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USAID/CENTRAL ASIA COVID-SPECIFIC GENDER ANALYSIS

USAID Safe Migration in Central Asia Activity

December 22, 2020

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Implemented by:

Banyan Global

1120 20th Street NW, Suite 950

Washington, DC 20036

Phone: +1 202-684-9367

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ACRONYMS

ADS	Automated Directives System
CA	Central Asia
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CSGA	COVID-specific gender analysis
CSO	Civil society organization
CTIP	Countering trafficking in persons
GBV	Gender-based violence
GoK	Government of Kazakhstan
GoT	Government of Tajikistan
GoTM	Government of Turkmenistan
GoU	Government of Uzbekistan
INL	Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs
IOM	International Organization of Migration
IR	Intermediate result
MOI	Ministry of Interior
MOIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
NAP	Nation Action Plan
NGO	non-governmental organization
PEA	Private Employment Agency
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SBCC	Social and behavior change communications
SMICA	Safe Migration in Central Asia
SOP	Standard operating procedures
SOW	Scope of work
TIP	Trafficking in persons
TRM	Transnational Referral Mechanism
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VTIP	Victims of trafficking in persons
WEE	Women's economic empowerment and equality

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I. INTRODUCTION

The United States Agency for International Development USAID/Central Asia Safe Migration in Central Asia (SMICA) is a five-year activity (2019–2024) implemented by Winrock International in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The activity raises awareness and promotes behavior changes among migrants to safeguard their rights, as well as connects them to support and services and highlights their contributions to host communities. SMICA received an additional \$2 million in USAID’s coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) response to provide migrants with informational resources, referrals to essential services, alternative livelihood support, and skills training and access to legal and psychological support. The activity works with government, civil society organizations (CSOs), and the private sector to prevent trafficking in persons (TIP), protect survivors, and promote safe migration. Lastly, the activity builds on policy reform and government capacity-strengthening accomplishments of previous USAID projects in the region to assist at-risk groups and trafficking survivors.

The USAID Office of Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment hired Banyan Global to carry out a COVID-19–specific activity-level gender analysis¹ in support of the SMICA activity. The analysis will support the activity in integrating gender equality and women’s empowerment, and in doing no harm in its programming to prevent and mitigate COVID-19 (see [Annex B for scope of work](#)).

The report structures its findings on gender² equality and women’s empowerment around the activity’s intermediate results (IRs) and crosscutting themes, with an eye toward several socially relevant categories (please refer to Table I).

¹ Gender analysis is an analytic, social science tool. It is used to identify, understand, and explain gaps between males and females that exist in households, communities, and countries, and the relevance of gender norms and power relations in a specific context. Such analysis typically involves examining differences in the status of women and men and their differential access to assets, resources, opportunities, and services; the influence of gender roles and norms on the division of time between paid employment, unpaid work (including subsistence production and care for family members), and volunteer activities; the influence of gender roles and norms on leadership roles and decision-making; constraints, opportunities, and entry points for narrowing gender gaps and empowering females; and potential differential impacts of development policies and programs on males and females, including unintended or negative consequences. (USAID. 2017. *Automated Directives System 205*)

² Gender is a social construct that refers to relations between and among the sexes based on their relative roles. It encompasses the economic, political, and socio-cultural attributes, constraints, and opportunities associated with being male or female. As a social construct, gender varies across cultures, is dynamic, and is open to change over time. Because of the variation in gender across cultures and over time, gender roles should not be assumed but investigated. Note that gender is not interchangeable with women or sex. (USAID. 2017. *Automated Directives System 201*)

TABLE 1. STRUCTURE OF COVID-SPECIFIC GENDER ANALYSIS

ACTIVITY INTERMEDIATE RESULT	CROSSCUTTING THEMES	SOCIALLY RELEVANT CATEGORIES
<p>IR 1 (Regional): Strengthened bilateral and multi-country strategies and actions to promote rights-based migration and counter TIP.</p> <p>Sub IR1.1 Approaches to counter trafficking in persons (CTIP) and labor migration are coordinated and cohesive among source and destination countries.</p> <p>Sub IR1.2 Improved collection, availability, and use of data and evidence around TIP and CTIP.</p>	<p>Gender-based violence risk</p> <p>Women's economic empowerment</p> <p>Access to information</p>	<p>Women</p> <p>Youth (15–24)</p> <p>Migrants</p> <p>Persons with disabilities</p>
<p>IR 2 (Prevention): Vulnerability of at-risk populations to all forms of TIP reduced.</p> <p>Sub IR2.1 At-risk populations have information, services, and skills to safeguard their rights.</p> <p>Sub IR2.2 Safe migration frameworks are enhanced and enforced.</p>		
<p>IR 3 (Protection): Identification and assistance to trafficked persons expanded and improved.</p> <p>Sub IR3.1 Enhanced policies and mechanisms for victim identification, referral, and assistance.</p> <p>Sub IR3.2 Improved availability, quality, and access to victim services.</p>		
<p>IR4 (Prosecution): Increased prosecution of TIP (Kyrgyz Republic only).</p> <p>Sub IR4.1 Strengthen capacity of criminal justice actors to identify and process TIP cases.</p> <p>Sub IR4.2 Enhance coordination and cooperation in investigation and prosecution of TIP cases.</p> <p>Sub IR4.3 Increase TIP victims' access to justice and redress.</p>		

Section 2 introduces the methodology and limitations of the analysis. Section 3 outlines the available gender-related COVID-19–specific data at the sector level and provides an overview of findings by the USAID Automated Directives System (ADS) 205 gender analysis domains. Section 4 summarizes the regional vulnerable and at-risk populations and key findings and recommendations by IR. Recommendations related to women's economic empowerment and equality have a **WEE** tag to facilitate the Mission's tracking of investments in that area, as required in the [Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act of 2018](#). Section 5 highlights risks and assumptions associated with the regional and country-specific recommendations. Section 6 provides a roadmap for updating the gender analysis, specifying when and what to update, and whom USAID designates to be responsible for the update. Annex A provides detailed country-specific findings and recommendations for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. It highlights vulnerable and

at-risk populations that are the most at risk of TIP and exploitation domestically and internationally by IR.

2. METHODOLOGY

Banyan Global consultants (Dr. Laurie Zivetz, Dr. Angela Oliver-Burgess, Ms. Gulfia Abdullaeva, and Dr. Gulnara Ibraeva) conducted this analysis over a two-month period. The findings and recommendations in this report rely on an in-depth review of secondary data and approximately three dozen interviews conducted remotely (due to COVID-19) (see [Annex C for a list of key documents](#) and [Annex D for a list of key stakeholders](#) consulted). Data collection included a few limitations:

- The research team could not interview government representatives because time was insufficient to obtain the permissions needed. Some CSO and other high-priority respondents were also unavailable.
- The research team did not interview migrants, victims of trafficking in persons (VTIP), or other directly affected persons.
- Available pre-COVID data about migration, TIP, remittances, and current information on COVID-19 and gender were uneven for the five target countries. Data on the post-COVID data are largely unavailable (though some studies are underway). Perspectives about impacts of COVID on migration patterns and gendered economic, social, and other outcomes are almost entirely anecdotal.
- Although there are international definitions of migrant vulnerability (including in the Palermo Protocol), definitions may vary at the national level. This lack of consistency means that planners and service providers may ignore groups at risk of TIP; skew the focus of programming; and unintentionally stigmatize those at-risk. To address this limitation, the presentation of findings and recommendations in Sections 3–8 uses a gender lens to provide a snapshot of populations vulnerable and at risk of TIP due to COVID-related disruptions to migration and impacts on TIP.

3. COVID-SPECIFIC GENDER EQUALITY AND SECTOR CONTEXT

3.1 COVID-SPECIFIC SECTOR DATA ON GENDER EQUALITY

Table 2 provides an overview of gender-related COVID-specific data at the sector level relevant for each country in the USAID/Central Asia SMICA.

TABLE 2. SNAPSHOT OF COVID-SPECIFIC STATISTICS ON GENDER EQUALITY AT THE SECTOR LEVEL

Kazakhstan

COVID-19 infection and mortality rates

- As of December 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported the following COVID-19 data.³ Confirmed infection cases: 182,657; confirmed mortality rates: 2,542; there were no sex- and age-disaggregated data on COVID-19 incidence, mortality, and recovery.

Government management of COVID-19 response

- On March 13, 2020, the first cases of COVID-19 infection were reported in Kazakhstan. The President of Kazakhstan imposed a state of emergency from March 16 to April 15, 2020.⁴ The President also put in place public health and social distancing measures in early May 2020 due to increases in the incidence of COVID-19, which he extended until early August 2020. The Government of Kazakhstan (GoK) closed all borders of entry to non-citizens in March 2020 but has since reopened into borders to citizens of almost all countries.⁵
- The GoK introduced a US\$10 billion Comprehensive Economic Growth Recovery Plan for income and business revenues lost due to quarantine measures in March 2020.⁶ The Plan includes assistance to women and vulnerable communities.⁷

Sector-level snapshot before and since the pandemic began

- Before COVID-19, Russia and Kazakhstan were the first- and second-choice destination countries, respectively, for Uzbek, Tajik, and Kyrgyz national labor migrants. Since COVID-19 began, no reliable data have been available on the scale of labor migration to Kazakhstan. Undocumented migrants far outnumber registered workers.⁸
- By the end of June 2020, nearly half of the workforce had been put on unpaid leave without pay, with 12 percent vulnerable to termination of employment. Women account for more than 65 percent of the employees in the most vulnerable sectors—tourism, hospitality, education, manufacturing, including microenterprises.⁹ At least 1.5 million people are estimated to be on unpaid leave or have lost their job due to the outbreak of COVID-19.¹⁰
- The COVID-19 crisis has made undocumented migrants vulnerable to human trafficking for sexual or labor exploitation, forced labor, and slavery.¹¹ Human traffickers are exploiting domestic and foreign workers in Kazakhstan for sex trafficking.¹²

³ World Health Organization. n.d. “Kazakhstan: The Current COVID-19 Situation.” ([Link](#)).

⁴ United Nation Country Team Kazakhstan. 2020. *United Nations Kazakhstan Covid-19 Socio-Economic Response & Recovery Plan*. ([Link](#)).

⁵ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. 2020. “COVID-19 Crisis Response in Central Asia.” ([Link](#)).

⁶ United Nation Country Team Kazakhstan. 2020. *United Nations Kazakhstan Covid-19 Socio-Economic Response & Recovery Plan*. ([Link](#)).

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Winrock International. 2020. *Safe Migration in Central Asia: Situational Analysis of Kazakhstan*. ([Link](#)). Is this the right link?

⁹ Asian Development Bank. 2020. “Proposed Countercyclical Support Facility Loans Republic of Kazakhstan: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program.”

¹⁰ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2020. *COVID-19 Crisis Response in Central Asia*. OECD. ([Link](#)).

¹¹ United Nation Country Team Kazakhstan. 2020. *United Nations Kazakhstan Covid-19 Socio-Economic Response & Recovery Plan*. ([Link](#)).

¹² Winrock International. 2020. *Safe Migration in Central Asia: Situational Analysis of Kazakhstan*. ([Link](#)).

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- Women, including rural women, divorcees, and young women (between the ages of 25 and 34 years) from the lowest-income part of the population, reported knowledge of or personal experience with domestic violence during the quarantine period.¹³
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The Kyrgyz Republic

COVID-19 infection and mortality rates

- As of December 11, 2020, the WHO reported the following COVID-19 data¹⁴: Confirmed infection cases: 76,391; confirmed mortality rates: 1,306; There were no sex- and age-disaggregated data on COVID-19 incidence, mortality, and recovery.

Government management of COVID-19 response

- On March 21, 2020, the Government of Kyrgyz Republic, in consultation with the WHO, declared a state of emergency. It closed borders, and then businesses and schools, and also imposed lockdown and social distancing measures.
- The Kyrgyz Republic put in place a National Contingency Action Plan that provides for humanitarian assistance to current recipients of state social benefits (51 percent of whom are women) and persons with disabilities. The Ministry of Social Protection and Labor estimates 30 percent of the population will need direct social protection.¹⁵ Implementation has been uneven, as noted below.
- More recent COVID-response policy measures focus disproportionately on enterprise liquidity rather than on social protection for households.

Sector-level snapshot before and since the pandemic began

- An estimated 40 percent of the labor force was working outside of the country in 2017 (mostly in the Russian Federation), with 34.7 percent of the population dependent on remittances.¹⁶
- Border closures and the falling demand for labor have led to large numbers of migrant workers returning to or remaining in their home countries. At the same time, many have been turned away at airports, or country borders when traveling by road.
- The National Statistics Commission of the Kyrgyz Republic projects that poverty will increase from 20 percent in 2019 to 36 percent nationally in 2020; and 55–57 percent in southern regions, which are more dependent on migrant remittances. Migration is a likely coping strategy for youth, who are at high risk of TIP.¹⁷
- Of the estimated 150,000 returning migrant workers, around 40 percent are women. Many migrate independently and work in the domestic and service sectors (42 percent), trade (33 percent), construction and renovation (8 percent), industry (5 percent), and other sectors (12 percent).¹⁸
- Trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation and forced labor continues to be a problem today. Women and children from the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan are mostly exported to the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, China, and South Korea, although they are exported to other countries, including Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, and Saudi Arabia.¹⁹

¹³ United Nations (UN) Women Kazakhstan and United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) Kazakhstan. 2020. *Rapid Gender Assessment (RGA) for the COVID-19 Situation in the Republic of Kazakhstan*. ([Link](#)).

¹⁴ World Health Organization. n.d. “Kazakhstan: The Current COVID-19 Situation.” ([Link](#)).

¹⁵ Asian Development Bank. 2020. *Covid-19 in the Kyrgyz Republic: Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment and Policy Response*. ([Link](#)).

¹⁶ National Statistics Committee. 2019. *Women and Men of the Kyrgyz Republic*. ([Link](#)).

¹⁷ Evening Bishkek. 2015. *National Statistical Committee: Without Migrant Transfers, the Poverty Level in the Kyrgyz Republic will Rise to 36.4%*. ([Link](#)); and National Statistics Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2015. “Standard of Living.” ([Link](#)).

¹⁸ Tyuryukanova, E.V., Zh.A. Zayonchkovskaya, L.B. Karachurina, N.V. Mkrtchyan, D.V. Poletaev, and Yu.F. Florinskaya. 2011. *GA: Women Migrants from CIS Countries in Russia*. MAX Press. ([Link](#)).

¹⁹ United States Department of State. 2020. *Trafficking in Persons Report 20th Edition (Russian language)*. ([Link](#)).

Tajikistan

COVID-19 infection and mortality rates

- As of December 11, 2020, the WHO reported the following COVID-19 data²⁰: Confirmed infection cases: 12,631; confirmed mortality rates: 87. There were no sex- and age-disaggregated data on COVID-19 incidence, mortality, and recovery.
- Early denial of COVID-19 led to a surge of COVID cases in late April 2020. This overwhelmed the country's fragile health system. Tajik workers returning from China may have been early spreaders. A United Nations (UN) study suggests the country has limited testing capacity and supplies.²¹

Government management of COVID-19 response

- In March 2020, the Government of Tajikistan (GoT) closed the country's borders, the airport, and schools, and briefly stopped mass gatherings. These partial measures have significantly impacted the economy, which is estimated to shrink by 2 percent in 2020.²² Before the pandemic, households were vulnerable to food insecurity, as the country has a weak social protection system.²³ Currently, travel into Tajikistan remains limited.
- GoT prepared COVID response plans in health, education, economic development and trade, and access to finance, with an eye toward addressing issues of exclusion.²⁴

Sector-level snapshot before and since the pandemic began

- Pre-COVID, one in five Tajik citizens—1.5 million—worked abroad.²⁵ In 2019, Russia was the destination country for 90 percent of Tajik seasonal foreign workers (18 percent female), though officially 267,324 (about half) were banned from entering.²⁶ At least one male family member is working abroad in most rural households. Men are absent from the villages for months or years at a time, leaving their wives behind as the heads of the household.²⁷
- Pre-COVID, one of the indicators of poverty risk is female household-head, uneducated household head, or household with many children. In a 2009 International Organization of Migration (IOM) study of 300,000 abandoned households, 70 percent had children.²⁸
- The shortage of men due to migration and abandonment has doubled divorce rates between 2005 and 2010 and contributed to polygamy (though illegal).
- Tajik women are trafficked for agriculture, construction, and sex in the country, the region, and in the Middle East.²⁹
- Post-COVID-19 border and airspace closures further limit regular migration options that can be exploited by smugglers, traffickers, and opportunists, who may take advantage of migrants.
- COVID-19 has disrupted trade and supply chains, affecting the availability and price of food, which has led to price controls on markets.³⁰
- With social-distancing and lockdowns, women and girls are at higher risk of sexual abuse and exploitation as well as other forms of domestic violence due to increased tensions in the household.³¹

²⁰ World Health Organization. 2020. *Tajikistan: The Current COVID-19 Situation*. ([Link](#)).

²¹ Najibullah, Farangis. 2020. "As Coronavirus Infections Go from Zero to Hundreds in Days, Tajikistan's Hospitals Can't Keep Up." RadioFreeEurope. RadioLiberty. ([Link](#)); and RFE/RL's Tajik Service. 2020. "Tajikistan's Official Coronavirus Stats Don't Reflect Reality, RFE/RL Investigation Finds." RadioFreeEurope. RadioLiberty. ([Link](#)).

²² United Nations in Tajikistan. 2020. *Integrated Socioeconomic Response Framework to Covid-19 (ISEF) for Tajikistan*.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ United Nations in Tajikistan. 2020. *Integrated Socioeconomic Response Framework to Covid-19 (ISEF) for Tajikistan*; and Lemon, Edward. 2019. "Dependent on Remittances, Tajikistan's Long-Term Prospects for Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Remain Dim." Migration Policy Institute.

²⁵ UN Women, Europe, and Central Asia. n.d. "Tajikistan." ([Link](#)).

²⁶ Asian Development Bank. 2020. *Strengthening Support for Labor Migration in Tajikistan*. ([Link](#)).

²⁷ United Nations in Tajikistan. 2020. *Integrated Socioeconomic Response Framework to Covid-19 (ISEF) for Tajikistan*; and USAID, and WINROCK International. 2020. *Safe Migration in Central Asia: Situational Analysis of Tajikistan*.

²⁸ UN Women, Europe, and Central Asia. n.d. "Tajikistan." ([Link](#)).

²⁹ United States Department of State. 2020. *Trafficking in Persons Report 20th Edition (Russian language)*. ([Link](#)).

³⁰ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2020. *Tackling Coronavirus (COVID-19): Contributing to a Global Effort*. OECD.

³¹ United Nations in Tajikistan. 2020. *Integrated Socioeconomic Response Framework to Covid-19 (ISEF) for Tajikistan*.

Turkmenistan

COVID-19 infection and mortality rates

- The Government of Turkmenistan denies that the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the country. No official statistics are available on the number of COVID-19 cases in the country.
- As of December 11, 2020, COVID-19 Turkmenistan, a crowdsourced project and unofficial [website](#) recorded a total of 112 deaths from COVID-19, though the actual number of deaths is likely higher.³²

Government management of COVID-19 response

- In the first few months of the global pandemic, mask-wearers and health workers were harassed. State-controlled media communicated only state-endorsed messages and provided limited coverage of COVID-19. Authorities provided no guidance on social distancing and even organized celebrative mass events.³³
- In July 2020, ahead of a WHO mission and citing the increased levels of dust in the air and the allegedly documented risk of spreading viruses by airborne dust from abroad, Government of Turkmenistan (GoTM) authorities stepped up measures to prevent COVID-19, requiring facemasks in public places, issuing guidelines for social distancing, and introducing unprecedented isolation measures. Consistent with their policy of denial, authorities also discouraged the use of the term “coronavirus.”³⁴

Sector-level snapshot before and since the pandemic began

- Before COVID-19, the country’s legal framework included measures to promote safe migration and youth employment, and punish TIP. No labor inspectorate is in place, however, and information and support services to enforce and support these measures are weak. Most migrants go through “irregular” channels.³⁵ An estimated 30 percent of the population emigrated between 2008 and 2018; most informally went to Turkey.³⁶ About half (52.7 percent) of migrants are female³⁷. (Official estimates: 3 percent of the population migrated internationally in 2019³⁸)
- The economy in Turkmenistan has contracted since 2017 due to disruption of the country’s hydrocarbon exports (90 percent of exports). COVID-19 has exacerbated Turkmenistan’s economy, as the volume of trade in energy and prices plummeted, especially with its major customer, China.³⁹
- Unemployment estimates range from 4 percent, according to the World Bank, 10 percent, according to USAID’s Enriching Youth for Tomorrow,⁴⁰ and 60 percent, according to independent media.⁴¹ The GoTM denies the existence of poverty and unemployment in the country. The GoTM announced economic mitigation initiatives, including support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and enterprises producing essential goods.⁴²

and USAID, and WINROCK International. 2020. *Safe Migration in Central Asia: Situational Analysis of Tajikistan*.

³² International Partnership for Human Rights, Kazakhstan International Bureau for Human Rights and Rule of Law, Legal Prosperity Foundation, Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights, and Association for Human Rights in Central Asia. 2020. *Protection of Human Rights in Central Asia During the Pandemic COVID-19 - Key Trends*. ([Link](#)); RadioFreeEurope. RadioLiberty. 2020. *Covid-19: Hospitals Overwhelmed in ‘Coronavirus-Free’ Turkmenistan*; Putz, Catherine. 2020. *Death and Denial in Turkmenistan*. The Diplomat; and Ospanova, Aygul. 2020. “Turkmenistan’s COVID-19 Response Gets Boost as WHO Assists with Measures.” Caspian News. ([Link](#)).

³³ International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR) (Belgium) and Turkmen Initiative for Human Rights. 2020. *Human Rights Impact Assessment of The COVID-19 Response in Turkmenistan*. IPHR. ([Link](#)).

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ USAID and Winrock International. 2020. *Safe Migration in Central Asia: Situational Analysis of Turkmenistan*.

³⁶ Human Rights Watch. 2020. “Turkmenistan: Denial, Inaction Worsen Food Crisis.” ([Link](#)).

³⁷ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division. 2019. “International Migrant Stock 2019: Country Profiles.” ([Link](#)).

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ The Diplomat. 2020. *What’s the impact of Turkmenistan’s COVID Delusion?*

⁴⁰ Enriching Youth for Tomorrow reports unemployment is about 10 percent.

⁴¹ Human Rights Watch. 2020. *Turkmenistan: Denial, Inaction Worsen Food Crisis*. ([Link](#)).

⁴² Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2020. *Tackling Coronavirus (COVID-19): Contributing to a Global Effort*. OECD.

- GoTM restrictions on citizen movement, information, and freedoms predate COVID.⁴³ Since the onset of COVID, the GoTM has also closed borders and restricted internal movements, which is having an impact on household economies because people cannot travel domestically or internationally for work and imported items are scarcer and more expensive.⁴⁴ Individuals have been arrested for discussing the pandemic in public or for wearing masks, as authorities closed the country's borders.⁴⁵
- State employees are forced to work in cotton fields to meet government quotas. Employees in such forced labor include teachers and health workers, most of whom are female.⁴⁶
- Although the GoTM keeps a tight lid on migration statistics, an officer in the State Migration Service said figures showed that over 110,000 of the 150,000 people recorded as leaving the country (between January and September 2020) did not intend on returning.⁴⁷ No other data or statements were available on the state of international migration.

Uzbekistan

COVID-19 infection and mortality rates

- As of November 14, 2020, the WHO reported the following COVID-19 data:⁴⁸ Confirmed infection cases: 69,680; Confirmed mortality rates: 594; There were no sex- and age-disaggregated data on COVID-19 incidence, mortality, and recovery.

Government management of the COVID-19 response

- In March 2020, the Government of Uzbekistan (GoU) closed the country's borders to non-citizens, and is now slowly re-opening its borders to citizens of other countries. In March 2020, the GoU also put in place national quarantine measures, which included putting a hold on transportation, and closing schools, public places, and non-essential businesses. Remote schooling is now in place for educational institutions⁴⁹ and transportation is now functioning again.
- The GoU convened a COVID-response Commission, which is headed by Prime Minister Abdulla Aripov. It issued economic measures to maintain national business activity and social support for vulnerable populations.⁵⁰

Sector-level snapshot before and since the pandemic began

- Uzbeks are the largest group of migrants in Kazakhstan. According to official statistics, 2.6 million Uzbek citizens were recorded as labor migrants in 2018, constituting 18 percent of the economically active population.⁵¹
- Remittances to Uzbekistan are estimated at US\$5.1 billion, constituting between 10 and 15 percent of the country's GDP, and are projected to drop by more than 50 percent, significantly increasing hardship for the poorest households.⁵²
- The pandemic has precipitated a fall in prices and sales of the country's natural gas to Russia and China. It has curtailed remittance flows from workers in Russia (about US\$1.3 billion). The country's main export is fresh agricultural products, which has decreased due to the partial closing of Kazakhstan.⁵³
- Women's job prospects will be severely affected since they comprise about 45 percent of formal employees. In 2017, 43.2 percent of SMEs were managed and/or owned by women, with one-third of new businesses registered by women

⁴³ United States. Department of State. 2020. *Trafficking in Persons Report*, 20th Edition.

⁴⁴ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2020. *Tackling Coronavirus (COVID-19): Contributing to a Global Effort*. OECD.

⁴⁵ The Diplomat. 2020. *What's the impact of Turkmenistan's COVID Delusion?*

⁴⁶ United States. Department of State. 2020. *Trafficking in Persons Report*, 20th Edition. Turkmen.News. 2018. *Turkmenistan: 2017 Findings of Forced Labor Monitoring during Cotton Harvesting*. ([Link](#)).

⁴⁷ News Briefing Central Asia. 2020. *Rising Emigration from Turkmenistan*. Global Voices Central Asia. ([Link](#)).

⁴⁸ World Health Organization. 2020. *Uzbekistan: The Current COVID-19 situation*. ([Link](#)).

⁴⁹ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2020. *COVID-19 Crisis Response in Central Asia*. OECD. ([Link](#)).

