THE KYRGYZ LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

In 2022 BOMCA completed two unique training courses for dog handling instructors specialising in searching explosives, ammunition, weapons and drugs. Implemented in parallel in Lithuania and Latvia with a tailored methodology in line with the EU member states' good practices, these courses equipped 10 trainers with theoretical and practical knowledge in the above-mentioned areas. Building upon the results this activity, in July 2023, in cooperation with the Programme Law Enforcement in Central Asia (LEICA) BOMCA held a national 10-day training course in the field of cynology, focusing on the search for explosives, arms and ammunition in Kyrgyzstan. Conducted by the trainer of the Border Service of the State Committee for National Security of Kyrgyzstan, certified in Lithuania, this activity enhanced participants' theoretical knowledge and practical skills in training service dogs used to perform service and combat missions in searching for explosives, ammunition and weapons.

It is expected that the implementation of elements of the new methodology will strengthen the capacity of institutions in the detection of cross-border crimes. Despite accelerated technological progress, service dogs and the use of service dogs by various law enforcement agencies have not lost their relevance in the 21st century. On the contrary, the knowledge and practical experience accumulated in the world over the past number of years allow us to prepare a cynologist and a service dog at a higher level. The use of specially prepared service dogs, in combination with progressive technical means, allows us to effectively supplement the capabilities of both, giving the opportunity to law enforcement agencies to effectively fight the illegal circulation of narcotics and explosives.



Thus, BOMCA's efforts in equipping instructors with the knowledge, skills and practical tools contribute to the improvement of national law enforcement agencies' detection capabilities to manage investigation cases at borders.



Subsequently, in July BOMCA officially handed over equipment for K9 instructors and service dogs of the State Customs Service under the Ministry of Finance of Kyrgyzstan. This equipment is necessary for conducting interdepartmental and international training courses for dog handlers, developing interaction and improving the skills of the staff of canine services, as well as enabling the further organisation of the educational process of training-specialized units of the State Customs Service.



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES IN OCTOBER-DECEMBER

CAPACITY BUILDING

- Training of Trainers
- National Workshops
- Regional and National training courses
- Launch of the mobile app for State Customs Service of Turkmenistan



PROCUREMENT

- Long-term (assessed) needs
- Mid-term needs
- Short-term (ad hoc) needs



GRANTS

- Activities under grants projects
- Second call for proposals from NGOs



COORDINATION

- National Steering Groups
- Regional Steering Groups



ACTIVITIES DEDICATED TO THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF BOMCA PROGRAMME

COMPLETED

- Drawing contest among the children in Turkmenistan (jointly with CADAP Programme)
- Essay contest among the students in Kyrgyzstan (jointly with CADAP Programme)



ONGOING

- International K9 competition of dog handlers/service dogs in the directions of "Search of drugs" or "Search of explosives" in Kazakhstan (jointly with CADAP Programme)
- Outstanding Women Shaping Central Asia: Online exhibition



ONGOING

- Photo contest among citizens of Tajikistan (jointly with CADAP Programme)
- Virtual Fair - Competition of the traditional handicraft among artists from Surkhandy region "Local traditions for economic prosperity in the border regions" (jointly with CADAP Programme)



20 YEARS ANNIVERSARY

- Press-conference dedicated to the 20th Anniversary of BOMCA and CADAP Programmes
- BOMCA Anniversary reception (jointly with CADAP Programme)



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