



- USAID facilitated business reforms that have saved \$530 million a year for local Kazakhstani businesses since 2010.
- USAID developed a system for Kazakhstan that simplifies customs declarations, saving time and money in the process of declaring cargoes and enhancing strategic trade corridors between Central and South Asia.
- USAID supported implementation of GeneXpert tuberculosis testing, which diagnoses multidrug-resistant tuberculosis within a few hours instead of weeks.

Photo credit: USAID

Country Profile

One of five countries in Central Asia, Kazakhstan has enjoyed steady growth over the past decade — largely fueled by its vast energy resources. Now a middle-income country, Kazakhstan continues to face a number of development challenges that constrain progress. The United States partners with Kazakhstan in support of its emergence as a leader contributing to peace and prosperity in the region.

Since 2006, USAID's economic reform programs have been co-funded by the Government of Kazakhstan. USAID is partnering with the government, the private sector and the people of Kazakhstan to enhance economic diversification, encourage further democratic reforms and improve health care services, as well as to prevent tuberculosis and HIV.

OUR WORK

Measuring four times the size of Texas and sharing large borders with China and Russia, Kazakhstan is the world's largest landlocked country. Since Kazakhstan gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, its economy has grown to be the largest in Central Asia, positioning it to become a donor country providing development assistance in the region.

However, the country continues to struggle with a variety of economic challenges that have their roots in the Soviet era, including an oil-based economy, a regulatory system that impedes business growth, limited media activity and low civic participation in governance, and a costly and ineffective medical system. About 25 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, and there are huge disparities between urban and rural areas and between geographic regions. Kazakhstan's economy produces significant greenhouse gas emissions — with 87 percent of its emissions coming from the energy sector — due to its heavy dependence on fossil fuel extraction and coal-based electricity generation.

USAID works with the Government of Kazakhstan to address these challenges to positive growth. Joint economic reform programs focus on small- and medium-sized enterprises and regional trade. Our programs also work to address limited media activity and low civic participation in relation to the country's governance, as well as the costly and ineffective medical system left over from the Soviet era.

GLOBAL HEALTH

USAID has assisted Kazakhstan in making its health system financially viable and capable of providing quality care. USAID supported the country's first family medicine centers and introduced international practices that have improved maternal, child and reproductive health service delivery. USAID also partners with the Government of Kazakhstan to improve the implementation of prevention, care and treatment services for infectious diseases like HIV, tuberculosis and multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR TB). Since October 2010, USAID has supported HIV prevention programs and provided linkages to health care services for over 23,000 most at-risk people. USAID has also introduced GeneXpert rapid diagnostic testing to provide a diagnosis for MDR TB in hours instead of weeks. USAID supports local health departments as they transition to providing TB patients with outpatient treatment, which plays an important role in preventing transmission.

DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE

With USAID's support, Kazakhstan has developed a robust network of civil society organizations that provide critical services to the population, advocate for constituent rights and engage on key policy reform issues. Initiatives include counter-trafficking in persons and improving the overall legal environment in which non-governmental organizations operate. To enhance the public's access to information, USAID supports the efforts of Kazakhstan's media outlets to produce and broadcast social, political and economic information relevant to local audiences. USAID also supports the implementation of national policies that advance gender equality. To improve efficiency, transparency and public trust in the court system, USAID assists the Supreme Court in implementing its strategic plan — especially aspects related to managerial and administrative capacity, including judicial appointments, quality of judicial decisions and standard operating procedures.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TRADE

The Government of Kazakhstan is a majority funder of USAID economic growth activities under our Program for Economic Development. USAID works to support the development of small- and medium-sized enterprises, streamline the legal and regulatory conditions for business and trade, expand access to business information, and strengthen the public sector budget and audit processes. These programs help small- and medium-sized businesses establish connections with U.S. companies. USAID also provides assistance to Central Asian firms interested in trading and investing across borders and in conducting business with the U.S. Department of Defense. Additionally, USAID is working with the Government of Kazakhstan to strengthen the implementation of green energy policies, improve energy efficiency and increase the supply of renewable energy. Wheat grown in Kazakhstan is especially vulnerable to climate change, which could have significant repercussions for regional food security, as Kazakhstan is the seventh largest wheat exporter in the world. USAID is working with the Government of Kazakhstan and the private sector to strengthen the climate resiliency of the wheat sector while also working with importing countries to identify strategies to reduce their risk exposure.

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HIV outreach workers create a memorial for the lives lost to AIDS in Kazakhstan. Photo credit: USAID



Kazakhstan's most energy-intensive companies attend workshops to learn green energy solutions. Photo credit: ICFI