

EVALUATION OF U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE'S CLDP AND SABIT PROGRAM IN EUROPE, EURASIA, AND CENTRAL ASIA

Evaluation Report for Central Asia (Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan) Prepared for U.S. Department of State

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Acronyms

ABR	Annual Budget Review
ACE	Assistance to Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AEECA	Advances in Electrical Engineering and Computer Applications
AmCham	American Chamber of Commerce
C5+1	The five countries of Central Asia plus the United States
CBA	Cost–Benefit Analysis
CDCS	USAID Country Development Cooperation Strategy
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CLDP	Commercial Law Development Program
CPI	Corruption Perception Index
DOC	Department of Commerce
DOS	Department of State
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EDB	World Bank Ease of Doing Business Index
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiatives
ERR	Economic Rate of Return
EU	European Union
FATAA	Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GAP	Good Agricultural Practice
GAO	Government Accountability Office
GIZ	<i>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit</i>
GNI	Gross National Income
GPA	Agreement on Government Procurement
HACCP	Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points
IBTCI	International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc.
ICS	U.S. Embassy Integrated Country Strategy
IDLO	International Development Law Organization
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IP	Intellectual Property
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
ITC	International Trade Centre
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KII	Key Informant Interview
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
NPV	Net Present Value
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PPP	Public–Private Partnership
SABIT	Special American Business Internship Training Program
SCA	Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary
TA	Technical Assistance

TIFA	Trade and Investment Framework Agreement
TOC	Theory of Change
TRIPS	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UPSDT	Union of Private Sector Development of Tajikistan
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government
USTR	United States Trade Representative
WG	Working Group
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

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Executive Summary

The U.S. Department of State has commissioned the evaluation of the Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) and the Special American Business Internship Training (SABIT) Program to assess the performance and effectiveness of the programs' results from 2007 to 2017. This assessment also more narrowly considers 2018 and 2019 in regards to their use of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices in six targeted countries: Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Tajikistan, and Ukraine. In this report, the International Business & Technical Consultants, Inc. (IBTCI) team presents the evaluation of CLDP and SABIT interventions in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.

CLDP: CLDP is a division of the U.S. Department of Commerce designed to further U.S. Government (USG) foreign policy goals through supporting commercial legal reforms in developing and post-conflict countries. Working closely with the U.S. Embassies in recipient countries, the CLDP provides government-to-government technical assistance and serves as a technical assistance catalyst to modernize laws and regulations. CLDP supports the adoption of international standards and best practices for economic growth and opportunity. SABIT, also managed by the U.S. Department of Commerce, exposes business executives and technicians from countries formerly part of the Soviet Union to market-based management and scientific skills through hands-on training in U.S. businesses.

One of the strengths of the CLDP technical assistance (TA) model (described in the main report) is its flexibility to tailor its activities to each country where it works. For example, CLDP interventions have both a country-specific and a regional focus. Country-specific interventions were designed and implemented to address specific development issues in a targeted country. More recently, particularly with its workshops, CLDP implemented its regional interventions utilizing the framework of the five Central Asia countries plus the United States (C5+1).¹ This format provided a collaboration platform that enabled joint efforts to address common challenges faced by the United States and the five countries of Central Asia. The program began working bilaterally in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan in 2008 and 2016, respectively. Both countries were invited to participate in CLDP's regional working groups from those groups' inception in 2014.

Findings - CLDP: CLDP's interventions were consistent with national priorities in both countries and the results varied in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan because of differences in the political and economic environments in these countries.² These differences limit the development of common conclusions across both countries.

Beneficiaries in the Kyrgyz Republic perceived the CLDP's programs as more effective than those in Tajikistan because CLDP has worked in the Kyrgyz Republic longer and therefore implemented more activities. CLDP interventions resulted in a range of legal, procedural, and organizational changes in the Kyrgyz Republic. Among these were the adoption of new phytosanitary and veterinary control measures and the revision of regulations to apply international standards³ for food safety. Other interventions advanced intellectual property rights (IPR) protection (with a special focus on trademarks), and as a result of regional and bilateral engagement, there has been an increased awareness among state and private-sector representatives about government

¹ Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan plus the United States.

² In response to CLDP Key Evaluation Question 1: *To what extent has the CLDP business model of technical assistance supporting trade and other commercial reforms in the region been effective in achieving its aims?*

³ International standards are core to the World Trade Organization's (WTO's) Agreement on Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Measures. The Agreement recognizes the value of international standards for improving efficiency of production and facilitating international trade, as well as encourages the development of such standards. The list of international standards is broad and includes *inter alia*: International Plant Protection Convention standards, Codex Alimentarius food safety standards, the standards of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), etc.

procurement and the progress made with regard to advancing public–private partnership (PPP), countrywide mechanisms and building local capacity. Overall, the perception of CLDP in both countries was positive and supportive. Field work confirmed the importance of CLDP’s TA for beneficiaries’ professional activities because the knowledge transferred and the lessons learned in the course of CLDP’s TA contributed to advancing the capacity of the targeted beneficiary agencies and the parties involved. Informants in both targeted countries confirmed that CLDP played a significant role in transferring knowledge and educating people about best practices. However, the visibility of CLDP activities was low among national and international communities in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, probably because of the targeted nature and limited size of CLDP’s interventions.

The strategic interests of the United States in the Kyrgyz Republic are focused on developing cooperation in the fight against terrorism and extremism, promoting a better business climate for American investors and traders, and providing overall support for democracy and stability in this strategically important country.⁴ In Tajikistan, the program focused on promoting more effective, accountable, and transparent governance institutions; increasing regional economic connectivity and social development; and strengthening relationships and trust between the United States and Tajik societies.⁵ Desk research and analysis of CLDP’s Annual Budget Reviews (ABRs) demonstrated that program activities in both countries were in line with the development priorities as stated in the relevant national strategic documents. Many key informant interviews (KIIs) and group discussions also indicated that CLDP activities were consistent with local priorities.

None of the respondents interviewed for this evaluation were able to specifically quantify the benefits or outcomes of the provided TA.⁶ For purposes of this evaluation respondents refer to both senior management of the beneficiary organizations, key informants from local institutions, the USG, and the beneficiaries themselves. Program beneficiaries received various forms of TA from different donor agencies. All stakeholders had a rather generalized perception of the benefits of CLDP assistance, which they usually limited to direct benefits (e.g., introduction of new approaches to governance, advancement of procedures and standards, and related changes to the legal/regulatory framework). Therefore, the respondents could not identify all of the benefits of CLDP interventions. Alternative cost-effective approaches to CLDP programming that informants mentioned included changing the program format and continue switching from large information-sharing workshops to well-tailored consultancies on specific topics. Many respondents suggested more cooperation with local training institutions that operate under targeted state organizations, and to coordinate CLDP activities more often with other international TA initiatives (this has apparently started to occur in the post-evaluation period).

The Evaluation Team found limited evidence that a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system was used during the evaluation period in CLDP’s design and implementation in the two countries.⁷ Beneficiaries completed feedback forms after each working group (WG) meeting and identified topics of interest to be discussed during the next gathering or meeting. CLDP staff incorporated an evaluation section into its ABR in 2018 as required by EUR/ACE, and developed and applied indicators (discussed later in this report) for each program implemented within the CLDP framework in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. However, in 2008-2017 the program did not conduct internal or external evaluations. At the same time, since 2016 the program started acknowledging the importance of strengthened monitoring and evaluation system. The program continued carrying out information evaluations of separate events. From a review of ABRs, it

⁴ In response to CLDP Key Evaluation Question 2: *To what extent has CLDP tailored its activities/model to adapt to country contexts, and if it has, have these adaptations been effective?*

⁵ Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) Tajikistan, 2018, p. 3.

⁶ In response to CLDP Key Evaluation Question 3: *What is the relationship between the costs vs. benefits of the CLDP technical assistance model? What other business model options might increase results?*

⁷ In response to CLDP Key Evaluation Question 4: *What are the strengths and weaknesses of CLDP’s current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium to longer-term effects of their activities?*

appears that there were no external evaluations conducted in 2016-2019. However, since 2019, the CLDP introduced a set of indicators to measure achieved results.

SABIT: Launched in 1991 as the Soviet–American Business Internship Training program and funded under the FREEDOM Support Act, the program provided one-to-one business internships in American companies for three to six months. Since 1995, SABIT also started providing group training in the form of industry-specific programs for groups of 15 to 20 business professionals. SABIT standardized its assistance model for all targeted countries and offered industry-specific trainings for business leaders from transition economies. The program initially provided two types of internships in United States companies: individual (three- to six-month internships) and group internships (15 to 20 people who participated in 3- to 4-week long trainings in the United States). Since just prior to 2007 the SABIT assistance model has consisted of two-week group trainings with two-hour long meetings, interactions, and discussions conducted in selected United States -based organizations. Both programs elaborated a typology of sectors to focus their program support depending on the needs of the individual country recipients.

Findings – SABIT: More than 75 percent of SABIT beneficiaries interviewed in the course of this evaluation positively rated the participant selection process, logistics, and organizational and administrative aspects of the program.⁸ SABIT activities in Central Asia are administered by a full-time employed regional coordinator located in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Participant selection has not addressed gender balance and mainstreaming. Alumni confirmed that the program’s application was adequate and comprehensive enough to cover the whole spectrum of activities for a potential applicant. There is no exclusive channel for disseminating information about SABIT. Candidates received information about the program from multiple sources, among which the SABIT alumni and SABIT website seem to be the most prevalent. The program is less effective in exploring and securing partnership opportunities with business associations in either country, including American Chambers of Commerce (AmCham). Due to its smaller size, there is little evidence that SABIT increased cooperation between the targeted countries and U.S.-based companies and/or improved the national business climate in the Kyrgyz Republic or Tajikistan. There are, however, cases of improved trade and cooperation reported with the recipient country and neighboring countries. Several small businesses benefit from this program annually.

The team did not find evidence that SABIT directly influenced a critical mass or a large number of business leaders in the targeted countries.⁹ In total, the program provided internship opportunities for 129 individuals from the Kyrgyz Republic and 205 from Tajikistan. Approximately 61 percent of the respondents reported having become more actively involved in the development of national business-related policies and regulations. However, due to the smaller size of SABIT, attributing improvements in business climate at the macro level to SABIT would be questionable.

SABIT participants confirmed that the program united entrepreneurs and provided a unique opportunity for key specialists to build and communicate with a business network across countries and regions.¹⁰ The highest number of business contacts were created inside the country of domicile, followed by the number of regional contacts. SABIT alumni acknowledged that the program’s regional format (a group of participants representing different countries) supported cross-country networking. However, regional networking was not supported by consistent subsequent program alumni activities. More than half of the surveyed alumni did not know whether there was a SABIT alumni association and/or community functioning in their country or in the Central Asia region. In

⁸ In response to SABIT Key Evaluation Question 1: *To what extent has the SABIT business model been effective in achieving its aims?*

⁹ In response to SABIT Key Evaluation Question 2: *Assess the extent to which, over time, SABIT has been able to influence directly a critical mass of business leaders in targeted industries.*

¹⁰ In response to SABIT Key Evaluation Question 3: *What ways could SABIT amplify the results and positive effects of its program in the region?*

many cases, beneficiaries did not participate in SABIT alumni association activities due to financial and/or time constraints and they lacked information on the events.

SABIT's ABRs for Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic from 2007 to 2019 show limited evidence of an M&E system during that period. The M&E mechanism gradually evolved with some generic indicators.¹¹ SABIT always requested that beneficiaries complete program feedback forms prior to their departure from the United States. SABIT also contacted selected SABIT alumni to assess and validate success stories resulting from their participation in SABIT events. The team could not validate that an external evaluation had been conducted during the period of the evaluation (2007–2017 plus 2018 and 2019) or that feedback forms were collated and analyzed.

From 2007 to 2017, SABIT did support traditionally important sectors in both countries.¹² These sectors were top national priorities and aligned with the U.S. strategic documents, such as annual Special 301 Report,¹³ and ICS for 2015–2018¹⁴ in each country.

Main Conclusions

1. CLDP's programs in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan were generally effective in the transfer of knowledge and best practices.

The CLDP's business model (described more fully in the main body of the report) is highly relevant and is a valuable tool in implementing both countrywide and regional trade and commercial reforms. In contrast with most other donors, CLDP provides highly targeted, specialized TA in the area of legal reform using well-regarded USG specialists in intellectual property rights, the judiciary, World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements, customs procedures, and other legal reform matters. It leverages its impact and conserves budget resources by combining its local expertise with experts funded by other government agencies.

The CLDP interventions in Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic had varying outcomes. CLDP programs in the Kyrgyz Republic began in 2008 and have had a positive influence, whereas CLDP programs in Tajikistan began only in 2016 and resource allocation there to date has been low. In addition, political, cultural, and socioeconomic factors significantly influenced outcomes achieved in each country according to background documents and in-country interviews. CLDP management designed WG meetings to support regional and international economic integration and trade and aligned them with the goals of the United States Central Asia Trade and Investment Framework Agreement and the C5+1 Platform. These events facilitated regional dialogue to address common challenges. However, limited communication with the assisted organizations and the low visibility of CLDP activities among the national state entities and international organizations weakened its effectiveness.

2. Communication between CLDP and national assisted organizations was limited.

There was not a lot of direct communication between CLDP and assisted organizations. The program made limited use of alternative communication channels through AmCham and other national business or professional associations in the two evaluated countries. Moreover, interruption

¹¹ In response to SABIT Key Evaluation Question 4: *What are the strengths and weaknesses of SABIT's current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium to longer-term effects of their activities? With its business model, what options does SABIT have to enhance its M&E of its activities?*

¹² In response to SABIT Key Evaluation Question 5: *Assess the effectiveness of SABIT's process for selecting industries to target, with a focus on how well they are aligned with posts' ICS or equivalent strategy documents for any given time, and inclusivity of other actors at post in the decision-making process.*

¹³ The Special 301 Report is prepared annually by the Office of the United States Trade Representative that identifies trade barriers to United States companies and products due to the intellectual property laws, such as copyright, patents, and trademarks, in other countries.

¹⁴ ICSs for 2007–2014 were not available for the Evaluation Team.

and/or postponement of planned-for interventions as a result of variable CLDP funding (a one-year budget cycle) affects the program's capacity-building objective. This makes it difficult for local institutions to rely on CLDP as a partner. National training centers that operate under the targeted state agencies possess the infrastructure, professionally trained trainers, and effective outreach tools that could implement CLDP initiatives. These institutions have the potential to play an important role in building the capacity of the specific state agencies they serve. This institutional capacity may enable CLDP to sustain knowledge transfer at national and regional levels. The political context, a high turnover of staff in state institutions, and limited capacity at the national level makes cost-benefit analysis of CLDP interventions difficult either for a specific time span (e.g., three-year period) or even for a specific intervention.

3. SABIT's programs in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan were generally effective at the level of individual participants, though the size of the program and the lack of alumni engagement limits influence at the national level.

The current SABIT program business model significantly developed the capacity of national business leaders and transferred knowledge of best international standards and business practices to these leaders. Industries supported in each country were well aligned with relevant Special 301 Reports, ICSs for 2015–2018, and national strategic documents.¹⁵ However, due to its smaller size SABIT's impact on improving the business environment in the targeted countries is not substantial or quantifiable. The unfavorable business environment and corruption in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan remain major challenges for international and local businesses. Beneficiaries acknowledged that SABIT provided a unique opportunity to build and communicate with a business network across countries. Its business model, however, lacks an efficient alumni support system to explore new business, knowledge-sharing, or cooperation opportunities. SABIT can do more to ensure its influence on a critical mass of business leaders, which is discussed in the main body of this report.

Main Recommendations for CLDP

1. Improve coordination with other donors.

CLDP should reassess the effectiveness of its country-specific interventions for the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan within the larger context of TA provided by other international donors, and existing political and administrative limitations.¹⁶ The program should also continue to focus on top-priority topics in line with the country's strategic priorities as outlined in integrated country strategies and consider improved synergy with other United States -funded interventions and/or other donor-funded activities.

2. Continue to consider the development needs of the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan when planning assistance.

CLDP should continue to tailor its TA model to the development needs of the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan in consultation with national governments and organizations and, as it currently does, with relevant USG Embassies, EURACE, and USG interagency partners.¹⁷ Active participation of national professional and business associations and women entrepreneurs in its planning and design phase may increase the effectiveness of this tailoring process and help insure that all the right local resources are engaged in an activity. The program may also refocus from the information-sharing

¹⁵ National Sustainable Development Strategy for the Kyrgyz Republic for the period of 2013-2017; National Strategy for the Development of IP of the Republic of Tajikistan (2014- 2020); National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan (2016-2030).

¹⁶ In response to CLDP Key Evaluation Question 1: *To what extent has the CLDP business model of technical assistance supporting trade and other commercial reforms in the region been effective in achieving its aims?*

¹⁷ In reference to CLDP Key Evaluation Question 2: *To what extent has CLDP tailored its activities/model to adapt to country contexts, and, if it has, have these adaptations been effective?*

workshops to a strategic and well-tailored series of CLDP activities that include interventions and consultancies focused on a limited number of beneficiaries from the targeted organizations that are participants in a particular targeted industry.

3. Improve communications outreach to former participants and develop a strategy for wider dissemination of information about the program to its stakeholders.

The program may consider strengthening its communications strategy to increase its visibility (and thus branding) and maintain constructive communication with local partners. Improved communication is needed with the assisted organizations regarding status of the planned activities.

4. Adopt a three-year planning and budget cycle.

CLDP should switch from one-year to at least three-year budget and planning cycles. This should result in a more effective use of CLDP's resources and improve the implementation of proposed reforms by recipients of assistance.

5. Apply cost–benefit analysis to proposed assistance and further develop measurement and evaluation of programs.

CLDP should consider the cost–benefits of its activities.¹⁸ This would include tracking direct and indirect costs as well as capturing data needed to estimate direct and indirect benefits.¹⁹

Most importantly, **CLDP needs to develop a comprehensive database of participants that will allow for tracking of results and outcomes. It currently keeps no database of participants with contact information.** It is too early in this evaluation to provide a recommendation on the revision of CLDP's current monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) practices.²⁰ This will be completed after all six countries have been evaluated. A preliminary recommendation will be to focus on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, coherence, and contribution of these practices to the program's anticipated impact. Switching from a one-off model (with respect to bilateral programs) to a mid- or long-term TA model²¹ will enable CLDP to further develop a rational logical framework and theory of change (TOC) for the program.

Main Recommendations for SABIT

- I. Strengthen cooperation with local business associations.

SABIT should continue interventions in the targeted countries and adjust its business model to strengthen cooperation with local businesses and professional associations, and AmCham to advance

¹⁸ In reference to CLDP Key Evaluation Question 3: *What is the relationship between the costs vs. benefits of the CLDP technical assistance model? What other business model options might increase results?*

¹⁹ Factors include cooperation with other U.S.-funded initiatives in the targeted country, coordination with other donor-funded programs and projects, and use of available local resources such as existing training centers that are under the assisted organizations and national professional associations. Other possible factors may be inclusion in the technical assistance planning process of, and possible pro bono contributions from participating organizations, and the selection of cost-effective modalities (e.g., small seminar vs. big workshop). Follow-up assistance after introductory workshops is important, as are remote and on-site consultations on topics identified in consultation with the participating organizations, organized site visits to less-expensive countries with good international practices, support in creating professional libraries/e-libraries, and the translation and dissemination of relevant materials.

