

Technical cooperation and border management in Central Asia



Technical cooperation and border management is one of IOM's key service areas in Central Asia, with border management having emerged from historical needs as the main focus of this particular programmatic area in the region. IOM Central Asia has extensive experience in implementing border management projects since 1999.

IOM has been involved in several regional initiatives, the most representative of which include the EU-funded Border Management in Central Asia (BOMCA) programme, implemented by UNDP, as well as a regional project focused on border management and law enforcement agencies.

The priority issues for IOM Central Asia's technical cooperation and border management programme include:

- Promoting and facilitating legal movement of people and goods across the borders while deterring illegal border operations and irregular migration;
- Promoting trans-border cooperation among the region including Afghanistan;
- Supporting governments in building effective border and migration management systems through capacity building;
- Addressing migration challenges and security concerns in the region by regularizing border management services according to international best practices;
- Building national capacities for effective migration data collection and sharing.

Given these priorities, IOM Central Asia looks to attain the following objectives within the technical cooperation and border management programme:

- Improve the policy, legislation and administrative structures for migration and border man-

agement, promoting and protecting migrants rights while ensuring sovereign rights of states to protect their borders;

- Strengthen government capacity to deal with labour migration, human and drug trafficking, smuggling and terrorism;
- Upgrade border and migration information systems, supported by proper procedures and technical capacity for securely issuing and handling identity and travel documents.

IOM's contributions to strengthening the border management system in Central Asia can be divided into the following three main categories:

- **Needs assessment and policy recommendations.** Assessment of the border crossing checkpoints, including evaluation of the existing passport and visa systems, as well as integrated information systems. Comprehensive assessments at land, rail and airport checkpoints are also designed to identify needs and provide recommendations for institutional, policy and procedural improvements and reforms;
- **Infrastructure support.** Procurement of border control equipment, as well as construction or renovation of the border checkpoints and training facilities, including establishment of on-site training rooms at the border. This work involves close

cooperation with central border officers training institutions and providing and equipping them with training rooms and relevant facilities to provide front line officers with an opportunity to upgrade their professional skills;

- **Professional capacity-building.** Development and implementation of skills and other training courses, which includes cross border seminars, assistance with development of training curricula, such as handbooks and manuals on various aspects of border control and management. Translation into Russian of the EU Schengen Acquis and other relevant documents related to the project scope.



IOM Kazakhstan launched its border management activities in 2002 with the successful implementation of a pilot project to enhance border control in the Kordai region between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. In this project, IOM coordinated with the Border Service and the Migration Police of Kazakhstan to procure specialized border inspection equipment, communication devices and transportation facilities.

Since 2003, IOM's key achievements in Kazakhstan in the three main categories of work include the following:

Needs assessment and policy recommendations

Assessment of borders between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Russia. Criteria of needs assessment included: checkpoint infrastructure, professional capacity of border staff and inter-agency coordination.

Assessment of on-site training facilities.

Follow up assessment visits to Kazakhstan-Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan land border.

Infrastructure support

Direct delivery of equipment valued at approximately USD 350 000 to the assessed checkpoints in Kazakhstan on the border with Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

On-going support for renovation of facilities in the Military Institute in Almaty. The Military Institute is the main educational facility for future border officers in Kazakhstan.

Support for the creation of a field training centres for border guards in south east and west Kazakhstan. The support consisted of both direct contributions and technical assistance.

Renovation and provision of equipment to the field training centre in Uralsk (north Kazakhstan), (2008)

Refurbishment of passport control hall at the Kordai (KZ-KG) and Ka-



planbek (KZ-UZ) border crossing point, (2007-2010).

Professional capacity-building

Provision of training activities including: advanced training for field officers working at the border, basic on site training for checkpoint staff, training on the use of specialized border inspection equipment.

Development, together with the Military Institute, and printing of manuals on technical aspects of border inspection.

Organization of multi agency, cross border training sessions in south and north Kazakhstan, together with, BOMCA, OSCE and UNHCR.

Study trip for border officials to Holesov Police School in the Czech Republic,

Translation into Russian and print-

ing of IOM Passport Examination Procedure Manual.

Development, translation and distribution of visa management manuals for Consular Service

In addition to these activities, IOM Kazakhstan has also contributed to inter-governmental dialogue. IOM Kazakhstan has funded and participated in joint meetings between the Border Services of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, and has maintained an active presence in regular biannual Border Security Donor Coordination meetings held in Astana. IOM has also established a strong partnership with the Border Service of Poland and is planning to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between the IOM Central Asia Headquarters in Astana and the Border Service of Poland.

IOM's first Border Management Project in Kyrgyzstan was launched in 1999. From 1999 through 2002 IOM provided the Border Service of the Kyrgyz Republic with its first Automated Border Management Information System: IAMIS (Inter-Agency Migration Information System).

Since the implementation of this project, IOM Kyrgyzstan has implemented several projects in the technical cooperation and border management programmatic area. IOM's main achievements are:

Needs assessment and policy recommendations

Assisted the Kyrgyz Government in the design, printing and adoption of a new visa system that improves security and incorporates anti-counterfeiting measures.

Assisted the Kyrgyz Government in establishing an automated passport production and issuance system. Old Kyrgyz passports had minimal security features and were easy to counterfeit. The new system introduced two different identity documents: ID cards for internal use and passports for international travels. New passports fully correspond to international standards, and have sophisticated security features and machine readable fields (2004 – 2006).

Conducted an assessment of border management processes at Osh airport.

Infrastructure support

Installation of IAMIS (Inter-Agency Migration Information System) at a number of international border crossing checkpoints selected as pilot project sites. Equipment of pilot sites with hardware and software to run IAMIS. IAMIS allows the Border Service to enter information on border crossings electronically into a centralized database. This data is

registered and saved for future use. All relevant ministries and agencies (Border Authorities, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs) can input information into IAMIS. The software has a "black list" function preventing the entry of unauthorized travelers.