⁵⁰ Tulyakov, Eldor. 2020. "COVID-19: Actions taken in Uzbekistan." *Foreign Policy Centre*.

⁵¹ Winrock International. 2020. *Safe Migration in Central Asia: Situational Analysis of Uzbekistan*.

⁵² United Nations Development Program (UNDP). 2020. "Uzbekistan's Health Care System, Economy hit Hard by COVID-19." *UNDP*.

⁵³ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2020. *COVID-19 Crisis Response in Central Asia*. OECD. ([Link](#)).

entrepreneurs. The pandemic has wiped out tourism and high-value horticulture exports. This affects women, who comprise 54 percent of workers in catering, trade, and tourism, and 46 percent in agriculture and forestry.⁵⁴

- COVID-19 has had devastating effects on the local economy, in particular the informal sector, which employs over two-thirds of the population, much of which is female.⁵⁵
- In 2019, 47 percent of the population was covered by at least one social protection benefit; 32 percent of persons with disabilities collected disability benefits; 68 percent of poor people were covered by social protection measures; and the retirement-aged population receive full pension coverage.⁵⁶ Economic contractions due to COVID-19 are likely making these persons more vulnerable.

3.2 COVID-SPECIFIC SECTOR CONTEXT ON GENDER EQUALITY

Table 3 presents COVID-specific findings on gender equality related to the USAID Automated Directives System 205 gender analysis domains.

TABLE 3. STRUCTURE OF COVID-SPECIFIC GENDER ANALYSIS

USAID ADS 205 GENDER ANALYSIS DOMAIN	COUNTRY
Laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices that influence the context in which men and women act and make decisions	<p>Kazakhstan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In December 2019, the GoK amended legislation to increase the punishment for trafficking crimes, including for sex trafficking, which now has the same penalty as other serious crimes, such as rape.⁵⁷ • A Commission on Human Rights addresses migrants' rights, migration law, migration health, and the gender dimension of migration.⁵⁸ • A 2009 Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence (no. 214) exists, but it is not enforced.⁵⁹ • In addition to a number of laws and international agreements that promote gender equality, Kazakhstan was the first Central Asian country to establish a national entity to promote gender equality (the National Commission on Women, Family and Demographic Policy).⁶⁰ <p>The Kyrgyz Republic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory frameworks for migration exist, but they are poorly implemented. Most migrants find work through informal networks.⁶¹

⁵⁴ Asian Development Bank. 2020. *Uzbekistan: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program. Project Data Sheet*. ([Link](#)).

⁵⁵ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2020. *COVID-19 Crisis Response in Central Asia*. OECD. ([Link](#)).

⁵⁶ Holzhacker, Hans. 2020. *COVID-19: Economic impact and mitigation measures*. CAREC Institute. ([Link](#)).

⁵⁷ United States Department of State. 2020. *Trafficking in Persons Report 20th Edition*.

⁵⁸ International Organization of Migration. 2020. *International Organization for Migration Central Asia Regional Response Report, Issue 6*.

⁵⁹ United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) Kazakhstan. 2020. "Central Asian Countries Meet to Discuss Multi-Sectoral Response to Gender-Based Violence (based on the example of Kazakhstan)." *UNFPA Kazakhstan*.

⁶⁰ United Nations (UN) Women Europe and Central Asia. n.d. "Republic of Kazakhstan." *UN Women*.

⁶¹ USAID and Winrock International. 2020. *Situation Analysis*.

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- The 2017 law of the Kyrgyz Republic on "Prevention and Protection against Family Violence" includes measures to improve protection for victims of domestic violence and strengthen police and judicial response.⁶² The law recognizes not only physical and psychological abuse but also "economic violence," which in the Kyrgyz Republic often takes the form of restricting access to and use of financial resources, property, or other assets.⁶³

Tajikistan

- Both the national regulatory framework and Inter-Agency Commissions on Migration and on CTIP are weak and lack a nuanced focus on the differential needs of male and female migrants.⁶⁴
- In 2013, Tajikistan passed the Law on the Prevention of Violence in the Family (hereinafter Family Violence Law), which is the first of its kind in the country. The Family Violence Law does not recognize domestic violence and other forms of violence as a crime, providing only for administrative liability.⁶⁵

Turkmenistan

- The GoTM has passed legislation on rights of employees (2016); and the Law on State Youth (2013), including a focus on youth employment.⁶⁶
- Sex and labor trafficking are criminal offenses under the law. Recent studies by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) of the U.S. Department of State resulted in the drafting of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for victim identification and referral, but these have not been adopted.⁶⁷
- No specific laws on domestic violence or violence against women are in place, but women are in theory protected by the criminal law, which prohibits violence in any form.⁶⁸

Uzbekistan

- On August 17, 2020, the President adopted an amended law on TIP that addresses trafficking in minors, country of origin, victims of TIP, and coercion. The law includes prevention and protection for human trafficking survivors.⁶⁹
 - A high-level National Commission on Trafficking includes all relevant state agencies, as well as regional commissions in every area of the country.⁷⁰
 - In September 2020, the GoU signed into order the new migration policy "Measures to Implement the Safe, Ordered, and Legal Labor Migration."⁷¹
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⁶² United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. n.d. *UNODC Supports the Need for Gender Sensitivity in Justice System to Safeguard Rights of Women in Kyrgyzstan*.

⁶³ Human Rights Watch. 2017. *Kyrgyzstan's New Domestic Violence Law*.

⁶⁴ USAID and Winrock International. 2020. *Safe Migration in Central Asia: Situational Analysis of Tajikistan*.

⁶⁵ International Partnership for Human Rights. 2018. *Tajikistan: Failure to Protect Women from Domestic Violence Joint NGO Submission to CEDAW ahead of the 71st Session*.

⁶⁶ USAID and Winrock International. 2020. *Safe Migration in Central Asia: Situational Analysis of Turkmenistan*.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. 2018. *Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women reviews the report of Turkmenistan*.

⁶⁹ KUN.UZ. 2020. "Presidential Decree: A New System of Labor Migration will be Introduced in Uzbekistan from 2021." KUN.UZ.

⁷⁰ United States Department of State. 2020. *Trafficking in Persons Report 20th Edition*.

⁷¹ KUN.UZ. 2020. "Presidential Decree: A New System of Labor Migration will be Introduced in Uzbekistan from 2021." KUN.UZ.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GoU has a legal framework that addresses violence against women (2019 law), discrimination in the workplace, and protection of women's rights, in line with international standards.⁷²
Cultural norms and beliefs	<p>Kazakhstan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural norms in Kazakhstan are generally positive toward the concept of equality between women and men. Women are generally perceived as strong and active members of society in Kazakhstan. They have public and social space, and most do not experience religious or cultural restrictions to their physical mobility.⁷³ Despite the economic and social changes in Kazakhstan, traditional gender norms around gender division of labor persist. A man's primary role and responsibility within the family is as an economic provider, whereas a woman's responsibility is to take care of the family. A 2018 World Health Organization study acknowledges that the "successful breadwinner" gender norm has resulted in stress and other health-related problems for men in Kazakhstan.⁷⁴ Women are responsible for raising and caring for children including education, while men are more likely to take care of households and pets, in particular during the quarantine period.⁷⁵ The 2015 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) survey found that 15.1 percent of women believed that a husband or partner is justified to hit or beat his wife or partner in at least one of six situations when a woman does not comply with certain expected gender roles.⁷⁶ Intimate partner violence has likely increased since the beginning of the pandemic. <p>The Kyrgyz Republic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic changes have prevented men from fulfilling their normative construction of masculinity as the "successful breadwinners."⁷⁷ Recent research found that families are sending their daughters to Russia as migrants as they are responsible and careful to send remittances. Young women are more adaptive than young men in working for less money. Male migration has been linked to abandonment.⁷⁸ Since the country's independence, conservative gender norms have resurged. Stereotypes promoted by the state, media, and other actors portray women as primarily mothers and wives, and research indicates that these ideas have influenced thinking among Kyrgyz women and men. Women's presence in public-sector roles has also decreased in large part due to the erosion of subsidized childcare facilities.⁷⁹ Early and unregistered civil marriages, polygamy, bride kidnapping, and domestic violence while illegal reflect prevailing patriarchal norms. They also present barriers to women's access to education and violates their inheritance rights.⁸⁰ Since the

⁷² Asian Development Bank. 2018. *Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment*. ([Link](#)).

⁷³ Asian Development Bank. 2019. *Kazakhstan Country Gender Assessment*.

⁷⁴ Edström, Jerker, Ramy Aly, Alan Greig, Charlie Walker, Svitlana Babenko, Meriç Çağlar, Diana T. Kudaibergenova, and Catherine Müller. 2019. *Masculinities and Transition: Enduring Privilege?* Brighton: Institute of Development Studies. ([Link](#)).

⁷⁵ United Nations (UN) Women Kazakhstan and United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) Kazakhstan. 2020. *Rapid Gender Assessment (RGA) for the COVID-19 Situation in the Republic of Kazakhstan*. ([Link](#)).

⁷⁶ Asian Development Bank. 2019. *Kazakhstan Country Gender Assessment*.

⁷⁷ Walker, Charlie. 2020. *Masculinity and Gender-based Violence in Eastern Europe and Central Asia: Engaging men in the Gender Equality Agenda*. The Berr Trust. ([Link](#)).

⁷⁸ International Organization for Migration. 2020. *Reclaiming the Concepts of Family and Community from the Narratives of Migration and Religious Radicalization*. ([Link](#)).

⁷⁹ Asian Development Bank. 2019. *Kyrgyz Republic Country Gender Assessment*.

⁸⁰ National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic and UNICEF. 2016. *Kyrgyzstan Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014, Final Report*. Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan: National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic and UNICEF. ([Link](#)).; #women2030. 2018. *Kyrgyzstan: Gender Assessment*. ([Link](#)); and Dubok, Helen, and Turakhanova, Dilbar.

beginning of the pandemic, reports to law enforcement of domestic violence have increased 65 percent under lockdown compared to the same period in 2019.⁸¹

Tajikistan

- Economic collapse and the rise of Soviet-era work values and Islamic religious conservatism promote patriarchal norms. Values also emphasize “equality” in labor, which ultimately adds to women’s workforce burdens.⁸²
- Cultural tolerance for violence, the practice of polygamy, and unregistered marriages are linked to high levels of GBV (26.4 percent women over lifetime in 2017) and female suicide, both expected to rise in lockdown.⁸³ Women living with HIV, representing 40 percent of people living with HIV and AIDS (PLWHA)), are particularly vulnerable to violence.⁸⁴ Violence has likely increased since the beginning of the pandemic.

Turkmenistan

- Cultural norms justify GBV.⁸⁵ Although, polygamy is illegal, it is still practiced in some regions (no statistics available).⁸⁶ Violence has likely increased since the beginning of the pandemic.

Uzbekistan

- Traditional gender norms and practices, though not constituting formal laws or policies, prescribe the roles of women and men in the family and society, define implicit and explicit rules, and assign different jobs, values, responsibilities, and obligations to women and men. Tradition-bound notions of motherhood, children, and family are prevalent in Uzbekistan. A woman who decides to have a career is expected to balance work and family life. Parents prefer their daughters to be married after completion of secondary education rather than strive for higher education..⁸⁷
 - No recent pre-pandemic studies have been conducted on the norms related to GBV in Uzbekistan. However, reports of GBV have increased since the beginning of the pandemic and the demand for hotline support increased fivefold in the country’s first week under lockdown.⁸⁸
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2018. *Gender Study for Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan Final Report*. EuroPlus Consulting & Management. ([Link](#)).

⁸¹ Asian Development Bank and United Nations Development Programme. 2020. *Covid-19 in the Kyrgyz Republic: Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment and Policy Response*. pp 17.

⁸² Putz, Catherine. 2018. “The Feminized Farm: Labor Migration and Women’s Roles in Tajikistan’s Rural Communities.” *The Diplomat*. ([Link](#)).; and Dushanbieva, Sayyokhat. 2014. *The Impacts of Migration: The Tajik Women’s Experiences of Their Husband’s Migration*. Master’s Thesis to Central European University.

⁸³ United Nations in Tajikistan. 2020. *Integrated Socioeconomic Response Framework to Covid-19 (ISEF) for Tajikistan*.; Statistical Agency under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan/SA, Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Tajikistan/MOHSP, and ICF. 2017. *Tajikistan Demographic Health Survey 2017*. ([Link](#)).; and Valentini, Nigina. 2018. *Gender-Based Violence in Central Asia is Common, But We Can Change That*.

⁸⁴ Coalition of Non–Governmental Organizations of the Republic of Tajikistan. 2019. Alternative Report of the Coalition of Non–Governmental Organizations of the Republic of Tajikistan “From Equality de jure to Equality de facto” on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action +25.

⁸⁵ UNFPA. 2020. *Country Program document for Turkmenistan*. Second regular session 2020.

⁸⁶ International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Finance Corporation, Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency, and Joint Country Engagement Note (CEN). 2015. *Report No. 99556-TM for Turkmenistan for the Period FY16-FY17*. The World Bank Group. ([Link](#)).

⁸⁷ Asian Development Bank. 2018. *Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment*. ([Link](#)).

⁸⁸ United Nations Development Program. 2020. “Uzbekistan’s Health Care System, Economy Hit Hard by COVID-19.” *UNDP*.

Gender roles, responsibilities,
and time use

Kazakhstan

- Pre-COVID gender discrepancies have become more pronounced since the onset of COVID-19, as unpaid domestic household activities have increased. 81 percent of women reported increased time spent on unpaid household work, including caring for children.⁸⁹
- As a result of COVID-related school and day-care closures, women and men are spending more time playing with and teaching children.⁹⁰
- Women make up 70 percent of workers in the health and social sector, presenting greater burdens and exposure risk to COVID-19.⁹¹

The Kyrgyz Republic

- Women spend an average of 4.5 hours/day on housework and caregiving for children and elderly—higher for rural women and lower overall for men. Men spend more time in remunerative work than women (28 percent urban and 22 percent rural for men, compared with 24 percent urban and 14 percent rural for women⁹²).
- In the pandemic, women take on increasing caregiver roles, loss of income, responsibilities for providing for children, and repayment of social housing loans.

Tajikistan

- Before COVID-19, females carried out 75 percent of agriculture and unpaid caregiving of children, elderly, sick; lockdown added to these burdens.⁹³ COVID-related school closures have exacerbated female care burden.⁹⁴
 - Before COVID-19, migrant wages were reportedly insufficient to support a family in the receiving country, so typically the male would migrate, leaving families behind in Tajikistan.⁹⁵ In Tajikistan, labor migration is perceived as a “male” job, which is why a high proportion of men migrants go to Russia for low-skilled jobs in construction, transport, oil, gas, and agriculture.⁹⁶
 - Due to COVID-19, a large number of rural households, where men have migrated, are particularly vulnerable to shocks, with supply chain disruptions, and border closings. This has prevented husbands’ return, reinforcing already existing trends toward wife abandonment.⁹⁷
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⁸⁹ United Nations (UN) Women Kazakhstan and United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) Kazakhstan. 2020. *Rapid Gender Assessment (RGA) for the COVID-19 Situation in the Republic of Kazakhstan*.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ United Nations Women Kazakhstan and United Nations Fund for Population Activities Kazakhstan. 2020. *The impact of COVID-19 on women’s and men’s lives and livelihoods*.

⁹² National Statistical Committee The Kyrgyz Republic. 2015. *Time Budget Survey, Part I*. B. pp. 7–9. ([Link](#)).

⁹³ Coalition of Non-Governmental Organizations of the Republic of Tajikistan. 2019. *Alternative Report of the Coalition of Non-Governmental Organizations of the Republic of Tajikistan “From Equality de Jure to Equality de facto” on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action +25*.

⁹⁴ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). 2020. *Tackling Coronavirus (COVID-19): Contributing to a Global Effort*. OECD.

⁹⁵ USAID and WINROCK International. 2020. *Safe Migration in Central Asia: Situational Analysis of Tajikistan*.

⁹⁶ Abdulloeva, Nodira. 2020. “Criteria for Determining The Categories of Families of Migrant Workers Left Without a Breadwinner And Entitled To Receive Targeted State Aid.”

⁹⁷ United Nations in Tajikistan. 2020. *Integrated Socioeconomic Response Framework to Covid-19 (ISEF) for Tajikistan*; and Lemon, Edward. 2019. “Dependent on Remittances, Tajikistan’s Long-Term Prospects for Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Remain Dim.” *Migration Policy Institute*.

	<p>Turkmenistan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women in low-income households spend up to 70 percent of their time in caregiving and household work.⁹⁸ • Women's care burden has likely increased since the beginning of the pandemic (despite the lack of available quantitative or qualitative data on this phenomenon). The increased burden may be due to border closings, which prevented their migrant husbands from returning. <p>Uzbekistan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional norms associated with motherhood and family are prevalent. A woman is expected to balance her work outside of the home with her domestic duties, with priority on domestic.⁹⁹ During COVID-19, household care work has increased for women and girls.¹⁰⁰ • Women are highly represented in the service delivery sectors, which typically offer lower salaries, while men predominately work in technical fields that offer higher salaries.¹⁰¹ • 82 percent of frontline health workers are women and are carrying a larger burden of work, stress, and hardship during COVID-19.¹⁰² • During COVID-19, women and youth, who are employed informally or unemployed, are suffering without income and social protection.¹⁰³
<p>Access to and control over assets and resources</p>	<p>Kazakhstan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrant workers are primarily employed in construction, agriculture, and trade—all considered vulnerable sectors for human exploitation. They are also engaged in manufacturing and production (sewing/textiles), occupations that primarily employ women.¹⁰⁴ • COVID-19 has had major economic consequences on women, including income loss from remittances, family businesses, and farming.¹⁰⁵ • Due to COVID-19, six out of 10 employers (60 percent) had to stop operating their businesses. Rural entrepreneurs and women's businesses have been most affected. Of women who are self-employed, 49 percent were negatively impacted by lockdown measures.¹⁰⁶ 26 percent of women were hit by job losses and reductions in paid working hours compared to 21 percent of men.¹⁰⁷ Both male and female youth are at high risk of job loss, and by extension, at risk of violent extremism.¹⁰⁸

⁹⁸ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2017. *Turkmenistan and Gender Approach*. ([Link](#)).

⁹⁹ Asian Development Bank. 2018. *Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment*. ([Link](#)).

¹⁰⁰ KII, 10/22/2020.

¹⁰¹ Asian Development Bank. 2018. *Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment*. ([Link](#)).

¹⁰² United Nations Development Program (UNDP). 2020. "Uzbekistan's Health Care System, Economy Hit Hard by COVID-19." *UNDP*.

¹⁰³ United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) Uzbekistan. 2020. "UN Agencies will Support those Worst affected by COVID-19 in Uzbekistan through a new Programme." *UNFPA Uzbekistan*.

¹⁰⁴ Winrock International. 2020. *Safe Migration in Central Asia: Situational Analysis of Kazakhstan*.

¹⁰⁵ United Nations Women Kazakhstan and United Nations Fund for Population Activities Kazakhstan. 2020. *The impact of COVID-19 on Women's and Men's Lives and Livelihoods*.

¹⁰⁶ United Nation Country Team Kazakhstan. 2020. *United Nations Kazakhstan COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response & Recovery Plan*.

¹⁰⁷ United Nations Women Kazakhstan and United Nations Fund for Population Activities Kazakhstan. 2020. *The Impact of COVID-19 on Women's and Men's Lives and Livelihoods*.

¹⁰⁸ United Nation Country Team Kazakhstan. 2020. *United Nations Kazakhstan COVID-19 Socio-Economic Response &*

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- The GoK implemented measures on tax exemption until the end of 2020 due to the pandemic. This includes property and land tax for business entities, agricultural producers, and individuals.¹⁰⁹ Due to local customs, traditionally, sons inherit family land over daughters.¹¹⁰
 - COVID-19 is shifting social and business life to Internet platforms that could potentially deepen disparities in the country.¹¹¹ More women (56 percent) than men (35 percent) have switched to home-based work.¹¹²
 - COVID-19 has brought an increase in unintended pregnancies and GBV (“17 percent of Kazakhstani women experienced physical and/or sexual violence post-COVID-19”).¹¹³ Fewer women are accessing maternal health services; family planning; or psychological support in cases of domestic violence—which may negatively affect their future health.¹¹⁴
 - Vulnerable populations of migrants, women, persons with disabilities, and children have less access to health services due to COVID-19.¹¹⁵

The Kyrgyz Republic

- In 2018, the unemployment rate was 6.9 percent for women and 5.7 percent for men. Both are likely to increase in 2020, with unemployment projected to reach 13.6 percent in 2020.¹¹⁶
 - Women make up about half of employees in the informal sector, holding temporary employment or informal contracts, limiting their access to government social safety net support, accorded only to those in the formal labor force.¹¹⁷
 - SME lending to women accounts for some 30-40 percent from commercial banks; ¹¹⁸ women comprise 38.3 percent of agricultural workforce; and 43.5 percent of medium- size firm managers.¹¹⁹ SMEs are expected to be affected by COVID-related trade disruptions due to closed borders and contracting local markets due to consumer job loss and diminished spending. Trade and consumer services in Bishkek, Osh, and Karasuu were hard hit by the lockdown.¹²⁰
 - Labor migrants in the region face wage discrimination—the wage gap can vary from 13 percent to 46 percent when compared with wages of Russian Federation citizens doing the same job. The wage gap is expected to widen with COVID-19.¹²¹
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Recovery Plan.

¹⁰⁹ Nalogkz. n.d. “Tax Incentives During an Emergency in Kazakhstan.”

¹¹⁰ 365 Info.KZ. 2018. “Inheritance from Kazakhs – the Tradition of Enshi I take.”

¹¹¹ United Nation Country Team Kazakhstan. 2020. *United Nations Kazakhstan Covid-19 Socio-Economic Response & Recovery Plan.*

¹¹² United Nations Women Kazakhstan and United Nations Fund for Population Activities Kazakhstan. 2020. *The impact of COVID-19 on Women’s and Men’s Lives and Livelihoods.*

¹¹³ United Nation Country Team Kazakhstan. 2020. *United Nations Kazakhstan Covid-19 Socio-Economic Response & Recovery Plan.*

¹¹⁴ United Nations (UN) Women Kazakhstan and United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) Kazakhstan. 2020. *Rapid Gender Assessment (RGA) for the COVID-19 Situation in the Republic of Kazakhstan.*

¹¹⁵ United Nation Country Team Kazakhstan. 2020. *United Nations Kazakhstan Covid-19 Socio-Economic Response & Recovery Plan.*

¹¹⁶ National Statistics Committee. 2019. *Women and Men of the Kyrgyz Republic.* Bishkek.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ EBRD. 2019. *Kyrgyz Republic Diagnostic April 2019.*

¹²⁰ United Nations. 2020. *COVID-19 Impacts on Livelihoods of Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic Gender Rapid Assessment.*

¹²¹ PIL for International Organization for Migration. 2018.

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- Data suggest that assets are mostly owned by men; 62 percent of real estate is registered in a man's name versus 29 percent in a woman's name, and 9 percent in the name of someone outside the household.
 - There is a digital divide between urban and rural areas, where 60 percent of the population lives. This is particularly critical for low-income rural women who tend to remain at home while their husbands migrate to the city for work. Further, 90 percent of the digital content is in Russian, marginalizing rural women, who do not speak Russian. This may further marginalize young rural women seeking employment or applying for higher-education opportunities. Finally, cultural barriers prevent women from accessing cyber cafés, thus barring them from accessing information on the Internet, including information on COVID-19.¹²²

Tajikistan

- A higher proportion (25 percent) of women are involved in the informal sector and unpaid jobs compared to men (13 percent). Around 73 percent of household income is earned from informal economic activities. Women and youth (15–24 years) are at higher risk of losing their jobs due to COVID-19.¹²³
 - Pre-COVID, male migration had contributed to the feminization of agriculture, offering women more (low-paid) opportunities in the informal economy, though adding to economic subsistence burdens.¹²⁴ The pandemic is rendering vulnerable an estimated 250,000+ women abandoned by male migrants.^{125 126}
 - COVID-19 will make it difficult for SMEs, especially those run by women, to survive and maintain employment, because of cash flow issues, labor constraints, and supply or demand issues.¹²⁷
 - Women have limited access to property.¹²⁸ In 2017, the ratio of women's wages to men's was 59.6 percent.¹²⁹ Female labor force participation is 46 percent compared to men (varies by region).¹³⁰
 - Only 22 percent of primary school students are female; dropping out high school in 9th grade due to domestic work pressures.¹³¹ COVID-19 is likely to exacerbate this trend.
 - Religious marriages are not legally recognized by the secular laws, diminishing women's access to entitlements in case of marriage dissolution or the husband's death. Women with children may obtain greater entitlements to property, alimony, and inheritance.
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¹²² The World Bank. 2018. *Digital CASA - Kyrgyz Republic (PI60230)*. ([Link](#)).

¹²³ United Nations in Tajikistan. 2020. *Integrated Socioeconomic Response Framework to COVID-19 (ISEF) for Tajikistan*.

¹²⁴ Putz, Catherine. 2018. "The Feminized Farm: Labor Migration and Women's Roles in Tajikistan's Rural Communities." *The Diplomat*. ([Link](#)).

¹²⁵ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). 2012. *Social and Economic Inclusion of Women from Migrant Households in Tajikistan*. Warsaw: Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

¹²⁶ The World Bank. 2018. *Tajikistan Socio-Economic Resilience Strengthening Program (PI68052)*. ([Link](#)).

¹²⁷ United Nations in Tajikistan. 2020. *Integrated Socioeconomic Response Framework to COVID-19 (ISEF) for Tajikistan*.

¹²⁸ United Nations Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia. 2019. *Regional Assessment of Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in Europe and Central Asia*.

¹²⁹ Coalition of Non-Governmental Organizations of the Republic of Tajikistan. 2019. Alternative Report of the Coalition of Non-Governmental Organizations of the Republic of Tajikistan "From Equality de jure to Equality de facto" on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action +25. ([Link](#)).