²⁰ In reference to CLDP Key Evaluation Question 4: *What are the strengths and weaknesses of CLDP's current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium to longer-term effects of their activities?*

²¹ Instead of conducting sporadic workshops, CLDP could develop a program based on a mid- or long-term strategic intervention in a specific area.

their roles as change agents in the targeted countries.²² In addition, SABIT should explore and elaborate a mechanism to transfer knowledge through national associations in order to develop a critical mass of business leaders who are indirectly influenced by SABIT interventions.

2. Improve participation of women business owners.

The program should elaborate the participant selection process to further engage more women entrepreneurs, at a minimum of up to 30 percent of small business owners, in its internship scheme. Members of business and professional associations, or associations of women entrepreneurs should be a priority.

3. Strengthen the participation of program graduates

The team recommends several strategic approaches to strengthen the SABIT alumni association.²³ SABIT could link alumni to competitive grant schemes funded by the USG, conduct in-country and regional events with involvement of other business and professional associations, strengthen the organizational structure of the SABIT alumni association, and explore ways to integrate the SABIT alumni into other alumni associations (e.g., CLDP alumni). Other options include the introduction of a grant opportunity for other non-SABIT business and professional associations in order to stimulate cooperation with the SABIT alumni association in Central Asia and other targeted countries. An example may be alumni of other United States-funded programs and similar internship programs funded by other donors.

4. Improve measurement and evaluation of results.

Recommendations for SABIT and CLDP

The Evaluation Team recommends developing a results-based MEL system both for SABIT and CLDP through the following steps:²⁴

1. Develop a MEL plan for the SABIT/CLDP program in close collaboration with the Department of State. The M&E framework requires agreement on output- and outcome-level indicators, targets, data-gathering methods, and tools. The plan also should specify the roles and responsibilities of SABIT/CLDP staff and partners in implementing MEL, and the timeline.
2. Develop a program-level TOC to provide a logical structure for measuring results.
3. Modify the existing TA model of the program to reflect changes in the MEL system. This modification entails changes in SABIT/CLDP business processes, data gathering, and reporting schemes, staffing strategy, and association development, which should be reflected in human and financial resources allocated for MEL activities.

²² In reference to SABIT Evaluation Question 1: *To what extent has the SABIT business model been effective in achieving its aims?* and SABIT Key Evaluation Question 2: *Assess the extent to which, over time, SABIT has been able to influence directly a critical mass of business leaders in targeted industries.*

²³ In reference to SABIT Key Evaluation Question 3: *What ways could SABIT amplify the results and positive effects of its program in the region?*

²⁴ In reference to SABIT Key Evaluation Question 4: *What are the strengths and weaknesses of SABIT's current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium to longer-term effects of their activities? With its business model, what options does SABIT have to enhance its M&E of its activities?*

4. Consider performing an annual needs assessment and involve all relevant national and international stakeholders.²⁵ ICSs and other national strategic documents²⁶ capture and reflect national priorities and development needs; however, a needs assessment is a valuable tool for achieving several key objectives and is important for internal MEL activities. A needs assessment will increase SABIT/CLDP's visibility and engage more stakeholders in its planning and follow-up phases.

²⁵ In reference to SABIT Key Evaluation Question 5: *Assess the effectiveness of SABIT's process for selecting industries to target, with a focus on how well they are aligned with posts' Integrated Country Strategies or equivalent strategy documents for any given time, and inclusivity of other actors at post in the decision-making process.*

²⁶ National action plans, strategic development plans and other relevant country development strategic papers, for example the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period up to 2030. It is also advisable to review country partnership strategic papers produced by multilateral institutions, such as the Country Partnership Strategy (2016-2020) (ADB Tajikistan); EBRD Country Strategy Priorities for Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (EBRD), etc.

Evaluation Report

Background

The U.S. Department of Commerce initiated two multi-country initiatives—the Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) launched in 1992 and the Special American Business Internship Training (SABIT) Program launched in 1991—to provide technical assistance to developing and transition economies formerly part of the Soviet Union to advance their economic potential, build stronger bilateral relations with these countries, and assist them in transitioning to a market economy.

CLDP

CLDP designs and implements diverse and largely demand-driven interventions to promote meaningful and lasting change in the legal and business environments of selected countries. The program provides discrete, well-targeted, and time-limited technical assistance (TA) to public-sector institutions that focus on improving the legal environment for doing business and promoting trade in transitional, developing, and post-conflict countries. CLDP trains lawmakers, regulators, judges, educators, intellectual property (IP) attorneys, and other relevant groups of stakeholders to build their capacity to strengthen the legal environment necessary for doing business. CLDP's focus is primarily on public institutions: ministries, agencies, and other organizations within the public sector, as presented in Annex 5.

The Evaluation Team focused its assessment of the CLDP business/technical assistance (TA) model on the following key components:

- Rationale for selecting the areas of TA
- Designing a specific set of TA initiatives in each assisted country
- Identifying and selecting beneficiaries and agents of change
- The existence of a system of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of CLDP activities

CLDP interventions in the post-Soviet space vary from country to country, but in 2007–2019, they were focused on six key areas: (1) transparency and governance, (2) commercial law and legal system adjustment, (3) trade and private sector development, (4) standards harmonization, (5) customs administration, and (6) IPR protection and enforcement. In Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, CLDP focused on these areas of assistance, as presented in Table I below.

CLDP provided country-specific bilateral programs in the Central Asian region and also regional working group (WG) meetings to bring together relevant interested stakeholders from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Recently, CLDP invited relevant experts from Afghanistan to some of the WG meetings. The meetings were designed to support regional and international economic integration and trade, and aligned with the goals of the United States.– Central Asia Trade and Investment Framework Agreement and the C5+1 Platform. The meetings were focused on the following key issues: trade facilitation, customs, standards and technical barriers to trade, and sanitary/phytosanitary (SPS) measures. In 2019, CLDP launched an expert-level working group focused on Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) protection. The same year, CLDP launched an expert level working group focused on Women's Economic Empowerment.

Table 1: Number of CLDP Events, Disaggregated by Targeted Country (2007–2017)²⁷

Country/ Area of Expertise	General/ Cross- areas ²⁸	Trans- parency and Governance	Commer- cial Law and Legal System Adjust- ment	Trade and Private Sector Develop- ment	Standards Harmoniz- ation	Customs Adminis- tration	IP Protec- tion & Enforce- ment	Total
Kyrgyz Republic	7	7	2	15	3	4	5	43
Tajikistan	7	3	-	5	4	5	1	25
Total	14	10	2	20	7	9	6	68

Source: CLDP Dataset, 2007–2017.

In the Kyrgyz Republic, strategic interests of the United States are focused on developing cooperation in the fight against terrorism and extremism, promotion of a better business climate for American investors and traders, and overall supporting democracy and stability in this strategically important country. CLDP, in line with U.S. embassy priorities in the Kyrgyz Republic, has been supporting the improvement of the business enabling environment and promoting entrepreneurship, including through the Kyrgyz–American Chamber of Trade (AmCham).²⁹

Technical assistance to the Kyrgyz Republic within the CLDP framework was launched in 2009, and has varied over the evaluation period as country priorities change. Initially, all assistance was focused almost exclusively on support to local SMEs in two sectors: craft and hospitality (hotel management). During that period, the TA model consisted of skills development workshops conducted in-country for representatives of target sectors; the organization of an introductory trip to the USA for five lead representatives of traditional Kyrgyz crafts, including attendance of a large craft-show in New York; and support for an experience-sharing trip for Kyrgyz hoteliers to Georgia, with follow-up training back in Kyrgyz Republic. In 2011, CLDP organized a pilot workshop on IP issues and conducted a needs assessment trip to the Kyrgyz Republic in 2012. Following this, CLDP revised its assistance model. Support to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) was discontinued, and CLDP activities were refocused on IP rights protection, the introduction of transparent public procurement (with a focus on an e-procurement model),³⁰ and more efficient border control with consideration to IPR protection. At the same time, CLDP, in response to and in support of the formation of the United States.–Central Asia Trade and Investment Framework Agreement council and working groups, introduced a modality of the regional WGs to improve coordination and implementation regarding customs, internationally recognized standards, government procurement, and phytosanitary measures in line with World Trade Organization (WTO) requirements in cooperation with United States Trade Representatives (USTR’s) Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA).

²⁷ These numbers are provided based on documents provided by CLDP as of January 8, 2020.

²⁸ Country assessments, regional meeting that includes several topics (TIFA); working groups on customs, standards, and sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures; and workshops on amendment of judiciary system, among other topics.

²⁹ ICS: Kyrgyz Republic, 2018, p. 2.

³⁰ Project: Increasing Transparency and Instituting International Best Practices in Government Procurement in the Kyrgyz Republic (2013–2017); Project: Regional Workshop on Cybersecurity and e-Procurement (2016); Project: Regional Workshop on Government Procurement – Advancement of Reform and WTO GPA Accession and Implementation (2016).

In **Tajikistan**, CLDP involvement in TA has been relatively recent and started in 2016.³¹ At the outset, TA focused on transparency and governance³² and IPR protection and enforcement;³³ however, the involvement of the program in these two areas was limited due to the low responsiveness of the Tajik Government to IPR issues and the established leadership of the World Bank in the area of transparent public procurement.³⁴ Facing a difficult operational environment in Tajikistan, CLDP focused almost exclusively on support for regional cooperation and in facilitating regional WGs on trade, customs, and international standards.

SABIT

The program's Theory of Change (TOC)³⁵ emphasizes economic and civil society development in Eurasia and Central Asia supported by encouraging market-based reforms, thereby generating valuable export and investment opportunities for the United States . industry through the provision of United States -based training and internship opportunities to business leaders from these regions. (See Annex 4: CLDP/SABIT Theory of Change.) The program's business model focuses on industry-specific training and TA to enable business leaders from developing and transition countries to become familiar with United States approaches to management, market principles, and modern business technologies. Where relevant, SABIT enables government officials from overseas to travel to the United States.

Program objectives prioritize the following areas:

- Promoting economic growth and diversification
- Strengthening the private sector and promoting entrepreneurship and SME development
- Improving the business climate and establishing standards
- Establishing a critical mass of entrepreneurial professionals who understand the need and desire for reform
- Building a network of critical thinking leaders predisposed to work with the United States

SABIT prioritizes industries that are key to economic growth in participating countries. According to SABIT Annual Budget Review (ABR) documents, its programs in Eurasia typically have a regional rather than country-specific focus, and they usually select representatives from 3 to 12 Eurasian countries for each internship.

Between 2007 and 2017,³⁶ participants from the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan constituted approximately 10 percent and 17 percent, respectively, of the total number of SABIT participants from the six countries targeted in the overall evaluation (**Figure I**).

³¹ Requests for budgets for previous years were either not approved or were approved with delay—funds for 2015, for instance, were not received until October 2015, and all the planned activities were subsequently moved to 2016. However, in 2014, participants from Tajikistan took part in Central Asia TIFA and Customs Working Group Meeting organized in Washington DC (USA), Regional Customs Working Group Workshop II organized in Bishkek (Kyrgyz Republic), and [the 1st Meeting of Central Asia Standards/SPS Working Group under the U.S.-Central Asia TIFA](#) in Istanbul (Turkey).

³² Project: Regional Workshop on Government Procurement – Advancement of Reform and WTO GPA Accession and Implementation; Project: Regional Workshop on Cybersecurity and e-Procurement.

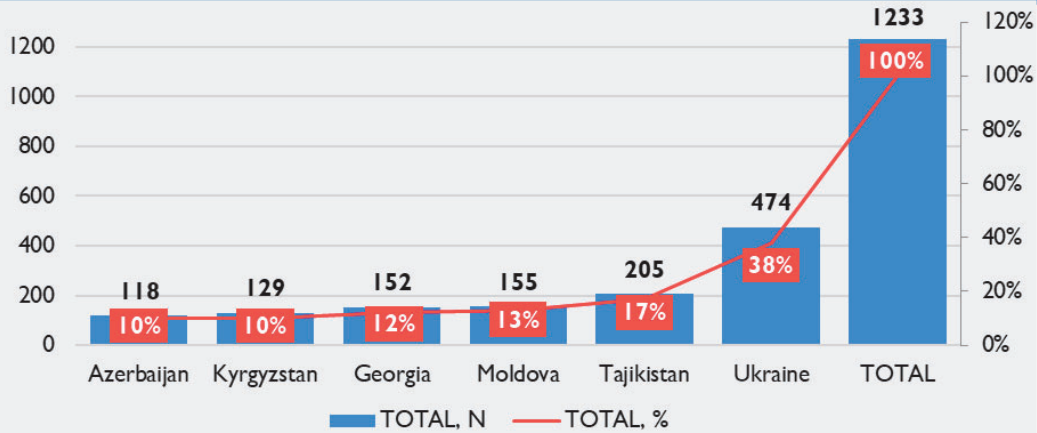
³³ Project: Protection and Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights.

³⁴ The WB Projects: Public Procurement Capacity-Building (2-13-2016), and Public Finance management Modernization (2015–2021).

³⁵ It reflects the goals and objectives formed at the inception phase of this evaluation.

³⁶ Pursuant to the Terms of Reference the evaluation covers 2007–2017. As agreed with the Department of State (DOS), the Evaluation Team will also assess whether CLDP interventions that took place between 2007 and 2017 resulted/followed up in any outcomes in 2018–2020.

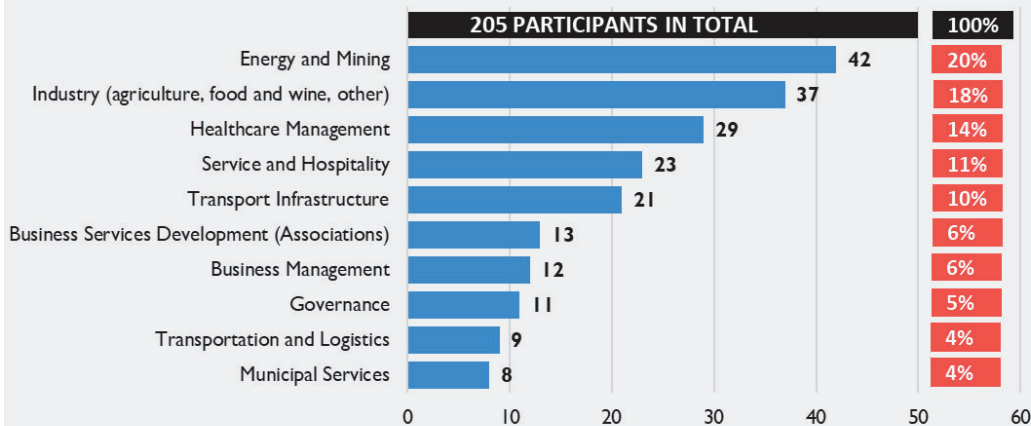
Figure 1: SABIT Participants' Breakdown per Targeted Country (2007-2017)



Source: SABIT Database for 2007-2017

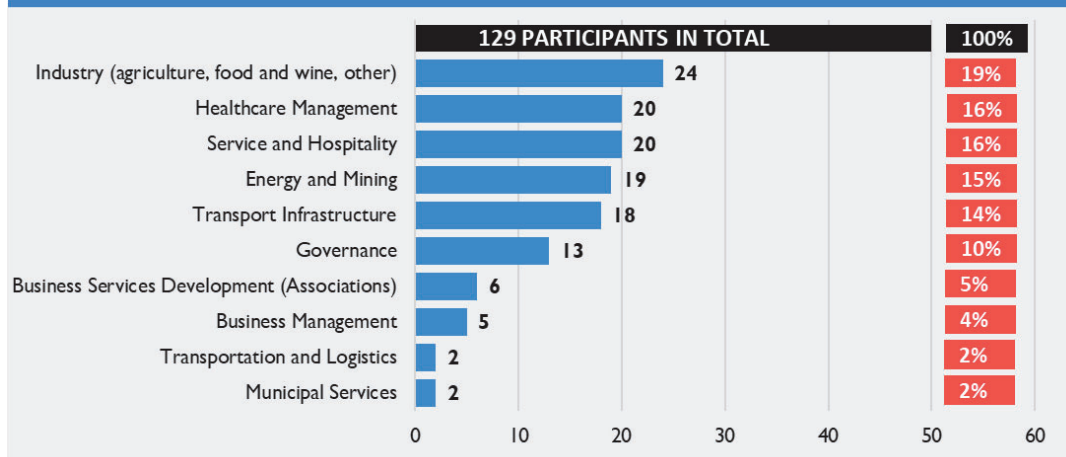
SABIT supported 1,233 individuals between 2007 and 2017. Of these, just over 20 percent of the Tajik participants came from organizations operating in the energy and mining sectors. SABIT selected 18 percent of participants from both countries from the industrial sector (agribusiness, food and wine, fashion, and timber and wood processing). (See **Figures 2 and 3**.)

Figure 2: SABIT Participants' Breakdown per Sector in Tajikistan (2007-2017)



Source: SABIT Database for 2007-2017

Figure 3: SABIT Participants' Breakdown per Sector in Kyrgyzstan (2007-2017)



Source: SABIT Database for 2007-2017

In 2007–2020, SABIT provided TA to advance the legal framework and enabling environment for doing business in these targeted countries. SABIT engaged both business leaders and government representatives. In SABIT, government representatives were mainly engaged in governance, municipal services, and healthcare management sectors in the program’s core focal areas. SABIT’s business model focused on the regional composition of its beneficiaries. SABIT organized regional activities that provided opportunities for the United States and five countries of Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, referred to as C5+1) to complement bilateral relationships in the region and to address common issues and challenges.

CLDP has had an exclusive focus on public sector institutions, and engaged participants who worked in those institutions. The program utilized a mixed approach of both country-specific and regional interventions.

Evaluation Purpose and Scope

The following are the objectives of this performance evaluation:

- Measure the results and the effectiveness³⁷ of CLDP and SABIT interventions.
- Inform future funding decisions of the Department of State/Office of the Coordinator of Assistance to Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia (ACE).
- Identify and apply lessons learned from the evaluation to future Department of Commerce programming in the region.

One outcome of this evaluation has been to identify the results of the CLDP’s and SABIT’s operations in the region between FY 2007 and FY 2017 and the monitoring and evaluation practices adopted in 2018-2019.

This current report focuses on two out of six targeted countries, Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, and addresses the following key evaluation questions:

³⁷ Effectiveness is defined as the degree to which objectives are achieved and the extent to which targeted problems are solved.

CLDP

1. To what extent has the CLDP business model of technical assistance supporting trade and other commercial reforms in the region been effective in achieving its aims?³⁸
2. To what extent has CLDP tailored its activities/model to adapt to country contexts, and if it has, have these adaptations been effective?
3. What is the relationship between the costs vs. benefits of the CLDP technical assistance model? What other business model options might increase results?
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of CLDP's current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium to longer-term effects of their activities?

