




# USAID | CENTRAL ASIA

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## Memorandum to the File (MTF)

**DATE:** February 28, 2019

**TO:** William Gibson, BEO/Asia

**FROM:** Stephanie Garvey, USAID/CA Director of Democracy and Governance Office 

**THROUGH:** Nina Kavetskaya, USAID/CA Regional Mission Environmental Officer, and Climate Integration Lead  
Andrei Barannik, Regional Environmental Adviser for Central and South Asia, and for Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs

**SUBJECT:** Documentation of Regional Civil Society Project under Democracy and Governance IEE Amendment #8 and restatement of environmental conditions

<b>Activity/Project Name:</b>	Regional Civil Society Project
<b>Development Objective (DO)</b>	<p><b>DO 3:</b> “More effective and inclusive governance institutions that serve the public good.”</p> <p><b>IR 3.1:</b> “More constructive engagement between representative civil society and governments”</p> <p><b>Sub-IR 3.1.1:</b> “Stronger, more representative civil society”</p> <p><b>IR 3.2:</b> “More accountable and transparent state institutions and civil society”</p> <p>Program Area: Civil Society. Program Element 2.4.1: Civic Participation</p>
<b>Country and/or Operating Unit</b>	USAID/Central Asia (CA): Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and possibly Kyrgyzstan.
<b>Originating Office</b>	USAID/CA Democracy and Governance Office
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Memo to a PAD Level IEE file <input type="checkbox"/> Memo to a Supplemental IEE file <input type="checkbox"/> Memo to a RCE/IEE file <input type="checkbox"/> Memo to an ERC file	<p>Programmatic Democracy and Governance (DG) IEE Amendment # 6 (Asia 11-131)<sup>1</sup> establishes conditions for NDC activities</p> <p>Programmatic DG IEE Amendment #8 (DCN: Asia 18-076)<sup>2</sup>– extends conditions established in DG IEE Amendment #6 through FY 2025</p> <p>Approved: 6/11/2018</p> <p>Expiry Date: FY 2025</p>
<b>Activity Start/Current End Date</b>	October 2019 – September 2024
<b>Funding Amount</b>	\$18,000,000

<sup>1</sup> Link to IEE Amendment #6 DCN:11-131 [https://ecd.usaid.gov/document.php?doc\\_id=38207](https://ecd.usaid.gov/document.php?doc_id=38207)

<sup>2</sup> Link to IEE Amendment #8 DCN:14-68 [https://ecd.usaid.gov/document.php?doc\\_id=40226](https://ecd.usaid.gov/document.php?doc_id=40226)

	Activity is within the LOP ceiling of DG IEE Amendment #8
<b>Contract Award Number</b>	TBD

## 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this MTF is to:

1. Document that the new USAID’s Central Asia Civil Society Project is covered by the Programmatic Democracy and Governance IEE Amendments #6 and #8 (P-IEEs) in view that it was not explicitly mentioned in these amendments. The activity originator and Regional Mission Environmental Officer (RMEO) and Climate Integration Lead (CIL) have reviewed the proposed Activity and determined that Central Asia Civil Society Project is consistent with and similar in the scope and nature to activities approved by the BEO/Asia under the referenced P-IEEs, which also contain language permitting addition of new activities.
2. Establish that all conditions, limitations and stipulation for revision approved in the original P-IEEs remain in force for the duration of the Central Asia Civil Society Project in FY 2019-2024.
3. Establish that more than 90% of program funds will be used for activities under approved Categorical Exclusion (CE).
4. Conduct first review of climate risk management for Central Asia Civil Society Project activities as required by the ADS 201 ([https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/201mal\\_042817.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/201mal_042817.pdf) ,) and establish that additional climate risk screening shall be conducted by the implementing partner (IP) (s) for activities which received Negative Determination with Conditions, as warranted and in consultation with the Activity Manager and the RMEO/CIL.
5. Establish that all conditions, limitations and stipulation for revision shall be fully transposed into procurement instruments.
6. Establish that at the “post-award conference” Central Asia Civil Society Project Activity Manager together with the RMEO/CIL explain to the IP(s) all conditions, limitations and stipulation for revision approved by the BEO/Asia in the original IEE and this MTF.

## 2.0 Background

Drawing on the results of its previous civil society-related interventions, USAID intends to build on its strategy of working with civil society organizations in Central Asia in order to build stronger institutions that are able to respond to issues of common concern and represent diverse voices and communities. As part of this approach, USAID is designing a new Central Asia Civil Society Program that can adequately respond to the ever-changing needs of the civil society sector. It is envisioned that the project’s overarching goal would be cultivating a vibrant and responsive citizen-oriented civil society across Central Asia. It is envisioned that the program will offer a combination of technical assistance, training, education, and different types of grants (rapid response grants, travel grants, and thematic grants) for CSOs, advocacy organizations, think-tanks, initiative groups and civic activists to strengthen their ability to articulate people’s concerns, meet needs within a local context, provide better services to beneficiaries, and initiate public debate and serve as a mediator between citizens and government institutions. Program objectives and illustrative activities are outlined in greater detail below (see Table 1).