¹³⁰ USAID and Winrock International. 2020. *Safe Migration in Central Asia: Situational Analysis of Tajikistan*.

¹³¹ United Nations Women Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia. 2019. *Regional Assessment of Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in Europe and Central Asia*.

Turkmenistan¹³²

- Statistics from 2015 suggest 50 percent labor participation rate for women (15- to 64- years-old), compared to 80 percent for men. The female youth rate is 21.6 percent and the male rate is 19.3 percent. Data from 2012 suggests women make up 58 percent of the agricultural labor force; 42 percent in other sectors. Average wages in agriculture are estimated at 25 percent of those in the extractive sector.^{133 134 135}
- Before COVID-19, households' reliance on remittances decreased precipitously due to government currency restrictions (IOM estimates of remittances were \$30m in 2014; \$1m in 2019).¹³⁶
- Traditional and religious practices have weakened inheritance protections for daughters and widows.¹³⁷
- Gender parity in primary and lower-secondary schooling, drops off at higher secondary, with only 40 percent eligible girls in tertiary. Access to higher education is banned for ethnic minority women.¹³⁸
- Only 39.3 percent of women and 17 to 26 percent of females 15- to 24-years-old have access to the Internet.¹³⁹
- Country-level data on the gender-specific economic impact of COVID-19 in Turkmenistan are not available due to the GoTM's lack of acknowledgement of COVID-19. Regional data, however, indicate that women have suffered less in job losses, but more in changed working arrangements and reductions in paid hours of work.¹⁴⁰

Uzbekistan

- Women have lower labor market participation rates in formal employment than men (45.7 percent versus 54.3 percent, respectively).¹⁴¹
 - Women in rural areas have limited opportunities for employment due to lack of formal jobs, access to necessary education, and vocational qualifications and skills.¹⁴² They are more likely to work in family-based businesses, such as farming or handicrafts.¹⁴³
 - Migrant workers including women are stranded due to travel restrictions and left without jobs. Remittances have stopped and migrant families are vulnerable to extreme poverty.¹⁴⁴
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¹³² Due to a lack of acknowledgement of COVID-19, little data exist on the impact on COVID-19 on gender equality in Turkmenistan.

¹³³ World Bank Poverty Global Practice. 2015. *World Bank Gender Statistics*. ([Link](#)).

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ The World Bank Group. 2015. *International Bank for Reconstruction and Development International Finance Corporation Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency Joint Country Engagement Note for Turkmenistan (FY16-FY17)*. ([Link](#)).

¹³⁶ Human Rights Watch. 2020. "Turkmenistan: Denial, Inaction Worsen Food Crisis." ([Link](#)).

¹³⁷ UNDP report.

¹³⁸ UNICEF Turkmenistan. 2020. "Gender: Women and Girls in Turkmenistan Have Equal Constitutional Rights as Men and Boys." ([Link](#)); and Miller, Mary Grace. 2018. "Girls' Education in Turkmenistan." The Borgen Project.

¹³⁹ Kemp, Simon. 2020. *Digital 2020: Turkmenistan*. Datareportal. ([Link](#)).

¹⁴⁰ UN Women. 2020. *Women at the Forefront of the COVID-Response in Europe and Central Asia*.

¹⁴¹ Asian Development Bank. 2018. *Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment*. ([Link](#)).

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Winrock International. March 2020. *Safe Migration in Central Asia Situational Analysis of Uzbekistan*.

¹⁴⁴ United Nations Fund for Population Activities Uzbekistan. August 17, 2020. "UN Agencies will Support those Worst Affected by the COVID-19 in Uzbekistan through a New Programme."

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender disparities exist in access to land ownership. Most residential homes are acquired through inheritance that traditionally goes to the elder son. This has implications on a woman's economic opportunities, as she is unable to provide collateral when applying for a loan.¹⁴⁵ During COVID-19, women are relying more on digital technology to connect with others and have access to information on the pandemic and support services. The Telegram messenger app is a popular tool among women.¹⁴⁶ Socially and economically marginalized groups, including persons with disabilities, returning migrants, and persons living with HIV, are experiencing the greatest challenges in accessing critical medications and health services during COVID-19.¹⁴⁷ Little data are available on the gender-specific economic impact of COVID-19 in Uzbekistan; however, regional data indicate that women have suffered less in job losses, but have suffered more in changed working arrangements and reductions in paid hours of work.¹⁴⁸
Patterns of power and decision-making	<p>Kazakhstan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2016, women made up 56 percent of government administrative staff, but held only 10 percent of political civil service positions, 22 percent of seats in Parliament, and 24 percent of executive banking jobs.¹⁴⁹ Women have been sidelined in the National Commission on the State of Emergency and COVID-19 coordination bodies, including a national response to GBV in the COVID-19 response plan.¹⁵⁰ Men traditionally make household financial decisions. With the decrease of income due to loss of jobs during the pandemic, women have less power in the household.¹⁵¹ This includes decisions on spending and COVID-related planning.¹⁵² <p>The Kyrgyz Republic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite the quotas for decision-making positions, only 16.7 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women. Women are also underrepresented at municipal positions, occupying only 3.5 percent of political positions in local government across the country.¹⁵³ The Ministry of Labor and Social Development is responsible for the gender policy, but no representatives were included in policy development for the COVID response. Only 40 percent of staff of the COVID-19 Secretariat is female.¹⁵⁴ <p>Tajikistan</p>

¹⁴⁵ Asian Development Bank. 2018. *Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment*. ([Link](#)).

¹⁴⁶ KII, 10/22/2020.

¹⁴⁷ United Nations Development Program. 2020. "Uzbekistan's Health Care System, Economy Hit Hard by COVID-19."

¹⁴⁸ UN Women. 2020. *Women at the Forefront of the COVID-Response in Europe and Central Asia*.

¹⁴⁹ United Nations Women Europe and Central Asia. n.d. "Republic of Kazakhstan."

¹⁵⁰ United Nations Country Team Kazakhstan. 2020. *United Nations Kazakhstan Covid-19 Socio-Economic Response & Recovery Plan*.

¹⁵¹ UN Women. 2020. *The Impact of COVID-19 on Women's and Men's Lives and Livelihood in Europe and Central Asia*.

¹⁵² KII, 10/20/2020.

¹⁵³ National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2020. *Women and Men of the Kyrgyz Republic*. Bishkek. ([Link](#)).

¹⁵⁴ Asian Development Bank and UNDP. 2020. *COVID-19 in the Kyrgyz Republic: Socioeconomic and Vulnerability Impact Assessment and Policy Response*.

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- Fewer than 25 percent of officials in civil service, parliament, and senior government positions are women.¹⁵⁵ No data are available on the role of women and men in COVID-19 planning structures and processes.

Turkmenistan

- A woman chairs the Parliament. Women account for 24.8 percent of the 125 deputies in the Parliament.¹⁵⁶ No data are available on the role of women and men in COVID-19 planning structures and processes.

Uzbekistan

- There is a 30 percent female quota for political parties' candidate lists.¹⁵⁷
 - In December 2019, the five political parties nominated more women than they have in the past. The number of women represented in the Parliament doubled.¹⁵⁸
 - Traditionally, men are in charge of making decisions in the household.¹⁵⁹ This also includes health and COVID-related decisions and planning.¹⁶⁰
 - Six district khokims are now women, as are 24 senators. The chair of the senate is a woman. There are female ministers and university rectors, and women as heads of investigative law enforcement and police units. The deputy general prosecutor is a woman.¹⁶¹ No data are available on the role of women and men in COVID-19 planning structures, and processes.
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4. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON GENDER EQUALITY AND COVID, CENTRAL ASIA REGIONAL TRENDS

4.1 POPULATIONS VULNERABLE TO/AT RISK OF TIP

- As of April 2019, Russia had an estimated 4.46 million migrants from Central Asia (CA) (including an estimated 1.9 million informal migrants). Statistics are based on national government figures, which may not be accurate. The estimates of formal migrants are 207,000 from Kazakhstan, 2.1 million from Uzbekistan, 713,000 from Kyrgyz Republic, and 1.2 million from Tajikistan.^{162 163}
 - Before the pandemic, migrants to Russia from Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyz Republic tended to be blue-collar workers, who worked in manufacturing and agriculture. Women worked as domestic workers, cleaners, cashiers, and in manufacturing and agricultural jobs. Migrants (including women)
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¹⁵⁵ United Nations Women, Europe and Central Asia. n.d. "Tajikistan." ([Link](#)).

¹⁵⁶ UNICEF Turkmenistan. 2020. "Gender: Women and girls in Turkmenistan have equal constitutional rights as men and boys." ([Link](#)).

¹⁵⁷ Asian Development Bank. 2018. *Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment*. ([Link](#)).

¹⁵⁸ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). 2020. "Championing Gender in Uzbekistan." OSCE.

¹⁵⁹ Asian Development Bank. 2018. *Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment*. ([Link](#)).

¹⁶⁰ KII, 10/21/2020.

¹⁶¹ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). 2020. "Championing Gender in Uzbekistan." OSCE.

¹⁶² Forbes Kazakhstan. 2020. "What are the Threats to Kazakhstan by Millions of Migrants Left without Work?" ([Link](#)).

¹⁶³ Russian Federation. 2020. "Central Asia Migrants in Russia Statistics 2020." ([Link](#)).

from these countries, who came to Kazakhstan, were typically traders and seasonal workers, who were engaged in the agricultural sector.¹⁶⁴

- Before the pandemic, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan showed trends of female civil servants and low-income families from rural areas being forced to migrate to larger cities to seek work and vulnerable to forced labor, particularly in agriculture to large-scale farms. Many of those forced are teachers, medical workers, and other employees of state enterprises—jobs in which women are the majority.¹⁶⁵
- COVID-19 has caused millions of migrants from CA, who previously accepted menial, low-paid jobs in construction and blue-collar work, to lose their jobs in Russia. Remittances rates, which used to support relatives, have plummeted, and many migrants lost their ability to pay for the monthly charge for a license to work, or the required documents and examinations required to work in Russia.¹⁶⁶ At the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020, an estimated 15,000 migrants from CA were stranded in Russia, Turkey, and Kazakhstan—the main destination countries for migrants from the region.¹⁶⁷
- Many informal migrants (in accordance with the law, they are defined as migrants with an irregular/unsettled status) and spouses of stranded migrants in Russia are not eligible for safety net support and are also vulnerable to TIP. Since the beginning of the pandemic, internal migrants have also become vulnerable due the lockdown because they have been cut off from their families, and have been unable go back to the cities where they previously worked. Many have lost their jobs, stuck in unsafe working conditions, and in tightly-packed apartments with 20 people living together, which does not allow for social distancing,¹⁶⁸ or have become homeless.¹⁶⁹ Migrant and populations at risk of TIP are often hidden, unaware of their rights and services, and discouraged from engaging with formal institutions, which has limited prevention and response efforts.¹⁷⁰
- Pregnant women and stranded women with children have been reported at the Russia and Kazakhstan border as a result of COVID-19. Students from CA are also stranded, specifically from

¹⁶⁴ Goncharova, Oksana. 2016. “Where Does the Army of Labor Migrants From Kyrgyzstan Work?” ([Link](#)). Vedomosti.; Sputnik. 2018. “Migrants From the Kyrgyz Republic Began to Occupy More Solid Positions In the Labor Market of The Countries of The Eurasian Economic Union.” ([Link](#)); and Zakhvatov, Andrey. 2017. “Female Labor Migration from Tajikistan: in Search of European Life.” Migrant. ([Link](#)).

¹⁶⁵ Karaev, Sayfiddin. 2020. *What Rights of Workers in Tajikistan are Most often Violated?*. Asia-Plus. ([Link](#)); Asian Development Bank. 2020. *Proposed Countercyclical Support Facility Grant Republic of Tajikistan: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program*. ([Link](#)); and Eurasian Economic Commission. 2020. “Temporary measures in the field of migration provide an opportunity for citizens of the member states to legally stay in the territories of the host state within the EAEU.” ([Link](#)).

¹⁶⁶ Kyzy, Aruuke Uran. 2020. “Coronavirus Exposes Central Asian Migrants’ Vulnerability.” *The Diplomat*. ([Link](#)).

¹⁶⁷ Panchenko, Tatiana. “What are the threats to Kazakhstan by millions of migrants left without work?” *Forbes Kazakhstan*. 2020. ([Link](#)).

¹⁶⁸ Kyzy, Aruuke Uran. 2020. “Coronavirus Exposes Central Asian Migrants’ Vulnerability.” *The Diplomat*. ([Link](#)).

¹⁶⁹ KII, 10/20/2020.

¹⁷⁰ Bond, Jeff. 2020. “COVID-19, Migrant Labor, and the Case for Labor Recruitment Reform.” *Council on Foreign Relations*. ([Link](#)).

Turkmenistan and Tajikistan, in Russia, Turkey, and elsewhere, who are vulnerable to TIP as they lack return options and services due to COVID restrictions.

- COVID-19 is exacerbating existing vulnerabilities for unemployed people, including returned migrants (rural and urban); households dependent on remittances that have stopped because of COVID; women-headed households (20.9 percent)¹⁷¹; women who are experiencing intimate partner violence who have been evicted from their homes; divorced women; and women (including first wives that have a registered marriage, or second wives that have an unofficial marriage) that have been abandoned by their husbands who have migrated abroad. It also includes women who have not completed secondary education and have low levels of education; adolescent children, especially girls who have been left alone for long periods of time; and persons with disabilities. All of these people are vulnerable to TIP.¹⁷² Council for Foreign Relations warns that COVID restrictions will only drive riskier migration for desperate populations.¹⁷³
- Children are especially at risk for TIP. Social distancing and school closures have left children and youth at home and isolated from their social networks. Parents may also be unemployed and distracted given the challenges of the pandemic. This has led children to be vulnerable to online predators.¹⁷⁴ Other disease outbreaks, such as Ebola, increased the number of orphans when parents died. Trafficking of orphans increased, while states diverted resources needed to combat human trafficking to other critical community needs.¹⁷⁵
- Sex traffickers exploit women and girls from CA to the Middle East, Europe, East Asia, and the United States. Women and girls from rural areas are also exploited in the commercial sex industry within their home country.¹⁷⁶ The pandemic has also caused on-line sex trafficking to skyrocket across the region.
- Data from the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) dashboard, which is one of the only reliable national sources of data on TIP, highlight the pre-COVID vulnerability of each country to “modern slavery.” The numbers of victims of modern slavery per 1,000 inhabitants are as follows: Kazakhstan 4.2, Kyrgyz Republic 4.1, Tajikistan 4.5, Turkmenistan 11.2, and Uzbekistan 5.2.¹⁷⁷ Sex-disaggregated data are not available. Women and girls account for the majority of victims of modern slavery, including in the commercial sex industry and other sectors. Many estimate that COVID-19 has

¹⁷¹ Tajikistan Statistics Agency. 2012. “Women and Men in Tajikistan.”

¹⁷² KII, 10/26/2020; and KII, 10/23/2020.

¹⁷³ Bond, Jeff. 2020. “COVID-19, Migrant Labor, and the Case for Labor Recruitment Reform.” Council on Foreign Relations. ([Link](#)).

¹⁷⁴ Bain, Christina, and Louise Shelley. 2020. “The Evolution of Human Trafficking During the COVID-19 Pandemic.” Council on Foreign Relations. ([Link](#)).

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ United States. Department of State. 2020. *Trafficking in Persons Report, 20th Edition*.

¹⁷⁷ Sustainable Development Report. 2020. “Country Profiles.” ([Link](#)).

heightened existing vulnerabilities, increasing modern slavery and worsening the conditions and potential risk of exposure to the virus of women and girls already in slavery.

4.2 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR I

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR I.

TABLE 4. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR I (REGIONAL): STRENGTHENED BILATERAL AND MULTI-COUNTRY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS TO PROMOTE RIGHTS-BASED MIGRATION AND COUNTER TIP.

SUB IR I.1: APPROACHES TO CTIP AND LABOR MIGRATION ARE COORDINATED AND COHESIVE AMONG SOURCE AND DESTINATION COUNTRIES

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bilateral agreements for reciprocal rights are in place for, or are being negotiated between, Turkmenistan and Turkey; Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan; and between all the Central Asian countries except Turkmenistan and Russia. Kazakhstan and Russia have an agreement that provides for reciprocal rights of citizens. Gender considerations, such as gender-responsive labor protections (for domestic workers) and benefits for spouses of breadwinners who have disabilities or are deceased,¹⁷⁸ are not as strong as needed in these agreements. Regulatory frameworks on migration exist and national commissions and ombudsman are in place, but a focus on gender is generally absent and implementation is weak. All countries have laws against TIP; however, the laws are gender-blind. All countries also are signatories to key international agreements, like the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and have National Action Plans (NAPs) on gender equality, but a gender focus in migration is lacking. Plans do not focus on the needs of women migrants or issues of migration and how they may affect women. Women's voices and representation are missing in decision-making about the pandemic on a national level, which is noted in the previous section. Negotiators of agreements are largely male. Representation and voices of women migrants and survivors of TIP are also absent. Persons with disabilities are largely left out of discussions on migration and CTIP. Regional networks for persons with disabilities are marginalized in discussions of migration or CTIP, despite their vulnerabilities to exploitation and TIP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote bilateral agreements within and beyond existing frameworks (e.g., Eurasian Customs Union), which ensure fair wages, local social protection and insurance, COVID-specific information on extended work permits, access to services, and information on extended work permits and safe passage home for migrants and their families (spouses/wives and children). Promote the Transnational Referral Mechanism (TRM) between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan as a model for the region. Include women's leadership and participation, along with consideration of challenges and specific needs, in the TRM. Engage VTIP, including women and youth, as participants and leaders in the dialogues planned with CSO-State Authority on effective cooperation on migration and TIP, which could lead to a regional dialogue to discuss the impacts of COVID on migration and TIP. By engaging women, youth, and persons with disabilities in the process, policymakers can understand their unique needs and vulnerabilities. This engagement also expands opportunities for women and youth in leadership and decision-making, while strengthening governance bodies as they address the challenges of the pandemic. Develop a strategy to identify survivors of TIP (especially younger women) and to provide leadership and public-speaking training (while ensuring confidentiality of their identities). Women-led CSOs, who are engaged in migration and CTIP, and influential migrants should be included in training to encourage their voices and representation with migration and CTIP dialogue with decision-makers. These individuals could speak about not only their challenges with migration and TIP but also their resilience, which would enhance social acceptance in local, national, and regional governance processes.

¹⁷⁸ International Labour Organization. 2014. *Gender Sensitivity in Labour Migration-Related Agreements and MOUs*.

- Multi-country CSO platforms, which are largely women-led, are in place to support migrants in COVID response and CTIP, but they are under-resourced.
- Russian laws on migrant registration, taxes, and services inform legal frameworks and regulations in all countries in the region (including both sending and other receiving countries such as Kazakhstan). Changes in Russian regulations are frequent (including in response to COVID), made in Russia's economic interest, and may contravene existing bilateral or multilateral agreements between Russia and countries in the region.
- International organizations set the agenda for safe migration and CTIP in the region. Governments follow the lead of international organizations, responding to pressure (shaming) and incentives (foreign assistance).

TABLE 5. SUB IR 1.2: IMPROVED COLLECTION, AVAILABILITY, AND USE OF DATA AND EVIDENCE AROUND TIP AND CTIP

KEY FINDINGS

- Reliable national data on TIP and CTIP, including sex-disaggregated data, are not uniformly available in any of the Central Asian countries. Current systems rely on legacy technologies and processes, and have poor data, little automation, and low transparency.¹⁷⁹ Stakeholders shared that government agencies were not using migration and TIP data from CSOs. Government agencies and CSOs flagged limitations in collection, resourcing, and coordination among government and CSO service providers. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) platform is a reliable source of national data on TIP,¹⁸⁰ but has gaps in data related to decent work, migrant rights, and protection of safe working environments for all workers, in particular, women migrant workers. The SDG data are not sex-disaggregated.
- Some but not all of the countries in Central Asia share data on migration within the Eurasian Economic Commission,¹⁸¹ the Collective Security

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Support state agencies to coordinate with CSOs gathering data on migration and TIP. Support the agencies and CSOs to disaggregate and analyze the data sex, age, disability, ethnicity, income, and geographical status to understand the differential impacts, barriers, and risks. This will help SMICA to use adaptive management in assessing barriers in accessing services, especially for at-risk groups.
- If it is not possible to support state agencies and CSOs to collect and analyze the types of data above, it may be possible to support National Statistics Offices to offer insights on the impact of COVID on gender and migration.
- Leverage effective regional cooperation platforms that involve governments of Central Asian countries, their state agencies, receiving countries, and other international partners to improve standardized collection, analysis, and use of data on migration and TIP. Ensure that data are disaggregated by sex and age.
- Support CSOs, Private Employment Agencies (PEAs), and employers to systematize data collection on VTIP and migration between government and CSOs. Ensure the confidentiality for VTIP and gender-relevant sex-disaggregated transparent data.

¹⁷⁹ Bond, Jeff. 2020. "COVID-19, Migrant Labor, and the Case for Labor Recruitment Reform." Council on Foreign Relations. ([Link](#)).

¹⁸⁰ Sustainable Development Report. 2020. "Country Profiles." ([Link](#)).

¹⁸¹ Eurasian Economic Commission. 2020. "Temporary measures in the field of migration provide an opportunity for citizens of the member states to legally stay in the territories of the host state within the EAEU." ([Link](#)).

Treaty Organization,¹⁸² and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization; however, none of the databases that these bodies manage using the data include information about TIP.

- Current National Referral Mechanisms (NRMs) in Central Asia lack consideration of gender, including in guidelines and SOPs for VTIP. Kazakhstan has yet to adopt NRMs. The Kyrgyz Republic approved its NRM in 2019, but it is gender blind and does not include services for VTIP. Tajikistan has a system and ministerial responsibilities being defined, but this discussion has stalled because of COVID-19. In Turkmenistan, IOM manages the National Referral Mechanism. The Ministry of Labor of Uzbekistan manages the Case Management System, but public consultations are underway to develop SOPs, which will include CSOs as a part of that system.¹⁸³
 - A unified VTIP database and standardized format for documenting VTIP and GBV and case management by government and CSOs does not exist in CA. In a recent survey of governments with NRMs, respondents shared that they were able to help serve victims with services, despite current COVID-19 impediments. This was done through established lines of communication between agencies, collaboration with local CSOs, and funding for legal and social services for survivors, which has proven essential as trafficking has increased.¹⁸⁴ The lack of a national referral mechanism has impacted government and CSO ability to use data to coordinate and adapt policy and services, with a gender lens.
 - Winrock International/USAID recently introduced a new unified Victim Case Management System for CSOs in Kazakhstan. This new system, which is
- Continue to pilot the Victim Case Management System¹⁸⁶ in Kazakhstan and regularly share learnings with other Central Asia SMICA team members. If successful, provide training for CSOs on the newly developed Victim Case Management System and collection of data, including the specific needs of female victims. Provide ongoing technical support to CSOs to use this database.
 - Provide technical and financial assistance to national governments in CA to create or update its National Referral Mechanisms on trafficking in the COVID-19 era.¹⁸⁷ NRMs should integrate CSOs, domestic (state agencies), and cross-border victim case management data that are standardized, shared, confidential, and sex-disaggregated. Analyzed data can improve pandemic response by noting barriers in accessing services, especially for at-risk groups.
 - Provide training for SMICA and CSO staff on how the activity and CSO partners can use data to design or customize interventions in line with gender-specific needs. Provide training for policymakers on how to collect and analyze sex-disaggregated data to support more gender-responsive policy on migration and CTIP. Use Winrock International's Integrating Gender and Social Inclusion into Counter-Trafficking Programming Toolkit to support training design.¹⁸⁸
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¹⁸² Collective Security Treaty Organization. 2020. "Opening Remarks by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Sergey Lavrov during a meeting of the CSTO Foreign Ministers Council, Moscow, May 26, 2020."

¹⁸³ KII, 10/19/20.

¹⁸⁴ Lanford, Phillip. "The Global Health Crisis and Human Trafficking are Correlated – But How?" Council on Foreign Relations. ([Link](#)).

¹⁸⁶ The VCMS is a cloud-based case management tool for organizations working with survivors of human trafficking or populations vulnerable to exploitation. The system assists in day-to-day record keeping by recording beneficiary history and experience, assessing their needs, tracking their progress, and planning their reintegration. It is administrated by Liberty Shared and currently serves NGOs in Thailand, Nepal, Kenya, Uganda, Hong Kong, and Malaysia.

¹⁸⁷ Bond, Jeff. 2020. "COVID-19, Migrant Labor, and the Case for Labor Recruitment Reform." Council on Foreign Relations. ([Link](#)).

¹⁸⁸ Winrock International. 2020. Integrating Gender and Social Inclusion into Counter-Trafficking Programming Toolkit, USAID. ([Link](#)).

currently being piloted, collects sex-disaggregated data.

- Border agencies in Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic collect data at departure, but not reason for travel. Sex-disaggregated data exist, but the data are inconsistent and of poor quality. This makes these data not useful for understanding TIP or migration patterns.
- CSOs are often the best source of information, but data are not comprehensive or standardized. CSO data are not requested by state bodies and not used to develop government strategic programs.¹⁸⁵

3.3 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 2

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 2:

TABLE 6. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 2 (PREVENTION): VULNERABILITY OF AT-RISK POPULATIONS TO ALL FORMS OF TIP REDUCED.