SABIT

1. To what extent has the SABIT business model been effective in achieving its aims?³⁹
2. Assess the extent to which, over time, SABIT has been able to influence directly a critical mass of business leaders in targeted industries.
3. What ways could SABIT amplify the results and positive effects of its program in the region?
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of SABIT's current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium to longer-term effects of their activities? With its business model, what options does SABIT have to enhance its monitoring and evaluation of its activities?
5. Assess the effectiveness of SABIT's process for selecting industries to target, with a focus on how well they are aligned with posts' Integrated Country Strategies or equivalent strategy documents for any given time, and inclusivity of other actors at post in the decision-making process.

Data and Findings

This section presents the data and findings gathered in the course of this evaluation on CLDP and SABIT programs.

Evaluation Findings and Conclusions: CLDP

Evaluation Question 1

To what extent has the CLDP business model of technical assistance supporting trade and other commercial reforms in the region been effective in achieving its aims?

The Evaluation Team reviewed variations of the CLDP business model, country-specific outcomes of CLDP interventions aimed to the support of trade, and commercial reforms in the targeted countries.

³⁸ Effectiveness of the business model should be measured through the full range of categories presented in the CLDP and SABIT typologies of assistance.

³⁹ Note that SABIT's aims are not clearly articulated in documents provided to the Evaluation Team and there is no official design document or theory of change that guides SABIT operations. Nonetheless, SABIT Program description documents provided to SABIT training applicants refer to two goals: "The first goal is to improve the effectiveness of economic development organizations in your countries by demonstrating industry trends and innovative best practices developed and implemented here in the United States. You will have the opportunity to experience Western managerial and financial concepts in action and receive suggestions and advice as to how to implement applicable changes in your organizations. This will foster the formation of a more investment-friendly environment in your countries, and lead to new business and infrastructure development in Eurasia. The second goal is to provide American companies with a unique opportunity to be directly involved in Eurasia's transition to a market-based economy by encouraging business relationships with Eurasian professionals. It is our hope that in the future, American companies that have participated in the SABIT Program will maintain contact and do business with you." For purposes of this evaluation, the Evaluation Team will consider the above to be SABIT's aims.

During the evaluation period (2007–2017) and in 2018 and 2019 the overall goals of the CLDP in both countries were in line with the United States’ strategic priorities and focus on improving the business enabling environment and economic growth through private-sector development, trade promotion, and better governance. The approach varies in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan due to differences in the political and economic environment. In those two countries CLDP applied both country-specific (bilateral) and regional approaches.

In the Kyrgyz Republic, CLDP initially provided bilateral TA with a focus on capacity-building workshops and exchange programs, initially for leaders in craft and hospitality, and later for the state agencies and representatives of judicial system. An attempt to provide a lasting consultancy assistance to the Prime Minister did not succeed due to the change in government in 2010. In recent years, a growing number of events for Kyrgyz beneficiaries were conducted as regional WGs, side-by-side with bilateral capacity-building interventions.

Regarding the TA typology, CLDP efforts during the evaluation period focused on trade promotion and private sector development; protection and enforcement of IPR, including strengthening the capacity of judges in this area; and support to the establishment of transparent governmental procurement through introduction of transparent e-procurement system and other new approaches, such as Public–Private Partnerships (PPP).

Key beneficiaries of the CLDP TA in the Kyrgyz Republic included the following ministries, agencies, and organizations: the Ministry of Finance and Training Center of the Ministry of Finance; the Ministry of Economy; the Customs Service; the State Service of Intellectual Property and Innovation (Kyrgyzpatent); the Centre for Standardization and Metrology; the State Inspection on Veterinary and Phytosanitary Safety; the Supreme Court and High School of Justice; and private sector representatives, primarily in hospitality and traditional craft sectors.

In Tajikistan, CLDP operates in a complicated political and economic environment and faces the following key challenges:

- Complicated, highly hierarchical, and slow administrative system
- Lack of interest from Tajik decision-makers in the areas targeted by Congress and the Department of State for programmatic activities by CLDP such as IP rights and transparent procurement, and insufficient CLDP leverage in this regard
- Limited interagency cooperation within the Tajik government
- Lack of initiative and incentives for middle-level public servants to adopt approaches and tools promoted by CLDP
- High turnover of public servants, and related issues in knowledge management and transfer

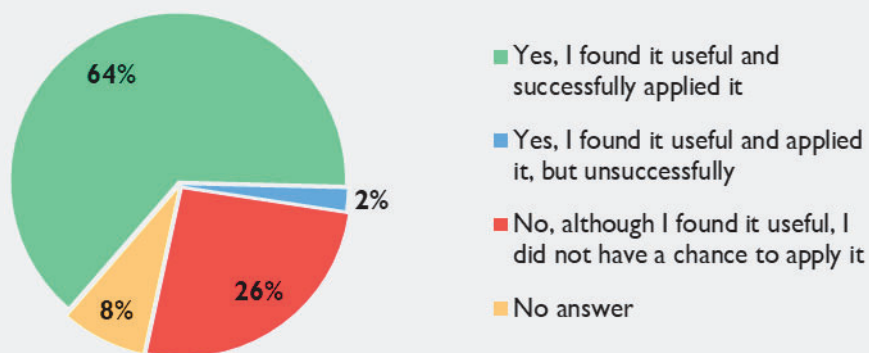
Due to funding delays CLDP conducted only one workshop on IPR in Tajikistan during the period under evaluation. In regard to transparent procurement, CLDP organized one in-country event and supported the participation of national experts in two regional workshops on public procurement (in Moldova and Ukraine). The majority of events organized by CLDP were conducted within a framework of regional WGs. Overall, the CLDP bilateral TA to Tajikistan was at its early stage and contributions to outcomes therefore are not clearly visible.

Recipients of TA in Tajikistan included the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade; the Ministry of Agriculture – Department of Plant Protection; the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Service of Tajikistan; the Veterinary Service of Tajikistan; the Tajik Customs Service; the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Tajikistan; and the Veterinary Institute of the Agricultural Academy of Tajikistan.

Effectiveness of CLDP

The general perception of CLDP in both countries is positive and all the interviewed beneficiaries expressed support for continuing CLDP activities. The vast majority of participants of in-depth interviews and group discussions confirmed the importance of CLDP's technical assistance for their professional activities. The TA promotes countrywide economic reforms and advances organizational practices, a finding confirmed by survey results. Approximately 87 percent (n = 39) of the online and phone survey respondents from both countries confirmed having obtained new knowledge and/or skills as a result of their participation in CLDP activities. However, 26 percent claimed that, although the skills acquired were very useful, they were unable to apply these skills in their professional capacity (**Figure 4**).

Figure 4: Survey Respondents' Feedback on Knowledge Applied



Source: IBTCI Survey of CLDP and SABIT participants in Central Asia, 2020

CLDP's authorization and funding to work in the Kyrgyz Republic significantly predated its authorization and funding to work in Tajikistan. Not surprisingly, KIIs indicate that the program was perceived to have been more effective in the Kyrgyz Republic than in Tajikistan. CLDP had a longer presence in Kyrgyz Republic and Congressional and Department of State allocations authorized CLDP to offer more varied interventions. In Tajikistan, several key informants stated that it was too early to discuss the effectiveness of CLDP TA because the program had limited presence in the country. The regional WG modality proved to be relevant and effective in both countries. Kyrgyz and Tajik respondents consider the CLDP regional WG meetings as a "unique opportunity," which not only exposes participants to international best practices but also helps to develop professional network, strengthen regional ties, and facilitate regional economic activity and trade.

In the **Kyrgyz Republic**, according to the interviewed stakeholders, CLDP interventions resulted in a range of legal, procedural, and organizational changes:

- Intellectual property rights (IPR) protection was increased, with a special focus on trademarks.
- A transparent e-procurement system was introduced, not just at the central agencies, but also across the country, including regions and municipalities.
- Progress was made in advancing PPP mechanisms and building local capacity.
- Regulations addressing the application of international standards were revised.
- New phytosanitary and veterinary control measures were adopted.
- CLDP, in cooperation with Ministry of Finance (MOF), contributed to the introduction of transparent public procurement models in the country and the PPP concept. The MOF staff

and experts at the MOF Training Center were actively engaged in development and amendment of the Law on Public–Private Partnerships of the Kyrgyz Republic, which was originally adopted in 2012 and amended in July 2019.⁴⁰ To promote PPP as a procurement tool, experts at the MOF Training Center conducted a large regional conference in Kyrgyz Republic in 2018, a roundtable in 2019, and developed a relevant training program⁴¹ to further disseminate knowledge after a visit to the United States in 2017 with CLDP support.

- A series of other examples relate to SPS measures. According to the feedback gleaned from CLDP participants from the State Inspectorate for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Safety of the Kyrgyz Republic, knowledge they gained during CLDP activities was useful to them when it came to providing proposals and additions to the Kyrgyz Phytosanitary Safety Framework 2019–2023. Their government approved these proposals in July 2019.⁴²
- Evidence of applied good practices was also mentioned in the information shared about the change in Customs procedures related to SPS measures. Traditionally, SPS approval was given after the goods had passed national Customs. However, the stakeholders at the national level learned that, according to best global practices, the Customs office was the endpoint of the work stream and that SPS measures had to be taken before goods reached the Customs offices. In 2018, phytosanitary control posts were established at the Kazakh–Kyrgyz border that strive to operate in line with international best practices. Participants also mentioned becoming familiar with new methods of controlling animal diseases, including IT-based databases, which were developed and applied in the region.
- Knowledge and skills in the SPS area, obtained by Kyrgyz beneficiaries as a result of participation in CLDP events, were helpful during the negotiations on procedures and standards between Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan within the Eurasian Customs Union (EACU) framework in 2015. The participants from the State Inspectorate for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Safety of the Kyrgyz Republic referenced the noncompliance of national SPS standards with those of the WTO and EACU. Therefore, the members of the SPS WG were mandated to revise SPS measures for trade. According to feedback from selected stakeholders, the information obtained during the CLDP-supported workshop was applied during negotiations between the Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan.
- Another example of changes as a result of CLDP interventions includes the enhancement of IPR protection as an important aspect of the country’s legal and administrative practices. According to the interviewed CLDP participants, a series of trainings organized on the identification and interdiction of counterfeit goods contributed to building the capacity of relevant state agencies and ultimately resulted in an increasing number of counterfeit detentions by Customs.⁴³
- All relevant stakeholders interviewed in the course of this evaluation in the Kyrgyz Republic emphasized that the enforcement of IPR needed further strengthening, not only at the central (capital) level, but nationwide through the involvement of relevant regional stakeholders. Specifically, the respondents from the State Service of Intellectual Property and Innovation under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic (*Kyrgyzpatent*) emphasized their interest that CLDP continue its technical assistance on IP-related matters (e.g., IP commercialization, geographic indications,⁴⁴ and management of IP assets). The key informants from *Kyrgyzpatent* confirmed that the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) of the United Nations is its key international partner on IP matters. However, they also indicated some limitations in their cooperation with the WIPO, which many respondents

⁴⁰ The Russian version of the legal act is available via this link: <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/111942>.

⁴¹ The Russian version of the course is available via this link: <http://uc.okmot.kg/kursy/view>.

⁴² The framework highlights the following four key government priorities: securing sufficient plant quarantine capacity; ensuring the application of appropriate phytosanitary measures for imports to protect the country’s plant resources; maintaining the creation of a reliable export certification system for international trade in plant products; and reducing food security and environmental risks through the implementation of supervisory (control) measures.

⁴³ The Evaluation Team was unable to validate the data due to certain evaluation limitations associated with accessing classified official statistics and an inability to arrange meetings with the staff of the State Customs Service.

⁴⁴ A name or sign used on products which corresponds to a specific geographical location or origin.

described as having an inflexible system. Meanwhile, they acknowledged that the CLDP was a demand-driven and client-oriented program that was responsive to clients' needs.

Table 2: CLDP Interventions in the Targeted Countries of Central Asia

Country	Transparency & Governance	Commerce	Trade	Standards	Customs	IP Protection & Enforcement
Kyrgyz Republic ⁴⁵	2013–2017	-	2008–2012	2014–2017	2012, 2014–2017	2011–2017
Tajikistan ⁴⁶	2016–2017	-	2017	2014–2017	2014–2017	2016

Source: IBTCI and CLDP Dataset.

In **Tajikistan**, participants of the regional WGs interviewed for this evaluation mentioned that they obtained new knowledge and skills, which led to the following results:

- The gradual introduction of internationally acceptable standards of lead-content control in commercial paints, new standards of energy efficiency in construction, and green energy production
- New methods of control of animal diseases (including computer/online databases)
- Increased role of Tajik Customs in the area of IPR protection with CLDP support

Findings collected during the desk study and in-country interviews were further supported with data obtained as a result of a survey conducted in the two countries. According to survey results, more than half of the 38 respondents from the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan have contributed to amending existing legal/regulatory initiatives, and 62 percent reported that they adopted new procedures or managerial practices in line with CLDP recommendations. Almost three-fourths of respondents (71 percent) stated that they became more familiar with the best United States and international practices of trade administration and wider economic reforms.

CLDP Results and International Technical Assistance

According to the interviews conducted in the two countries, other USG-funded projects,⁴⁷ other donors, and international financial institutions also provide TA to CLDP beneficiaries and often cover the same subject matter as CLDP interventions.

The Evaluation Team found no evidence of CLDP's collaboration with other multilateral donors and intergovernmental organizations operating in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.⁴⁸ Although a formal international technical coordination platform exists in these countries, the majority of interviewees questioned their efficiency and indicated that the platforms are used more for information-sharing than actual coordination. Conversations with USAID officials in Bishkek and Dushanbe indicated that cooperation with other USG-funded initiatives exists on a limited basis. Meetings conducted with AmCham staff in both countries also revealed that there was no institutional memory of collaboration between the CLDP and AmCham offices during recent years. In addition, no evidence surfaced to verify that the CLDP maintained contact with national businesses and professional

⁴⁵ <https://cldp.doc.gov/category/countries-and-regions/eurasia/kyrgyzstan?page=1>.

⁴⁶ <https://cldp.doc.gov/category/countries-and-regions/eurasia/tajikistan?page=1>.

⁴⁷ For example, in Kyrgyz Republic, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) also targets areas supported by CLDP. In the area of judicial training, USAID started implementing Trusted Judiciary Program (2018–2020) and Judicial Strengthening Program (2011–2018). In the area of governance reform, USAID implemented Enhanced Enabling Environment Program (2014–2018). The Evaluation Team did not find evidence of cooperation between CLDP and any USAID-implemented programs.

⁴⁸ Possible organizations include World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ), and International Development Law Organization (IDLO), which was active in building judicial sector capacity in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.

associations in either country. In the opinion of all key informants, the absence of country-level representation complicated CLDP operations because no information about CLDP interventions was made available to key international and multilateral organizations or to some state agencies that are the direct beneficiaries of CLDP activities.

Overall, in-person interviews and group discussions conducted in the targeted countries confirmed that CLDP interventions in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan have limited visibility, particularly when compared to other international organizations such as ABR, World Bank, and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development [EBRD]) that had implemented programs covering the same subject matter covered by CLDP.

Knowledge Transfer and Management

Participants of in-person interviews and group discussions in both countries reported that CLDP played a significant role in transferring knowledge and educating people about best practices. Participants also mentioned the sporadic nature of some activities and inconsistent knowledge transfer. The beneficiaries from Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic reported the existence of the following two prevalent knowledge transfer practices within organizations assisted by the CLDP:

- Internal written reports about the results of workshops, site visits, and other CLDP events submitted by CLDP participants to the supervisors
- Verbal reporting and oral presentations delivered by CLDP participants during internal meetings of relevant specialists after attending CLDP events

Some agencies in these countries have training centers as part of their organizational structure. These resources are used for knowledge transfer within professional communities.⁴⁹ In the Kyrgyz Republic the training centers that operate under Ministry of Finance and the High School of Justice under the Supreme Court both have operational training infrastructure and established contacts across the country.⁵⁰ The Customs Service of Tajikistan has the Institute for Capacity Strengthening, a training center that was built with United States . support and has been operational since 2014.⁵¹

Limitations to CLDP Effectiveness

CLDP interventions in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan often face a series of limitations. Noted weaknesses obtained from respondents (referring to both senior management of beneficiary

⁴⁹ Examples include the Ministry of Finance, Customs Service, and Supreme Court in Kyrgyz Republic and Customs Service in Tajikistan.

⁵⁰ For example, the High School of Justice under the Supreme Court of the Kyrgyz Republic works closely with judges of different levels across the country. In cooperation with the Kyrgyz Republic Judicial Training Center, CLDP held a two-day workshop on adjudication of cases of IPR infringement, which was attended by judges from the Supreme Court and those from local and regional courts in Kyrgyz Republic, including the Deputy Chairman of Supreme Court of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Head of the Bishkek Inter-District Court. All relevant stakeholders interviewed in the course of this evaluation emphasized that the arbitration and judiciary aspects of IP needed further strengthening not only at the central level but nationwide through the involvement of relevant regional stakeholders. Along with the more common requests for TA (e.g., methodological support, introduction of best international practices, consultancy), the High School of Justice with the Supreme Court of the Kyrgyz Republic also expressed an interest in learning the curricula and capacity-building practices of similar institutions, specifically those in Ukraine and Georgia, which are also assisted by CLDP.

⁵¹ The mandate of the Institute for Capacity Strengthening is to disseminate professional information and support skills development of customs and border control officers. According to its management, the Institute can be used to reach professionals in Tajikistan and in the wider region, including Afghanistan. Key informants from the Institute revealed that its management is open to cooperation with international organizations and donors, and is interested in strengthening further ties with U.S. programs, especially because the Program for Customs Development (2020–2024), approved in 2019, foresees use of international TA for building the capacity of Tajikistan Customs. Institute management is specifically interested in obtaining support for international accreditation, possibly with a status of regional training center. The Institute is ready to include lectures prepared and delivered by international experts in its training programs.

organizations, key informants from local institutions as well as USG and the beneficiaries themselves) include the following:

- Although the respondents appreciated activities organized by the program, CLDP visibility is very low in Kyrgyz Republic and especially in Tajikistan. In Tajikistan, recognition of CLDP's contributions to improve IPR protection and to introduce public procurement in line with WTO Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA) was almost nonexistent, not only among the target organizations but also among key donors and donor-funded projects.
- Recognition of CLDP is low; program events are often not identified as United States -funded and are confused with TA provided by other donors.
- Several respondents mentioned a short (one-year) planning period with unpredictable financing as CLDP weaknesses; both undermine the program's predictability and reliability.
- In the opinion of all interviewed beneficiaries, continuous TA follow-up is necessary to increase the effectiveness of the assistance. Additional consultations are needed once beneficiaries become familiar with certain approaches and tools and adopt them. After acquiring practical experience, beneficiaries search for good international practices on specific issues.
- In the opinion of many beneficiaries, the absence of country representation (which may not be feasible) complicates CLDP operations in the country.
- The CLDP team makes little use of potentially effective communication channels such as business/professional associations (including AmCham, which has long received USG funding). There is also no evidence to verify that CLDP maintained contact with leading national business and professional associations in either country.
- The vast majority of respondents mentioned difficulties in communication with CLDP, namely, insufficient feedback collection and limited involvement in TA programming and design of participating organizations. Several respondents mentioned a lack of two-way communication in the period after receiving TA (e.g., workshop or consultation) due to an unclear communication protocol. This may be due to the fact that many participants are unable to communicate outside of "official channels."