Given the similar challenges faced across Central Asia, USAID proposes a regional approach with flexible components that can be adapted for each country, namely Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and possibly Kyrgyzstan to create opportunities, resources, linkages, and partnerships for civil society organizations, networks, civic activists and young leaders on a national and regional scale. At the same time target countries of the program have different operating environments and the needs of civil society groups are manifold and challenging. Therefore programmatic emphasis and approach will be slightly different from country to country. It is envisioned that the implementer along with its Technical Approach will propose sound and reasoned country strategy for each of the participating countries



	<p>skills for civic advocacy and business, social entrepreneurship, fundraising, etc. This could be a permanent facility or a traveling salon.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pilot mentor-led activities in selected areas where there are strong mentors from civil society sector available. This could include multi-stage, small grants linked to the mentoring program.</li> <li>● Study-tours, internship, residencies (experiential learning developmental programs) and scholarship programs for young people to gain exposure and practical experience in social entrepreneurship, non-profit management.</li> <li>● Debating activities, volunteer, sports, cultural and social events, English language courses, leadership trainings, networking and outings for young activists to develop and enhance their creativity, leadership, communication and critical thinking skills.</li> <li>● ‘Ted talks and TEDx’ like events and activities that spark deep discussion and connection among young people, youth opinion leaders, positive role models and broader groups of population.</li> <li>● Grants and technical assistance to implement advocacy campaigns, community projects and youth empowerment activities. In countries where monetary grants are not practicable</li> </ul>	<p>CE, NDC</p> <p>CE</p> <p>CE</p> <p>CE</p> <p>NDC</p>
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	various types of non-monetary grants will be offered.	
<b>Objective 2:</b> Strengthen civil society’s role in promoting greater public accountability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Training programs and internships that increase the capacity of think tanks and/or transparency advocacy organization.</li> <li>● Sub-grants to think tanks and/or existing transparency advocacy organization.</li> <li>● Study tours within Central Asia and beyond to enable young researchers, think tanks and transparency advocacy organization members to meet with representatives of Eastern European and other countries’ think tanks and advocacy groups to gain a comprehensive insight into their work and identify cooperation possibilities.</li> <li>● Support citizen monitoring and oversight initiatives, including citizen engagement in service delivery.</li> <li>● Support government-CSO engagement mechanisms and opportunities, for example through working with Parliament members, working groups and committees.</li> </ul>	<p>CE</p> <p>CE, NDC</p> <p>CE</p> <p>CE</p> <p>CE</p>
<b>Objective 3:</b> Enhance civil society’s ability to quickly react to unforeseen threats and opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop a flexible small grants program for civil society organizations and initiatives to respond to emerging opportunities</li> <li>● As appropriate, facilitate linkages between civil society groups targeted under other project components and “Rapid Response” grantees for greater impact</li> <li>● Take a leading role in facilitating regular</li> </ul>	<p>CE</p> <p>CE</p> <p>CE</p>

	<p>dialogue and cooperation among the broader civil society community (including CSOs, media, government bodies, international donors, and others), particularly to address nascent threats to the human rights and civil society agenda and train civil society on how to respond to emerging challenges and identify future opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support for travel to respond to crises/opportunities that are time-limited (e.g. transparency, international policy on key issue areas like human trafficking, etc.).</li> </ul>	CE
<p><b>Objective 3:</b> Build the capacity of CSOs to be financially viable and constituent-based.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Conduct an open and competitive grant selection process for institutional grants to participating CSOs in target countries;</li> <li>● Conduct an institutional assessment of each of the participating CSOs in order to identify individual strengths and weaknesses and generate CSO buy-in for internal capacity building;</li> <li>● Develop and carry out tailored multi-year institutional capacity building programs in partnership with participating CSOs;</li> <li>● Support participating CSOs in identifying and procuring technical assistance in institutional strengthening and staff training;</li> <li>● Work closely with participating CSOs to develop sustainability mechanisms, such as</li> </ul>	<p>CE</p> <p>CE</p> <p>CE</p> <p>CE</p> <p>CE</p>

	<p>functioning boards of directors, membership, fundraising, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide limited commodities/IT support and improvements for participating CSOs, as needed</li> <li>● Develop a fundraising/funds diversification strategy and transparency and accountability standards for each participating CSO that takes into consideration both local, national and international funding options and accountability requirements;</li> <li>● Work with participating CSOs to improve their compliance with their own charters and to serve as role models for transparent and accountable public organizations.</li> <li>● Assist participating CSOs in developing communication strategy and constituency building strategy to help them better communicate their activities to stakeholders, constituents and the media, and increase their visibility and relevance in the society.</li> </ul>	<p>NDC</p> <p>CE</p> <p>CE</p> <p>CE</p>
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*CE= Categorical Exclusion, NDC = Negative Determination w/Conditions*

### **3.2 Climate risk screening**

All activity components are rated as Low Climate Risk as climate changes are not expected to materially affect the implementation or outcomes of the activity. Additional climate risk screening should be conducted for NDC activities by the IP (s) as required by ADS 201mal using the tools provided at: <https://www.climatelinks.org/tools> . The IP may use sources referenced in the Central Asia Climate Change Risk Profile at <https://www.climatelinks.org>.

### **4. Revision**

If during implementation, new activities are considered outside of those described in this document, an amendment shall be submitted. Pursuant to 22 CFR 216.3(a) (9), if new information becomes available which indicates that activities to be funded by the project might be “major” and the project’s effect “significant”, this determination will be reviewed and revised by the IP, in collaboration with the COR of the project, and submitted to the MEO and BEO/Asia for approval and, if appropriate, an environmental assessment will be prepared.

**DRAFTED BY:**

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Cleared by email on 2/22/ 2019

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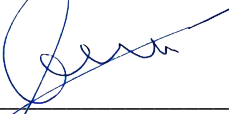
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William Gibson

Date: 3/1/2019

**Distribution:**

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