SUB IR 2.1 AT-RISK POPULATIONS HAVE INFORMATION, SERVICES, AND SKILLS TO SAFEGUARD THEIR RIGHTS.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrants and their dependents from Central Asia in Russia and elsewhere have challenges meeting their basic needs, such as shelter, and health care services, such as reproductive health care. Migrants in Russia are entitled to free medical care, but access is problematic, even if they have an insurance policy (40 percent of surveyed migrants).¹⁸⁹ • Labor migrants, especially women, do not have adequate access to pre-departure information, including on migration regulations, rights, and any changes to legislation due to COVID-19.¹⁹⁰ • The main method of communication among migrants is mass media or word of mouth. Migrants from Tajikistan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan to Russia rely on three main sources of information about jobs, registration, and services: 1) relatives and neighbors; 2) social media and Russian information-sharing platforms; and 3) the diaspora communities based in Russia. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Russia and CA are well established and provide information and services to migrants. Also, a growing number of websites, developed by 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to humanitarian assistance, including access to basic medical services (including reproductive health services) to unemployed migrants, wives, and children of migrants irrespective of their legal status; VTIP; and students studying abroad who may be trapped in receiving countries because of COVID. • Develop a gender-responsive communication strategy for segmenting audiences to understand how women, youth, persons with disabilities, and displaced persons access information: whom they trust, which channels/medium are best to reach them, from which fora or groups they get information, and whether there are barriers to accessing information. Within this context: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify the power dynamics at the community and household levels as they affect access to (and processing of) information by women, youth, and other vulnerable or at-risk groups. ○ Ensure that outreach extends to rural women by using informal/formal channels and groups of the diaspora, community leaders, and local CSOs.

¹⁸⁵ KII, 10/20/2020.

¹⁸⁹ Varshaver, E.A. 2020. "Foreign Labor Migrants in Russia in Conditions of Pandemic and Economic Crisis." *Monitoring of The Economic Situation in Russia Trends and Challenges of Socio-Economic Development* No. 11(113). Center for Regional Studies and Urban Studies. ([Link](#)).

¹⁹⁰ KII, 10/20/2020.

international organizations or by former migrants and social media apps (WhatsApp, Instagram, Viber, Telegram), disseminate pre-departure and COVID-specific information and build awareness around rights and CTIP. Even with these platforms, women may lack access to information due to language barriers and limited access to technology and the Internet. Diaspora networks and web- and app-platforms work efficiently, though may marginalize some women who are susceptible to misinformation and rumors.¹⁹¹

- CSOs do not have the capacity and therefore do not provide sex-specific information about safe migration, risks of TIP, local employment, and border closures.
- COVID-19 is influencing attitudes toward labor migrants. In receiving countries, discrimination may have increased as domestic unemployment rises. Women may also find themselves victims of stigma and discrimination.¹⁹²
- Private Employment Agencies play important roles in overseas placement in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, but they are weak in other countries. Government oversight of PEAs is weak across regions, and some PEAs are known to engage in TIP. Also, job gender stereotyping is the norm in PEAs, relegating women into low-wage and female-dominated jobs.
- Private-sector employers are not actively engaged in CTIP responses. With COVID-19, businesses may be under financial pressure to save money in the short term by sourcing through unethical recruiters.¹⁹³ Many companies do not understand their role or responsibility in upholding workers' rights, including women workers' rights.¹⁹⁴
- Ensure the use of local languages in social media platforms and printed materials.
- Integrate social behavior and change communication (SBCC) in the strategy with a focus on norm change that promote non-gender stereotyped images and messages and norm change in the materials for the new CTIP info-campaign for at-risk groups of population.¹⁹⁵
- Develop materials that strengthen information channels: add factual information on the availability of food, shelter, jobs, and medical services (reproductive health; COVID) for stranded migrants and students. Campaigns should also expand pre-departure information and migrants' rights. The activity should also build awareness for recently returned migrants on employment opportunities, and GBV and TIP-related services.
- Integrate risk awareness of TIP and information on safe migration, including COVID-era risks into UNODC's *Education for Justice* school-based program.
- Develop an SBCC campaign to demystify non-traditional work as masculine work, like construction and manufacturing, at all levels of the value chain. Messages should target those at-risk and should be gender sensitive. The campaigns should reach women and young girls, their families, and communities that will speak about the opportunities in non-traditional work. The activity can work with private sector to engender the sector by supporting awareness-raising and capacity-building interventions for key value-chain stakeholders as well as academic and technical institutions.
- Strengthen the capacity of municipalities and local councils (ensuring representation of women, CSOs on women's, youth, migrants, VTIP rights), to disseminate accurate and gender-specific information about safe migration, and local employment, given border closures.
- Collaborate with private employment agencies to disseminate information in Kazakhstan to increase information to domestic and foreign migrant women on employment opportunities. **(WEE)**
- Provide CTIP gender sensitivity training to private-sector companies with a focus on women's rights and ending

¹⁹¹ Ibraeva, Gulnara, Gulfia Abdullaeva, Ablezova M. 2018. "The Fragile Power of Migration: The Needs and Rights of Women and Girls from Tajikistan And Kyrgyzstan Who Are Affected by Migration." PIL Research Company - International Organization for Migration Regional Office.; Vadimovna, Sobolevskaya Olga. 2019. Despair, trust, deception, help: How migrants support each other on social media." Scientific and Educational Portal IQ. ([Link](#)); and Varshaver, Evgeni, Anna Rocheva, and Nataliya Ivanova. 2017. *Information Behavior of Migrants from Central Asia Under Changes in The Russian Migration Legislation*. The Monitoring of Public Opinion Economic Social Changes.

¹⁹² KII, 10.26.2020.

¹⁹³ Bond, Jeff. 2020. "COVID-19, Migrant Labor, and the Case for Labor Recruitment Reform." Council on Foreign Relations. ([Link](#)).

¹⁹⁴ KII, 10/22/2020.

¹⁹⁵ Health Communication Capacity Collaborative. n.d. *Social and Behavior Change Communications Saves Lives infographic*. ([Link](#)).

sexual harassment. Raise awareness through mass media and social media. **(WEE)**

- Encourage governments in CA to provide more oversight to their PEAs to ensure they comply with the law in supporting women's rights in the workplace, and to address the specific vulnerabilities of women in domestic work and sex work. **(WEE)**
- Target returned female seasonal traders, agricultural workers, unemployed migrants, and recently returned migrants with:
 - Information on skills training options, market information (including online options), and credit and financial literacy to enable safe economic empowerment of women in their country.
 - Childcare, stipends, and time sensitivity to enable women to attend and complete training.
 - Psychosocial support and services with training and employment counseling. Discuss with returning migrants their mental-health stressors and strengths, and understand the time and responsibility burdens of women and men in family units (and outside of them). Use these data to develop a sex-disaggregated reading of the psychosocial landscape. Also, develop training materials that take these differentiated realities into account, including how certain recommendations might affect members of a family in different ways.

TABLE 7. SUB IR 2.2 SAFE MIGRATION FRAMEWORKS ARE ENHANCED AND ENFORCED

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Nation Action Plans (NAPs), commissions, and ombudsmen on migration exist in most countries, but are mostly gender blind, and patriarchal norms prevail over legislation in practice. • Systemic barriers exist for migrants, particularly informal migrants, to access social and rehabilitation services. One reason for this is the lack of consultation of women migrants and survivors of TIP, which results in a mismatch between services and needs. Another reason is that VTIP, who are not citizens, are not eligible for assistance, which is legally limited to citizens of the host country.¹⁹⁶ • Human rights organizations in destination countries do not focus on violations of the rights of foreign labor migrants. In the face of the pandemic, CSOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support increased country-based and regional dialogue on migration, including a focus on the particular challenges of women migrants and women from migrant households. • Support the integration of gender in NAPs, and SOPs for commissions and ombudsmen by including gender-sensitive indicators and a focus on the prevention and protection of women VTIP. • Develop a checklist that SMICA can use to support the ombudsmen, labor inspectors, PEAs, and police focused on safe migration and forced labor to integrate gender in their SOPs and trainings. The checklist should provide these actors and institutions with tools to understand how gender affects the types of migration taking place; how to facilitate the access of migrants to services, resources, and economic opportunities; and how to engage survivors of TIP or CSO leaders in consultations and participation, which will

¹⁹⁶ KII, 10/20/2020.

from sending countries have been unable to help across closed borders.¹⁹⁷

improve policies, procedures, protocols, and agreements so that they are gender responsive.

4.4 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 3

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 3:

TABLE 8. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 3 (PROTECTION): IDENTIFICATION AND ASSISTANCE TO TRAFFICKED PERSONS EXPANDED AND IMPROVED.
SUB IR 3.1 ENHANCED POLICIES AND MECHANISMS FOR VICTIM IDENTIFICATION, REFERRAL, AND ASSISTANCE

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In cases of transnational trafficking in persons, the process of conducting investigative procedures to collect evidence and prosecuting a citizen of another country is challenging.¹⁹⁸ TIP investigations also experience challenges due to lack of political will and financial and human resource constraints.• Many CSO service providers do not have SOPs on how to integrate gender-specific needs and considerations into TIP programming and services (legal services and other service provision). For example, despite being mostly run by women, Tajik CSOs lacked a gender lens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote regional TIP investigative capacity, including a focus on trafficking that disproportionately affects women and girls, based on reciprocal agreements among law enforcement agencies.• Review existing and developing NRMs, SOPs, and case management systems to promote: 1) confidentiality and protection for women, girls, and persons with disabilities who are survivors of TIP; 2) more women investigators; and 3) peer and female observers and advocates in the interrogation process.• Engage VTIP and GBV survivors in developing the local- and national-level TIP referral mechanisms to gain a better understanding of their experiences and needs. Support platforms and opportunities for the voices and experiences of TIP survivors to be integrated into policies, mechanisms, and services. Ensure confidentiality measures are put into place for their protection.• Create a space for dialogue, such as an online platform, where CSOs can discuss and standardize SOPs and recommend changes in regulations on NRM.• Document best practices in integrating gender into TIP programming and incorporate the findings into SOPs for Ministry of Labor and Social Development (MLSD), Ministry of Health (MoH), the Border Service, and CSOs. Also, develop a gender checklist for CSOs offering legal and social support to VTIP.

¹⁹⁷ Gulnara Ibraeva, Anara Niyazova, Mehriyul Ablezova, and Anara Moldosheva. 2014. "Gender and Migration." Innovative Solutions Inc. and ICCO Cooperation.

¹⁹⁸ Sputnik. 2020. "Special Emphasis: is There Human Trafficking and Slavery in Kyrgyzstan." ([Link](#)).

TABLE 9. SUB IR 3.2 IMPROVED AVAILABILITY, QUALITY, AND ACCESS TO VICTIM SERVICES.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victims of TIP and migrants with irregular status experience systemic barriers in accessing social services, rehabilitation, and protection. For example, the provision of assistance to VTIP in the Republic of Kazakhstan is legally limited to citizens of Kazakhstan. In other countries in the region, no legal prohibition exists against providing services to foreign VTIP; however, service providers do not cater to the needs of foreign citizens.¹⁹⁹ Spouses of foreign migrants, often women who accompany their husbands, experience particular limitations in their access to services. Relations between governments and CSOs supporting migrants and VTIP are broadly positive across the region, with governments relying on CSOs to deliver services to migrants. CSOs deliver services based on resources made available from international agencies (and some from government) while ensuring they adhere to government restrictions. Many CSOs target women as a key group, as noted below. Migrants and VTIP have the highest degree of trust in CSOs, as they provide the best information and linkages to services. Most CSOs are run and staffed by women. Government labor inspectors lack gender sensitivity and a trauma-sensitive approach. Labor inspectors who are engaging with female VTIP are mostly men, and TIP survivors have shared negative experiences based on the tone and line of questioning by male interrogators.²⁰⁰ Government of Uzbekistan opened an “adaptation center” in Russia for Uzbek migrants, offering legal, psychological, language, and skills development courses. GoU also funded a national rehabilitation center for VTIP. GBV is increasing in all countries due to COVID-19. Most countries have GBV-relevant laws, but level of enforcement is weak. Turkmenistan does not have a GBV law. As noted in Section 2.2, cultural norms related to women’s status have normalized GBV, especially among family members. Women in CA are afraid to report violence due to fear of retribution, or they distrust the police or do not know how to report. Currently, the activity does not have GBV prevention and mitigation in its workplan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support CSO and regional CSO networks for assessments and gender integration of CTIP information, services, and humanitarian assistance. CSO partners working at a household level should deliver information, services, or aid to women or couples to overcome social norms and ensure that women and families benefit from the support. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult or survey female beneficiaries about their needs, especially basic needs (medical and maternal health), shelter, food (formula for infants), and reintegration assistance, such as legal services, skills training, and employment counseling. Engage female migrants and survivors of TIP by building their capacity in leadership and public speaking, to advocate to decision-makers and build awareness of other women as peer educators. TIP survivors can also work with CSOs to improve their survivor-centered service provision and SOPs. Engage women decision-makers in government and on mahalla committees. Build the capacity of women to be part of the decision-making structures in delivering humanitarian assistance to vulnerable communities. Showcase successful women leaders as role models to bring awareness to the value of women’s participation in leadership positions, in the workforce, or as successful entrepreneurs. Provide systemic specialized gender sensitivity training, with modules on trauma-sensitive services, for all labor inspectors to identify victims of forced labor and report potential trafficking cases to the police. Training should include a module on trauma-sensitive services. Prioritize women inspectors, as female survivors of TIP may be more comfortable speaking to another woman. Advocate to Central Asia governments to fund and allow foreign migrants into government shelters. Support CSO shelters for VTIP to include foreign migrants, as well as GBV services. Shelters need to adapt to the impact of COVID and ensure that safety protocols are established. Support psychosocial support for VTIP women and girls (including persons with disabilities) who may be affected by the COVID outbreak and are also GBV survivors. Also, provide TIP survivors with legal services, skills training, and employment counseling.

¹⁹⁹ KII, 10/20/20; KII, 11/09/2020; and KII, 10/28/2020.

²⁰⁰ KII, 10/20/20.

- Governments and CSOs have GBV hotlines for reporting and counseling, although CSOs are donor dependent.
- Government of Tajikistan has established a hotline in Russia for aiding victims of labor exploitation as well as stranded migrants, and for reporting TIP.
- All countries have a minimal number of government and CSO shelters for GBV and TIP survivors.
- Given that GBV is a new area for SMICA, the project should coordinate, consult, and align with a local CSO in CA to better understand the issue, scale, and scope.
- Consider carrying out a SBCC campaign and interventions on GBV that promote nonviolent relationships, peaceful resolution of conflicts, understanding of the causes and consequences of racism and violence, healthier gender relations, positive (nonviolent) masculinities, and ways to prevent GBV. The campaigns can use multiple means of communication, such as radio, television, and social media apps in local languages, to improve awareness of GBV and how it can be prevented and addressed, especially in the context of the pandemic. **(WEE)**
- Provide training and funding for GBV hotline staff to offer psychological support. Also, train all SMICA participants and staff on GBV and VTIP so that they can identify and refer victims of GBV and VTIP to protective services for those who have been (or fear they may be) subject to violence. Services must be safe, confidential, anonymous, and freely available to anyone who seeks them.
- Extend information for returned migrants and households affected by drop- in remittances about job opportunities; credit, including credit guarantees on risk-sharing facilities and business development services through European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD); and markets. Focus information outreach on vulnerable women, heads of household, and unemployed youth. **(WEE)**
- Engage the private sector and CSOs in entrepreneurial thinking around sustainable employment programs for survivors of TIP.
- AnnieCannons,²⁰¹ engaged with online platforms in developing a new Internet venture to provide employment for survivors of TIP in tech-based jobs.²⁰² Explore partnerships between the private sector and CSOs to develop long-term digital employment. Provide digital literacy training to TIP survivors. These skills would be particularly beneficial for women, as women are more likely than men to lack skills in these areas, but men could also benefit.

²⁰¹ AnnieCannons is a U.S. non-profit that works with survivors of human trafficking and gender-based violence, who have received skills training and have learned how to code and become developers. For more information: <https://anniecannons.com/>.

²⁰² Bain, Christina and Shelley, Louise. 2020. *The Evolution of Human Trafficking During the COVID-19 Pandemic*. Council on Foreign Relations. ([Link](#)).

4.5 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 4

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 4:

TABLE 10. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 4 (PROSECUTION): INCREASED PROSECUTION OF TIP (KYRGYZ REPUBLIC ONLY) .

SUB IR 4.1 STRENGTHEN CAPACITY OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACTORS TO IDENTIFY AND PROCESS TIP CASES

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general, women are afraid to report intimate partner violence or TIP due to inadequate police protection, stigma, and lengthy legal trials.²⁰³ The police and courts are less responsive under COVID-19. • Police extortion of VTIP and victim intimidation, including by judges, has been documented, and also may affect willingness to report cases.²⁰⁴ • Contradictions are found between the Criminal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic (Art.171) and the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings,” which can criminalize VTIP. • The TIP training curriculum used in the General Prosecutor's Office and Supreme Court lacks attention to gender. SOPs are similarly gender blind. • Investigative and documentation capacity of the police is weak. For example, 33 percent of criminal cases in the Kyrgyz Republic were thrown out due to insufficient evidence.²⁰⁵ • The capacity of VTIP prosecutors to document and investigate cases is limited.²⁰⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the integration of tools, including case studies, on assessing the vulnerability and needs of women and girls, and men and boys, to TIP, into the existing training curricula for legal actors, such as investigators, prosecutors, judges, and lawyers. Also include tools that support the assessment of how COVID-19 is exacerbating these vulnerabilities and needs to ensure services align with the specific needs of VTIP, most of whom are women and girls.²⁰⁷ The tools can be modules in existing training and re-training curricula. CSOs that play an important role in service provision, and project implementors who work on TIP, should receive training using these tools.

²⁰³ Baimuratova, Kamila. 2019. “Mistrust of The Police and Underestimated Data on Crime - Research by The National Statistical Committee on Bishkek and New Buildings.” Kloop. ([Link](#)).

²⁰⁴ Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. “2020 Trafficking in Persons Report: Kyrgyz Republic.” *United States Department of State*. ([Link](#)).

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ Annie Cannons. 2020. “World Day Against Trafficking in Persons.” ([Link](#)).

TABLE 11. SUB IR 4.2 ENHANCE COORDINATION AND COOPERATION IN INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF TIP CASES

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transnational investigation capacity across the Commonwealth of Independent States is not sufficient to investigate most cases of GBV and other crimes taking place against VTIP and migrants in destination countries.²⁰⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize bilateral and multilateral agreements to enable joint investigations between the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which investigates TIP cases, and Migration services.

TABLE 12. SUB IR 4.3 INCREASE TIP VICTIM'S ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND REDRESS

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A monopoly exists among CSOs providing legal services for VTIP and asylum seekers (Legal Clinic Adilet). There is one organization based only in Bishkek. Female migrants, who may want to hold traffickers legally accountable and have experienced trafficking overseas, may not be located in Bishkek. This CSO does not focus on CTIP or safe migration (including internal migration).²⁰⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversify legal aid support and partners, prioritizing accessibility in regions where there are migrants. Provide training for CSO legal service providers to have a basic understanding of the gender-specific needs and priorities of VTIP and to be able to develop action plans to better support VTIP. Ensure that VTIP can receive assistance without being required to participate in investigation and prosecution efforts.

5. ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

The following section highlights assumptions and risks that will affect implementation of the previous recommendations for the USAID/Central Asia Safe Migration in Central Asia activity.

Assumptions

- Government stability across the region will enable progress on safe migration and CTIP.

²⁰⁸ Sputnik. 2020. "Special Emphasis: is There Human Trafficking and Slavery in Kyrgyzstan." ([Link](#)).

²⁰⁹ Public Foundation Legal Clinic "Adilet." 2014. *Protection the Rights of Refugees and Statelessness* ([Link](#)).

- International agencies will be able to continue to offer humanitarian assistance to returned, unemployed migrants, prioritizing vulnerable groups, including women, persons with disabilities, and youth.
- COVID restrictions and positive government relations will allow CSOs to continue to deliver services for migrants and vulnerable populations, including recommended activities.
- CSOs conducting advocacy on CTIP will continue to enjoy good government relations.
- Demand for female household workers from Central Asia (which has enabled Russian women to enter the labor force) will continue.
- Confidentiality of VTIP participating in proposed initiatives will be protected.

Risks

- Receiving countries may become more inward looking, with higher barriers for informal migrants. Putin's recent proclamations about racial preferences for migrants would doubly discriminate against Central Asians (excepting ethnic Kazaks). Kazakhstan is likely to follow the Russian example.
- COVID restrictions could impede CSO service delivery for migrants in receiving countries and for returned migrants, including GBV, medical, food, etc.
- COVID restrictions could present barriers for VTIP to access services from CSOs and governments.
- Women's economic empowerment support may revert to traditional sectors, which are perceived as being low risk.
- CSOs working on migration issues may be sanctioned or shut down based on growing government restrictions on CSOs in all countries in the region.
- Government instability may have an impact on continuity of programming (Kyrgyz Republic).

6. USAID/COUNTRY (ACTIVITY) GENDER ANALYSIS NEXT STEPS

The following is a roadmap for updating this gender analysis. It specifies when (key scenarios), what to update, and who will be responsible for updating it.

TABLE 13. UPDATES TO THE COVID-SPECIFIC GENDER ANALYSIS: KEY SCENARIOS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

SCENARIO	WHAT TO UPDATE	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE FOR UPDATING GENDER ANALYSIS
Scenario I COVID cases rise and borders remain closed.	All countries; all IRs	USAID/Winrock International

Scenario 2 COVID cases rise and receiving countries open borders conditionally.	All countries; all IRs	USAID/Winrock International
Scenario 3 Pandemic continues but humanitarian assistance to migrants diminishes.	All countries; IR2.1 and IR 3.2	USAID/Winrock International
Scenario 4 Countries are inward looking, pulling back from regional cooperation on safe migration and CTIP.	Regional; all countries; IR1	USAID/Winrock International

ANNEX A: DETAILED COUNTRY-SPECIFIC FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

AI. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON GENDER EQUALITY AND COVID, KAZAKHSTAN

AI.I VULNERABLE/AT-RISK POPULATIONS

- COVID-19 has severely impacted migrant workers in Kazakhstan, where many migrants and their families are stranded and unable to return home due to border closures. Some women migrants cannot return to their home countries because they have children in school or no work at home, or have recently given birth to children, who do not have the identification required to travel. Many are without work and are vulnerable to TIP.²¹⁰
- Informal migrants (in accordance with the law, they are defined as migrants with an irregular/unsettled status) are also vulnerable to TIP. They cannot access education, social, legal, and medical services due to their lack of awareness about their rights or of confidence in the systems that uphold those rights in the country of destination.²¹¹
- Migrant family members are vulnerable, as their rights are not protected within the current migration policies, and they do not have access to support services.²¹²
- Low-income families across the country, especially those in rural areas, are forced to migrate internally to larger cities to seek work. These categories are more likely to experience labor exploitation.²¹³
- Children from families of labor migrants are also exploited, mainly in agriculture.²¹⁴
- Women migrants with children are particularly vulnerable to TIP, as traffickers can manipulate them using their children.²¹⁵
- During the lockdown, internal migrants have also become vulnerable because they have been cut off from their families, and are unable go back to the cities where they previously worked. Many have lost their jobs due to COVID and often became homeless.²¹⁶

²¹⁰ KII, 10/20/2020; and KII, 10/22/2020.

²¹¹ KII, 10/20/2020.

²¹² Ibid.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

- Women working as domestic workers in Kazakhstan during COVID are vulnerable to GBV and TIP.²¹⁷

AI.2 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR I

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR I.

TABLE 14. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR I (REGIONAL): STRENGTHENED BILATERAL AND MULTI-COUNTRY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS TO PROMOTE RIGHTS-BASED MIGRATION AND COUNTER TIP.

SUB IR I.1: APPROACHES TO CTIP AND LABOR MIGRATION ARE COORDINATED AND COHESIVE AMONG SOURCE AND DESTINATION COUNTRIES

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On May 22, 2020, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan launched a bilateral agreement on the migration and protection of migrants. This was a first agreement among CA countries. However, it is focused mainly on information exchange and joint CTIP actions that are broadly defined.⁴⁰⁴ It does not include gender considerations, in terms of specific needs for women VTIP, which include health and support services. Also, the agreement does not include establishment of the Transnational Referral Mechanism. • The TRM⁴⁰⁵ between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan has not yet been developed.⁴⁰⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan bilateral agreement rolls out, ensure gender considerations are integrated. • Promote the establishment of a TRM between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan as a model for the region, and include women's leadership in the process and integrating gender dimensions into the referral mechanism.

⁴⁰⁴ UZ Daily. 2020. "Agreement on Cooperation in Combating Illegal Migration Entered into Force." ([Link](#)).

⁴⁰⁵ According to the Organization for Cooperation and Security in Europe, a Transnational Referral Mechanism is a co-operative agreement for cross-border comprehensive assistance and/or transfer of identified or potential trafficked persons, through which state actors of different countries fulfill their obligations to promote and protect the human rights of trafficked persons.

⁴⁰⁶ KII, 10/22/2020.

TABLE 15. SUB IR 1.2: IMPROVED COLLECTION, AVAILABILITY, AND USE OF DATA AND EVIDENCE AROUND TIP AND CTIP

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The official source of data on migration for Kazakhstan is the Committee of Migration Services, a unit within the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Other named sources of data include border guards, local CSOs, police, media, and consulates of foreign countries. Data and statistics on TIP and migration are sparse and unreliable, and they are not disaggregated by sex and age. Also, data are lacking on the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations of women, youth, and persons with disabilities. A unified VTIP database does not exist, which affects data collection and effective case management. SMICA is currently piloting a new unified Victim Case Management System for CSOs. It anticipates collection of sex-disaggregated data. The GoK has not yet adopted National Victim Referral Mechanisms, and CSOs are hesitant to implement this new initiative for data collection. Individual case management systems in CSOs collect data disaggregated by age and sex on TIP victims. CSO data are not requested by state bodies and are not used to develop government strategic programs. The SDG platform is a reliable source of data on TIP but has gaps in data related to decent work, migrant rights, and protection of safe working environments for all workers, in particular, women migrant workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host forums between CSOs and state agencies to promote collaboration and exchange of TIP and CTIP data. Support development of guidelines for the standardization of the collection, analysis and reporting of sex-disaggregated data. Continue to support systematic data collection among CSOs and state agencies on the impact of COVID-19 on TIP. Collect sex-, age-, and disability-disaggregated data and analyze the differential impacts, barriers, and risks faced by different groups. Assess potential barriers in accessing services, especially for at-risk groups. After the Victim Case Management System is finalized, provide training for CSOs in collecting data, including the specific needs of female victims. Provide ongoing technical support to CSOs in using this database. Facilitate dialogue among government, civil society, business, and international organizations to ensure the collection, analysis, and use of data on migration and TIP disaggregated by sex and age takes place and is incorporated into the SDG dashboard.