Among the factors beyond CLDP control, in the opinion of respondents, the following are the most challenging in both countries:

- Inability of CLDP representatives to directly communicate with the assisted organizations
- Limited ability to influence the selection of beneficiaries/participants of specific events
- Inability to attribute knowledge/skills transfer to CLDP assistance within organizations or agencies
- High turnover of personnel in the assisted organizations (which negatively affects the institutionalization of acquired knowledge)

According to feedback from stakeholders in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, there was no direct communication channel between the CLDP team and the beneficiary state agencies in either country. Instead, training and workshop invitations had to first be sent to each country's respective foreign affairs ministry, which would pass the invitation on to the relevant agency if it saw fit to do so. This procedure, by default, applies to all international organizations and representatives thereof.⁵² According to feedback from stakeholders at the national level, CLDP event participants are then nominated by the relevant state agency. For instance, respondents in both Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan emphasized that frequent changes in the set of experts attending the WG meetings affected the continuity of CLDP TA and its internal logic. In some cases, the national subject-matter specialists were not given reasonable opportunity to attend these events. Overall, respondents described such practices as a serious limitation of the current CLDP model.

⁵² The same procedure was followed in the course of CLDP/SABIT evaluation.

Almost all stakeholders⁵³ in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan encouraged the CLDP to send personal invitations for the event with the names of preselected subject-matter experts, including those taking part in working groups. According to many of the interviewees, issuing personal invitations could not guarantee the participation of preselected individuals, but doing so would nevertheless increase the likelihood of the targeted experts being approved by the nominating state agency. In rare cases, national experts from Tajikistan requested that their names not be put on invitation letters to avoid the possible anger of their supervisors, who may want more control over the selection process. The readiness of specific experts with respect to obtaining personal invitations may be further clarified during the feedback collection at the end of conducted events. This is a challenging issue because personal invitations may go against the wishes of participating agencies and governments.

Conclusions on Evaluation Question I

To what extent has the CLDP business model of technical assistance supporting trade and other commercial reforms in the region been effective in achieving its aims?

- CLDP interventions in Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic were mostly positive, with expected variation between the two countries. Political, cultural, and socioeconomic factors had a significant influence on the outcomes achieved in each targeted country. CLDP could provide more types of TA in the Kyrgyz Republic due to a longer-term country presence and a more-inclusive development environment. Overall, the program demonstrated a higher degree of effectiveness than in Tajikistan.
- CLDP's approach to the provision of TA in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan included both country-specific interventions and activities conducted within the framework of regional WG format. This provided an adequate degree of flexibility and represented a valuable tool in maintaining either countrywide or multi-country trade and commercial reforms. The WG approach demonstrated reciprocal value for the United States and assisted countries. First and foremost, the United States maintained a distinctive role in convening and facilitating dialogue between key multi-country and multi-sector actors to address common challenges. Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic then benefit with improved capacity-building, strengthened regional cooperation, reestablished professional contacts at the regional level, and information-sharing among participants. In the Kyrgyz Republic, CLDP was able to initiate and/or support changes in the national legal/regulatory environment. The biggest progress was achieved in the areas of adoption of new phytosanitary and veterinary control measures; harmonization of regulations in the area of standards; IP rights protection (with a special focus on trademarks); transparency of public procurement and introduction of e-procurement system at various levels of the public sector; and progress in the introduction of PPP mechanisms. In Tajikistan, CLDP's contribution to the national development agenda is considered as necessary and helpful by all key informants, but they also believe that it is too early to expect tangible results because TA is at its early stage. Nevertheless, an interest of the Tajik beneficiaries in international best practices can create a basis for further cooperation with agencies and organizations assisted by the Program.
- The majority of state agencies visited by the Evaluation Team faced high turnover of personnel. This had a negative impact on the effectiveness of CLDP interventions due to the loss of institutional memory. This challenge may be mitigated by the formalization and institutionalization of policies and tools promoted by CLDP in the Kyrgyz Republic.
- The limited recognition and visibility of CLDP and its activities, and infrequent, mostly one-way communication with the assisted organizations are weaknesses of implementation.

⁵³ With the only exception.

Organizational and administrative limitations in Kyrgyz Republic and especially in Tajikistan, and limited CLDP resources have led to sporadic, inconsistent, and ineffective communication with beneficiaries. The program does not use alternative communication channels through AmCham and national business/professional associations. Moreover, interruption and/or postponing of planned interventions as a result of unpredictable CLDP funding negatively affected the program's achievement of capacity-building goals and undermined its effectiveness and reliability as a partner.

- The national training centers within state agencies play an important role in building the capacity of national and local institutions. The management of these organizations is interested in international cooperation with programs such as CLDP. These centers have an established training infrastructure, professionally trained trainers, and effective outreach tools that could be used by CLDP for regional and national capacity-building efforts.

Evaluation Question 2

To what extent has CLDP tailored its activities/model to adapt to country contexts, and if it has, have these adaptations been effective?

EQ2 Findings

The CLDP model includes identifying needs-driven activities and issues a 12-month planning and budgeting cycle to design and conduct events in line with United States strategic priorities in specific countries. This provides a high degree of flexibility with respect to the selection of areas of assistance from the CLDP portfolio and the modality of TA.

The Evaluation Team applied the following criteria to assess how CLDP technical assistance was tailored to the country context:

- Compliance with the Integrated Country Strategy (ICS)
- Relevance to the country development needs and priorities
- Consideration of specific political, economic, administrative, gender, and cultural conditions for CLDP activities planning and implementation
- Selection of activities and modalities expected to be the most effective under existing conditions
- Adoption of the approaches and tools by the beneficiaries

The team analyzed the program planning and implementation process and its effectiveness in addressing the needs of targeted agencies and countries in terms of securing sustainable, national-level policy and regulatory change.

Assessment of the Effectiveness of Tailoring CLDP Technical Assistance

Desk study confirmed that the types of CLDP TA to Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan support ICSs for these two countries. In **Kyrgyz Republic**, strategic United States interests are focused on developing cooperation in the fight against terrorism and extremism, promotion of a better business climate for United States investors and traders, and overall support for democracy and stability in this strategically important country. Several Western countries, including Switzerland and Canada, have major investments in the mining and mineral sector. About four percent of imports are from the United States. In line with priorities in the Kyrgyz Republic, CLDP has been supporting improvement of the business enabling environment and promoting entrepreneurship, including through the Kyrgyz–American Chamber of Trade.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ ICS: Kyrgyz Republic, 2018.

In **Tajikistan**, the CLDP framework targets the following key areas of economic cooperation:

- Promoting more effective, accountable, and transparent governance institutions
- Increasing regional economic connectivity and social development
- Strengthening relationships and building trust between United States . and Tajik societies⁵⁵

Due to recent staff rotation, personnel at the U.S. embassies in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan could not provide any additional information about direct contributions of CLDP interventions to ICS implementation in these countries. However, the analysis of CLDP’s ABRs and preliminary consultations with CLDP staff demonstrated that the program’s activities in Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic are in line with development priorities stipulated in relevant national strategic documents.

Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic are both signatories of United States Trade and Investment Framework Agreements (TIFA)⁵⁶ along with other Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan). TIFA provides a strategic framework and principles for trade and investment issues between the United States and other TIFA parties.

The Kyrgyz Republic became the 133rd member of the WTO in 1998 and has long pursued increased regional integration through its participation in the free trade agreement (FTA) of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Despite its significant capacity, the country’s economic and trade potential has been hampered by low productivity, a burdensome business environment, and corruption. In 2006–2007, the Government of Kyrgyz Republic released the Country Development Strategy (CDS) of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2007–2010,⁵⁷ which identified four key development priorities:

- Economic and trade potential enhancement with a focus on nine key sectors (energy, mining, agriculture, SMEs, construction, tourism, transport, communication and information, and innovation technologies)
- Combating corruption through political and public administration reforms
- Human and social development
- Environmental sustainability

Since 2007, the Kyrgyz Republic has had mixed progress in improving its business climate. The country has implemented major reforms in the areas of business and property registration, construction permits, employing workers, enforcing contracts, access to credit, access to electricity, paying taxes, protecting investors, resolving insolvency, and trading across borders. In 2010, the country underwent drastic changes in its government system, with the introduction of parliamentary rule. The *National Sustainable Development Strategy for the Kyrgyz Republic* for the period of 2013–2017 outlined that, “due to bad governance, corruption, and criminalization of certain state institutions during the rule of the first two presidents of the country these undertakings did not give sufficient positive impetus to national development and have largely failed to achieve their objectives.”⁵⁸

Following Tajikistan’s admission to the WTO in 2013, the Government of Tajikistan pursued the agenda of acceding to the WTO’s multilateral GPA.⁵⁹ In this regard, the Government of Tajikistan intended to advance its state procurement practice to support fair and transparent conditions of competition in government procurement. In 2016, the Tajik government introduced the 2016–2030

⁵⁵ ICS: Tajikistan, 2018.

⁵⁶ https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/uploads/agreements/tifa/asset_upload_file683_7722.pdf.

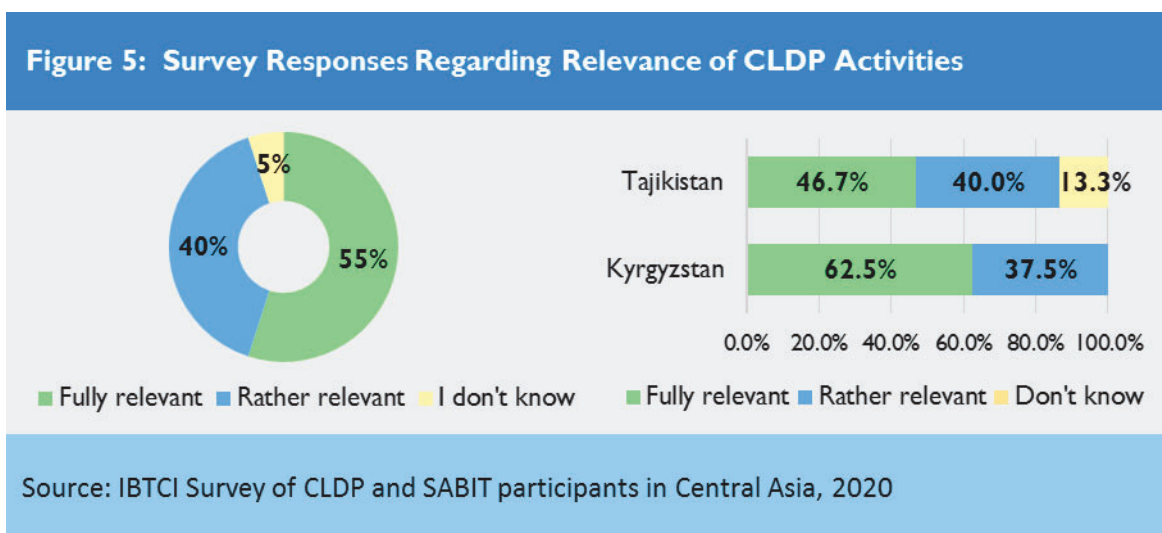
⁵⁷ http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/prgm/cph/experts/kyrgyzstan/documents/CDS.2007_2010.pdf.

⁵⁸ *National Sustainable Development Strategy for the Kyrgyz Republic* for the period of 2013-2017, https://www.un-page.org/files/public/kyrgyz_national_sustainable_development_strategy.pdf.

⁵⁹ The fundamental aim of the GPA is to mutually open government procurement markets among its parties.

National Development Strategy,⁶⁰ which detailed the country’s key development challenges as, “Insufficiently favorable business climate, demonstrated in excessive and inefficient regulation, corruption, excessive tax burden and burdensome tax administration, high level of monopolization, and weak protection of property rights and the rights of entrepreneurs.”⁶¹ In the same year (2016), Tajikistan ratified the WTO’s amendments to its Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement, which sets minimum standards for the national government’s regulation of many forms of IP. It is noteworthy that Article 40 of the Constitution of Tajikistan states that, “IP is protected by law.” Furthermore, the Tajik government also acknowledged that, “A market economy cannot be imagined without an effective system of protection and enforcement of IP.”⁶² At that point, Tajikistan had yet to fully implement its IPR commitments under the 1993 United States –Tajikistan Trade Agreement and remained on the watch list. Tajikistan was removed from the watch list in 2016 for its efforts in improving IPR protection and enforcement measures, including providing ex officio authority to the national customs service.⁶³

The relevance of CLDP technical assistance to development needs was mentioned by the vast majority of key informants, and confirmed by data from the survey conducted in two countries (**Figure 5**). Approximately 95 percent (38 out of 40) of survey respondents agreed that CLDP activities were relevant to their national context. More specifically, 62.5 percent (15 out of 24) of respondents from Kyrgyz Republic and approximately 46 percent (7 out of 15) from Tajikistan confirmed that the program was fully relevant to the needs of their respective countries. The same feedback was received during in-depth interviews with the program beneficiaries conducted in both countries.



According to data collected by the Evaluation Team, the types and modality of TA were implemented in consideration of the sociopolitical and economic environments in both countries. When possible, project staff consulted the organizations to be assisted during activity design and implementation stages.

Overall, the majority (95 percent) of 40 surveyed respondents in both countries confirmed that the CLDP’s activities and modalities had been tailored to the country context. At the same time, the perception of how effectively CLDP activities were tailored slightly differs in Kyrgyz Republic and

⁶⁰ https://nafaka.tj/images/zakoni/new/strategiya_2030_en.pdf.

⁶¹ Section 2 - Challenges and Opportunities for Development, page 27, National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the Period up to 2030, 2016, https://nafaka.tj/images/zakoni/new/strategiya_2030_en.pdf.

⁶² Chapter 3 (Present situation of intellectual property in the Republic of Tajikistan), paragraph 3, page 25, National Strategy for the Development of IP of the Republic of Tajikistan (2014- 2020).

⁶³ <https://ustr.gov/sites/default/files/USTR-2016-Special-301-Report.pdf>.

Tajikistan. All 24 surveyed respondents in Kyrgyz Republic confirmed that CLDP activities were relevant to the national context, compared with 13 out of 16 respondents surveyed in Tajikistan.

The results of the in-person interviews and group discussions conducted in Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic echoed the feedback collected through the survey. At the same time, some key informants mentioned that, although CLDP country-specific interventions (with the exception of the regional WG modality) were generally well tailored to the local conditions, they also were rather sporadic and did not appear to be part of a comprehensive strategy.

Beneficiaries appreciated all CLDP technical assistance types and modalities. Workshops focused on specific topics, working group meetings, consultations, and site visits played important roles in the capacity-building of assisted organizations. A substantial number of key informants believed that the U.S. trainers/consultants suggested very practical approaches and provided useful tools. They expressed their satisfaction with the useful demonstrations and site visits. Members of the regional WGs more frequently expressed appreciation of assistance received within the CLDP framework due to a lasting participation in the working meetings.

Representatives of the assisted organizations *in Kyrgyz Republic* have expressed interest in longer-term TA with a possible switch from the workshop modality to a series of consultancies on topics specific for each assisted organization, as well as “return/follow-up U.S. consultations” in which beneficiaries could familiarize themselves with new practices and receive answers to the specific questions related to application of the approaches and tools initially introduced by CLDP.

Twelve key informants mentioned that they are looking for solutions for specific technical and/or legal issues related to the application of approaches promoted by CLDP. There was a specific request for government procurement practices that look for “best value for money.” They also requested additional support to adopt PPP practices to the specific conditions of Kyrgyz Republic. Five interviewees mentioned that they faced issues related to the need for harmonization of standards, measures, and methodologies after joining the Euro-Asian Custom Union. Overall, in the opinion of respondents, CLDP activities should be further tailored due to ongoing changes in the political, legal, and economic environments in the Kyrgyz Republic.

In *Tajikistan*, all interviewed public-sector employees expressed their satisfaction with the selection of CLDP activities and modalities. However, some interviews revealed that stakeholders do not fully understand why CLDP has prioritized certain areas (e.g., IPR). In the opinion of two respondents, Customs is not very interested in stopping counterfeit products with the exception of goods undermining food security because local people are too poor to afford high-quality products or expensive brands. Respondents directly connected with the Customs (2 key informant interviews and group discussions) suggested that CLDP should continue to work with the Customs officers to strengthen their practical skills in the area of IPR protection. In their opinion, CLDP assistance should be further extended to cover topics such as the use of modern means of technical control, including the computer-based and online tools. Along with theoretical presentations about best international and regional practices, the respondents suggested practical exercises at the border crossings, including organization of IPR control in the airports.

Another CLDP focus area in Tajikistan was “organization of public procurement in line with WTO GPA requirements.” On this topic, the Evaluation Team registered limited interest from the Tajik side. Ukrainian experience in this area (namely the procurement system PROZORO promoted by CLDP) was not considered as applicable to the local conditions in Tajikistan. The World Bank Public Finance Management Modernization Project 2 (launched June 1, 2015) currently plays the leading role in supporting the development of a transparent public procurement system.

When asked about preferred modalities, six respondents expressed their opinion that, in the development context of Tajikistan, organizing workshops on generalized topics has less impact than

well-tailored consultancies. In their opinion, a series of consulting assignments designed with consideration of specific local needs and conditions would be ideal.

The evaluation obtained mostly positive results with respect to involvement of assisted organizations in the design and planning of CLDP activities in both countries. Overall, members of the regional WGs expressed satisfaction with their contributions to the meetings' agenda and content. Usually organizers of working meetings consult the participants regarding topics to be covered. At the same time, the respondents would be interested in seeing some changes in the organization of WG meetings. In their opinion, the WG meetings ideally should be conducted twice per year; be approximately five working days long; and have an agenda that balances a combination of theoretical material, work-related consultations, and site visits. For the matter of continuity, WG participants recommended to keep the composition of WGs more or less unchanged. Some respondents—such as Tajik WG members representing Tajikistan Standards, Agricultural Academy under the Ministry of Agriculture, and Customs Services—believe that personal invitations sent by CLDP could be helpful in this respect.

As for participation of national stakeholders in the planning of country-specific bilateral interventions, the Evaluation Team found no evidence in the visited countries that the assisted organizations' representatives were approached for consultation regarding types of assistance to be provided, activities to be conducted, and modalities to be used. When asked about possible improvements for CLDP technical assistance, nine key informants from the Kyrgyz Republic suggested to include organizations and beneficiaries in the design and planning of activities. In an opinion expressed by four interviewees in Tajikistan, national stakeholders have limited impact on the planning of CLDP interventions due to a lack of ongoing and direct communication between the program and the assisted organizations; often letters/requests of beneficiaries remain unanswered by the program.