Expansion of IAMIS infrastructure to Osh airport and border checkpoints at Irkeshtam and Torugart on the Kyrgyz-Chinese border, Karamyk (Kyrgyz – Tajik border) and Kaindy (Kyrgyz-Kazakh border)

Provision of equipment to the international airport in Bishkek and selected international border crossing checkpoints. The equipment included: communication and computer equipment, vehicles, furniture and inspection and communication hardware and software.

Refurbishment and equipment of the Interagency Training Centre (2004)

Improvement of physical infrastructure of the crossing points along the border with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Kaindy railway border crossing was refurbished, modular buildings for border personnel installed and border inspection and control equipment provided. Later on Dostuk, Bekabad, Chaldybar international border crossings were completely refurbished (since 2005). The interventions included refurbishment of passport control/inspection areas, foot and vehicle traffic areas, overhang roofs, power supply, road pavement, offices, furniture, and equipment.



Provision of support to the Border Service Training Centre, including purchase of training equipment to teach employees how to inspect passports and IDs, how to use passport readers and how to detect fraudulent documents.

Professional capacity-building

Conduct of training seminars, lectures, workshops and study tours for the Border Service. These activities enabled personnel to share experiences and benefit from international best practices (2003-2004).

Support the expansion of the library at the Border Service Training Centre by purchasing modern training materials, manuals, and books.

Development, translation and distribution of visa management manuals for Consular Service

Needs assessment and policy recommendations.

In terms of policy-level interventions, IOM Tajikistan contributed to the following reforms:

Conducted a comprehensive assessment of border management in the country. The outcome of this assessment was a series of recommendations on how to improve border management and immigration inspection. Specifically, the 60 recommendations aimed to:

1. Improve legislation related to migration and border control;
2. Improve the quality of travel documents and visas and make them conform to international standards;
3. Create a Document and Analysis Center;
4. Organize training for Border Guards;
5. Improve the checkpoints at Dunshanbe airport and Bratsvo checkpoint so that they conform to international standards.

Assisted the Government in establishing an Interdepartmental Commission on Border Management. This commission includes one



working group and 4 subcommittees. Participation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior, State Border Guards Committee and airport authorities has been confirmed.

Conducted an assessment of border management procedures at Dushanbe and Khujand airport.

Assisted in streamlining exit-entry processes through:

1. Introduction of primary and secondary inspection steps;
2. Development of standard operating procedures and manuals

- for entry and exit;
3. Simplification of exit controls on exit;
4. Development and introduction of guidelines and service standards for detention/removal and refugee registration at border crossing checkpoints.

Developed and produced new date stamps for the border checkpoints. The design, quantity and security features of the stamps were agreed and confirmed with the State Border Guard Committee.

Delivered 100,000 (one hundred thousand) new visas in 2007.

Infrastructure support

Provided technical support to Consular Department of Tajikistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs by:

1. Delivering hardware including computers, printers and scanners to MFA
2. Installing local area networks and servers in MFA Tajikistan
3. Developing a computerized international passport issuance programme for Consular Department of Tajikistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (2009)

Provided infrastructure improvement to Dushanbe airport, including:



1. Renovation of arrival hall including equipping border guard booths with the computers, passport readers and other checking facilities;
2. Installation of a computerized system connected to the State Border Guard Committee under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan;
3. Installation of a video surveillance system

Provided technical support to “Bratstvo” border crossing checkpoint. This support included measures such as moving the local and police road outside of the checking zone of the checkpoint; improving electricity and water supply; ensuring adequate communication links between the Bratstvo checkpoint and headquarters; improving living accommodation; providing computers, passport readers, communication equipment and checking facilities (ultraviolet lamps, retro reflective viewers, magnifiers).

Supported improvement of border

data management through the introduction of computerized work stations at target border check points. These work stations are linked to local area networks and the Document Analysis Centre at the Headquarters of the State Border Guards Committee (SBGC).

Professional capacity-building

IOM has contributed to the development and delivery of specialized trainings on border and immigration control, and assisted the establishment of specialized training centres.

Developed a Computerized Training Record System for two Training Centers for border guards established by IOM.

Established and operated the three Training Centres for Tajik border/immigration officers at SBGC HQ in Khorog and Dushanbe.

Conducted various training for border guards from a variety of border checkpoints between 2003 and 2006. 220 border guards attended

trainings designed and delivered by IOM experts or SBGC experts trained by IOM through ‘train-the-trainers’ type of programmes (2003-2006).

Hosted, at Khorog centre, border guards from Afghanistan who work on the Afghanistan-Tajikistan border and lack training facilities. At present, the Training Centre in Khorog provides courses on six subjects, including Border Control and Devices for Identification of False Documents; Computer Science; Migration Legislation; and Language.

Currently, IOM is working on the improvement of the English language training courses in both training centres in Khorog and in Dushanbe. Once funding is secured IOM will equip the English language classes with the language laboratory as well as with text books, dictionaries and software.

IOM also intends to assist the Government of Tajikistan with the development of data sharing mechanism and to support the introduction of biometric featured national passports.

Development, translation and distribution of visa management manuals for Consular Service centres in Khorog and in Dushanbe. Once funding is secured IOM will equip the English language classes with the language laboratory as well as with text books, dictionaries and software.

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IOM's efforts in border management in Uzbekistan consist of the following:

Needs assessment

Assessment of international airports in Tashkent and Bukhara

Professional capacity building

Providing seminars to improve the skills of border guards and customs officer within the framework of the EU-funded Border Management in Central Asia (BOMCA) programme.