AI.3 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 2

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 2:

TABLE 16. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 2 (PREVENTION): VULNERABILITY OF AT-RISK POPULATIONS TO ALL FORMS OF TIP REDUCED.

SUB IR 2.1 AT RISK POPULATIONS HAVE INFORMATION, SERVICES AND SKILLS TO SAFEGUARD THEIR RIGHTS.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labor migrants, especially women, do not have adequate access to pre-departure information, including on migration regulations, rights, and any changes to legislation due to COVID-19.⁴⁰⁷ Essential information for new women and men migrants is provided through informal and formal groups in the diaspora, local CSOs, and community members.⁴⁰⁸ WhatsApp is the main communication tool for women and youth in disseminating information pertaining to CTIP and COVID-specific information from CSOs and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand efforts to disseminate pre-departure information that focuses on current migration regulations and changes due to COVID, and migrants' rights with focus on women's rights in the country of destination. This is for migrants both leaving and entering Kazakhstan. Use local language through social media platforms and printed materials. Promote information on current COVID-specific support, employment opportunities, and GBV-related services

⁴⁰⁷ KII, 10/20/2020.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid.

government. Instagram is also popular, especially among youth. Telegram is popular among migrants coming from Uzbekistan.⁴⁰⁹

- Information channels for women foreign migrants working in Kazakhstan is not well studied.
- State bodies, international organizations, and the civil society sector recently started to involve vulnerable citizens, including women VTIP, in activities to counter TIP. Due to lack of trust and confidence in the process, they have not publicly expressed their opinions.⁴¹⁰
- During COVID, the number of young girls being exploited by traffickers in pornographic filming in online systems has increased.⁴¹¹
- Private-sector employers are not actively engaged in CTIP responses. Many of the companies do not understand their role or responsibility in upholding worker rights, including women workers' rights.⁴¹²
- Since the onset of COVID, women have found it more difficult to find a job, do not have access to employment information, and are more likely to work in the worst forms of labor. They are often exposed to sexual harassment and due to social norms and fear of stigma, migrant women or women from other vulnerable groups do not report workplace harassment, preferring instead to leave or change jobs.⁴¹³
- CSOs working for migrants are few and stretched. The GoK provides support to CSOs with minimal interference, which is unique in the region. Most CSO workers are women.⁴¹⁴
- Effective advocacy campaigns on CTIP exist, including 100 days against TIP (UNODC) and GloACT.⁴¹⁵
- Information is lacking on response services for GBV survivors.⁴¹⁶

for VTIP. Ensure that outreach extends to rural women by using informal/formal channels and groups of the diaspora, community leaders, and local CSOs. Also, use platforms such as Telegram, WhatsApp, and Instagram and provide information in local languages.

- Include non-gender stereotyped images in informational campaigns in videos, printed materials, and social media.
- Display anti-trafficking awareness materials at border crossings and checkpoints, including specifics for GBV awareness and access to support.
- Conduct a study on what are the most effective information channels for foreign women migrants.
- Engage women and youth, especially survivors of TIP, in the migrants' rights advocacy process.
- Collaborate with private employment agencies to disseminate information in Kazakhstan to increase information to domestic and foreign migrant women on employment opportunities. **(WEE)**
- Provide CTIP gender sensitivity training to private-sector companies with a focus on women's rights and ending sexual harassment. Raise awareness through mass media and social media. **(WEE)**
- Encourage the GoK to provide more oversight to PEAs to ensure they comply with the law in supporting women's rights in the workplace. **(WEE)**
- Support income generation activities and skills training for vulnerable women at-risk to TIP. **(WEE)**
- Collaborate with other advocacy campaigns, including 100 days against TIP and GloACT in raising awareness of TIP. Support linkages to women's CTIP issues.
- Communication materials should make clear that GBV is unacceptable and illegal, no one should endure it, and reporting mechanisms and services are confidential and safe.
- Seek and disseminate information about what COVID-safe GBV response services are available and operational. Ensure all staff are familiar with updated referral pathways and receive training on psychological first aid.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ Ibid.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid.

TABLE 17. SUB IR 2.2 SAFE MIGRATION FRAMEWORKS ARE ENHANCED AND ENFORCED

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GoK Interdepartmental Commission on Combating Illegal Export, Import and Trafficking in Persons was created in 2017. Regional Commissions are operating. The current plan does not include gender-sensitive indicators and standards. Currently working on the next five-year strategic plan.⁴¹⁷ Over the last five years gender has been included in government discussions about safe migration, but not integrated into policies.⁴¹⁸ Systemic barriers exist to access social and rehabilitation services for migrants, particularly for informal migrants. VTIP who are not citizens also face barriers to protections from violence. The provision of assistance is legally limited to citizens of Kazakhstan.⁴¹⁹ Kazakhstan has not joined the International Convention on the Protection of All Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. Therefore, spouses and family members of migrants are vulnerable as they do not have legal status and cannot access support services.⁴²⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Interdepartmental Regional Commissions on Combating Illegal Export, Import and Trafficking in Persons for the Prevention of Human Trafficking to incorporate a gender lens by conduct a SWOT analysis, gathering input from all key stakeholders to understand what worked, what was achieved, and where the problems remain and why. Ensure gender-sensitive indicators and standards are integrated into the five-year strategic plan with a focus on the prevention and protection of women VTIP. Facilitate dialogue with key stakeholders including relevant GoK state bodies, Interdepartmental Commission on Combating Illegal Export, Import and Trafficking in Persons, CSOs, private sector, UNODC, and IOM on integrating gender policies into safe migration frameworks. Promote the inclusion of migrants and VTIP in the SOPs for TIP and GBV. Advocate to the GoK to also include foreign VTIP in the provision of assistance.

AI.4 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 3

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 3:

TABLE 18. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 3 (PROTECTION): IDENTIFICATION AND ASSISTANCE TO TRAFFICKED PERSONS EXPANDED AND IMPROVED
SUB IR 3.1 ENHANCED POLICIES AND MECHANISMS FOR VICTIM IDENTIFICATION, REFERRAL, AND ASSISTANCE

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temporary labor migrants, as well as foreign victims of TIP temporarily staying in the country are not eligible to benefit from social services from the state. The GoK has not yet adopted the National Victim Referral Mechanism. There exist two official state documents: The Criteria for Identification, and Standards to Provide Social Services to Victims. The priorities in both documents are the same for men and women, except support measures for reproductive health is included. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for the inclusion of the protective status of women within the new national Victim Referral Mechanism, including the criteria for the identification and standards to provide social services to victims. Promote the collection of sex-disaggregated data in the Victim Referral Mechanism. Advocate with the GoK to make labor migrants and foreign victims of TIP eligible to receive social services from the state.

⁴¹⁷ KII, 10/20/2020; and Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan. 2017. On the Formation of the Interdepartmental Commission on the Fight against Illegal Export, Import and Human Trafficking. ([Link](#)).

⁴¹⁸ KII, 10/22/2020.

⁴¹⁹ KII, 10/20/2020.

⁴²⁰ KII, 10/22/2020.

- SMICA plans to test TIP referral mechanisms at the local level to build toward a national TIP referral mechanism. SOPs are not developed at the local level for the criteria and standards documents.
- SOPs for TIP identification and referral do not exist for the health, education, and labor sectors, where the majority of the frontline workers are women.
- Many CSOs do not have SOPs on integrating gender considerations into TIP programming.
- Engage VTIP and GBV survivor's voices in the development of the local level TIP referral mechanisms to gain a better understanding of their experiences and needs. Ensure confidentiality measures are put into place for their protection. Support their participation toward building the national TIP referral mechanism.
- Develop SOPs for health, education, and labor sectors on working with vulnerable women, VTIP identification, and referral mechanisms.
- Develop gender checklist for CSOs offering legal and social support to VTIP. Document best practices in integrating gender into TIP programming and incorporate it into SOPs. Analyze how women are involved as beneficiaries, implementors, and decision makers.
- Increase assistance to foreign trafficking victims, including for GBV survivors, and ensure victim identification and assistance are not contingent on participation in investigation and prosecution efforts.

TABLE 19. SUB IR 3.2 IMPROVED AVAILABILITY, QUALITY, AND ACCESS TO VICTIM SERVICES.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although regular immigrants and stateless persons have the right to free medical assistance, irregular and undocumented migrants can only access emergency treatment.⁴²¹ • Due to COVID-19, government shelters are closed in Kazakhstan for women and children, and VTIP and GBV survivors. The shelters were only for citizens and residents of Kazakhstan. The GoK has stated that it is prioritizing the inclusion of foreign migrants into shelter programs, but has not included funding for this initiative.⁴²² • CSOs kept shelters open for migrants and internal migrants—one per region, some are for TIP and others are for both GBV and TIP survivors. Some CSO shelters have government grants but only for citizens. Not many people coming, due to COVID restriction.⁴²³ • CSOs reported when they went to the border for humanitarian assistance, it was mostly Uzbeks and Tajiks at the border. Due to traditional cultural norms, men make the decisions and speak only to the CSOs and do not allow women to engage with the CSOs. CSOs report that it is difficult to capture the needs and perspectives of women.⁴²⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate to the GoK to fund and include foreign migrants into government shelters. • Support CSO shelters for VTIP to include foreign migrants, and include GBV services. Shelters need to adapt to the impact of COVID and ensure the establishment of safety protocols. • Support psychosocial support for VTIP women and girls (including persons with disabilities) who may be affected by the COVID outbreak and are also GBV survivors. • Identify data collection strategies at the border areas to engage women's perspectives and voices into service delivery programs and incorporate into project requirements. • Ensure women serve in decision-making structures in government or represented in committees for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to vulnerable communities due to COVID. • Engage female survivors to TIP and women CSO leaders as change agents by consulting survivors in delivery of services. If possible, survivors or women CSOs, who work with them, should advocate for survivor centered services from government agencies, like the engaging female inspectors. • Consult women beneficiaries and other at risk groups to ensure that their needs, such as appropriate of supplies, like formula, is provided for women with small children. .

⁴²¹ International Organization for Migration. 2018. *Migration Governance Snapshot*. ([Link](#)).

⁴²² KII, 10/20/2020.

⁴²³ Ibid.

⁴²⁴ KII, 10/22/2020.

- The textile private sector mostly employs female workers. Textile companies have many women managers. There is a lack of awareness on CTIP in textiles, which SMICA has identified as a sector where they will engage with the private sector on this issue. Generally, the private sector has been unaware of CTIP identification and referral; and potential risk of engagement in TIP and/or labor rights violations.⁴²⁵
 - Lack of CTIP awareness exists among labor inspectors in the identification of victims of forced labor.⁴²⁶
 - Youth within the country are becoming vulnerable due to COVID with internal movement from rural to urban seeking work.⁴²⁷
 - There is an increase of reported GBV cases during COVID, and a need to prevent and mitigate GBV as women are at-risk to being trafficked and sexually exploited.⁴²⁸
 - There remains a high level of fear to report GBV and TIP for both nationals and foreigners (men and women) due to retribution. Also some people at risk do not know where to report about GBV and TIP.⁴²⁹
 - Engage with private sector companies (including the textiles) awareness raising around CTIP. Develop training modules for textile and other sector management, targeting both men and women managers to serve as change agents in CTIP.
 - Provide systemic specialized training with gender components to all labor inspectors to identify victims of forced labor and report potential trafficking cases to the police.
 - Engage youth especially young girls on issues of TIP to mitigate risk. Coordinate with the education system and higher educational institutions on educational campaigns of CTIP.
 - Engage with University of Almaty on development of curriculum for business school and public policy school on CTIP.
 - Seek and disseminate information about what COVID-safe GBV response services are available and operational. Ensure all staff are familiar with updated referral pathways and receive training on psychological first aid.
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⁴²⁵ Ibid.

⁴²⁶ Ibid.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

A2. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON GENDER EQUALITY AND COVID, KYRGYZ REPUBLIC

A2.1 VULNERABLE/AT-RISK POPULATIONS

- Domestic: The Government of the Kyrgyz Republic identifies 308,700 people, including 93,100 persons, who do not have the right to pension provision, as vulnerable and eligible for monthly family support. It identifies the following categories of the population as eligible: 2829 children in difficult life situations; 9,800 citizens who receive social assistance at home (including elderly and persons with disabilities). The last category was dramatically affected by the lockdown because social workers, in many cases, were not able to provide assistance due to stay-at-home measures. 430
- During lockdown, a majority of markets and shopping malls were closed, pushing workers into economically insecure situations. Internal migrants including women who are self-employed and working in the informal sector are suffering economically and may be more vulnerable to GBV and TIP.
- An estimated 25,000 women are being internally trafficked in the domestic sex trade. There have been reports of extra bribes to police to access clients during lockdown. 431
- International: The State Migration Service estimates that 750,000 Kyrgyz citizens were working abroad when the pandemic hit (40 percent female). UNICEF shares a similar estimate of 650,000 to 750,000 citizens of Kyrgyz Republic working abroad and IOM estimates that 40 percent are female. 432 Informal migrants, who do not have registration, are now unemployed or job insecure. Many are stranded abroad and are vulnerable to exploitation, particularly those stranded in Russia.
- An estimated 5,000 migrants from Kyrgyz Republic were victims of fraud and stuck in the Samara and Orenburg regions of Russia for almost two months while trying to return home. The majority were women with small children, pregnant women, and young men. 433
- Informal (illegal) migrants from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are increasingly coming across the border to work in agriculture and construction. 434
- Vulnerable people also include women, children, person with disability, who are becoming homeless because of financial hardship and income losses from COVID-19 related job loss. Homeless people also include labor migrants from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. All are vulnerable to TIP and forced labor, especially in urban centers. 435
- A total 20,000 international students are studying in Kyrgyz Republic who cannot return to their home countries, mostly from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and other neighboring countries. 436
- Historical forced labor trends and TIP for labor in agriculture, textiles, construction, domestic service in destination countries⁴³⁷ may be increasing.
- Female Kyrgyz labor migrants in Russia are particularly vulnerable to violence from male Kyrgyz migrants due to deep-rooted patriarchal attitudes and stereotypes on the roles and responsibilities of

⁴³⁰ Republican institution of prosthetic and orthopedic products. n.d. ([Link](#)).

⁴³¹ Bengard, Anastasia. 2019. "Human Trafficking 60 Thousand Kyrgyzstanis Risk Falling into Slavery." ([Link](#)).; 2020. Uraliev, Marat. "A Police Officer Was Detained. He Delivered Sex Workers During Curfew." KaktusMedia. ([Link](#)).; and Zotov, Georgy. 2020. "Sex, Pilaf and Girls for 500 Rubles. The Nightmares of The Red Light District of Kyrgyzstan." Arguments and Facts. ([Link](#)).

⁴³² International Organization for Migration. n.d. *Current Migration Situation and Trends in Kyrgyzstan*.

⁴³³ United Nations. 2020. *COVID-19 Impacts on Livelihoods of Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic Gender Rapid Assessment*.

⁴³⁴ Forum of Resettlement Organizations. 2018. "The number of labor migrants from Uzbekistan is growing in Kyrgyzstan." ([Link](#)).

⁴³⁵ Reshetov, Rodion. 2017. "Bishkek beggars were Fed by the Bishkek residents themselves. Revelations of those who ask." ZAO Evening Bishkek. ([Link](#)).

⁴³⁶ Sputnik. 2019. "How many foreign students are there in the Kyrgyz Republic and where do they study – infographics." ([Link](#)).

⁴³⁷ Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. "2020 Trafficking in Persons Report: Kyrgyz Republic." *United States Department of State*. ([Link](#)).

men in the family and society as patriots and gatekeepers of national dignity.⁴³⁸ Male Kyrgyz migrants are often threaten by their “friendships” with non-Kyrgyz men.

A2.2 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR I

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR I.

TABLE 20. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR I: (REGIONAL): STRENGTHENED BILATERAL AND MULTI-COUNTRY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS TO PROMOTE RIGHTS-BASED MIGRATION AND COUNTER TIP.

SUB IR I.1: APPROACHES TO CTIP AND LABOR MIGRATION ARE COORDINATED AND COHESIVE AMONG SOURCE AND DESTINATION COUNTRIES

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the second wave of COVID-19, the Government of Russia (GoR) granted all foreigners with temporary or permanent residence permits and access to treatment under the compulsory medical insurance policy.⁴³⁹ • The Eurasian Economic Union (EUAU) reciprocal agreements with Russia provide for pension benefits for registered migrants. (EAEU includes Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic from Central Asia). The agreement includes benefits for spouses of breadwinners who have disabilities or are deceased. This is important for female migrants and wives of migrants.⁴⁴⁰ • The Kyrgyz Republic has regulations for hiring of experts from foreign countries and requires employers to prove there is no citizen with the required expertise or availability, before granting the visa for a foreign national to take a particular job.⁴⁴¹ • The number of informal/illegal migrants from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan is growing. The numbers threaten to exceed the Kyrgyz Republic’s established quota for migrants (17,410 for 2019) at a time when the country’s own economy is in decline. These migrants are at risk of exploitation and TIP.⁴⁴² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider expanding the national CTIP framework to include provision of basic needs (including medical and maternity services) in emergency situations, like COVID-19, to informal migrants, with special attention to different needs of women, youth, and persons with disabilities in the countries of destination. • Promote bilateral relations between the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and employment agencies in Kyrgyz Republic and destination countries, such as Kazakhstan and Russia. SMICA could play a role in starting the dialogue and include CSOs, which should also be involved.

⁴³⁸ Sputnik. 2020. “Ministry of Internal Affairs begins check on appeal to punish Kyrgyz women in Moscow.” ([Link](#)); and Kharizov, Ruslan. 2020. “Guys who threaten Kyrgyz girls in Russia wanted by police.” ([Link](#)).

⁴³⁹ M Bulak. 2020. “Migrants in Russia will be treated for coronavirus for free.” ([Link](#)).

⁴⁴⁰ Zamakhina, Tatiana. 2020. “Russia will pay pensions to labor migrants.” Rossiyskaya Gazeta. ([Link](#)).

⁴⁴¹ Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2019. *Regulations on The Procedure for The Implementation of Labor Activities by Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons on The Territory of The Kyrgyz Republic*. ([Link](#)).

⁴⁴² Forum of Resettlement Organizations. 2018. “The number of labor migrants from Uzbekistan is growing in Kyrgyzstan.” ([Link](#)); and Dosalieva, Bubukan. 2017. “How Many Labor Migrants from Abroad Are There in the Kyrgyz Republic?” Radio Azattyk. ([Link](#)).

TABLE 21. SUB IR 1.2: IMPROVED COLLECTION, AVAILABILITY, AND USE OF DATA AND EVIDENCE AROUND TIP AND CTIP

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Kyrgyz Republic Border Service and State Migration Service collects relevant data on internal and overseas migration. The data are inconsistent and of poor quality. The Border Service collects biometric data at departure, but does not ask about the purpose of exit or entrance.⁴⁰⁴ The State Migration Service gets data from overseas migration offices.⁴⁰⁵ Two sources of data are most promising: 1) the National Statistics Office conducts a household survey quarterly that collects data on employment, number of internal and overseas migrants, and sources of income (including remittances). However, information on seasonal migration is missing. Data are sex-disaggregated; 2) Municipalities are responsible for collecting data on movements of residents. Data are typically comprehensive.⁴⁰⁶ Kyrgyz Republic has plans to transition to e-government. CSOs lack a standardized format for documenting VTIP and GBV and case management. The lack of standards means that information cannot be analyzed and used for government programs, as the links with national databases are weak.⁴⁰⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure indicators related to migration and TIP are included in the planned e-government data collection system, with gender indicators and sex- and age-disaggregated data. Promote cross agency coordination and standardization of data on overseas and domestic migration, disaggregated by sex, age, ethnic group, and disability etc. Integrate sex-disaggregated migration-related indicators into the quarterly household survey. Continue to support systematic data collection among CSOs and state agencies on the impact of COVID-19 on TIP. Collect sex, age, and disability disaggregated data and analyze the differential impacts, barriers, and risks faced by different groups. Assess potential barriers in accessing services, especially for at-risk groups. Provide training for CSOs on the newly developed Victim Case Management System and collection of data, including the specific needs of female victims. Provide ongoing technical support to CSOs to use this database.

A2.3 KEY FINDINGS and recommendations FOR ACTIVITY IR 2

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 2:

TABLE 22. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 2: (PREVENTION): VULNERABILITY OF AT-RISK POPULATIONS TO ALL FORMS OF TIP REDUCED. SUB IR 2.1 AT RISK POPULATIONS HAVE INFORMATION, SERVICES AND SKILLS TO SAFEGUARD THEIR RIGHTS.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women and men are equally vulnerable to external and domestic human trafficking. (IOM statistics cite 2,428 victims; 54 percent female; 47 percent male; 9 percent domestic VTIP).⁴⁰⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boost government oversight to improve accountabilities of PEAs on safe migration and TIP.

⁴⁰⁴ Omurkulova-Ozerska, E.A., Zh.R. Kiyizbaeva. 2018. *Kyrgyzstan: Advanced migration profile*. International Organization for Migration and UN Agency for Migration. ([Link](#)).

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁷ KII, 11/09/20.

⁴⁰⁸ Shan, Tien. 2015. "Special Report on the Results of Monitoring and Analysis of the Implementation of the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic 'On Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.'" International Organization for Migration, USAID, and PANGAEA. ([Link](#)).

- The State Migration Service (SMS) provides licenses to PEAs, but oversight of PEAs is weak. Most migrants are informal and the capacity of the PEA to place people in overseas employment is limited.²⁴⁶ There is potential for abuse.
- Information about migration on social media is not always accurate.²⁴⁷
- Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is attuned to skills training in line with demand in external and internal markets.²⁴⁸ Gender bias in admissions and training is unknown.
- More than half of unemployed young people 16–29 years of age are women (54.2 percent); most have no work experience. Women face hiring bias and employment discrimination due to their reproductive responsibilities and employers not wanting to cover maternity benefits. This discrimination puts women at risk for being trafficked, as they are unable to find formal employment. The pandemic has aggravated this situation.²⁴⁹
- Women, including young women and women with disabilities, have less decision-making power in COVID-19 response strategies. They have less opportunities to communicate their needs and challenges due to women’s underrepresentation at all levels of government.
- The Kyrgyz Republic promised extra remuneration for front-line public servants, including medical workers, social workers, teachers, and police, for their work under extraordinary conditions. This has not been forthcoming, and proper protections have not been provided. Eighty-four medical workers have died due to COVID infection.²⁵⁰
- As schooling transitioned to virtual medium because of lockdown, Kyrgyz Republic realized that 10 percent of the population does not have access to television. Steps are being taken to address this situation.²⁵¹
- Promote public awareness, especially related to new laws and changes in regulation, and develop an SBCC campaign against TIP (e.g., *Free zone from slavery and trafficking*). SBCC campaigns should avoid stereotyping related to gender and persons with disabilities.
- Integrate risk awareness of TIP and information on safe migration, including COVID-era risks into UNODC’s *Education for Justice* school-based program.
- Strengthen the capacity of municipalities and local councils (ensuring representation of women, CSOs on women’s, youth, migrants, VTIP rights), to disseminate accurate and gender-aware information about safe migration and local employment, given border closures.
- Diversify information channels for disseminating information on employment opportunities for returning migrants, including training and retraining opportunities for domestic in-demand skills, credit sources, COVID protection (include Population Service Centers, television, radio, Telegram app, and Instagram) **(WEE)**
- Provide media literacy training to women and youth to enable them to understand how to evaluate, verify and trust information from social media platforms. **(WEE)**
- Target returned, unemployed seasonal traders and agricultural workers with skills training options (free and paid), market information (including on-line options), access to finance (EBRD special Women in Business Program²⁵²) to enable safe WEE in the country (including exporting products rather than people)
- Incentivize TVET to expand or earmark options for women including into nontraditional sectors. Include gender sensitization for TVET staff. **(WEE)**
- Leverage diaspora information-sharing networks to gather data on employment opportunities and humanitarian assistance for rebroadcast to stranded, unemployed migrants and students. Also leverage these networks to gather information on TIP and discrimination. Provide technical and organizational support to network organizers. Ensure women’s vulnerabilities and needs are addressed through information about jobs, benefit

Migration, USAID, and PANGAEA. ([Link](#).)

²⁴⁶ BizNews. 2019. “How to Get a License for a Private Agency for The Employment of Kyrgyz Citizens Abroad.” ([Link](#)).

²⁴⁷ KII, 10/25/2020.

²⁴⁸ Kabar. 2019. “Vocational Education in Kyrgyzstan: State and Prospects.” ([Link](#)).

²⁴⁹ United Nations. 2020. *COVID-19 Impacts on Livelihoods of Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic Gender Rapid Assessment*. P.11.

²⁵⁰ Sputnik. 2020. “Already 84 Doctors with Coronavirus die in Kyrgyzstan.” ([Link](#)).

²⁵¹ Timirbaeva, Natalia. 2020. “‘Hey, I don’t have a TV.’ In Kyrgyzstan, schoolchildren have no opportunity to study remotely.” KaktusMedia. ([Link](#)).; and Dzhamankulova, Ayzhamal. 2020. “Education is not for Everyone: How was Online Education for Schoolchildren Massively Introduced in Kyrgyzstan due to the Pandemic, and what Went Wrong?” Kloop. ([Link](#)).

²⁵² European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. n.d. “Finance and Advice for Women in Business.” ([Link](#)).

packages (insurance, basic medical assistance), etc. Ensure messaging is in local language (not only in Russian).

- Fact check information shared through diaspora networks about safe return options.
- Offer training on leadership and management for VTIP to strengthen their self-confidence and encourage participation in CTIP efforts.