Sixty percent of survey respondents (24 out of 40) were positive about their organization being involved in identifying areas in need of assistance or in designing CLDP interventions. However, none of them reported participating in activity development. Only a limited number of the staff of institutions are involved in designing interventions. The evaluation interviewed only a limited number of people from each of these institutions, and could likely have missed these staff members.

According to the key informants in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, gender aspects were not specifically considered by the program except for programs relating specifically to women entrepreneurs. Local authorities selected workshop attendees. The vast majority of CLDP beneficiaries are men (with the exception of the judicial corps). This overall statistic reflects the gender breakdown of employment in the target sectors.

Adoption by the CLDP beneficiaries of approaches and tools promoted by the program also confirms effective tailoring of interventions. As mentioned in response to Evaluation Question 1, CLDP launched a number of initiatives that resulted in changes to the legal/ regulatory environment, administrative practice, and business conditions. The survey of CLDP beneficiaries conducted in both countries confirms that changes supported by CLDP were adopted in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. A total of 21 out of 38 surveyed respondents reported that they contributed to changes in legal regulations in line with the program's suggestions, and 23 mentioned adoption of new procedures and managerial practices.

Respondents from both countries identified the following top three outcomes of CLDP interventions:

- Introduction and adoption of international trade and/or business-related standards
- Improvement of customs processes and procedures
- Reduction of barriers to international trade

Table 3 details beneficiary perceptions of CLDP’s contributions to strategic goals, measured on a scale of one (low) to five (high).

Table 3: Survey Respondents’ Feedback on Achievement of Long-term Goals

Outcomes	Combined Score Both Countries	Scores for Kyrgyz Republic	Scores for Tajikistan
International trade or business-related standards were introduced and adopted at the country level.	4.08	4.06	4.11
Customs processes/procedures have improved.	3.97	3.69	4.33
Barriers to international trade were reduced and cross-border trade increased as a result.	3.90	3.83	4.30
Overall business climate has improved.	3.86	3.85	3.89
Accession of the country to new international organizations (e.g., WTO) has been achieved/progressed.	3.76	3.47	4.20
Legal/regulatory framework has changed through development, amendment, and/or adoption of new laws.	3.67	3.62	3.78
Protection of IPR has improved.	3.63	3.33	4.00
New FTAs were been signed.	3.52	3.38	3.89
Government procurement has improved.	3.35	3.31	3.50
Commercial dispute and arbitration resolution services have been developed and institutionalized.	3.32	3.17	3.50
Foreign direct investments into the country have increased.	3.21	3.00	3.63

Source: IBTCI Dataset, 2020.

Conclusions on Evaluation Question 2

To what extent has CLDP tailored its activities/model to adapt to country contexts, and if it has, have these adaptations been effective?

Overall, CLDP activities in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan were effectively designed to local political, administrative, and economic conditions. Application of two business models—discrete, country-specific interventions and regional-level activities—ensures program flexibility, which is essential, given the challenging political environment and limited financial and human resources. The majority of TA was provided in recent years through the regional WGs. Country-specific interventions in the Kyrgyz Republic focused on a few specific areas, such as IPR, transparent government procurement, and PPP. In Tajikistan, almost all CLDP activities were provided in a WG format and were designed to fit regional conditions. In the opinion of interviewed WG participants, the WG meetings could have been even more useful if they were conducted regularly (twice per year); lasted longer (up to five working days); covered theoretical aspects and provided practical, hands-on experience; and were attended by the same group of experts.

CLDP activities were tailored based on national development priorities and conclusions of the CLDP assessment missions conducted in the region (most recently in 2016). There are few regular

consultations with CLDP beneficiaries regarding design and implementation of program interventions.

Side by side with overall effective design of the program's activities to national needs, the evaluation revealed that the current CLDP approach to TA in the region is flexible and tailored to needs but improvements can be made. Overall CLDP does address country-specific needs that have been elaborated on the basis of an annual planning cycle; but it is a small program and as a result its efforts can appear to be ad hoc even if they are not. The following are some suggestions that could help CLDP become more effective:

- Offer a TA program with a multiyear time horizon designed with input from beneficiaries.
- Address unmet demand through tailored consultancies to sufficiently support the institutionalization of changes promoted by CLDP (this appears to be already occurring at CLDP).
- Improve communication between the program and organizations to be assisted, to allow for even better tailoring of CLDP interventions to the local context, therefore improving local stakeholder ownership of the newly acquired skills/knowledge.

CLDP participant selection did not address gender balance and mainstreaming. This is inconsistent with the regional attempts to strengthen gender equality and inclusion.

Evaluation Question 3

What is the relationship between the costs vs. benefits of the CLDP technical assistance model? What other business model options might increase results?

EQ3 Findings

The findings for EQ3 are based upon desk study and interviews conducted during the mission to the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, and will be further supported with discussions with the CLDP personnel involved into Program's activities design and implementation.

The Evaluation Team initially considered the information that would be required to assess the economic efficiency of the CLDP approach using Cost–Benefit Analysis (CBA). In the context of an evaluation, the best starting point is to compare actual performance during implementation to the cost–benefit analysis that was conducted ex ante as part of the program planning process. Both the World Bank and the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) require CBA as part of every project proposal process to screen out inefficient activities (i.e., those whose anticipated costs exceed anticipated benefits), although in practice both make exceptions for various reasons. Research has shown that conducting CBA as part of the program planning process leads to a higher-quality program portfolio both by informing program design (i.e., making the proposed programs better) and by screening out inefficient programs. CBA is also increasingly used by USAID in its program development process. Unfortunately, in this case, the CLDP has never included any formal modeling of costs and benefits in its program design; consequently, the Evaluation Team is not able to use M&E data to compare actual performance to any models that were developed before implementation commenced.

To address EQ3, the Evaluation Team considered developing new models ex post that would reflect the program logic documented in budget requests and compare those to the demonstrable impacts of the programs described in later-year documents. Because many separate activities comprise the CLDP approach, an assessment of the impact (the benefits compared to the costs) of the technical assistance model would require that the CBA be conducted for each specific activity or work stream or for a representative subset of those activities or work streams.

After reviewing CLDP documents, the Evaluation Team reached the conclusion that a formal comparison of costs and benefits would not be possible as requested in EQ3. The program documents provide a basic summary of annual expenditures on specific activities, and program documents provide a broad description of the logic of both the activities and the work streams, as relevant. However, there is insufficient data to generate plausible estimates of impact that can be attributed to any of the specific activities carried out over this period, let alone generating a plausible estimate of the CLDP technical assistance model as a whole.

However, given the importance of this question (and indeed, some might consider it central to the issue of whether the program should continue as currently designed or be radically reconsidered), the Evaluation Team selected a single work stream, specifically the multiyear activities focused on improving the public procurement system in Tajikistan, to highlight how this question might be answered given the existing information and what new data might be collected going forward to enable better informed decisions in the future.

The CLDP Work Stream on Transparent Procurement in the Kyrgyz Republic

In general terms, the CLDP has implemented a series of activities between 2013 and 2017 aimed at “Increasing Transparency and Instituting International Best Practices in Government Procurement in Kyrgyzstan.” These activities can be considered a work stream rather than a series of one-off events because they all contributed to the same broad objective of helping put in place a system that would enable the Kyrgyz Republic to procure public goods and services in a manner that would meet international standards. For the government, a more transparent system would minimize the risk of corruption and would enhance the efficiency of the process, generating lower costs of procurement and better quality goods and services. This work stream included the following activities:

- 2013: Initial workshop in the Kyrgyz Republic with officials in the Ministry of Finance to develop a curriculum for training on new procurement methods
- 2014: Consultations in the United States between Ministry of Finance officials and American counterparts in the Office of Federal Procurement Policy, the General Services Administration, the Government Accountability Office, and other relevant federal and state agencies
- 2015: Second workshop in the Kyrgyz Republic with 40 Kyrgyz participants
- 2016: Participation by Ministry of Finance officials in a workshop in Ukraine
- 2017: Second round of consultations in the United States for 5 Kyrgyz officials with a variety of American counterparts

CLDP documents provide information about the costs of each of these activities to the CLDP budget, and so the Evaluation Team can construct the cost component of a CBA model fairly easily for this work stream. The budget for the 2013–2017 period totaled \$488,500, including both program and administrative costs. Only about 60 percent of the budget (\$290,000) was spent on the actual activities (i.e., those which presumably delivered something of value to the participants), while the remaining 40 percent was dedicated to “program design and learning” and “administration and oversight.” Even without considering the impact of the program, this overhead-heavy design would raise serious concerns about cost-effectiveness.

The challenge for constructing a CBA model in this case is estimating the benefits expected as a result of this specific set of five activities.⁶⁴ For the Evaluation Team to analyze this Transparent Procurement work stream, CLDP would need to have a clear and compelling logic linking the five activities listed above to actual procurement changes in the Kyrgyz Republic. Unfortunately, there are a series of challenges that are insurmountable in this context.

First, the CLDP is neither the sole nor the primary external partner working on procurement reform in the Kyrgyz Republic. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) spent more than four times as much money (\$2.25 million) between 2012 and 2018 on activities related to procurement reform, including implementing an e-procurement system and supporting regulatory reform. The World Bank has funded or will support related activities between 2016 and 2020 valued at \$27 million (or more than 50 times as much as the CLDP five-year outlay) on related public finance and e-procurement reform activities. USAID has provided substantial support (almost \$13 million) to activities focused on strengthening public administration, including e-governance. Even the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has supported additional workshops on relevant topics in the Kyrgyz Republic. To conduct CBA on the CLDP activities, we would need to be able to differentiate between the changes that could be attributable to those activities as distinct from the progress made as a result of the substantially larger ADB or World Bank programs. When such activities are coordinated, then one might consider a single CBA model that aggregates all activities toward a single goal, but there is no evidence that these four external partners were coordinating in such a fashion.

Second, in such governance reform activities, the ultimate responsibility for implementing institutional and regulatory reforms rests with (or at least credit must be shared with) the government counterparts. In the case of MCC described above, the funds are provided as a grant and the CBA then reflects on the efficient use of those funds by the Government of Indonesia. Such calculations can be done with ADB and World Bank loan funds, as well. But when external partners provide TA of this type and then seek to attribute economic gains to their training actions, they essentially claim full credit for the actions taken by smart and courageous local officials.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, it is not clear that any material changes have resulted from this work. There is evidence that the overall e-procurement system has generated some benefits because the number of firms registered as potential suppliers for public contracts has grown from 2,000 in 2015 to more than 17,000 in 2018. But because no CBA was done ex ante, we have no idea of the counterfactual (what would this number have been without the modest additional CLDP activities in support of the much larger ADB, World Bank, and USAID investments). This attributable impact is essential in the calculation of cost-benefit ratios, net present values (NPVs), and Economic Rate of Returns (ERRs). But because the project documents do not describe the specific logical connection between activities funded by CLDP and specific outcomes that will lead to specific changes in behavior in the procurement process, we are unable to claim any specific quantifiable benefit that can be attributed to these activities.

These challenges are not unique to the Transparent Procurement work stream, and in fact are considerably larger in many of the other activities. Due to the irregular financing (especially obvious in case of Tajikistan) and the fact that in many cases CLDP interventions are part of initiatives funded

⁶⁴Upon completion of a \$67 million project on procurement reform in Indonesia in 2018, economists working for the Millennium Challenge Corporation used estimates of lower costs and higher quality procurement throughout the affected procurement offices to generate an estimated Economic Rate of Return (ERR) of 13.3 percent, reflecting their projection of the activity as an efficient investment of US grant funds. Even when done retrospectively (this project had no CBA model during program development because the activities had not been determined yet), the analysts were required to make a series of assumptions that linked activities to behavioral change that could be quantified and valued. The MCC economists had annual detailed expenditures that included training, equipment, regulatory changes, and, importantly, the average value of procurement expenditures for the agencies whose work was fundamentally altered by the five-year program.

by other donors, the feasibility of applying cost–benefit analysis is difficult due to the inability to attribute changes to the CLDP program. The Evaluation Team was not able to identify any clearly formulated methodology of assessment of the Program’s costs and benefits. None of the interviewed CLDP stakeholders (including U.S. Embassy staff, contributors, and beneficiaries) were able to identify specific benefits generated by CLDP activities that could be quantified and then valued in financial terms.

It is possible that the CLDP activities in other countries offer more explicit information that links activities to actual changes in policy or bureaucratic behavior. The Evaluation Team proposes exposing those country programs to more formal review using the following CBA model:

- Define the project or work stream and document relevant expenditures by the program and any other relevant partners.
- Quantify the outputs.
- Link these outputs to specific changes in behavior that have consequences that can be quantified and valued and estimate the projected flow of benefits over an appropriate time horizon.
- Discount the net benefits over time using an appropriate discount rate.

This model is particularly appropriate for actions with obvious economic implications (such as activities related to the private sector that might yield greater profits and increased investment). For activities directed at governance objectives, pursuing formal CBA estimates may not be useful. Instead, cost-effectiveness analysis that describes a specific outcome and seeks to identify the least-cost approach to that objective may be more appropriate.

For example, the Transparent Procurement program clearly aims to contribute to a better functioning Kyrgyz economy, but the program also appears to have public diplomacy objectives (i.e., strengthening relationships between United States . and local officials and building a more positive bilateral relationship) and broader good governance objectives that may not have direct economic benefits. In such cases, the search for strong evidence of economic impact may not be appropriate if the program is successful on these other dimensions. Indeed, some development professionals argue that these kinds of interventions should not be exposed to time-bound scrutiny because their actual impact may appear to be zero for many years until institutional change is finally effected.

The Evaluation Team, however, sees the current lack of relevant information as a reflection of inadequate attention to the program logic and anticipated outcomes during the design process. Even if the objectives are (or include) public diplomacy and good governance, written broadly, the CLDP could be expected to provide better economic rationale during the design phase of exactly what outcomes are expected, why these are relevant and valuable, and what other less cost-effective approaches were considered and rejected. With this information in the project design documents, evaluators can assess the logic that was provided ex ante and the extent to which specific objectives were met. This kind of external review of program logic and evidence of achievement of targets may be a much more reasonable framework for evaluating future activities than a comprehensive CBA model.

As mentioned earlier, programs that entail administrative overhead approaching 40 percent may never be cost-effective, and one-off workshops and training programs likewise have a poor record of achieving lasting impact. In this context, other approaches might be more cost-effective:

- Switching programming from large information-sharing workshops to well-tailored consultancies on specific topics and addressing the most challenging issues
- Cooperating with existing training institutions under assisted organizations, including use of their training and accommodation facilities and their capacity to reach a network of experts and trainers

- Including representatives of local AmChams and leading professional and business associations in CLDP activity design and implementation
- Improving coordination with other international TA initiatives
- Contributing to the development and adoption of modern computer-based and online informational systems and libraries, including development of manuals, standards, and operational checklists

Conclusions to Evaluation Question 3

What is the relationship between the costs vs. benefits of the CLDP technical assistance model? What other business model options might increase results?

The CLDP has been implementing programs in challenging political contexts in both Tajikistan and The Kyrgyz Republic, with programs also being undermined by high turnover of staff in state institutions and limited capacity at the national level. Under these conditions, it is possible that even successfully implemented programs may achieve little to no material impact on important governance practices. The Evaluation Team was unable to calculate any summary statistics using CBA because there is no information about outcomes from these activities that can be quantified and converted to monetary values. If the primary level of assessment of these activities is their demonstrable economic impact, the current technical assistance model might very well be found to be failing simply by the lack of any evidence of its success; indeed, most development organizations have moved from this kind of programming to establishing more of a presence within institutions by providing resident policy support in two- or three-year programs.

However, if the activities are also seen as generating important noneconomic value both through building relationships and strengthening acceptance of broader governance concepts like transparency and rule of law, then these activities need an alternative, but still formal, performance management system that describes tangible results *ex ante* and collects relevant monitoring data during implementation and beyond. The Evaluation Team agrees that EQ3 is important, and believes that greater discipline in the design and implementation of future activities will both improve their quality and will make it possible to answer EQ3 in a more satisfactory way in the future.

More on Cost Benefit Analysis including an outline of a framework can be found in Appendix 3.

Evaluation Question 4

What are the strengths and weaknesses of CLDP's current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium to longer-term effects of their activities?

EQ4 Findings

The Evaluation Team found limited evidence that an M&E system was applied in CLDP's design and implementation. CLDP's ABRs prepared in 2007–2009 for Kyrgyz Republic do not mention any M&E activities being conducted. The country's 2010 ABR refers to the usage of questionnaires as a part of the program's evaluation system.⁶⁵ The same approach was applied in 2011 and 2012, and the ABR reports the use of questionnaire results for further planning of CLDP activities.⁶⁶ In 2013, the program team asked the participants to fill out questionnaires after the workshops; responses then

⁶⁵ "The CLDP asks all participants to complete evaluation questionnaires at the conclusion of its programs. Results and answers from questions are always reflected in how CLDP conducts its programs and in its current and future work plans." CLDP ABR for Kyrgyz Republic (2010).

⁶⁶ "Results and answers from questionnaires are generally reflected in how CLDP conducts its programs, and in its current and future work plans." CLDP ABR for Kyrgyz Republic (2012).

were used in further planning.⁶⁷ The program's ABR for 2014 confirmed that no external evaluation had been conducted.⁶⁸ CLDP did not conduct external evaluations in 2015, and instead asked CLDP participants to fill out evaluation forms by the end of each workshop, and then used this feedback in future planning. In 2015, the program team outlined its plan for conducting external evaluations in the future. The Evaluation Team was unable to verify that CLDP introduced any changes in its M&E system either in Kyrgyz Republic or in Tajikistan from 2016 to 2017. The ABRs for Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan state that "The CLDP has not carried out an independent evaluation of this project in the last 12 months. . . . The CLDP always asks participants to complete feedback forms upon the conclusion of its programs. Results and answers from questionnaires are always reflected in how CLDP conducts its programs and in its current and future work plans."⁶⁹

The Evaluation Team verified these findings during in-person interviews and group discussions with CLDP participants. According to these informants, CLDP representatives systematically collect feedback from the participants in WG meetings, along with their suggestions for the next meeting's agenda. During presentations conducted during the WG meetings of various thematic areas of expertise, participants discuss the implementation of actions decided in the previous meeting. At the same time, the informants did not recall that they were approached by CLDP for M&E purposes between WG meetings. Participants in country-specific CLDP events and representatives of organizations assisted by CLDP in two countries interviewed by the Evaluation Team reported that they had no communication with the program regarding the M&E of its activities. The majority (53 percent)⁷⁰ of phone and online survey respondents confirmed that they were contacted to fill out CLDP workshop feedback forms. In-depth interviews revealed that the forms completed by beneficiaries mostly contained questions about what TA might be needed in the future. In some cases, beneficiaries could not answer whether the training and workshop in which they took part was even supported by CLDP.

