



Summary of DFID's work in Central Asia 2011-2015

June 2013

Why we work in Central Asia

Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are the two poorest countries in the Central Asia region (Tajikistan Gross Net Income per capita \$870; Kyrgyzstan \$880). Both states are economically and politically fragile and rely heavily on external assistance and remittances from labour migration.

Progress on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has been sluggish on all fronts, with risks that the limited progress made in recent years will stall. Tajikistan is very unlikely to achieve the MDGs, and education and health systems are deteriorating compared to the pre-1991 Soviet period. Kyrgyzstan has done better, despite

a challenging political, economic and social situation, with the national poverty rate falling from 63% to 31% (2000-2008) and the economy showing steady growth. However, the violent conflict in the south of the country in April 2010 has slowed progress, and the indicators on infant, under five and maternal mortality remain unacceptably high. With many able-bodied men working abroad, women make up the majority of agricultural workers in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, with increased responsibilities to care for their children and the elderly. They work in low paid and exploitative conditions, and face constraints in exercising their legal rights to land, property and money. A WHO Survey in Tajikistan found that approximately 50 per cent of women aged 15 and older had experienced physical, psychological or sexual violence by a family member.



DFID-funded Mobile Consultation to labour migrants at their work place.



Malohat Jiyanova, a successful beneficiary of the Rural Growth Programme, Tajikistan.

What we will achieve

DFID's strategy in Central Asia reflects a reassessment of how we can best promote development and security. It is focused on supporting the private sector and growth, promoting democracy and good governance and regional trade and cooperation (including migration):

- 12,000 Small and Medium Enterprises and individual entrepreneurs will receive business advice and access to credit in Tajikistan through a programme to support growth in the rural economy.
- Improvement to the legal and regulatory framework for business will generate cost savings and investments worth £25.5 million for private sector development as a result of investment climate reform.

- The Regional Migration Programme will help 512,800 poor and vulnerable Tajik and Kyrgyz migrants who go to work in Kazakhstan and Russia. Support includes legal, social and health advice. This will bring wide development benefits, including for their families left at home.
- In three of the poorest conflict-affected provinces of south Kyrgyzstan, we will save 500 infant lives and ensure 5,200 children are enrolled in pre-school institutions.

Who we will work with

In recognition of our limited resources, most of the work undertaken by DFID in the region involves working with and/or through other donor partners. This approach ensures greater sustainability, facilitates sharing of good practice, and reduces the burden on the partner governments. DFID maintains close engagement in project design, and benefits from wider programme benefits arising from collaboration. We continue to work closely with colleagues in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) on issues of common interest.



Rural Water Supply Project. v.Maman, Kyrgyzstan

How we will work

We are streamlining management arrangements, focussing on a small number of sectors as current projects come to an end. The regional Team Leader is responsible for ensuring our projects address the needs of women and girls. We have established a very close relationship with UN Women at country level, and we maintain a good dialogue with the government and other donors on gender equality.

Some actions we will take on transparency include:

- Ensuring information about DFID projects is of high quality, clear and easily understandable to the public;
- Translations of summary programme information for all new programmes are being published and disseminated;
- Through our public financial reform programme, we help local civil society organizations to understand government budgeting processes in order to help them hold the government to account;
- We will also be supporting anti-corruption initiatives such as Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development work in Central Asia which aims to improve cross-country peer learning in the areas of legal reform, investigation and prosecutions where appropriate, and integrity in public services.

More information

[DFID website](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [UKinKR](#), [UKinTJ](#).

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