TABLE 23. SUB IR 2.2 SAFE MIGRATION FRAMEWORKS ARE ENHANCED AND ENFORCED.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kyrgyz legislation on migration is fragmented: the 2002 law on internal migration and the 2000 law on external migration have gone through multiple revisions (17 for external migration) to respond to changing conditions. This includes protection of children leaving the country (Article 43, 2020). Legislation still does not address vulnerable groups (including vulnerable women) or the new reality that Kyrgyz Republic is also a destination country for citizens of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.²⁵³ • Resolution No. 256 extended registration for foreign citizens stranded in the Kyrgyz Republic during the pandemic. The Resolution makes no mention of female or other vulnerable groups of migrants, or TIP.²⁵⁴ • Kyrgyz Republic has taken a number of steps to extend for 6 months the safety net benefits for people unemployed because of the pandemic. Per pending government order, labor migrants are not eligible unless they have been employed in Kyrgyz Republic for the last 12 months.²⁵⁵ • Kyrgyz Republic offered preferential credit for agricultural producers to stimulate domestic food production.²⁵⁶ However, no special provisions are in place for female farmers, who represent 19 percent of heads of farms. • Kyrgyz Republic has invested \$182 million in financial support for SMEs to stabilize the economy due to the economic impact COVID-19. Kyrgyz Republic earmarked 30 percent of credit for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct research and monitor labor migration in the Kyrgyz Republic with special attention to immigration of vulnerable groups and TIP. • Promote public awareness about changes in legislation to adequately address the challenges of migration and TIP in Kyrgyz Republic and for Kyrgyz citizens abroad. • Promote awareness and wraparound support for women SME owners, farmers, women-headed households, and VTIP to take advantage of government credit. (WEE) • Ensure public awareness about government initiatives on social protection support to unemployed, returned migrants through relevant channels, particularly those accessible to vulnerable women, persons with disabilities, and youth.

²⁵³ KII, 11/09/2020.

²⁵⁴ Nuzaham. Interim Measures of The EAEU During Covid-19: What Do Migrants Need To Know? ([Link](#))

²⁵⁵ Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2020. "The Ministry of Labor and Social Development of the Kyrgyz Republic submits for public discussion the draft NLA." ([Link](#)).

²⁵⁶ Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2020. "Prime Minister Mukhammedkaly Abylgaziev: The Agriculture Financing Project is an Important Tool for the Development of Agriculture." ([Link](#)).

businesses that are women-owned or largely staffed by women.²⁵⁷

A2.4 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 3

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 3:

TABLE 24. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 3 (PROTECTION): IDENTIFICATION AND ASSISTANCE TO TRAFFICKED PERSONS EXPANDED AND IMPROVED.
SUB IR 3.1 ENHANCED POLICIES AND MECHANISMS FOR VICTIM IDENTIFICATION, REFERRAL, AND ASSISTANCE.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Referral Mechanism was approved in 2019, with gender blind guidelines that do not include services for VTIP. The NRM also makes no provision for foreign VTIP.²⁵⁸ In the list of state social services provided by MLSD and MoH, there is no crisis center as a service, either for victims of DV or TIP. Further, technical regulations on counseling for women has not been adopted by MoLSD, or MoH, and is not specific enough to be a SOP. Kyrgyz Republic recently launched the 117 GBV hotline, which has not been systematically rolled out.²⁵⁹ Rates of crime, rape, and GBV are growing since the beginning of the pandemic, which has been linked to unemployed migrant groups, who are hungry and angry.²⁶⁰ The Kyrgyz Republic's response to COVID-19 has been inadequate. The grassroots COVID volunteers movement sprang up and mobilized civil activists to help the most vulnerable people get access to medical services, supplement limited medical forces (many medical professionals returning from abroad joined); and developed digital services to manage distribution of humanitarian aid and PPE resources. At least half 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for including the protective status of women in the new National Victim Referral Mechanism, in particular, the criteria for identifying victims, and the standards for providing social services to them. Promote collection of sex-disaggregated data in the Victim Referral Mechanism. Develop a gender checklist for CSOs offering legal and social support to VTIP. Document best practices in integrating gender into TIP programming and incorporate them into SOPs, which can be rolled out to MLSD, MoH, the Border Service, and CSOs. Create a space for dialogue, such as an online platform, where CSOs can discuss and rationalize SOPs and recommend changes in regulations on NRM. Advocate that the MoLSD, MFA, and General Prosecutor should conduct monitoring of referral mechanisms and report annually to the national Gender Council (on GBV) and Prime Minister's Office (on TIP). Promote the adoption of bylaws, which should include SOPs in service delivery for VTIP. A definition of VTIP already exists for key state organizations. Bylaws on State Social Order should include an order of services for VTIP. There is a need to introduce new state services, such as "Shelter for VTIP," which is noted as a need in table 25 (including registration in the list of state services under relevant state agencies), and for infrastructure needs (premises of shelters).

²⁵⁷ Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2020. "The Program 'Financing of Entrepreneurship Entities' Was Approved." ([Link](#)).

²⁵⁸ Ministry of Justice of the Kyrgyz Republic. 2019. *On the National Referral Mechanism for Victims of Human Trafficking in the Kyrgyz Republic*. Government of the Kyrgyz Republic. ([Link](#)).

²⁵⁹ Government Resolution No. 473 adopted on September 8, 2020. 2020. "On Approving the Regulation on the Permanent Service - "117 single hotline."

²⁶⁰ Tsoi, Maxim. 2015. "National Statistical Committee: Without Migrant Transfers, the Poverty Level in the Kyrgyz Republic will Grow to 36.4%." ZAO Evening Bishkek. ([Link](#)).

of the volunteers were girls and women (though some have died).²⁶¹ The movement has faced some roadblocks from Kyrgyz Republic.

- Integrate issues of CTIP, prevention of GBV, and safe migration into the Gender Equality Strategy (2020–2030) and Roadmap, as it is currently being drafted.
 - Promote legislation to encourage and support the COVID volunteers movement, ensure their security, protect their rights, and celebrate their achievements.
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²⁶¹Ulitina, Ekaterina. 2020. “‘Saved Thousands of Lives.’ *New York Times* Wrote about Volunteers in Kyrgyzstan.” ZAO Evening Bishkek. ([Link](#)).

TABLE 25. SUB IR 3.2 IMPROVED AVAILABILITY, QUALITY, AND ACCESS TO VICTIM SERVICES.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single mothers and parents who have to go to work face childcare challenges in COVID lockdown.²⁶² • Women who care for children and other family members with disabilities have increased their workload during the lockdown.²⁶³ • Online prostitution (webcam) with female and adolescents has been noted by law enforcement during the lockdown, but police do not have the capacity to prevent and to prosecute.²⁶⁴ • Women with disabilities have experienced food insecurity because they could not get to the bank to withdraw money before transport support services stopped.²⁶⁵ Now that transportation has resumed, it is unclear whether that food security still exists. • An unknown number of stranded migrants and victims of forced labor are vulnerable to COVID infection due to unsafe work and living environments.²⁶⁶ The need for shelter under COVID is urgent.²⁶⁷ • Between January and March 2020, law enforcement received 2,319 reports of intimate partner violence. This was 65 percent higher than the same period in 2019. Of those experiencing violence, 95 percent were women aged 21–50.²⁶⁸ Over the last four months, hotline calls were reportedly 10 times higher than before. Abuse from husbands and their family members, including threats to life, have been reported.²⁶⁹ • Internal migrants did not receive humanitarian assistance during lockdown, causing economic hardship as well as tension and conflict that may lead to an increase in domestic violence.²⁷⁰ • However, rates of GBV may be much higher, as women are afraid to report because of fear of infection, distrust of police, and economic dependency, which COVID-19 has exacerbated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide humanitarian assistance and access to basic medical services, including maternity services, irrespective of their legal status, to Kyrgyz unemployed migrants, VTIP, students studying abroad as well as unemployed vulnerable women and persons with disabilities. • Provide training and funding for GBV hotline staff to offer psychological support. Also, sensitize all participants and staff on GBV and VTIP so that they can identify and refer victims of GBV and VTIP to protective services for those who have been (or fear they may be) subject to violence. Services must be safe, confidential, anonymous, and freely available to anyone who seeks them. • Enhance hotline facilities for hearing- and sight-impaired people. • Include women representatives in decisions about composition and distribution of humanitarian packages.

²⁶² COVID-19 Impacts on Livelihoods of Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic. Gender Rapid Assessment as of 15 May 2020 p.15

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ KII 11/ 09/2020

²⁶⁵ 24 KG. August 27, 2020. Coronavirus in Kyrgyzstan. Vulnerable populations under attack. ([Link](#)).

²⁶⁶ KII 11/09/2020

²⁶⁷ KII, 10/26/2020

²⁶⁸ COVID-19 Impacts on Livelihoods of Women and Men in the Kyrgyz Republic. Gender Rapid Assessment as of 15 May 2020

²⁶⁹ KII, 10/25/2020.

²⁷⁰ KII, 10/25/2020.

- The Kyrgyz Republic anticipated a rise in GBV, but adequate resources were not allocated.²⁷¹
- No state shelter is in place for VTIP, and CSO shelters are limited. During COVID-19 the biggest CSO-run shelter was closed from March until the end of September 2020.²⁷²
- A Kyrgyz network of CSOs supporting internal migrants (within the regional platform *CA on the Move*) became inactive during COVID due to resource constraints.²⁷³
- Humanitarian packages are not tailored to families with children, persons with disabilities, or pregnant women.

A2.5 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 4

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 4:

TABLE 26. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 4 (PROSECUTION): INCREASED PROSECUTION OF TIP (KYRGYZ REPUBLIC ONLY)

SUB IR 4.1 STRENGTHEN CAPACITY OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACTORS TO IDENTIFY AND PROCESS TIP CASES

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women are afraid to report intimate partner violence or TIP because of inadequate police protection, stigma, and lengthy trials.²⁷⁴ The police and courts are less responsive under COVID-19. No cases have been documented. • Police extortion of VTIP and victim intimidation, including by judges, have been documented.²⁷⁵ • Contradictions are found between the Criminal Code of the Kyrgyz Republic (Art.171) and the Law of the Kyrgyz Republic “On Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings,” which can criminalize VTIP. • The TIP training curriculum used in the General prosecutor's office and Supreme Court lacks attention to gender. SOPs are similarly gender blind. • Investigative and documentation capacity of the police is weak: 33 percent of criminal cases were thrown out for inadequate evidence.²⁷⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training (including case studies) for legal actors, such as investigators, prosecutors, judges, and lawyers, as well as CSO service providers and project implementers, to identify gender-specific needs and vulnerabilities of VTIP, who are often women.²⁷⁸ Emphasize how COVID-19 is affecting women and men differently so that they can take action. This training material can be used as a module in specific training and re-training curricula, which already exist, for investigators, prosecutors, judges, and lawyers. • Prioritize bilateral and multilateral agreements to enable joint investigations. Also, CSOs, who play an important role, and project implementors, who work on TIP, should be trained using this case study material.

²⁷¹ KII, 10/25/2020.

²⁷² KII 11/09/2020

²⁷³ KII, 11/08/2020

²⁷⁴ Kamila Baimuratova. 11/7/2019. *Mistrust of the police and underestimated data on crime - research by the National Statistical Committee on Bishkek and new buildings*. Kloop. ([Link](#)).

²⁷⁵ United States Department of State. 2020. *2020 Trafficking in Persons Report: Tajikistan*. Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. ([Link](#)).

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Annie Cannons. 2020. “World Day Against Trafficking in Persons.” ([Link](#)).

- The capacity of prosecutors and due process for VTIP lack rigor, documentation, and investigation.²⁷⁷

TABLE 27. SUB IR 4.2 ENHANCE COORDINATION AND COOPERATION IN INVESTIGATION AND PROSECUTION OF TIP CASES

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transnational investigation capacity across the Commonwealth of Independent States is not sufficient to investigate the majority of GBV and other crimes conducted in destination countries.²⁷⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize bilateral and multilateral agreements to enable joint investigations with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, who investigate TIP cases, and Migration services.

TABLE 28. SUB IR 4.3 INCREASE TIP VICTIM'S ACCESS TO JUSTICE AND REDRESS

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A monopoly exists among CSOs providing legal services for VTIP and asylum seekers (Legal Clinic Adilet). One organization is based only in Bishkek. Female migrants, who may want to hold traffickers legally accountable and have experienced trafficking overseas, may not be located in the Bishkek. This CSO does not focus on CTIP or safe migration (including internal migration).²⁸⁰ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversify legal aid support and partners, prioritizing accessibility in regions where there are migrants. • Ensure gender awareness training for CSO service providers, so that partners have a basic understanding of different gender needs and priorities and can develop action plans to better support VTIP. • Ensure confidentiality and that victim identification and assistance are not contingent on participation in investigation and prosecution efforts.

²⁷⁷ KII, 11/09/2020; Duishenbekova, Gulnara, Bakyt Kachikeyeva, Kuvat Kerez, and Zulfia Turumbekova. 2018. *Analytical Report: Study of jurisprudence on trafficking-related offenses in Kyrgyzstan, the Kyrgyz Association of Women Judges*. Criminal Justice, Crime Prevention and Corruption Project, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Kyrgyzstan. ([Link](#)).

²⁷⁹ Sputnik. 2020. "Special Emphasis: Is There Human Trafficking and Slavery In Kyrgyzstan." ([Link](#)).

²⁸⁰ Public Foundation Legal Clinic "Adilet." 2014. *Protection the Rights of Refugees and Statelessness*. ([Link](#)).

A3. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS, GENDER EQUALITY AND COVID, TAJIKISTAN

A3.1 VULNERABLE/AT-RISK POPULATIONS

- *Domestic:* GoT defines vulnerability as a family with more than five children; living 50 kilometers or more from the city center; a family with person with a disability; women; and unemployed youth (18–30). These groups are all eligible for social assistance.
- Particularly vulnerable groups include unemployed people, including returned migrants (rural and urban); households dependent on remittances that have stopped because of COVID; women-headed households (20.9 percent)²⁸¹; women who are experiencing intimate partner violence who have been evicted; divorced women; women (including first wives that have a registered marriage, or second wives that have an unofficial marriage) that have been abandoned by their husbands who have migrated abroad. It also includes women who have not completed secondary education and have low levels of education; adolescent children, especially girls who have been left alone for long periods of time; and persons with disabilities. All of these people are vulnerable to TIP.²⁸²
- State employees are commonly pushed into forced labor (*subbotniks*) for urban clean up and/or cotton picking.²⁸³ Many of those forced are teachers, medical workers, and other employees of state enterprises—jobs dominated by women.²⁸⁴ Most health workers are women (39 percent of doctors), and at risk of COVID infection.²⁸⁵
- Citizens of Afghanistan and Bangladesh are known to be trafficked to Tajikistan to work in the construction industry and agriculture.²⁸⁶ There are also reports of Vietnamese citizens trafficked to Tajikistan for sex work.²⁸⁷
- *International:* Most migrants from Tajikistan could be considered vulnerable because they lack status, registration, safety net insurances, and often face racial discrimination. Older migrants are vulnerable because they are not as adaptable.²⁸⁸ Men who migrate to Russia for agriculture and construction

²⁸¹ Tajikistan Statistics Agency. 2012. “Women and Men in Tajikistan.”

²⁸² KII, 10/26/2020; and KII, 10/23/2020.

²⁸³ Eurasianet. 2019. “Teachers Toil in Cotton Fields as Tajikistan Tries to Fix Trade Imbalance.” ([Link](#)).

²⁸⁴ Karaev, Sayfiddin. 2020. *What Rights of Workers in Tajikistan Are Most Often Violated?*. Asia-Plus. ([Link](#)).; Asian Development Bank. 2020. *Proposed Countercyclical Support Facility Grant Republic of Tajikistan: COVID-19 Active Response and Expenditure Support Program*. ([Link](#)).; and Eurasian Economic Commission. 2020. “Temporary Measures In the Field of Migration Provide an Opportunity For Citizens of the Member States to Legally Stay in The Territories of The Host State within the EAEU.” ([Link](#)).

²⁸⁵ Statistics Agency under the President Republic of Tajikistan. 2019. *Health in The Republic Tajikistan*. ([Link](#)).; and Tajikistan News. 2018. “The Number of Women Workers in Education and Health is Increasing in Tajikistan.” ([Link](#)).

²⁸⁶ United States Department of State. 2020. *2020 Trafficking in Persons Report: Tajikistan*. Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons.

²⁸⁷ KII, 10/26/2020.

²⁸⁸ Ibid.

work (estimated 70 percent of migrants) are vulnerable to being trafficked and/or exploited.²⁸⁹

- Wives of migrants (who make up most of the 14 percent of female migrants to Russia) are particularly vulnerable because they are invisible within the system and lack access to services. Women who migrate on their own and remain single are vulnerable to discrimination and may be pressured into sex work.²⁹⁰
- Unemployed youth, especially those who have not completed or dropped out of secondary education, are vulnerable to trafficking.²⁹¹
- Tajik students stranded overseas face housing, food, and medical challenges.²⁹²

A3.2 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR I

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR I.

TABLE 29. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR I: (REGIONAL): STRENGTHENED BILATERAL AND MULTI-COUNTRY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS TO PROMOTE RIGHTS-BASED MIGRATION AND COUNTER TIP.

SUB IR I.1: APPROACHES TO CTIP AND LABOR MIGRATION ARE COORDINATED AND COHESIVE AMONG SOURCE AND DESTINATION COUNTRIES

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GoT enacted a Law on Migration in 1999. Tajikistan has multiple bilateral agreements with Russia, but Russia mostly does not adhere to them.²⁹³ • Russian law provides opportunities for migrants to work, but it does not protect them. In 2019, official statistics suggest that about half of the 518,066 migrants from Tajikistan were banned from entering Russia.²⁹⁴ • Women make up approximately 14 percent of migrants to Russia.²⁹⁵ As noted above, women are particularly vulnerable. Some have reported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote more bilateral discussions with Russia to increase protections for informal migrants, and humanitarian support for stranded migrants (specifically taken into consideration newly approved bilateral agreement on organized recruitment). • Encourage female survivors of TIP and women leaders from CSOs to become leaders and represent the needs of VTIP in labor migration policy dialogue. If in-person support is not possible, find viable proxies (for instance CSO or family representatives) who can represent their views.

²⁸⁹ Ibid.

²⁹⁰ Zakhvatov, Andrey. 2017. "Female Labor Migration from Tajikistan: in Search of European Life." Forum of Resettlement Organizations. ([Link](#)).

²⁹¹ KII, 10/22/2020.

²⁹² KII, 10/26/2020.

²⁹³ KII, 11/06/2020.

²⁹⁴ KII, 10/26/2020.; and Republic of Tajikistan. 2020. *Human Rights Report for the Republic of Tajikistan*. ([Link](#)).

²⁹⁵ Migration Service of the Ministry of Labor, Migration and Employment of the Population of the Republic of Tajikistan. 2019.

that their employers have taken their passports away.²⁹⁶

- The United Nations Committee on the Protection of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families notes the need for greater gender sensitivity in policy and strategy.²⁹⁷
- The Tajik Embassy in Russia is poorly equipped to help with VTIP and stranded migrants.
- Russian CSOs and human rights activists are overwhelmed by the 1.5 million (unofficial) migrants.²⁹⁸ CSOs in Kazakhstan and Russia reportedly take into account the needs of women and women with children.
- Chartered flights are expensive. Only 10,000 migrants have returned since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic; IOM helped 2,000–3,000 return overland through Uzbekistan.²⁹⁹

TABLE 30. SUB IR 1.2: IMPROVED COLLECTION, AVAILABILITY, AND USE OF DATA AND EVIDENCE AROUND TIP AND CTIP

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Migrants fill out forms when they depart, but GoT's data management system is weak.³⁰⁰ Sex-disaggregated migration data are published annually.³⁰¹ • Data on TIP are limited, but can be pieced together from data gathered by international bodies, such as the International Labor Organization and USAID. Details on identification, prosecution, and gender constraints are not collected in an organized way. Data are not used for planning.³⁰² • CSOs suggest that the fragmentation of available data on foreign citizens trafficked into Tajikistan affects their ability to plan services for VTIP.³⁰³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to the National Statistical Committee and Migration Service to disaggregate data by sex and youth, and include indicators of vulnerabilities as the newly unified forms are being developed. Ensure that these indicators are analyzed and used for planning. Ensure TIP and labor exploitation are defined as distinct categories. • Revise data collection and analysis frameworks based on COVID reality in which trafficking patterns may have altered, including shifts to digital trafficking.³⁰⁵ • Promote a partnership between the ombudsman and CSOs working with migrants and VTIP to focus on needs of vulnerable groups. Ensure data frameworks include key indicators to measure the needs of vulnerable groups and the impact of COVID-19 on TIP.

²⁹⁶ KII, 10/23/2020.

²⁹⁷ United Nations. 2019. *Concluding observations on the Second Period Report of Tajikistan*. International Convention on the Protection on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

²⁹⁸ KII, 10/23/2020.

²⁹⁹ KII, 10/22/2020.

³⁰⁰ KII, 10/23/2020; and United Nations. 2019. *Concluding Observations on the Second Period Report of Tajikistan*.

International Convention on the Protection on the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families.

³⁰¹ KII, 10/26/2020.

³⁰² Ibid.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

- No references to TIP (internal or external) are contained in the country's annual ombudsman report or report of the commissioner for human rights.³⁰⁴
 - Harmonize information related to VTIP across service-providing agencies in the NRM and ensure sex and age disaggregation. Provide technical support to existing regional platform (e.g., CA 5+1) and conduct discussion among CA state migration services/ministries to promote better cooperation on ensuring safe migration and countering TIP.
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³⁰⁴ Ibid.

A3.3 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 2

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 2.

TABLE 31. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 2: (PREVENTION): VULNERABILITY OF AT-RISK POPULATIONS TO ALL FORMS OF TIP REDUCED.

SUB IR 2.1 AT RISK POPULATIONS HAVE INFORMATION, SERVICES AND SKILLS TO SAFEGUARD THEIR RIGHTS.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal migration has been historically the norm due to the inadequacies of state employment agencies. Lack of government oversight of PEAs is known to enable trafficking.³⁰⁶ • Only 10 percent of migrant families are aware of support services that are provided through multiple donors for the most vulnerable families. Some assistance for labor migrants is offered abroad, but the details of that support are not clear.³⁰⁷ • Labor migrants lack skills and full awareness of which jobs are in-demand in destination sites. They tend to rely on friends and family in the receiving country to find work for them.³⁰⁸ Migrants in Russia network through Messenger and Viber about jobs and where and how to obtain humanitarian assistance.³⁰⁹ • Older people prefer print media; younger people prefer social media. Internet penetration in Tajikistan is the lowest in the region, partially because access is restricted. Television is a good medium (everyone has access to one). Word of mouth is key.³¹⁰ • Women who travel to United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Turkey also travel informally. Per the INL, an estimated 80 percent of women are aware they are going for sex work, but then become trapped. Traffickers in Dubai are former sex workers.³¹¹ • Vulnerabilities of labor migrants have been aggravated by COVID in multiple ways: loss of work, nonpayment of wages, forced labor, hunger, and lack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen information networks on the availability of food, shelter, jobs, and medical services (especially for pregnant women) for stranded migrants and students. Prioritize existing informal information-sharing networks as a point of entry and the availability of information in local languages (not Russian). • Leverage networks in the diaspora to gather data on employment opportunities for rebroadcast, and report on TIP and discrimination. Help with organizing and disseminating information. Ensure women's vulnerabilities and needs are addressed.³¹⁷ • SMICA is planning to support peer informants in women's clubs on safe migration. This is most effective for rural women without Internet access. The involvement of ex-migrants is optimal.³¹⁸ • Provide training and budget for hotline staff to offer psychological support. Also, sensitize all participants and staff on GBV and VTIP so that they can identify and refer victims of GBV and VTIP to protective services for those who have been (or fear they may be) subject to violence. As previously noted, services must be safe, confidential, and freely available. Also, enhance hotline facilities for hearing and sight-impaired people.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

³⁰⁷ Winrock International. 2020. *Safe Migration in Central Asia: Situational Analysis of Tajikistan.*; and Sputnik. 2020. "Help in a Pandemic: What Benefits will Residents of Tajikistan Receive." ([Link](#)).

³⁰⁸ KII, 10/26/2020; and KII, 10/22/2020.

³⁰⁹ KII, 10/26/2020.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

³¹¹ KII, 10/23/2020.

³¹⁷ KII, 10/26/2020; and KII, 10/22/2020.

³¹⁸ KII, 10/22/2020.

of access to information about jobs or medical assistance, including for COVID cases.³¹²

- Labor migrants to Russia (especially youth) lack sufficient language skills, which contributes to discrimination from bureaucrats and citizens.³¹³
- Tajik CSOs are well informed and active in providing services and legal assistance to migrants and VTIP, but appear to lack a gender lens, even though most are run by women.³¹⁴
- Huge spikes in crime are blamed on unemployed, return migrants.³¹⁵
- The national Law on Domestic Violence is not being implemented. Stigma and shame prevent reporting. IOM had a hotline for GBV and TIP. Rising rates of female and youth suicide are thought to be linked to GBV and stressed household economies due to the COVID lockdown.³¹⁶

TABLE 32. SUB IR 2.2 SAFE MIGRATION FRAMEWORKS ARE ENHANCED AND ENFORCED.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The criminal code does not separate forced labor from TIP, making it difficult to prosecute and measure.³¹⁹ • Legislation on TIP and migration is gender-blind. Social, patriarchal norms prevail over legislation and disadvantage women.³²⁰ • The National Plan for CTIP (2019–2021) does not analyze the vulnerabilities or needs of at-risk groups (including women). It offers only generic recommendations and lacks budget support for VTIP.³²¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a situational analysis/SWOT of lessons learned on CTIP, with consideration of age, sex, and other key variables. Use SWOT to lobby for changes to legislation and mainstream gender considerations.³²²

³¹² KII, 10/26/2020.

³¹³ Ibid.

³¹⁴ Ibid.

³¹⁵ Ibid.

³¹⁶ KII, 10/22/2020.

³¹⁹ KII, 10/26/2020.

³²⁰ Ibid.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² Ibid.