CLDP did not synthesize feedback gained from workshop evaluations in an internal report from what the team observed, and the program does not have a systematized and updated database of beneficiaries and contributors to events. The team's review of ABRs from the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan reveal that M&E tools were gradually introduced into project management over the time period covered in this evaluation. For example, a basic set of indicators associated with immediate outputs, longer-term impact and performance, and the overall contribution of these to the larger U.S. foreign policy objectives is suggested in the 2007 ABR for the Kyrgyz Republic. However, indicators would have to be developed to support some of the activities mentioned in this document.

The documents listed the activities below as indicators for measurement; however none of them are time-bound or measurable:

- "At the advice of the Embassy, CLDP sponsored an Investment Opportunities Seminar for over 200 participants." *Indicator – Number of participants trained in investment opportunities.*
- "Providing the advice necessary for increased contact between United States and Kyrgyz Republic business communities will foster more successful trade and investment between the two countries." *Indicator – Amount of trade between the two countries.*
- "Providing advice on business practices for trade and investment and on how to improve the business environment in Kyrgyz Republic will foster more successful trade and investment between the two countries." *Indicator – Investments between the United States and the Kirgiz Republic.*

⁶⁷ "Evaluation feedback from the April 2013 workshop helped determine CLDP's future assistance to Kyrgyzpatent." CLDP ABR for Kyrgyz Republic (2013).

⁶⁸ "The CLDP did not solicit external evaluations but asks all participants to complete evaluation questionnaires at the conclusion of its programs." CLDP ABR for Kyrgyz Republic (2014).

⁶⁹ ABRs for Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan (2017).

⁷⁰ 20 out of 51.

Over time, ACE staff added additional questions and requests for outcome indicators to the standard ABR reporting template. By 2020 CLDP has to fill out these out annually, including the following:

- Alignment with strategies/post ICSSs
- Purpose-level outcome indicators (changes in organization and systems and/or changes in behavior of people the program is measuring, or plan to measure, to determine whether the project has been successful)
- Implementing mechanisms and activities
- Significant achievements
- Significant challenges and implications for the future project implementation
- Other USG and non-USG activities in the sector/subsector
- Evaluation and assessments

CLDP developed and applied indicators for each project implemented in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. Pursuant to the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act (FATAA) of 2016, CLDP staff incorporated an M&E section into its annual ABR submission and anticipates conducting further M&E activities. However, the Evaluation Team did not obtain any CLDP M&E reports except for the M&E data (section) provided in the ABRs.

Conclusion to Evaluation Question 4

What is the relationship between the costs vs. benefits of the CLDP technical assistance model? What other business model options might increase results?

The current M&E practice of the program in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan is still under development. Currently, the system provides general information about the progress of project implementation, key challenges, and information about project results.

The process to collect stakeholder feedback is fragmented. The Evaluation Team did not find sufficient evidence to confirm that CLDP gathered feedback from the beneficiaries (institutions) of country-specific interventions. Feedback forms collected by the end of WG meetings adequately serve the needs of activity management, and this practice of feedback collection should be continued with the forms revised to incorporate questions related to reaction⁷¹ and learning⁷² levels of the Kirkpatrick and other evaluation models.⁷³ The feedback forms will be able to provide an important data on the output indicators.

Overall, the current practice has weaknesses that should be addressed to strengthen CLDP performance, including the following:

- Insufficient formalization and adoption by CLDP staff of a comprehensive M&E system
- Inadequate CLDP archiving system for storing information on activities and programs including participants, consultants, and stakeholders
- Lack of regular and systematized information collection from CLDP beneficiaries
- Inconsistent feedback collection from the participants of country-specific events
- Absence of a TOC and a Logic Model for each CLDP project
- Absence of regular external evaluations

⁷¹ Reaction data captures the participants' reaction to the training experience. Specifically, it refers to how satisfying, engaging, and relevant they find the experience.

⁷² Learning data tells us whether or not the people who take the training have learned anything.

⁷³ Kirkpatrick evaluation model is the most popular model for evaluating the effectiveness of a training program.

In summary, the CLDP team has not requested sufficient M&E resources from ACE (although ACE can make these available to CLDP to conduct full-scale monitoring and external evaluation activities) and as a result, CLDP has limited capacity to present information that is collected in a standard format with clear findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future planning.

Evaluation Findings: SABIT

Evaluation Question I

To what extent has the SABIT business model been effective in achieving its aims?⁷⁴

The SABIT program is striving to achieve two key goals: the development of more efficient and market-oriented economies and the promotion of trade and business relations between the U.S. and other countries. These goals are to be achieved through industry-specific, U.S.-based training and internship opportunities for business leaders and, where relevant, for government representatives from transitional and developing economies. SABIT's business model articulates the program's objectives of building capacity of local businesses, supporting economic growth, and developing business relations with the United States. In this regard, the Evaluation Team assessed program outreach, the process for selecting participants, and participants' satisfaction levels with the program. The business model includes targeted support to industries considered to be key for each country's economic growth. This support includes the selection of current and future leaders from those industries and building the capacity of those industry leaders through U.S.-based training and consultations.⁷⁵

SABIT's business model provided two types of internships in U.S. companies during the first decade of its implementation: individual three-to-six-month internships and group internships for business leaders from post-Soviet countries. The program organized internships for 15 to 20 business professionals who participated in three to four weeks of training in the United States.⁷⁶ From about 2007 SABIT has used two-week group trainings for business leaders consisted of two-hour-long meetings, interactions, and discussions in preselected U.S.-based organizations. The program does not endorse recurring participation; SABIT alumni are unable to participate again in the program.

SABIT enables participants to expand their businesses and to support economic reforms in their home countries. Overall, 87 percent of SABIT participants in both countries indicated that their participation in the program led to specific mid- or long-term outcomes for their organization, industry, and/or country.⁷⁷

Country-Level Outcomes

Country-level outcomes included establishment of new businesses, creation of new jobs, and increased export sales. At least 105 new businesses have been opened in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan since 2007, and more than 3,855 new jobs have been created. Overall, 45 percent of surveyed participants established at least one new business; almost 65 percent hired new staff as a direct result of their participation in the program. (See **Table 4.**)

Additionally, 26 percent of participating businesses increased export sales and almost 11 percent reported that they either started exporting or increased their export sales to the United States.

⁷⁴ a) The Joint Regional Strategy, objectives, and sub-objectives, b) Integrated Country Strategies, c) equivalent strategy documents, and d) other program-specific aims identified in the course of the desk review of project-related documents.

⁷⁵ The U.S. host organizations selection model is an integrated part of the SABIT business model and will be fully assessed in a second evaluation report which will focus on Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine.

⁷⁶ <https://iawg.gov/wp-content/uploads/sabitcase.pdf>

⁷⁷ IBTCI Survey of SABIT participants in Central Asia, 2020 (n = 191).

Total export sales increased by 23 percent on average for all exporters, and exports to the United States increased by 15 percent within a three-year period after participation in the program.

Table 4: Outcomes of the SABIT Program on the Macro Level (Both Countries Combined)⁷⁸

Indicators for Business Companies	Share of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Mean Value	Extrapolated Total
At least one new business created as a direct result of participation in SABIT	53%	50	1	105
New jobs created as a direct result of participation in SABIT	64.9%	72	30	3,855
Overall export sales increased within three years after participation	26.1%	29	23%	-
Exports to the United States increased within three years after participation	10.8%	12	15%	-

Source: IBTCI Survey, 2020.

Business associations involved in the SABIT program actively developed or improved various pieces of legislation aimed at improving business or investment policies, regulations, and/or enforcement. Participants mentioned legislation, including the following:

- A law on innovations (Kyrgyz Republic)
- A law on techno parks (Kyrgyz Republic)
- Extractive Industries Transparency Initiatives (EITI), 2012 and 2013 (Tajikistan)
- Customs control for IP (Kyrgyz Republic)
- A law on trademarks (Kyrgyz Republic)
- Changes to the Tax Code, 2018 (Tajikistan)
- Improved trade procedures, 2019 (Tajikistan)
- A law on automobile transport, 2015 (Kyrgyz Republic)
- Improved rights of truck drivers, 2016 (Kyrgyz Republic)
- A law on support of entrepreneurship, 2013 (Tajikistan)
- A law on PPP, 2014 (Tajikistan)
- Classification of hotels and restaurants (Tajikistan)
- Law on trade and domestic services (Tajikistan)

Industry-Level Outcomes

The SABIT program impacted industry through an inflow of additional investments into the sectors, an expanded number of goods and services provided, new procurement of franchises in other countries, new trade and cooperation projects within the country and with foreign enterprises, and the establishment of new industry standards as a direct result of participation in the program. These are mid- and long-term outcomes as a result of participation in the SABIT program according to the participants.

Almost 49 percent of SABIT participants invested money in their businesses within three years after participation in SABIT program. These investments include equity, loans, and/or grants. Although many respondents refused to provide exact values of investments, 40 of them invested a total of almost \$120 million. The median investment was \$50,000 in Kyrgyz Republic and \$110,000 in Tajikistan.

⁷⁸ All calculations are based on the IBTCI Survey of SABIT Business Participants in Central Asia, 2020 (n = 114). Extrapolations were made based on the total number of SABIT business participants in Central Asia (n = 198).

Of surveyed participants, 72 percent reported that they launched new products or services or established a completely new direction for their businesses after participating in the program. More than 81 percent of respondents managed to improve overall competitiveness of their businesses. Seven respondents claim that they acquired a new franchise in the United States.

Table 5: Outcomes of the SABIT Program on the Industry Level (Both Countries Combined)⁷⁹

Indicators for Business Companies	Share of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Median Value Among Respondents	Total Value Among Respondents
New investments in the business within three-year period after participation in SABIT	48.6%	54	\$90,000	\$120 million
Launched new products or services	72.3%	68	-	-
Overall business competitiveness improved	81.9%	77	-	-
New franchise acquired in the United States	8.8%	7	-	-

Source: IBTCI Survey, 2020.

A total of 17 participants (business and industry associations) helped to develop or improve the following existing industry standards in their countries:

- Different standards of International Organization for Standardization (IOS), such as ISO 9001, which is the internationally recognized quality management system standard that can benefit any size of organization
- Regional freight forwarding standards
- Commercial agricultural standards, such as DDP-15⁸⁰ and DDP-30⁸¹
- Airport administration certification received in 2008, 2011, and 2015
- Fuel supply certification received in 2012
- Standardization of solar panels

SABIT’s business model prioritized the development of improved business relations with the United States, including overall business improvement and the exploration of export opportunities for all participants. Regional and multi-country trade and cooperation are extremely important in promoting economic growth.⁸² Analysis of trade statistics between the United States and Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan demonstrates very limited import/ export transactions from 2015 to 2019 (**Table 6**). In-person interviews with key stakeholders in Kyrgyz Republic also revealed that many stakeholders felt that visa/travel restrictions imposed by the United States in 2019 on Kyrgyz citizens set back bilateral and trade relations between the two countries.

⁷⁹ All calculations are based on the IBTCI Survey of SABIT business participants in Central Asia, 2020 (n = 114).

⁸⁰ UNECE Standard DDP-15 concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of dried apricots.

⁸¹ UNECE Standard DDP-30 concerning the marketing and commercial quality control of dried melons.

⁸² “Trade integration is often regarded as a principal determinant of economic growth.”

http://www.hwwi.org/uploads/tx_wilpubdb/HWWI_Research_Paper-123_Trade-and-Growth.pdf.

Table 6: Statistics on Trade with the United States (All Products)

	Imports from the US			Exports to the US		
	Value in 2019 (USD thousands)	Annual Growth in Value, 2015 to 2019 (%)	Share in the Country's Imports (%)	Value in 2019 (USD thousands)	Annual Growth in Value, 2015 to 2019 (%)	Share in the Country's Exports (%)
Tajikistan	44,372	8	1	1,146	-27	0
Kyrgyz Republic	89,868	-8	2	2,624	37	0

Source: International Trade Center (ITC) Database, 2019.

Approximately 43 percent (64 of 148) of survey respondents (beneficiaries) claimed that the SABIT program was somewhat effective in promoting cooperation and trade with U.S. companies, and nearly 32 percent stated that the program was “very effective” in this regard. However, the majority (71.3 percent, or 77 out of 108) of survey respondents who were private-sector representatives had not yet established new trade or business cooperation in the United States. The highest number of collaboration and trade projects was established with domestic companies (Table 7).

Table 7: Survey Respondents' Feedback on Multi-Country and Domestic National Collaboration

Collaboration Type	Confirmed	Number of Contacts/ Cooperation Established
New trade/cooperation with U.S. companies	7.4% (8 out of 108)	5
New trade/cooperation with companies from Eurasia and Central Asia	58.1% (61 out of 105)	236
New trade/cooperation with domestic companies	60.7% (65 out of 107)	313

Source: IBTCI dataset, 2020.

The vast majority of interviews with stakeholders in both countries pointed to the need for improving the business environment in the respective country. Corruption and favoritism continue to impede business development within each country thus discouraging potential international business partners. All respondents were highly supportive of the SABIT program and positive about the support received from the United States.

These findings echo the ICS for Kyrgyz Republic, which states, “Western countries, including the United States, have few investments here and little trade. The business environment favors Chinese, Turkish, and Russian investors who are able to navigate an often corrupt and heavily managed economy.”⁸³ However, at least two western countries (Switzerland and Canada) do have major investments in the mining sector.⁸⁴ The USAID Kyrgyz Republic country profile paper notes that “Expanding economic opportunity is crucial for the Kyrgyz Republic to demonstrate the efficacy of its democratic governance system.”⁸⁵

Similarly, the ICS for Tajikistan further states that, “Tajikistan has shown it can play an important role in advancing vital U.S. strategic interests in South and Central Asia. For example, Tajikistan is a committed partner in U.S. efforts to promote greater regional connectivity, including through initiatives such as the C5+1 regional framework and the Central Asia–South Asia (aka CASA-1000)

⁸³ ICS: Kyrgyz Republic, 2018. https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/ICS-Kyrgyz-Rep_UNCLASS_508.pdf.

⁸⁴ REFERENCE NEEDED HERE FROM S. CRESKOFF.

⁸⁵ https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1861/Country_Profile_-_Kyrgyz_Republic_-_Mar_2017_ENG_0.pdf.

regional power transmission project. U.S.–Tajikistan security cooperation is strong and complements our efforts to build a stable, peaceful Afghanistan.”⁸⁶

In-depth interviews and online/phone surveys further support these statements. Nearly 33 percent of survey respondents⁸⁷ were unaware of significant changes (either positive or negative) that occurred in their country’s trade relations with the United States over the past decade. Some respondents claimed to have noticed increased trade (about 16 percent of respondents)⁸⁸ and cooperation (about 23 percent of respondents)⁸⁹ with the United States in the past 10 years.

Building Capacity of Local Entrepreneurs

Over 74 percent (123 out of 165) of survey respondents (beneficiaries) from both countries confirmed that the program has been very useful for their business, and 26 percent (42 out of 165) claimed it has been somewhat useful. According to respondents, the most useful services that SABIT provided for their businesses are discussions on business management issues and practices, and information about international standards (e.g., safety and quality of food products and production processes, and international labor standards). (See **Table 8.**) The regional composition of the participants’ group contributed to an expansion of learning and networking opportunities according to all of the alumni for this evaluation. A significant majority of interviewees positively rated the duration of the internship and encouraged SABIT to lift the restriction on one-time participation in the internship. The Evaluation Team found that AmCham in Kyrgyz Republic offers a similar fee-based study visit to the United States for local entrepreneurs. When questioned, less than 10 percent of SABIT alumni were aware of this opportunity. More than 75 percent expressed their readiness to cover necessary fees associated with a follow-up internship to the United States.

Table 8: Discussion Topics Prioritized by Survey Respondents

Satisfaction of Participants with the SABIT Program	Group 1:	Group 2:
Topics	“The program was very useful.”	“The program was somewhat useful.”
Business management issues and practices	86	27
International standards (e.g., safety and quality of food products and production processes, and international labor standards)	71	20
Recognized trade reforms and advocacy for change	37	10
Legal issues (laws and regulations) related to trade between your country and the United States	37	6
Generalized System of Preferences (GSP, GSP+) that provides preferential duty-free entry for products from your country	21	5
Policy changes that could be required to improve trade between your country and the United States	21	1

Source: IBTCI Survey, 2020.

⁸⁶ ICS: Tajikistan, 2018. https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/ICS-Tajikistan_UNCLASS_508.pdf.

⁸⁷ 61 out of 183.

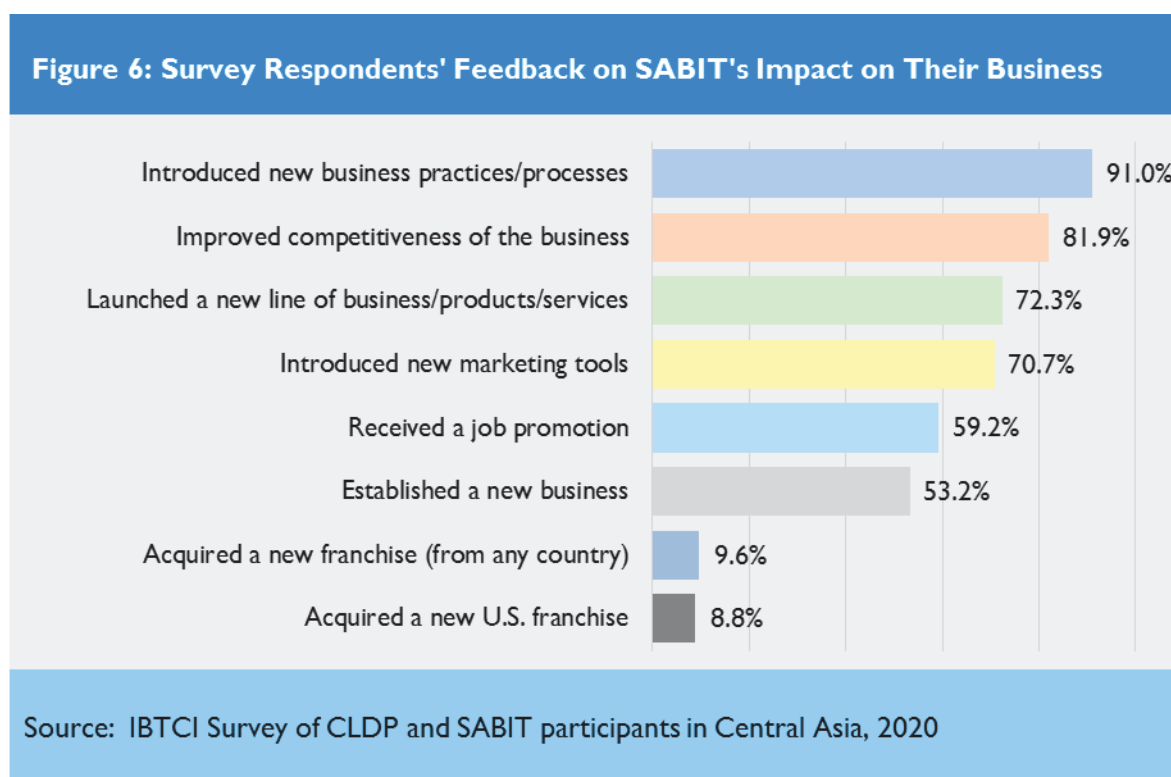
⁸⁸ 29 out of 183.