A3.4 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 3

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 3:

TABLE 33. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 3 (PROTECTION): IDENTIFICATION AND ASSISTANCE TO TRAFFICKED PERSONS EXPANDED AND IMPROVED.
SUB IR 3.1 ENHANCED POLICIES AND MECHANISMS FOR VICTIM IDENTIFICATION, REFERRAL, AND ASSISTANCE.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The referral system names responsible agencies, and protections for female VTIP, but the process and ministerial responsibilities are unclear. CSOs have shared that the GoT has promised institutional changes, such as the use of shelters for victims and that the MoH will inherit this responsibility, but this has not happened. As noted in Table 32, the country has only one VTIP shelter, run by a CSO. UNODC is leading the process, but it has stalled with COVID.³²³ 2016 GoT issued guidelines for identifying VTIP and SOPs for services. However, no distinction was made between risk factors and service needs for men, women, or children. CSOs suggest SOPs are too broad to be useful.³²⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support INL/UNODC development of referral systems with gender sensitivity training and guidelines. Develop a gender checklist for use by CSOs that offers legal and psychological counselling or referrals. Document best practices in integrating gender into TIP programming and incorporate it into SOPs.

TABLE 34. SUB IR 3.2 IMPROVED AVAILABILITY, QUALITY, AND ACCESS TO VICTIM SERVICES.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry of Internal Affairs has established a state hotline for victims of labor exploitation. MoLabor opened a new hotline for migrants, mostly those stranded in Russia because of COVID.³²⁵ There is no known outreach strategy for migrant women. In 2018, the GoT opened a hotline for reporting on TIP. There was also a CSO hotline in 2017–2018 for VTIP and intimate partner violence with two qualified lawyers, but it closed due to funding. There is currently one other CSO with a hotline for GBV. The GoT ombudsman report suggests that there are 15 district inspectors for the prevention of DV under the MoIA, as well as 33 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support INL/UNODC development of referral systems with gender sensitivity training and guidelines. Develop a gender checklist for use by CSOs that offers legal and psychological counselling or referrals. Gender checklists can also be standardized into operating procedures, such as ensuring that proposal vetting criteria and monitoring are inclusive and balanced. Document best practices in integrating gender into TIP programming and incorporate it into SOPs. Adjust messaging content and medium about services. Make women and girls a special focus. Build in flexibility to adjust messages with the changing situation based on COVID restrictions and service availability for VTIP. Provide gender training to CSOs and justice actors to strengthen sensitivities and responsiveness to vulnerable groups, women, and unemployed youth.

³²³ KII, 10/23/2020.

³²⁴ KII, 10/22/2020; and KII, 10/26/2020.

³²⁵ Bobokhodzhiev, Muso. 2020. "Embassy of Tajikistan in the Russian Federation: 'In Case of Infection with Coronavirus, Call the Ambulance or the Embassy.'" Asia-Plus. ([Link](#)).

crisis centers, three temporary shelters, and 105 information and advisory centers.³²⁶ Observers suggest far fewer are operational.

- There is only one CSO-run shelter for VTIP (for women only) in Dushanbe. Another shelter closed for lack of funding. Reportedly, men would not want to stay in a shelter, but would rather go home. Since the beginning of the pandemic, placement in the shelter has been challenging, as a COVID test was required.³²⁷
- Demands on CSOs are increasing due to humanitarian work because of COVID. Staff say they are at risk of burnout. CSOs also face greater administrative obstacles to human rights work with COVID, so rely on personal relationships with government officials.³²⁸
- Provide capacity-building support to CSOs with a focus on managing changing demands due to the pandemic, burnout, and institutional/service delivery sustainability. Facilitate supportive linkages for CSOs with GoT for financing and access to data.
- Extend information for returned migrants and households affected by a drop in remittances about job opportunities; credit—including credit guarantees on risk-sharing facilities and business development through the EBRD; and markets. Focus information outreach on vulnerable women, heads of household, and unemployed youth. **(WEE)**
- Provide advice and credit support to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) run by women (24 percent of MSMEs) that have been affected by COVID-related closures. **(WEE)**
- Build on women's trading and business acumen. Offer skills training, credit, job placement, financial literacy, with earmarks for vulnerable women. Include financial state support, childcare consideration, and provisions sensitive to cultural restrictions during the training period. Study lessons from the European Union/CSO, and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development programs.³²⁹ **(WEE)**
- Begin dialogue with GoT about establishing purchasing targets for women-owned businesses. **(WEE)**
- Couple humanitarian support to female-headed households affected by COVID with market-led advice on agriculture and other locally based productive activities. Subsidized childcare would enable broad participation. **(WEE)**
- Increase assistance to foreign trafficking victims, including to GBV survivors, and ensure victim identification and assistance are not contingent on participation in investigation and prosecution efforts.

A4. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON GENDER EQUALITY AND COVID, TURKMENISTAN

A4.1 VULNERABLE/AT-RISK POPULATIONS

- Women and children are particularly vulnerable in the Mary region (culturally conservative), Lebap (high levels of unemployment), and Dasoguz (environmentally and economically stressed).³³⁰
- Married women traditionally live with their husbands' families and are often pushed into domestic and international migration when households are economically stressed.³³¹

³²⁶ Report of the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2019. 2019. ([Link](#)).

³²⁷ KII, 10/23/2020; and KII, 10/22/2020.

³²⁸ KII, 10/26/2020.

³²⁹ European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. n.d. "Finance and Advice for Women in Business." ([Link](#)).

³³⁰ KII, 10/19/2020.

³³¹ Ibid.

- Migrants to cities are vulnerable to sex trafficking.
- Migrants to privatized farms are vulnerable to exploitation and forced labor (children to child labor), as are civil servants, who are forced to work on farms by government for fear of threat of dismissal.
- An estimated 60,000 overseas migrants to Turkey and the United Arab Emirates (70 percent female) are vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking.³³²
- Men are migrating for construction and agriculture to Uzbekistan, Georgia, or Turkey (there are less visa restrictions for Georgia and Turkey). These men are vulnerable to being trafficked and recruitment for extremism.³³³
- Turkmen students in Russia and elsewhere are stuck because of COVID restrictions, without services or return options.³³⁴

A4.2 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR I

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR I.

TABLE 35. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR I: (REGIONAL): STRENGTHENED BILATERAL AND MULTI-COUNTRY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS TO PROMOTE RIGHTS-BASED MIGRATION AND COUNTER TIP.

SUB IR I.1: APPROACHES TO CTIP AND LABOR MIGRATION ARE COORDINATED AND COHESIVE AMONG SOURCE AND DESTINATION COUNTRIES

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GoTM is sensitive to international criticism about TIP. The government may be negotiating a bilateral agreement with the Government of Turkey, but not publicly.³³⁵ • There is anecdotal evidence that transfer of Turkmen VTIP from Turkish shelters was easier two years ago; now more strained as the Ministry of Internal Affairs is in charge. • Many migrants prefer to wait out the pandemic in receiving countries, fearing diminished job options in Turkmenistan. Many have lost jobs and livelihood options and are at risk of being trafficked and exploited.³³⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote policy advocacy and other support to bilateral agreements that ensure salaries; enable local social protections and insurance; information; extended work permits; and safe passage home for Turkmen migrants in Turkey and Georgia. • In other countries, encourage agreements to integrate gender considerations and to extend work permits, etc. for stranded labor migrants. • Continue humanitarian assistance to unemployed workers in Turkey; Georgia; students studying abroad. Ensure access to basic medical services, including maternity services, for migrants, wives, and children of migrants irrespective of their legal status. • Offer job placement and visa/registration advice for stranded/unemployed migrants and students. • In due diligence discussions about business and export opportunities, spotlight women's traditional niche in trade; encourage female

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Ibid.

employment, including in information communication technology. **(WEE)**

- Ensure women are at the table in bilateral negotiations about safe migration and CTIP.

TABLE 36. SUB IR 1.2: IMPROVED COLLECTION, AVAILABILITY, AND USE OF DATA AND EVIDENCE AROUND TIP AND CTIP

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government migration and TIP statistics are not publicly available. Police also do not share relevant data about GBV and trafficking.³³⁷ • According to CSO statistics the current rehabilitation program for VTIP is 55 percent male and 45 percent female. It was previously 50/50.³³⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the development of Victim Case Management and data collection that includes sex and age disaggregation and indicators related to the special needs of women VTIP. Support CSO participation and training for the newly developed Victim Case Management system.

A4.3 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 2

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 2:

TABLE 37. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 2: (PREVENTION): VULNERABILITY OF AT-RISK POPULATIONS TO ALL FORMS OF TIP REDUCED.

SUB IR 2.1 AT RISK POPULATIONS HAVE INFORMATION, SERVICES AND SKILLS TO SAFEGUARD THEIR RIGHTS.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GoTM views overseas migration as a slight on national economy, and; has been in denial about TIP and consequences for the State. Deputy PM was given CTIP portfolio as the GoTM is concerned about the country's reputation based on poor USDOS rating on TIP.³³⁹ • Government censorship/denial constrains public information about safe employment, safe migration, and COVID risks. For this reason, PEAs mostly recruit for domestic work (and are unable to support safe overseas placement). A few recruit for work in Russia but do not support the documentation process, only provide information about vacancies. Job assignments are largely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that PEA capacity building includes particular attention to women's vulnerabilities in domestic work, and sex work in materials, training and oversight. Consider encouraging training and recruitment of TIP survivors to serve as peer educators. • Target seasonal traders, agricultural workers, returned, unemployed migrants with information on skills training options, market information (including online options), credit to enable safe WEE in the country (including exporting products rather than people). Prioritize non-traditional skills training for women. (WEE)

³³⁷ KII, 10/19/2020; and KII, 10/24/2020.

³³⁸ KII, 10/24/2020.

³³⁹ Ibid.

based on traditional niches (women as secretaries, cooks).³⁴⁰

- WhatsApp has been banned in Turkmenistan and people currently use Viber.
- Overseas migrants have traditionally avoided registration to sidestep paying taxes. A downturn in the economy since 2014 combined with border closures in COVID, is incentivizing families to send female members to cities and, newly large-scale privatized large-scale farms which have govt quotas, where workers without registration in such circumstances they are often exploited. (sex work; forced labor), particularly without registration.³⁴¹
- Women migrants often leave children and teenagers with grandparents. Some migrants reportedly abandon children in state orphanages. Some women without family support take children to cities and farms.
- Bank restrictions on remittance transfers dilute benefits to vulnerable households.³⁴²
- CSOs are trusted more than government, as migrants fear being blacklisted and prevented from leaving again.³⁴³
- In Russia and Turkey, local CSOs offer support to migrants stranded by COVID; which Winrock International is investigating further.³⁴⁴ Other countries are unknown.
- CSOs in Turkmenistan offer hotline information on migration, psychosocial, legal, and medical services as well as skills training support.
- Turkmen CSOs are overwhelmingly female led. Most of the support goes to women and youth from economically vulnerable families, because they are perceived to be at higher risk.³⁴⁵
- There are significant information gaps for people living in less economically stable and border regions. Information on trafficking, rights, and safe migration is available only in Russian. Ethnic women from Turkmenistan don't understand Russian. Women access information through social media (IMO, Instagram).³⁴⁶
- Earmark credit lines for women-owned SMEs (including farmers), with consideration to collateral available to vulnerable women.³⁵¹ Include training in financial literacy. **(WEE)**
- Develop and share gender criteria for CSO proposal review to ensure responsiveness to particular needs of Turkmen women at risk because of COVID.
- Create and disseminate information on rights and recourse for VTIP and GBV for domestic and overseas workers on social media in Turkmen language, in Turkmenistan and key receiving countries.³⁵²
- Spotlight women in forced labor; vulnerabilities of women in domestic work; plight of male workers; relevant GoTM laws and CSO/GoTM services in planned media training.
- Provide support to Russian and Turkish CSOs to deliver humanitarian assistance to vulnerable Turkmen migrants using gender responsive checklists for awards and monitoring. Enhance collaboration between Russian and Turkmen CSOs.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

³⁴¹ KII, 10/19/2020.

³⁴² KII, 10/24/2020.

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ KII, 10/19/2020.

³⁴⁵ KII, 10/19/2020; and KII, 10/24/2020.

³⁴⁶ KII, 10/19/2020.

³⁵¹ KII, 10/24/2020.

³⁵² KII, 10/19/2020.

- Male migrants are less likely to report rights abuses because of “dignity” and are also less likely to be informed, as they don’t use social media.³⁴⁷
- Growing vulnerabilities of overseas citizens and domestic migrants threatens to spiral into crime, social unrest.³⁴⁸
- Women have a longstanding, established niche as specialty traders with Turkey and domestic workers in Turkey. With COVID, they have become more interested in domestic investments, but unsure about legal, start-up, and other entrepreneurship technical assistance.³⁴⁹
- Returned migrants “look at their garden plots in a different way”—agricultural potential in villages with demand in cities and export markets. Free of government quotas.³⁵⁰

TABLE 38. SUB IR 2.2 SAFE MIGRATION FRAMEWORKS ARE ENHANCED AND ENFORCED.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GoTM is a signatory to CEDAW and is currently developing a second National Action Plan on Gender Equality (2021–2025). The current NAP (2015–2020) includes a section about migrant women, and a budget, though allocations are unknown.³⁵³ • Th GoTM has issued a National Action Plan on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (2020–2022); and a NAP on the protection of human rights during and post-pandemic, which also covers migrants’ rights. • An ombudsman established in 2016 for migrant rights. Stakeholders note that “traditions prevail over laws.” There is no evidence of a gender focus in the ombudsman’s work.³⁵⁴ • A government commission is vetting applications for migrants wishing to return because of COVID. It is giving priority to people who have children in Turkmenistan, students who have completed their studies, and those who left the country for medical treatment abroad.³⁵⁵ • Registration is a requirement to get a job, and to be eligible for all safety net benefits. Internal migrants are required to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop gender checklist and training for ombudsman, which is focused on safe migration and forced labor. • Include female TIP survivors in planning programs and policies for safe migration and CTIP, as it ensures that women’s needs and priorities are represented and considered. • Provide training and mentoring for returned female migrants or VTIP to work in PEAs to bolster informed, peer support for women. Also, ensure employment information that is available in local languages on social media and other media accessed by vulnerable women; youth; stranded migrants (including male laborers).

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ KII, 10/19/2020; and KII, 10/24/2020.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

register for a residence permit, and then the employer has to register them. Regional personnel agencies offer support. Women are often unaware of the process. With COVID, some of this support has shifted online.³⁵⁶

A4.4 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 3

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 3:

TABLE 39. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 3 (PROTECTION): IDENTIFICATION AND ASSISTANCE TO TRAFFICKED PERSONS EXPANDED AND IMPROVED. SUB IR 3.1 ENHANCED POLICIES AND MECHANISMS FOR VICTIM IDENTIFICATION, REFERRAL, AND ASSISTANCE.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IOM currently manages the victim referral mechanism with support from CSOs.³⁵⁷ IOM has helped draft legislation and SOPs. Clarity on the roles and responsibilities of specific government ministries in the TIP referral system is still pending after three years.³⁵⁸ There is no evidence of gender considerations in the referral mechanism. CSOs have been advocating for psychological services to be included. A social work specialization is brand new in universities.³⁵⁹ Government eschews a gender focus based on its stated perception that the country has gender equality. This is despite evidence of wage, employment, and education discrepancies.³⁶⁰ VTIP do not participate in policy or planning dialogue and are not engaged in CSO initiatives.³⁶¹ Big reforms in privatization and the COVID crisis may open opportunities for progress on migration reform.³⁶² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review referral SOPs and responsibilities with attention to gender-responsive focus for Ministry-specific services, considering also confidentiality and safety. Though finalizing the NRM has been postponed because of COVID, the gender focus can be shaped in the interim. Enable engagement with GoTM partners to allow VTIP to confidentially contribute to the development of SOPs. The new Ministry of Youth may offer opportunities for information dissemination.³⁶³ Include gender awareness components in training, fora and presentations to government bureaucrats. Provide a stipend for VTIP to work in CSOs that focus on CTIP.

³⁵⁷ Ibid.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

³⁵⁹ KII, 10/24/2020.

³⁶⁰ The World Bank Group. 2015. *International Bank for Reconstruction and Development International Finance Corporation Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency Joint Country Engagement Note for Turkmenistan (FY16–FY17)*.

³⁶¹ KII, 10/19/2020; and KII, 10/24/2020.

³⁶² KII, 10/19/2020.

³⁶³ KII, 10/19/2020; and KII, 10/24/2020.

TABLE 40. SUB IR 3.2 IMPROVED AVAILABILITY, QUALITY, AND ACCESS TO VICTIM SERVICES.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSOs are largely run by women, and are more trusted by people.³⁶⁴ Uneven access to health services and potable water may exacerbate regional response to COVID. GBV is thought to be increasing with COVID lockdown (anecdotal) from husbands and husbands' families. CSO <i>Keyik Okara</i> offers GBV hotline and shelter. This CSO's reach is unknown, but it seems to be just one shelter.³⁶⁵ COVID assistance from UN, embassies is distributed through CSOs is prioritizing families with children with disabilities, elderly, families with a lot of children, and guardians of orphans.³⁶⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the reach of GBV services offered through CSOs and links with diaspora CSOs, especially in Turkey. Develop gender guidelines for vetting grants to Turkish diaspora CSOs for humanitarian assistance and job placement. Support hotline services and shelters for VTIP and survivors of GBV. As noted in other sections, hotline staff may require training to offer psychological support and resourcing. Also, all participants and staff should be sensitized to GBV and VTIP. Increase assistance to foreign trafficking victims, including to GBV survivors, and ensure victim identification and assistance are not contingent on participation in investigation and prosecution efforts.

A5. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON GENDER EQUALITY AND COVID, UZBEKISTAN

A5.1 VULNERABLE/AT-RISK POPULATION

- Persons who are currently at risk and vulnerable to trafficking include low-skilled workers in the informal sector and those who do not speak Russian.³⁶⁷

³⁶⁴ KII, 10/19/2020.

³⁶⁵ Ibid.

³⁶⁶ KII, 10/24/2020.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

- Single women especially in rural areas are also vulnerable due to lack of job opportunities and being stigmatized for not being married. They can be exploited within their household and marginalized within the family.³⁶⁸
- A high number of young men are vulnerable, as they cannot locate employment opportunities after school.³⁶⁹
- Families of migrants are highly dependent on remittances, which have stopped due to COVID. These families are also vulnerable to TIP.³⁷⁰
- Migrant women make less income than men, and patriarchal norms prevent them from access/control over their finances.³⁷¹
- A large number of women migrants work in the informal sector, including as caregivers to babies, young children, and the elderly. Also, they serve as domestic workers. They are working in other residences more hours during COVID-19 due to quarantine measures. They are faced with psychological and physical abuse from their employers and also have limited access to health care while employed, and lack of PPE during COVID.³⁷²
- Informal migrants are vulnerable, as they do not have official ID documents and no access to medical, legal, and social services.³⁷³
- Some young women migrants with children had to return to their home countries due to COVID and are now going into prostitution.³⁷⁴
- Returning migrants stopped at the borders (including women with children and pregnant women among them) risk COVID infection as crowds gather at the border; many were not aware of protection measures.³⁷⁵
- Informal internal migrants from rural areas face violence and labor exploitation from employers, they do not have legal protection as they are working without a contract. They also face higher exposure to COVID as labor conditions are not safe, working in crowded areas without protective gear.³⁷⁶
- Forced labor continues to be a harmful practice in Uzbekistan. The government continues to mobilize employees of public institutions and enterprises to work on cotton farms, with the threat

³⁶⁸ KII, 10/21/20.

³⁶⁹ KII, 10/19/20.

³⁷⁰ Ibid.

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ KII, 10/21/20.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

of losing their jobs or other reprisals if they refuse. This includes both men and women.³⁷⁷ There is political will to stop forced labor, which was recently noted by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo during his visit with Uzbekistan Foreign Minister Abdulazizi Kamilov in February 2020.³⁷⁸

- Law-skilled workers (called mardikers), who live in border areas between Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan, cross daily, seeking work in low-skilled jobs. They are vulnerable to trafficking. Women work in the fields, especially cotton, and within households as domestic workers. Due to COVID, a PCR test is needed for every entry/exit. Once you enter, you can stay up to three days without registration. The cost of the test is equal to three days of earnings.³⁷⁹
- Some wives of migrants experienced domestic violence from their husbands who returned home due to COVID.³⁸⁰

A5.2 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR I

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR I.

TABLE 41. SUB IR I.1: APPROACHES TO CTIP AND LABOR MIGRATION ARE COORDINATED AND COHESIVE AMONG SOURCE AND DESTINATION COUNTRIES

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan signed on April 15, 2019, an intergovernmental agreement to cooperate in combatting illegal migration. Rights for female migrant workers are not included.³⁸¹ • As stated in the Kazakhstan section, the Transnational Referral Mechanism between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan has not yet been finalized.³⁸² • In September 2020, the GoU signed into order the new migration policy “Measures to Implement Safe, Ordered and Legal Labor Migration.” The policy includes measures to develop international cooperation in external migration; strengthen links with Uzbek diasporas abroad; provide pre-departure language training and skills development courses for labor migrants; reintegrate returning migrants, including support for employment and skills development; and promote entrepreneurship activities.³⁸³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote establishment of the TRM between Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan; include women’s leadership in the process and integration of gender dimensions into the referral mechanism. • Facilitate discussions with gender experts and state officials on incorporating gender components into new migration policy. • Ensure gender-sensitive SOPs are included in implementing the new migration policy. Expand vocational skills training to also incorporate skills relevant to women, and encourage women to be included in the training and job placements for non-traditional jobs.

³⁷⁷ Human Rights Watch. 2020. “Forced Labor Persists in Uzbekistan’s Cotton Fields.”

³⁷⁸ KUN.UZ. 2020. “Mike Pompeo Praises Uzbekistan’s Efforts in Preventing Forced Labor.”

³⁷⁹ KII, 10/21/20.

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

³⁸¹ KUN.UZ. 2020. “Uzbek-Kazakh Agreement on Cooperation in Combating Illegal Migration Entered into Force.”

³⁸² KII, 10/19/20.

³⁸³ KUN.UZ. 2020. “Presidential decree: A New System of Labor Migration will be Introduced in Uzbekistan from 2021.” KUN.UZ.

- The new migration policy does not integrate specific measures targeting women, e.g., vocational training is focused on traditional male jobs.³⁸⁴

TABLE 42. SUB IR 1.2: IMPROVED COLLECTION, AVAILABILITY, AND USE OF DATA AND EVIDENCE AROUND TIP AND CTIP

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sources of data on migration and TIP include The Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations, and the National Commission on TIP and Forced Labor under the Senate.³⁸⁵ • Sex- and age-disaggregated data are limited, and the data do not include vulnerability criteria.³⁸⁶ • Since the beginning of the pandemic, official data on the numbers of migrants and TIP have been limited.³⁸⁷ There is information in the MoL on returning migrants by sex, region, and district, but it is not accessible to the general public.³⁸⁸ • No unified database of VTIP exists in Uzbekistan. CSOs collect data individually per agency. They are reluctant to contribute to a new unified system because of confidentiality concerns. They have limited resources to maintain the database.³⁸⁹ • CSOs collect data from those who have applied for services. Every mahallia (community average of 2,000 residents) maintains data on migrants. This also includes tracking vulnerable women and youth to ensure their access to social and financial support.³⁹⁰ • The MoL provides monthly reports and data on incidents of domestic violence. Data are national, and CSOs have access to these data. CSO network Istibol Avlod works on migration and CTIP and has 14 branches throughout the country, and a database with sex-disaggregated data.³⁹¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance capacity of CSO partners in sex- and age-disaggregated data collection, including monitoring and evaluation. • Support the collaboration and exchange of TIP and CTIP data between CSOs and state agencies and the impact of COVID; promote sex-disaggregated data standardization. • Collaborate with Winrock International's Kazakhstan Country Office in developing a unified database of trafficking victims. Gain lessons learned and best approaches for rollout in Uzbekistan using a gender-sensitive approach.

³⁸⁴ KII, 10/21/20.

³⁸⁵ KII, 10/19/20; and KII, 10/21/20.

³⁸⁶ KII, 10/19/20.

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ KII, 10/21/20.

³⁸⁹ KII, 10/19/20.

³⁹⁰ KII, 10/21/20.

³⁹¹ Ibid.

A5.3 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 2

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 2:

TABLE 43. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 2: (PREVENTION): VULNERABILITY OF AT-RISK POPULATIONS TO ALL FORMS OF TIP REDUCED.

SUB IR 2.1 AT-RISK POPULATIONS HAVE INFORMATION, SERVICES AND SKILLS TO SAFEGUARD THEIR RIGHTS.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness is lacking on how legislation in destination countries has changed due to COVID-19 and what circumstances migrants now face.³⁹² • Criminal groups and traffickers are taking advantage during the pandemic to request money. They are also offering opportunities to travel on trucks transporting goods, but it is not legal. These are new risks for human trafficking.³⁹³ • Since the beginning of the pandemic, human traffickers started recruitment on the internet targeting migrants. They sell fake tickets online to return to Uzbekistan or back to destination countries. Also, they entice migrants into illegal labor and sex work.³⁹⁴ • Telegram messenger app is most popular among citizens and an important tool for disseminating COVID-related information and changes in migration legislation, and on the rights of migrant women workers, including what to do if they experience sexual assault in the workplace and what their rights are for pregnancy leave.³⁹⁵ • Most of the population is young; 60 percent under the age of 35. According to different experts and CSOs, most Uzbek migrants are young males who finished school and could not find jobs in the country. They are vulnerable to human trafficking and COVID because of currently using informal migration channels to find employment during the pandemic.³⁹⁶ • Due to COVID, unemployment levels for women are high. Government job creation measures and microcredit programs are being implemented, but returning migrants are not aware of them.³⁹⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in social media and Telegram app awareness-raising campaigns and current information on the new types of fraud during COVID and risk to trafficking, in particular for women and youth. Also include information on changes in legislation and new requirements for entrance into countries due to COVID-19 and channels for reporting violations; and the rights of women migrant workers and their access to legal and medical support in case of sexual violence. • Ensure non-gender stereotyped images within the materials for the new CTIP info-campaign for at-risk groups of the population. • Enhance TIP awareness-raising campaigns targeting youth. Use communication outreach channels most used by youth, including Telegram app and Instagram. Support UNODC program Education for Justice in the schools; include risks of TIP and safe migration targeting students in the last two years of school. Integrate the perspectives and needs of girls and ensure a gender-specific focus included in training. • Train journalists on covering TIP cases and raising awareness on risks of TIP and safe migration. Ensure women journalists are included in the training. Also, integrate awareness of GBV, including access to services and justice mechanisms. • Strengthen engagement with community leaders (mahalla) at the local level for collecting and disseminating information. Host community dialogue platforms for disseminating CTIP information and information on support services to women VTIP. • Support informational campaigns for the private sector on how to protect workers from trafficking and COVID, especially returning women and youth migrants.