⁸⁹ 41 out of 183.

In addition, survey respondents marked the following topics as being of use for their organizations:

- Practices entailing the use of energy-efficient technologies in construction
- Management and financing of airports at state and municipal levels
- Information on the activities of business associations, impact hubs,⁹⁰ and business incubators
- Road maintenance practices
- Ways in which businesses are established in the United States, how authorities protect businesses, how regions compete to attract businesses, and how businesses are protected legally
- The United States health insurance system
- Information and communication technologies applied in business processes

Approximately 86 percent of survey respondents (143 out of 165) claimed that information they received during their participation in the SABIT program led to specific mid- or long-term impacts for themselves or their organization and/or country. Just over 10 percent (17 out of 165) expressed negative feedback about the impact of the program in this particular regard. Overall, 91 percent (91 out of 100) of respondents claimed that they had introduced new marketing tools in their organization and 81.9 percent (77 out of 94) stated that the SABIT program had helped them to improve the competitiveness of their business. A minority of survey respondents confirmed acquiring a new franchise from the United States or another country. (See **Figure 6.**)



In-person interviews identified a number of success stories as a result of the SABIT program, some of which are presented below:

- A Tajik SABIT alumnus of the energy efficiency in construction program reported continuing revenue increases in 2011 (40 percent), 2012 (35 percent), and 2013 (30 percent) due to his enhanced capacity to successfully compete for tenders focused on energy-efficient projects.

⁹⁰ Impact hubs are community centers aimed to build entrepreneurial communities. (Impact Hub definition, www.impacthub.net)

The alumnus reported producing construction materials in accordance with the techniques to which he was introduced in Arizona.

- Two Tajik alumni of road construction internships learned of the U.S. experience of involving private contractors in public road construction projects. Upon their return, the alumni hired a team of lawyers and prepared the implementation mechanism for the new Law on Private–Public Partnership for Infrastructure (2012), which opened the domestic market to private companies.
- A Tajik alumna of the municipal services program benefited from experience shared during the U.S. internship regarding secondary water treatment and usage practices. After participating in the SABIT program, she prepared and submitted innovative proposals to the Coca-Cola Corporation entailing the provision of a purified water supply to two villages of Khovalin region of Tajikistan. Both proposals were approved.
- An alumnus from Kyrgyz Republic, who was a participant in agribusiness and food processing, reported that he acquired new knowledge on commercializing new technologies that notably increased his standing among national entrepreneurs in his country.
- A group of alumni from Tajikistan established an association of restaurateurs after taking part in the SABIT program. They all emphasized the importance of the program with respect to their professional growth, as they became familiar with the specifics and standards of the hospitality business in the United States, including those related to staff capacity-building and development. One of the association members, a SABIT alumnus, issued a textbook on the restaurant business in 2016.⁹¹ The textbook was approved as official training material by the national education center (called *Midoc*), which was jointly established by SABIT alumni. They also reported developing a new syllabus based on the SABIT material and introducing a hospitality school curriculum in the center that opened up employment opportunities to hundreds of young Tajiks in the hospitality industry.
- A SABIT program participant from Tajikistan in the tourism and hospitality sector reorganized his company’s internal processes related to marketing and outreach to attract new clients. He reported enhancing the clients’ service and feedback systems. His hotel also improved its digital visibility, joined the Association of Restaurateurs and Hoteliers of Tajikistan, and is now actively taking part in the association’s monthly meetings to discuss important issues faced by the hotel business.
- A Kyrgyz participant became familiar with the concept of hazard analysis and critical control points (HACCP)⁹² after visiting the U.S. Department of Commerce within the course of the SABIT program. The internship resulted in a business contract being signed with a U.S. partner and, after the adoption of HACCP standards, the export of dried tomatoes to the United States and Canada.

SABIT Planning and Implementation, Participant Selection, and Outreach

Most of the SABIT beneficiaries interviewed in the course of this evaluation positively rated the selection process, the logistics, and the organizational and administrative aspects of the program. Interviewees emphasized that the program was well-organized and encouraged the exchange of opinions and ideas. The Evaluation Team did not find evidence that gender balance was emphasized in the selection process. Overall, more than 75 percent of interviewed stakeholders confirmed that the program’s application was adequate and comprehensive enough to cover the whole spectrum of the activities of a potential applicant. This positive feedback received during the in-person interviews echoed the survey results from both countries. Just under 79 percent (133 out of 169) of survey responses from Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic verified that the program was very well organized, while 35 percent (64 out of 182) the responses confirmed that the program was *much better* than expected, and 47 percent (85 out of 182) stated that it was *better* than expected (**Figure 7**).

⁹¹ The copy of the textbook was shared with the Evaluation Team.

⁹² HACCP is an internationally recognized method of identifying and managing risks related to food safety.

Of the SABIT participants who replied to the online survey, 37 out of 110 (33.6 percent) confirmed having received information solely from SABIT alumni, while 24 out of 110 (21.8 percent) confirmed having received information only from the SABIT website. The responses also revealed cases where information was received from multiple sources (29 respondents reported that they obtained information through both SABIT alumni and the program website). Three of the respondents said they received information from SABIT alumni, the Regional SABIT Coordinator in Almaty, and their local business association, and/or chamber of commerce, while seven respondents said they had received information from both SABIT alumni and the U.S. embassy in their country of residence.

Overall, survey respondents cited the following other sources of information:

- SABIT alumni event hosted by the relevant U.S. embassy
- U.S. embassy in their country of residence
- Business association/chamber of commerce in their country of residence
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce in their country of residence
- Friends and relatives
- Regional SABIT coordinator in Kyiv (Ukraine) or Almaty (Kazakhstan)⁹³
- SABIT website

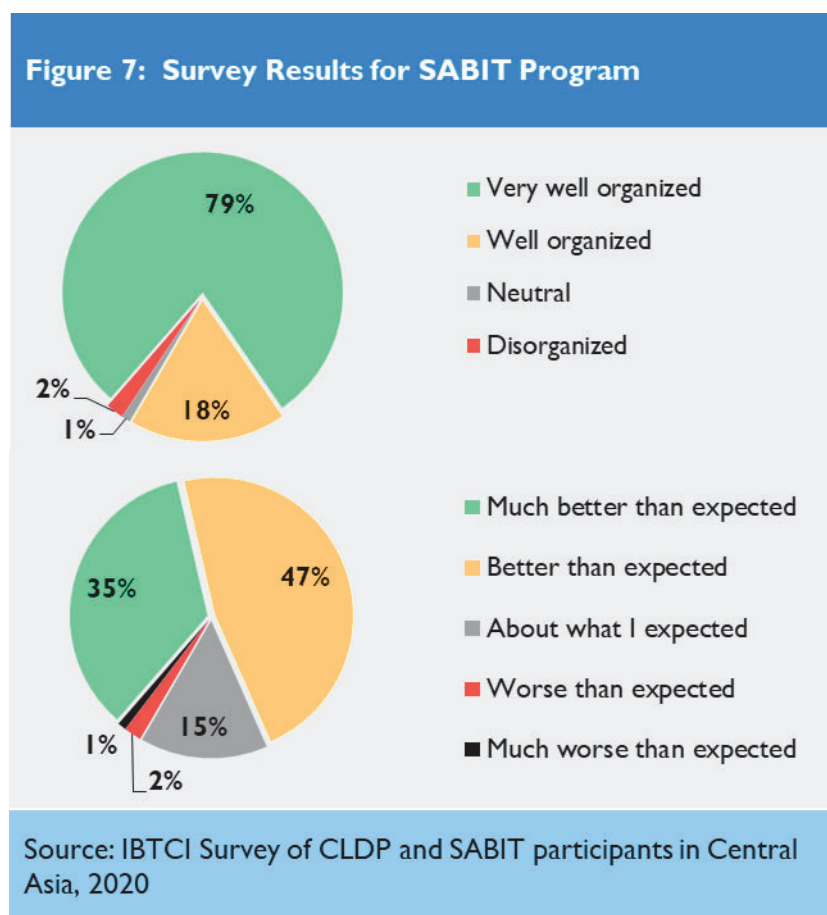


Table 9 depicts the diversity of information sources from which the alumni confirmed having received information about the program. In terms of social media presence, the program’s profile on Facebook is followed by 11,178 users and liked by 10,500 users.⁹⁴

⁹³ SABIT has two representative offices, one in Ukraine and one in Kazakhstan.

⁹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/SABITProgram>, as of May 2, 2020.

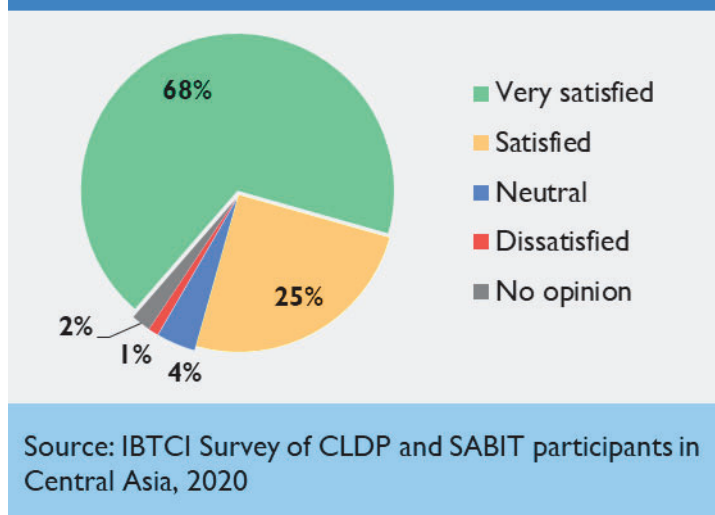
Table 9: Sources of Information Identified by SABIT Alumni

Source of Information	Confirmed Cases	
SABIT alumni	94	36.0%
SABIT website	72	27.6%
Other	33	12.6%
U.S. embassy in their country of residence	21	8.0%
Regional SABIT coordinator in Almaty	13	2.3%
Business association/chamber of commerce in their country of domicile	11	2.3%
SABIT representative(s)	6	1.1%
Local newspaper(s)	6	0.4%
SABIT alumni event hosted by the relevant U.S. embassy	3	0.4%
U.S. Chamber of Commerce in their country of residence	1	36.0%
Regional SABIT Coordinator in Kyiv	1	0.4%

Source: IBTCI dataset, 2020.

The SABIT team maintains a database of national business associations to inform them about upcoming opportunities. However, less than 20 percent of association members interviewed in the course of this evaluation recalled any updates from SABIT. Likewise, the representatives of AmCham in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan did not confirm hearing about the opportunities provided by SABIT. In total, nearly 50 percent of interviewees and survey respondents also mentioned receiving information by word-of-mouth from their colleagues, relatives, and friends (19 respondents in total); representatives of state agencies (four respondents); a national association in Kyrgyz Republic (one respondent); and through internet searches (four respondents). Overall, 68 percent (117 out of 170) of survey respondents were *very satisfied* with the selection process, 25 percent (42 out of 170) also reported being *satisfied*, and only one percent of participants reported being *dissatisfied* (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Satisfaction Level Regarding Participant Selection Process in Both Countries



Overall, SABIT participants from both countries were satisfied with the selection process; however, 40 out of 170 respondents (23 percent) stated that there was room for improvement in the selection process. Some respondents suggested the following improvements:

- Involving more participants from the different regions of the country (equally from the capital and the various regions)
- Engaging more female beneficiaries
- Allowing potential participants to complete their SABIT application in Russian as well as English (the majority of entrepreneurs from the regions were not fluent in English)

- Lifting the restriction on one-off participation
- Providing feedback to unsuccessful applicants
- Hiring a SABIT coordinator in each country to ensure continuous feedback and follow-up
- Engaging local associations in outreach and information-sharing about the program to ensure that there are multiple sources of outreach channels
- Ensuring that only technically qualified participants are selected for internships requiring specific technical knowledge⁹⁵
- Engaging a subject-matter expert in the participant selection process to assess the knowledge of the applicant on the given matter
- Engaging more young entrepreneurs

Some alumni also referred to the experience with GIZ, which offers similar internship programs for local entrepreneurs. GIZ's participant selection process also includes mandatory site visits of enterprises represented by the candidate. The GIZ program selection criteria include consideration of candidates' concrete aspirations and specific projects/plans developed to establish business partnerships with companies in Germany.

Conclusions on Evaluation Question 1

To what extent has the SABIT business model been effective in achieving its aims?⁹⁶

Overall, SABIT efficiently prepared and administered the internships, one component of their business model. The SABIT team limited the selection process to applications, references, and phone interviews. The SABIT team did not conduct site visits to assess the capacity/ business potential of organizations represented by the applicant. There is no exclusive channel for disseminating information about SABIT. Candidates received information about the program from multiple sources, among which alumni and the SABIT website seem to be the most prevalent. The program is less effective in exploring and securing partnership opportunities with business associations in either country, including AmCham but this is likely due to budget limitations.

SABIT participation neither boosted cross-Atlantic cooperation with U.S.-based companies nor resulted in substantial success in improving the business climate for the targeted countries. There was some success achieved within the country of domicile or in trade relations with neighboring countries because the majority of trade and business cooperation activities were established by SABIT alumni either within their country of domicile or the wider region. The SABIT program significantly contributed to developing the capacity of national business leaders and proved to be a useful tool for transferring knowledge of the best international standards and business practices.

Perhaps due to its size and limited scope the program's impact on improving business environment in the targeted countries is insignificant. An unfavorable business environment and corruption remain major challenges for international and local businesses. The team observed positive and constructive attitudes at the local level toward SABIT as a useful mechanism to address regulatory, institutional, or professional capacity gaps. Informants believe that SABIT contributes to advancing the private sector and business environment.

Evaluation Question 2

Assess the extent to which, over time, SABIT has been able to influence directly a critical mass of business leaders in targeted industries.

⁹⁵ For example, half of the participants selected for SABIT internships that focused on construction typology came from the consulting sector and lacked technical knowledge.

⁹⁶ a) The Joint Regional Strategy, objectives, and sub-objectives, b) Integrated Country Strategies, c) equivalent strategy documents, and d) other program-specific aims identified in the course of the desk review of project-related documents.

Program documents do not define what a critical mass of entrepreneurial professionals should entail. The Evaluation Team believes that such a critical mass materializes where such a body of knowledge and expertise grows and becomes self-sustainable, and thus no longer requires additional TA to influence the business climate and to generate social and economic value.

The Evaluation Team assessed quantitative results and qualitative findings relating to the SABIT activity to assess at what point, if any, a critical mass of business leaders was established. In total, the SABIT program trained 334 private and public sector representatives from Kyrgyz Republic (129 participants) and Tajikistan (205 participants). Support covered all 10 sectors of the SABIT typology for assistance (**Table 10: Breakdown of SABIT Participants by Sector and Country (2007–2017)**). Overall, 21 out of 334 SABIT participants were registered under the Governance section of the program, which encompassed IPR, regional economic development, and water resource management.

Table 10: Breakdown of SABIT Participants by Sector and Country (2007–2017)

Sector	SABIT Participants from Tajikistan	SABIT Participants from Kyrgyz Republic	Total
Transport Infrastructure	21	18	39
Transportation and Logistics	9	2	11
Industry (agriculture, food and wine, other)	37	24	61
Energy and Mining	42	19	61
Service and Hospitality	23	20	43
Healthcare Management	29	20	49
Municipal Services	8	2	10
Business Management	12	5	17
Business Services Development (Associations)	13	6	19
Governance	11	13	24
Total	205	129	334

Source: SABIT Dataset, 2020.

According to the report *Tajikistan in Figures – 2018* issued by the Agency on Statistics under the President of Tajikistan, 187,112 private enterprises existed in Tajikistan in 2017 (**Table 11**).⁹⁷

⁹⁷ To compare the quantitative results, the Evaluation Team gathered information on the number of private enterprises operating in both countries. In this regard, the team noticed that the statistical data were fragmented and incomplete. Specifically, the national statistics provided generic quantitative data which was impossible to disaggregate into SABIT-supported sectors.

Table II: Number of Private Enterprises in Tajikistan (2012–2017)

Type	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Industrial enterprises	1,586	1,804	2,164	2,310	2,043	1,999
Consumer services enterprises	558	548	425	436	461	429
Agricultural enterprises						
Collective farms	707	543	58	58	231	129
State farms	15	7	3	-	-	-
Private farms	73,800	87,600	108,000	123,400	145,100	169,600
Associations, enterprises and their subdivisions servicing clients in general communication	634	634	634	490	490	490
Public catering enterprises	2,677	2,624	2,656	2,717	2,748	2,757
Retail trade enterprises	12,119	11,548	12,983	14,271	15,178	11,708
Total	92,096	105,308	126,923	143,682	166,251	187,112

Source: Tajikistan in Statistics – 2018, Agency on Statistics under the President of Tajikistan, <http://stat.wv.tj/publications/June2019/tajikistan-in-figures-2018.pdf>

By January 2019, the National Statistics Committee of Kyrgyz Republic reported having 707,200 operating economic entities, including both legal entities (private enterprises) and self-employed individuals. Legal entities amounted to 4.5 percent (31,600) of the total number of economic entities operating in Kyrgyz Republic. A significant proportion (80.2 percent) of existing legal entities are small business entities.⁹⁸ Meanwhile, the shares of medium and large business entities amounted to 13.6 percent and 6.2 percent, respectively. Elsewhere, agro-enterprises constitute 47 percent (333,000) of operating economic entities in the country.

Over 75 percent of interviewed beneficiaries stated that being introduced to new technologies and innovative practices changed their approaches to business and had a positive impact on the quality of their activities as they started to assess business-related issues from a new, broader perspective. Of survey respondents, 88 percent (88 out of 100) confirmed that their participation in the SABIT program contributed to improving their capacity and reputation, allowing them to influence and improve the business or trade environment of their respective countries. Approximately 61 percent (60 out of 99) reported having become more actively involved in the development of national business-related policies and regulations. However, only a small minority of respondents of the survey and in-person interviews confirmed having achieved substantial success in improving the national business climate. Some relevant SABIT success stories are presented below:

- A Kyrgyz alumnus reported contributing to the adoption of the Law on Intellectual Property Commercialization.⁹⁹ His contribution was largely attributable to the SABIT experience and the meeting conducted with the U.S. Patent Office as part of the SABIT program.
- A SABIT alumnus from Kyrgyz Republic reported being involved in the Antimonopoly Authority of Kyrgyz Republic's decision to ban the import of products containing xylitol sweetener, which was proven to have negative side effects on health.
- A senior manager of an agribusiness company in Kyrgyz Republic reported that after his U.S. experience, he contributed to consolidating the agro-processing industry and to creating a

⁹⁸ Of these entities, 47.6 percent are registered in the capital.

⁹⁹ <http://cbd.minjust.gov.kg/act/view/ru-ru/100172>.

business association in Kyrgyz Republic. He also reported planning to design and implement a new, medium-term agro-industrial program, subject to the securing of financial support from the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic.