³⁹² KII, 10/19/20.

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁶ Ibid.

³⁹⁷ KII, 10/21/20.

- Private Employment Agencies work inside and outside of Uzbekistan and are an important part of the migration landscape.³⁹⁸
- Encourage PEAs to work with returning migrant women to assist vulnerable and returning migrant women with employment opportunities. **(WEE)**
- Include wives of migrants, returning female migrants, and vulnerable women who are unable to migrate due to borders being closed, in low-interest loans or start-up grants offered by the government, including financial literacy and vocational skills training. **(WEE)**

TABLE 44. SUB IR 2.2 SAFE MIGRATION FRAMEWORKS ARE ENHANCED AND ENFORCED.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uzbekistan Agency for External Labor Migration provides pre-departure training courses free for migrants. Private recruitment agencies and Union of Youth also provide these pre-departure courses.³⁹⁹ They teach Russian language as well as the laws of the destination countries. Agreements have been signed with Russian organizations that will facilitate direct hiring. Such candidates are selected first for specific jobs in those countries and then trained for those specific positions.⁴⁰⁰ • In September 2019, Uzbekistan adopted the country's first ever gender equality law, "The Law to Guarantee Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men"⁴⁰¹ Under the new gender law, the country is developing a draft 2020–2030 Gender Equality Strategy under the Commission on Gender Equality of the Republic of Uzbekistan.⁴⁰² This law does not include any provisions on TIP. • The Law on Domestic Violence (DV) was adopted on August 2, 2020. It establishes a framework for monitoring and undertaking actions on DV. There is a commission within the Senate on Gender and GBV.⁴⁰³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate gender specific information into the pre-departure training courses for migrants. Provide information on access to maternal health and reproductive health services; the rights of women migrant workers in the workplace; and where to access support in case of GBV (including hotlines for protection). • Monitor the implementation of the Equal Rights Law and linkages to specialized services for women VTIP and legal recourse. • Support the integration of issues of CTIP, and standards for victim identification, referral, and assistance into the country's new Gender Equality Strategy (2020–2030).

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

³⁹⁹ KII, 10/19/20.

⁴⁰⁰ KII, 10/21/20.

⁴⁰¹ Development Strategy Centre. 2020. "Uzbekistan Takes Important Steps towards Gender Equality."

⁴⁰² Senate of Oliy Mazhlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan. 2020. "A Press Conference was Held on Gender Equality."

⁴⁰³ KII, 10/21/20.

A5.4 KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 3

The following section provides key findings and recommendations for activity IR 3:

TABLE 45. KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIVITY IR 3 (PROTECTION): IDENTIFICATION AND ASSISTANCE TO TRAFFICKED PERSONS EXPANDED AND IMPROVED.
SUB IR 3.1 ENHANCED POLICIES AND MECHANISMS FOR VICTIM IDENTIFICATION, REFERRAL, AND ASSISTANCE.

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In August 2020, the GoU amended its TIP law, which now includes referral mechanisms. Currently, the Ministry of Internal Affairs is developing documents regarding the identification (including questionnaire) and referral mechanisms for victims of human trafficking. CSOs are involved in developing these documents. Amendments will come into force on February 17, 2021. All victims can be preliminarily identified as VTIP according to specific criteria, and final identification is when a criminal case is opened and investigated. Now all identified VTIP are eligible for state support.⁴⁰⁴ Under this amended TIP law, the Ministry of Internal Affairs is assigned to introduce a common Victim Case Management System. Currently, there is a process of public consultation in developing SOPs. CSOs are a part of this working group.⁴⁰⁵ No special types of referral pathways and mechanisms have been set up for female survivors and youth of TIP. Women VTIP state that the interrogation process is not gender sensitive.⁴⁰⁶ Victims of trafficking are not part of SOP development.⁴⁰⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the specific perspectives and needs of women victims are incorporated into developing the new Victim Case Management system, including protection of confidentiality in the interrogation process. Increase the number of women investigators to provide gender-sensitive support to women and girl VTIP. Include in the referral mechanism SOPs, risk factors due to COVID, adaptive coping strategies, guidelines on rehabilitation, and reintegration services for women and girl VTIP, including victims of sexual violence. Support platforms and opportunities for the voices of victims to be heard and their lived experiences to be integrated into policies and mechanisms.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁵ KII, 10/19/20.

⁴⁰⁶ KII, 10/21/20.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

TABLE 44. SUB IR 3.2 IMPROVED AVAILABILITY, QUALITY, AND ACCESS TO VICTIM SERVICES

KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GoU launched a psychosocial support center in St. Petersburg, Russia, last month for Uzbek migrants. It plans to expand centers in other regions throughout Russia. These centers are coordinated by the Uzbekistan embassy and consular offices. No gender-related standard operating procedures are in place for them.⁴⁰⁸ A national rehabilitation center is funded by the GoU for VTIP. Currently, only one exists; however, the GoU recently issued a new resolution to create four additional centers in other regions throughout the country. Job skills need to be developed for women VTIP.⁴⁰⁹ CSOs operate a few rehabilitation centers; however, they lack human resource capacity and financial resources to properly address the needs of women VTIP.⁴¹⁰ Strong collaboration exists among Uzbek CSOs and CSOs in destination countries to assist VTIP who are informal and formal migrants during the pandemic with basic needs, including food, shelter, and medical supplies.⁴¹¹ Reported cases of GBV against women and girls during the pandemic have increased.⁴¹² The mahalla leaders and their communities are good structures to address GBV. They are represented on the ground and are aware of the situation in their communities.⁴¹³ Multiple hotlines offer support for victims of TIP and GBV, including the Network of CSOs Istiboli Avlod, the Ministry of Labor, and the Ministry of Health. Coordination among them is unclear, but they refer to police and other agencies.⁴¹⁴ Returning women migrants and women VTIP who have lost their jobs due to COVID do not have access to employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure women are consulted in developing psychosocial support centers for Uzbek migrants in Russia with an emphasis on the specific needs of vulnerable women migrants and spouses of migrants, and GBV. Develop SOPs with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for integrating gender-sensitive standards and indicators to be provided for these centers. Support the expansion of rehabilitation centers for VTIP, including specialized services for survivors of GBV. Include families of returning migrants in the services of the rehabilitation centers. Ensure services can reach rural and vulnerable populations during the pandemic working with Mahallia community leaders, especially the deputy heads for women and children issues. Support coordination with partners in the country of destination and origin on access to victim services, including GBV and COVID prevention. Train CSO providers on working with victims of TIP and GBV within service provision. including psychosocial and legal support. Develop mechanisms for responding quickly to a victim's needs working in collaboration with local authorities, police, and medical institutions. Strengthen case management. Collaborate with the mahalla leaders. Make available free psychological, legal, and medical support online and through mobile phone apps such as Telegram for victims of TIP and GBV. Support hotlines as well. Support economic empowerment initiatives for women VTIP, linking them confidentially to state centers of MSME support and also to consulting centers on business startups. (WEE) Support vocational and management training courses, including financial literacy for women VTIP. Avoid gender stereotyping of training and job opportunities for women. (WEE) Increase assistance to foreign trafficking victims, including to GBV survivors, and ensure victim identification and assistance are not contingent on participating in investigation and prosecution efforts.

⁴⁰⁸ KII, 10/19/20.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid.

⁴¹⁰ KII, 10/21/20.

⁴¹¹ Ibid.

⁴¹² Ibid.

⁴¹³ Ibid.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid.

information, and also need training in job skills.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹⁵ Ibid.

ANNEX B: SCOPE OF WORK

I. PURPOSE

Under the Gender Integration Technical Assistance II Task Order, Banyan Global, in partnership with U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)/Central Asia (CA), will carry out a COVID-19–specific activity-level gender analysis to identify opportunities for USAID/CA and to explore the conditions of migrant/domestic workers during the pandemic. This gender analysis will ensure that the Safe Migration in Central Asia activity integrates gender equality and women’s empowerment throughout the implementation process.

2. BACKGROUND

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the U.S. Government has committed more than \$900 million in State Department and USAID emergency health, humanitarian, economic, and development assistance to 120 countries aimed at helping governments, international organizations, and civil society organizations (CSOs) fight the pandemic.⁴¹²

USAID-pledged assistance in the global fight against COVID-19 as of May 1, 2020, has included \$99 million in emergency health assistance from USAID’s Global Health Emergency Reserve Fund for Contagious Infectious-Disease Outbreaks, \$100 million in Global Health Programs account funds, nearly \$300 million in humanitarian assistance from USAID’s International Disaster Assistance account, and nearly \$153 million from the Economic Support Fund. As part of the response, USAID’s assistance is supporting rapid public-health information campaigns; water, sanitation, and hygiene activities; and infection prevention and control, including cleaning and disinfection protocols, educating staff on personal protective equipment use, establishing isolation areas, and implementing triage mechanisms. USAID assistance is also mitigating and responding to the social, economic, and governance-related impacts, including through assistance for families and small- and medium-sized businesses, support for free media and civil society, emergency services for survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), and support for distance learning.⁴¹³

USAID/CA’s support is urgently needed to prevent and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable populations in the region. Safe Migration in Central Asia is a five-year activity implemented by Winrock International in Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. The activity works with government, CSOs, and the private sector to prevent trafficking-in-persons (TIP), protect survivors, and promote safe migration. Activity interventions include:

- Providing grants to CSOs, diaspora groups, and media organizations to develop COVID-19–related awareness campaigns on legal rights and COVID-19 protection measures.

⁴¹² USAID. 2020. *State Department: Update: The United States Continues to Lead The Global Response to COVID-19*.

⁴¹³ USAID. 2020. *USAID: COVID-19 Global Response - Fact Sheet #2 FY20*.

- Working with CSOs and/or diaspora networks to help coordinate channels for return, assistance, and family support for migrants in their home country and destination countries.
- Providing referrals for alternative work, engaging with the private sector to connect migrants to formal jobs, supporting job fairs, etc. to support livelihoods for a targeted group of migrants to lessen the negative economic impact of COVID-19.
- Providing stranded and vulnerable migrants with access to services for critical needs.
- Ensuring temporary or permanent shelters that are properly equipped to isolate migrants with COVID-19 symptoms and provide health screening and medical treatment.
- Providing access to reliable information about COVID-19 and preventive measures to stranded and vulnerable migrants and their families.
- Supporting vulnerable migrants to return safely and in accordance with their governments' plans to return them home, including additional reintegration support in their home communities.
- Advocating for including migrants in ongoing preparedness and response plans.

3. OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE

3.1 OBJECTIVE AND PURPOSE

Banyan Global will analyze and help the USAID/CA understand the current situation with migrants and propose recommendations for USAID/CA to ensure that the Safe Migration in Central Asia activity integrates gender equality and women's empowerment, and does no harm. To those ends, the COVID-19 gender analysis will:

- Identify gender-related COVID-19 advances, gaps, and opportunities related to the activity's intermediate results, with an eye toward GBV risk, women's economic empowerment, and access to information as priority crosscutting themes across all intermediate results and provide recommendations on how to close identified gaps.
- Address priorities and needs of the following social relevant categories: women, youth (15–24), migrants, and persons with disabilities.

TABLE 47. KEY ELEMENTS OF THE ACTIVITY-LEVEL COVID-SPECIFIC GENDER ANALYSIS

INTERMEDIATE RESULTS	CROSSCUTTING THEMES	SOCIALLY RELEVANT CATEGORIES
Intermediate Result 1 (Regional): Strengthened bilateral and multi-country strategies and actions to promote rights-based migration and counter TIP.	Women's economic empowerment Gender-based violence Access to information	Women Youth (15–24) Migrants Persons with disabilities
Intermediate Result 2 (Prevention): Vulnerability of at-risk populations to all forms of TIP reduced.		
Intermediate Result 3 (Protection): Identification and assistance to trafficked persons expanded and improved.		
Intermediate Result 4 (Prosecution): Increased prosecution of TIP (Kyrgyz Republic only).		

4. METHODOLOGY

The COVID-19–specific gender analysis will include the following key deliverables:

- In-briefing with USAID/CA
- Draft COVID-19–specific activity gender-analysis report
- Validation workshop with Mission staff to validate the draft report (if time constrained, the Mission may forgo this workshop and simply provide written feedback on the draft)
- Final COVID-19–specific activity gender analysis report, which incorporates the discussion in the validation workshop and written feedback on the draft report

The following section provides more details on each deliverable.

1. In-briefing with USAID/CA: On the first day of the assignment, the Banyan Global research team will hold an in-briefing with the Mission to:⁴¹⁴

- Ensure agreement on the scope of work (SOW) and methodology for secondary (and any limited primary) data collection and analysis
- Review the structure and presentation of findings and recommendations in the COVID-19 gender-analysis report

2. Draft COVID-19–Specific Gender Analysis: The preparation of the draft COVID-19–specific gender-analysis report will include an analysis and interpretation of secondary (and any limited primary) data, in line with USAID’s global gender and social-inclusion strategies, policies, and regulations, including but not limited to:

- The Automated Directives System (ADS) 201 and 205 (2019 and 2017, respectively)
- The 2012 Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (2012)
- U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-based Violence Globally (2016)
- USAID Vision for Ending Child Marriage and Meeting the Needs of Married Children (2012)
- USAID Policy Framework (2019)
- USG 2018 Act on Women’s Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act
- U.S. Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls (March 2016)
- Counter-Trafficking in Persons Policy (2012)
- USAID’s Youth in Development Policy (2012)
- USAID Disability Policy Paper (1997)
- Advancing Disability-Inclusive Development
- LGBTI Vision for Action (2014)
- USAID Policy on Non-Discrimination (2011)
- Equal Employment Opportunity, Diversity and Inclusion (2011)
- Presidential Memorandum on International Initiatives to Advance the Human Rights of LGBT Persons (2011)
- USAID and State COVID-19 Response Strategy Framework
- USAID Policy on Promoting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2020)

⁴¹⁴ It will be the Mission’s discretion to determine the implementing partner’s level of engagement in each gender analysis, including in the in briefing, review of the draft COVID-specific gender analysis (CSGA) report, validation workshop, and the review of the final CSGA report.

- United States Government Action Plan on Children in Adversity A Framework for International Assistance: 2012–2017 (2012)

The review of secondary data also will include a review of pertinent Mission or activity reports or documentation that the Mission will make available. Documents may include:

- Previous Mission Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) gender analyses or assessments
- The Mission’s current CDCS
- The Mission’s current strategic results framework
- Project appraisal document (and gender analysis) for the sector or area to which the activity pertains
- Activity Situational Analyses (five countries) “Gender and Youth” section
- Activity monitoring, evaluation, and learning plan
- Activity FY2020 quarterly reports

The research team will gather, analyze, and interpret other reports and data related to the activity sector, activity, and COVID-19. These may include:

- Studies, analyses, and assessments concerning gender equality conducted by donors, CSOs, national governments, regional organizations, and academia
- National statistics from the Demographic and Health Survey, the United Nations Development Programme’s Human Development Index Reports, and the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Index, ADB Gender Analyses for Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Kyrgyz Republic.
- Recent literature that addresses gender equality and women’s empowerment issues related to the activity and COVID-19

The research team also may carry out a maximum of 10 to 14 stakeholder interviews or focus groups to support or nuance the findings and recommendations from the secondary data. The research team may include more than one interviewee in interviews to increase the number of stakeholders interviewed within the short timeframe. To support the process of gathering secondary data, Banyan Global will create a Google Drive folder for the gender analysis to serve as a central repository for all key secondary documents and data (for use by the USAID Mission and the research team).

Two international and two national consultants will analyze and interpret the primary and secondary data in the initial draft of the report. The report will present sector-level COVID-19 findings on gender equality and women’s empowerment by USAID ADS 205 domain, followed by findings and recommendations by intermediate result, as defined in the SOW for each gender analysis (see Section 5.2 for details on the report structure). The recommendations may include alternative or additional indicators to measure the progress against the activity’s intermediate results.

- 3. Validation Workshop—Draft COVID-19-Specific Gender-Analysis Report:** The research team will submit a draft COVID-19-specific gender-analysis report to the Mission. The Mission will have the option of participating in a one- to two-hour session to discuss and validate the findings and recommendations or providing written feedback on the draft. Both options will include building a consensus on how and when the Mission will need to update the gender analysis based on different scenarios, related to the country’s phase of reopening or other key variables.

4. **Final COVID-19-Specific Gender-Analysis Report:** The research team will finalize the report by incorporating written feedback from the Mission on the draft report, as well as the discussions from the workshop.

For all deliverables, Banyan Global’s home-office technical staff will provide technical guidance to the research team to ensure deliverables meet USAID and Banyan Global’s quality standards.

5. DELIVERABLES AND GUIDELINES

5.1 KEY DELIVERABLES

The associated work will include the deliverables in Table 48.

TABLE 48. KEY ELEMENTS OF THE GENDER ANALYSIS		
DELIVERABLE	CONTENT	PERIOD OF IMPLEMENTATION
In-briefing with USAID/Central Asia Mission staff	In briefing with designated Mission staff to discuss the purpose of the COVID-19-specific gender analysis and the proposed research questions, methodology, and structure of gender-analysis report findings and recommendations	Week 1 October 5, 2020
Draft COVID-19-specific gender-analysis report	Research and prepare the draft report, including the national consultant’s (virtual) review	Weeks 1–6 November 18, 2020
Validation workshop for the draft COVID-19-specific gender-analysis report	Workshop (one to two hours) with Mission staff to validate the draft’s findings and recommendations, and to come to a consensus on next steps needed to update the gender analysis (at different stages of country’s reopening)	Week 7 November 25, 2020
Final COVID-19-specific gender-analysis report	Final gender-analysis report that incorporates feedback in writing and from the validation workshop on the draft	Week 8 December 11, 2020

5.2 REPORTING GUIDELINES

The gender-analysis report (25 pages excluding executive summary, table of contents, acronyms, and annexes) should follow the following format and be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word and PDF formats:

1. Executive summary (4 pages)
2. Table of contents (2 page)
3. Section 1: Introduction (2 page)
4. Section 2: COVID-19 by ADS 205 gender-analysis domain (4 pages)

5. Section 3: Findings and recommendations on gender equality regarding COVID-19 (up to 30 pages, 20 pages recommended) – According to Intermediate Result
6. Section 4: USAID/Central Asia Region’s Next Steps on Updating the Gender Analysis (4 pages)
7. Annexes
 - Acronyms (1 page)
 - Gender-analysis SOW
 - Methodology (0.5 pages)
 - List of key documents

Note: The recommendations in Section 3 will point to linkages with women’s economic empowerment (using a **WEE** tag).

6. TEAM COMPOSITION

6.1 TEAM LEADER (INTERNATIONAL) (2)

This position seeks an international consultant with core experience working with and knowledge of USAID programs. This consultant must be an experienced social scientist with expert knowledge in conducting gender analyses, with preference given for relevant experience in Central Asia. Other qualifications include:

- Minimum of 10 years of experience in research, policy formulation, and program design in gender or social inclusion.
- At least six years of experience in carrying out gender analyses—including a focus on GBV risk assessments
- Familiarity with USAID’s strategic planning and program management strongly desired
- Excellent English language speaking and writing skills are required
- Exceptional interpersonal and intercultural skills
- Excellent leadership skills
- Expertise in one or more of the priority gender-analysis intermediate results
- Full professional fluency in Russian (Tajik, Turkmen, and Uzbek languages are preferable).
- Master’s degree in sociology, anthropology, economics, or other relevant social science field
- Experience with other donors desirable
- U.S. nationality or third-country national

6.2 NATIONAL GENDER EXPERT (2)

The team must include two national gender experts with skills complementary to those of the team lead and core experience conducting thorough evidence-based research on gender equality in Central Asia. Qualifications include:

- A minimum of five years of experience in conducting evidence-based research and expert knowledge on migration, gender inequality, and women’s economic-empowerment issues in Central Asia
- Expertise in one or more of the activity’s priority sectors
- In-depth knowledge of the government of Central Asia gender-mainstreaming programs, development partner engagement in the gender space, and a sound relationship with national government ministries
- Excellent writing skills in native language.
- English language writing and speaking fluency

7. ANALYSIS MANAGEMENT

7.1 SCHEDULING

The expected period of performance for the analysis will be approximately eight weeks for an activity-level COVID-19–specific gender analysis, with one week of preparation required before beginning each analysis.

This work order includes a six-day work week. Level of effort and salaries are calculated accordingly.

7.2 BUDGET

The total estimated cost of this analysis is in a separate budget, subject to the availability of funds. The USAID Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GenDev) fully funds this analysis.

7.3 SUBMISSION TO THE DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE CLEARINGHOUSE

The final approved report must be a public document, unless otherwise specified, submitted to the Development Experience Clearinghouse (www.dec.org) (DEC) following the required GenDev format (see Annex II). The contractor must make the final COVID-19–specific gender-analysis report publicly available on the DEC within 30 calendar days of final approval of the formatted report.

7.4 TASK ORDER PACKAGING AND MARKING

Task order packaging and marking shall be performed in accordance with Section D of Gender Integration Technical Assistance II Task Order: 47QRAA18D00CM.

7.5 BRANDING AND MARKING

The contractor shall comply with the requirements of the policy directives. Required marking shall comply with USAID's Graphic Standards Manual available at www.usaid.gov/branding or any successor branding policy.

7.6 WORK ORDER PREPARATION

The Mission agrees to the following commitments to facilitate the research and preparation of the COVID-19–specific gender-analysis report:

TABLE 49. WORK ORDER PREPARATION AND COMMITMENTS

COMMITMENT	DUE DATE
Mission to designate at least two staff to coordinate with the research team on the analysis	One week before research begins
Mission to propose three national gender-expert consultant candidates	One week before research begins
Mission to hold a remote in-briefing with the research team	First day of work (select date three days before work start date)

Mission to schedule the validation workshop	Select date three days before work start date
<p>Mission to upload all necessary resource documents to a secured Google Drive including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mission's current or previous CDCS • Previous CDCS gender analyses/assessments • The Mission's current draft strategic results framework • Activity-level gender and social-inclusion analyses and strategy; monitoring, evaluation, and learning plan; and annual and quarterly reports • Project appraisal document-level gender analysis corresponding to the activity • Any current COVID-19-sector analyses, in particular, at the national and subnational levels 	Three days before work start date

ANNEX C: LIST OF KEY DOCUMENTS

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Senate of Oliy Mazhlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan. 2020. “A Press Conference was Held on Gender Equality.”

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ANNEX D: LIST OF KEY STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

Name of Key Informant	Title	Organization	Country
Altyngul Turaliyeva	Country Coordinator	Winrock International	Kazakhstan
Diana Bahyt	Lawyer	CSO Rodnik	Kazakhstan
Shakhnosa Khasanova	Director	CSO Sana Sezim	Kazakhstan
Alexander Muha	Director	CSO Meierim	Kazakhstan
Urmat Aitpaev	Analyst	National Strategic Institute for Strategic Studies (NISS)	Kyrgyz Republic
Nurjan Tulegabylova	Director	CSO El Agartuu	Kyrgyz Republic
Nuriya Temirova	Chairperson of Coordination Committee	CA in the Move regional platform Camplatform.org	Kyrgyz Republic
Hairulla Yuvashev	Entrepreneur	Agricultural Enterprise, Kara-Suu rayon, Nariman village, Osh oblast	Kyrgyz Republic
Jyldyz Ahmetova	Sr. Program Assistant	IOM Kyrgyz Republic	Kyrgyz Republic
Meder Dastanbekov	Country Coordinator	Winrock International	Kyrgyz Republic
Eliza Adjieva	Program Manager	Women Support Center Public Association	Kyrgyz Republic
Tolkun Tulekova	Director	The Association of Crisis Centers of Kyrgyz Republic	Kyrgyz Republic
Raushan Bootalieva	Head of the Committee on TIP and Prosecution	UNODC/Kyrgyz Republic	Kyrgyz Republic
Gulmira Kazakunova	Director	Association of Disability, Regional	Regional
Bermet Moldobaeva	Regional Director	IOM	Regional
Gulya Gaibova	Country Coordinator	Winrock International	Tajikistan
Sarvat Ansori,	INL Program Manager	US Embassy Dushanbe	Tajikistan

Muyassara Bobokanova	Chairwoman	Association of Women & Society	Tajikistan
Hairiniso Rassulova	Project Coordinator	Association of Women & Society	Tajikistan
Solieva Sanoat Akhtamovna	Director	CSO Femida	Tajikistan
Zulfia Kasymova	Lawyer	CSO Femida	Tajikistan
Gulnora Becnazarova	Director	Research Center Zerkalo-Analytics	Tajikistan
Nodira Abdulloeva	Consultant	Center of Human Rights	Tajikistan
Nodira Saidkarimova	Country Coordinator	Winrock International	Uzbekistan
Nodira Karimova	Chairperson	'Istiqbolli Avlod' CSO Network, Republican Social and Information Center	Uzbekistan
Nazifa Kamalova	Regional Director	'Istiqbolli Avlod' CSO Network, Republican Social and Information Center, Jizzakh branch	Uzbekistan
Natalya Abdullayeva	Regional Director	'Istiqbolli Avlod' CSO Network, Republican Social and Information Center, the Republic of Karakalpakstan branch	Uzbekistan
Shirin Rashidova	Chairperson	Center for Development and Support of Initiatives NIHOL	Uzbekistan