- A SABIT alumnus reported working with the Tajik government to develop a business-friendly tax code. According to official reports, the Government of Tajikistan made tax reform a major priority, having identified that an effective and service-oriented tax administration is essential to ensuring a healthy business environment and promoting economic growth. However, group discussions conducted with national associations revealed that private entrepreneurs were very skeptical about the government's position on tax code reforms.
- Based on the knowledge and experience obtained through the SABIT program in the United States, a Kyrgyz alumnus reported drafting 40 amendments to the existing transport legislation. Ten of these were incorporated into the legislation, regulating the tax incentives scheme regarding vehicles and transportation.
- Another SABIT alumnus also developed and promoted the System of Classification of the Hotels and Housing in the Republic of Tajikistan adopted by the State Agency in 2013 as national standards.

All participants interviewed in the course of the evaluation reported that the program had a major impact on the way they worked and how they ran their businesses upon returning to Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic, including increased personal and professional confidence. Stakeholders reported both tangible and intangible benefits arising from their participation. Intangible benefits reported by Tajik beneficiaries coincided with those reported by SABIT participants from Kyrgyz Republic (e.g., extraordinary experience and opening new horizons). The SABIT alumni interviewed in both countries confirmed that the program helped to create a very positive image of the United States, both in cultural terms and as a potential trade partner. Regarding the internship experience in the United States, stakeholders offered the following descriptions:

- “Life-changing.”
- “A dream come true.”
- “A positive cultural shock.”
- “Destroyed all negative stereotypes we used to have about Americans.”
- “Opened up a bright unbounded perspective on life.”
- “Democracy at work.”
- “The huge uncontested success of the American way of life translates into a great economy and high quality of social life.”

During the in-person interviews, some program beneficiaries confirmed that their SABIT experience had been put into practice and offered the following examples:

- After returning home, a Kyrgyz alumnus of the Energy Efficiency in Construction Program delivered a presentation on energy-efficient technologies to the Association of Young Entrepreneurs, which unites about 500 professionals across different industries.
- An alumnus from Tajikistan reported translating good agricultural practice (GAP)¹⁰⁰ and HACCP brochures and manuals obtained during his internship and distributing these materials in Tajikistan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan. He also helped to introduce and adopt GAP and HACCP in two agro-enterprises in Tajikistan.
- A SABIT beneficiary of 2013 hosted multiple seminars and lectures on IP in Kyrgyz Republic, including seminars entitled Legal Protection of Industrial Property (April 2017), Applying for an Invention and the Issues of Commercialization (April 2017), and The Role of Intellectual Property in Entrepreneurship (2015 to 2017). The aforementioned contribution was largely

¹⁰⁰ GAP is a certification system for agriculture, specifying procedures that must be implemented to create food for consumers or further processing that is safe and wholesome, using sustainable methods.

attributable to the information received during the meetings with the U.S. Patent Office, organized within the course of the SABIT program.

- An alumna from Kyrgyz Republic hoped to apply the knowledge she acquired in United States in her home country. However, after her internship, she realized that legislative amendments were required in Kyrgyz Republic in order to develop the tourism sector. The alumna started raising relevant issues at different levels in pursuit of state support for the drafting and adoption of appropriate legislative amendments.
- Two SABIT alumni pointed to the innovative, energy-efficient approaches they learned about in the construction of residential and industrial buildings and the growing global tendency toward green energy (e.g., solar panels and wind-power generators). They pointed out that such energy-saving technologies had not yet been utilized in either country. After taking part in the SABIT program, a Kyrgyz alumnus reported expanding his plans to produce environmentally friendly insulating material.

Conclusions on Evaluation Question 2

Assess the extent to which, over time, SABIT has been able to influence directly a critical mass of business leaders in targeted industries.

The SABIT program neither created a pool nor directly influenced the “critical mass” of business leaders in the targeted countries. However, SABIT did contribute to building the capacity of selected private entrepreneurs and, helped to build a network of critically thinking leaders prepared to acquire new knowledge and advance their businesses. By comparing the number of business leaders trained by SABIT from 2007 to 2017 (205 from Tajikistan and 129 from Kyrgyz Republic) with the number of private enterprises registered (187,112 in Tajikistan [2017 data] and 707,200 in Kyrgyz Republic [2019 data]) it is clear that SABIT’s alumni cannot be counted as critical mass in quantitative or qualitative terms.

It is unlikely that the current SABIT program business model will directly influence a critical mass of business leaders. Although indirect influence through knowledge-sharing is realistic, the current business model does not efficiently safeguard even an indirect influence on a critical mass of leaders. The model lacks a multiplier effect in the targeted business community, namely because no follow-up, institutionalized, knowledge-sharing mechanism was developed to make the model self-sustainable (i.e., no longer requiring TA).

Evaluation Question 3

What ways could SABIT amplify the results and positive effects of its program in the region?

The desk review and in-person interviews confirmed that the SABIT program had a regional focus.¹⁰¹ Overall, from 2007 to 2017, the SABIT program provided training and internship opportunities to 1,233 beneficiaries from the six countries targeted in this evaluation (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Ukraine, and Tajikistan).¹⁰² In-person interviews conducted in Tajikistan and

¹⁰¹ “For the most part, SABIT programs in Eurasia are regionally focused rather than country-specific. Therefore, programs will generally have representatives from three to twelve Eurasian countries in each program. This allows participants to establish business relationships with their colleagues from neighboring countries and other former Soviet republics. Nearly every participant reports that such cross-border contact is one of the most significant results of program participation,” SABIT ABR for Kyrgyz Republic, 2015. “...These regional delegations also include participation from Russians from the private sector. We have had these regional delegations since the beginning of our programs in 1995 and we have not had any issues with the inclusion of countries which are in some state of conflict, such as Armenia and Azerbaijan, Georgia and Russia, and now, Ukraine and Russia,” SABIT ABR for Tajikistan, 2016.

¹⁰² The statistics about the total number of SABIT participants in all post-Soviet countries will be provided in a second report that will address the program results in four other countries targeted in this evaluation (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine).

Kyrgyz Republic reconfirmed that the regional focus was highly valued by the participants. Findings reconfirmed throughout the research included the following:

- According to key informants, SABIT united entrepreneurs and provided a unique opportunity to key specialists to build and communicate with a business network across countries and regions.
- The program enabled comparisons between different business systems and climates, particularly between planned economies (e.g., the Soviet Union) and market-oriented economies (e.g., the United States) according to most of the informants.
- Approximately 97 percent (176 out of 181) of online survey respondents said they had shared the knowledge they acquired with others, and about 92 percent (166 out of 181) of respondents confirmed having applied the knowledge they acquired during the internship.
- Most interviewees were positive about the application and transfer of knowledge acquired through their SABIT participation. SABIT participants contributed to the amendment of legal frameworks, introduced new business practices, and participated in adoption of new standards at state level in several cases.
- Overall, 27 SABIT participants reported establishing 120 business contacts with representatives of U.S.-based organizations after the program.
- Approximately 74 percent (80 out of 108) of private entrepreneurs interviewed in this evaluation confirmed that they established new trade or business contacts across the region and with neighboring countries.¹⁰³
- Overall, 77.8 percent (84 out of 108) of the respondents established new business contacts within their country of domicile.¹⁰⁴ (See **Table 12.**)

Table 12: Survey Respondents' Feedback on Business Contacts Established

Type of Contact	Confirmed	Number of Contacts/ Cooperation Established
New business contacts in the United States	25.0% (27 out of 108)	120
New business contacts across the region and with neighboring countries	74.1% (80 out of 108)	807
New business contacts inside country of domicile	77.8% (84 out of 108)	1,533

Source: IBTCI dataset, 2020.

The majority of survey respondents supported the idea that the SABIT program sponsor its alumni to participate in regional trade and business development conferences, and to increase the duration of technical visits to U.S. host organizations (

¹⁰³ 70 respondents reported establishing 807 business contacts.

¹⁰⁴ 67 out of 84 reported establishing 1,533 new business contacts inside their country of domicile.

Table 13). Such initiatives would increase the program’s effectiveness to advance regional cooperation and trade.

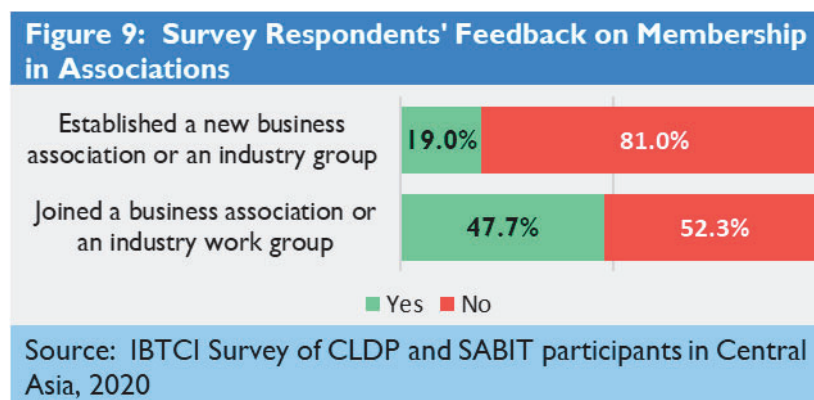
Table 13: Survey Respondents' Feedback on Advancing Regional Cooperation

Type of cooperation	Frequency	Percentage
Sponsor SABIT alumni to participate in international business conferences and/or trade fairs in business sectors of focus	101	15.9%
Organize individual internships for business	74	11.6%
Increase duration of technical visits with the U.S. host agencies	72	11.3%
Maintain the database of U.S. business contacts disaggregated by business sector and industry	69	10.8%
Update SABIT alumni on legal issues (laws and regulations) related to the trade between the domicile country, countries within the region, and/or the United States	61	9.6%
Updates on policy changes that could be required to improve trade between domicile country, countries within the region, and/or the United States	60	9.4%
Updates on industry information on regional and/or U.S. trade-related issues	51	8.0%
Arrange delegations from the same country	49	7.7%
Continue diversifying targeted sectors	46	7.2%
Increase participation of government officials from the targeted country	32	5.0%
Other	21	3.3%
Total	636	100%

Source: IBTCI Dataset, 2020.

Of SABIT beneficiaries, 57 percent (85 out of 149) did not know whether there was SABIT alumni association and/or community functioning in their country of residence or in the Central Asia region at all. Approximately 47 percent¹⁰⁵ of respondents said that they joined an industrial association as a result of their participation in the SABIT program (**Figure 9**). An in-depth interview confirmed that SABIT alumni activities are administered by a SABIT coordinator employed full-time and located in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

In-depth interviews with SABIT beneficiaries verified that, in many cases, the beneficiaries were not taking part in SABIT alumni association activities due to financial and/or time constraints and a lack of information on the events. In order to stimulate networking and collaboration among program alumni, the



U.S. Embassy in Tajikistan subcontracted the National Association of Woman Entrepreneurs of Tajikistan to create an online platform for alumni of both the SABIT program and CLDP. However, the alumni database was not shared with the association due to data privacy concerns. The association opened a Facebook page for program alumni, in addition to the USG-administered page.

Conclusions on Evaluation Question 3

¹⁰⁵ 42 out of 88.

What ways could SABIT amplify the results and positive effects of its program in the region?

The SABIT program contributed to development of a regional network of business leaders. Its actions amplified its results and produced positive effects in the region. For example, the SABIT Facebook page is followed by more than 11,000 people and provides a great opportunity for disseminating and magnifying the positive impact of the program. In addition, the SABIT alumni association is partially acknowledged by the alumni as a potential opportunity for building joint regional initiatives.

SABIT alumni confirmed that the program provided a unique opportunity to build and communicate with a business network across countries and regions. However, they also noted that its business model does not have an efficient alumni support system to explore new business, promote knowledge sharing, and generate opportunities for cooperation.

Evaluation Question 4

What are the strengths and weaknesses of SABIT's current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium to longer-term effects of their activities? With its business model, what options does SABIT have to enhance its monitoring and evaluation of its activities?

A review of SABIT ABRs for Tajikistan and Kyrgyz Republic from 2007 to 2009 provide limited evidence of a formal M&E system. The 2007 ABR does include measurable output and outcome indicators. The Evaluation Team did not find evidence of a TOC developed for SABIT interventions.

The 2010 ABRs for each country made a generic reference to M&E: "We have the participants fill out feedback that notes what they intend to do with the training they have received and use these to improve our programming. Moreover, they are used for following up with the alumni throughout the years to see how they have used their training as they had planned."¹⁰⁶

SABIT maintains contact with US companies, conducts program reviews, utilizes feedback forms and surveys but not as part of an overall M&E system. SABIT ABRs for 2012 and 2013 stipulate that, "SABIT conducts two primary evaluations on a continual basis. First, all departing groups give written feedback to SABIT before departing home; and second, SABIT conducts telephone, e-mail, and in-person follow-up at regular intervals after participants have returned home and had some time to use the knowledge and skills gained during SABIT training."¹⁰⁷ ABRs for 2014 note, "A survey was sent this summer to a wide sample of our more than 5,000 alumni. From this sample, an auditor or evaluator will be able to follow up with alumni and evaluate the results of the program over the past decade at least."¹⁰⁸

ABRs for 2015 state that, "We have started the process for having an external evaluation, gathering the raw data that we will need to have the program and alumni successes evaluated by an outside USG agency or firm. We planned on getting a contract in FY 15 but were not able to do so. We are planning another SurveyMonkey survey in Q2 of FY 16 to gather additional data."¹⁰⁹ ABRs for 2016 confirm that no external evaluation was conducted in 2016: "SABIT did not carry out an independent evaluation in 2016."¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ SABIT ABRs for Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan (2010).

¹⁰⁷ SABIT ABRs for Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan (2012, 2013, 2014).

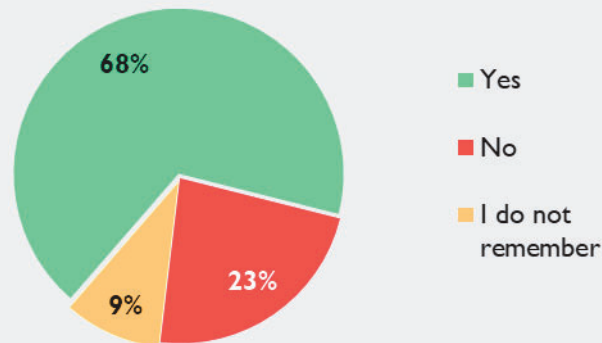
¹⁰⁸ SABIT ABRs for Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan (2014).

¹⁰⁹ SABIT ABRs for Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan (2015).

¹¹⁰ SABIT ABRs for Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan (2016).

The majority of survey respondents (68 percent) confirmed that they were contacted by the SABIT team to gather their feedback on the program (**Figure 10**). This echoes the findings of in-person interviews conducted in both countries. The majority of interviewees also confirmed that they completed questionnaires after the internship, although no further follow-up inquiries were noted in this regard.

Figure 10: Survey Respondents' Reply on the SABIT M&E System (whether they were contacted)



Source: IBTCI Survey of CLDP and SABIT participants in Central Asia, 2020

The Evaluation Team did not find evidence that feedback forms completed by the participants were actually analyzed. SABIT program reports simply summarize activities conducted during the internship in the United States. None of the SABIT program team members¹¹¹ confirmed that the data shared through these feedback forms had been synthesized and framed in an internal evaluation report. The analysis of the functional responsibilities of the SABIT coordinator in Central Asia revealed that about 50 percent of the time was allocated to recruitment and processing of SABIT beneficiaries; the other 50 percent was shared between program marketing (20 percent) and follow-up arrangements (30 percent). However, follow-up arrangements did not take into account any fully fledged evaluation activities. Instead, these arrangements consisted of assisting the SABIT alumni network meetings, seminars, and receptions; selecting potential success stories; conducting short interviews with SABIT alumni to verify the success stories; submitting the stories to the SABIT team in Washington, D.C., for further verification; and maintaining an up-to-date database of SABIT alumni.

In 2016, the U.S. Congress passed FATAA,¹¹² which created guidelines for monitoring and evaluation of U.S. foreign assistance initiatives. SABIT's ABRs for 2017 addressed FATAA's provisions and officially verified that no external evaluation was ever conducted: "SABIT has not had an external evaluation conducted in several years (the most recent is 2004)." However, the ABRs confirmed that SABIT's process of becoming compliant with FATAA regulations had begun: "[W]e are working with the FATAA compliance contractor at State. We are requesting funding for an outside evaluation to take place no later than 2019."¹¹³ In order to assess the progress made in this regard, the Evaluation Team reviewed the program's ABRs for the following year. The program's ABR narratives for 2019, for the first time, incorporated M&E-related components including purpose-level outcome monitoring indicators, evaluations and assessments, and public posting of evaluations. Further analysis revealed certain shortcomings in the M&E system. For example, the purpose-level outcome monitoring indicators listed generic indicators such as those below:

Economic Growth

- Business growth of program alumni (increased revenues or job creation at alumni enterprises)
- Promotion/new position of greater responsibility
- Alumni opening a new company/organization
- U.S. exports: Are they buying from a U.S. source, therefore maintaining contact with U.S. companies?

¹¹¹ SABIT has a small staff of three employees in Washington, D.C. and a regional coordinator in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

¹¹² <https://congress.gov/114/plaws/publ191/PLAW-114publ191.pdf>.

¹¹³ SABIT ABR for Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan (2017).

- Contracts with U.S. companies, including distribution or representation agreements and joint venture or licensing agreements
- Scientific agreements and joint work
- Implementation of new concepts – anything from human resources to accounting software
- Product registration
- Standards and certification
- Business relationships between alumni

Civil Society

- Participation in the legislative process, individually or through an association
- Improvements in business environment through direct work with the government, associations, or the political process
- Election/appointment to political office
- Association activity or expansion
- Participation in industry conferences or publications

None of these indicators meet the S.M.A.R.T.¹¹⁴ criteria; they are not specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, or time bound. No reference was made to the outcome indicators and the logical framework of the SABIT program. In-depth interviews conducted with the program team revealed a need to build the capacity of the staff in relation to M&E.

Conclusions on Evaluation Question 4

What are the strengths and weaknesses of SABIT's current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium to longer-term effects of their activities? With its business model, what options does SABIT have to enhance its monitoring and evaluation of its activities?

SABIT's M&E system was developed over its implementation period but the system remains at a nascent stage and lacks a monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) plan. Neither internal nor external evaluations have ever been conducted. The program lacks accountability. Its M&E approach is limited to questionnaires being filled out after internships; these results have never been synthesized into a full-scale report. There was a follow-up mechanism developed, with success stories being selected and informants interviewed on the basis of the applications and feedback forms they had completed. However, no holistic analysis of the program's achievements (mid- and long-term) have ever been conducted and no lessons-learned documents have been prepared to record the needed improvements. Neither financial nor human resources were ever allocated for conducting full-scale M&E activities. With regard to learning aspects of the program benefits, the program disseminated information internally about selected success stories that resulted from its activities.

Evaluation Question 5

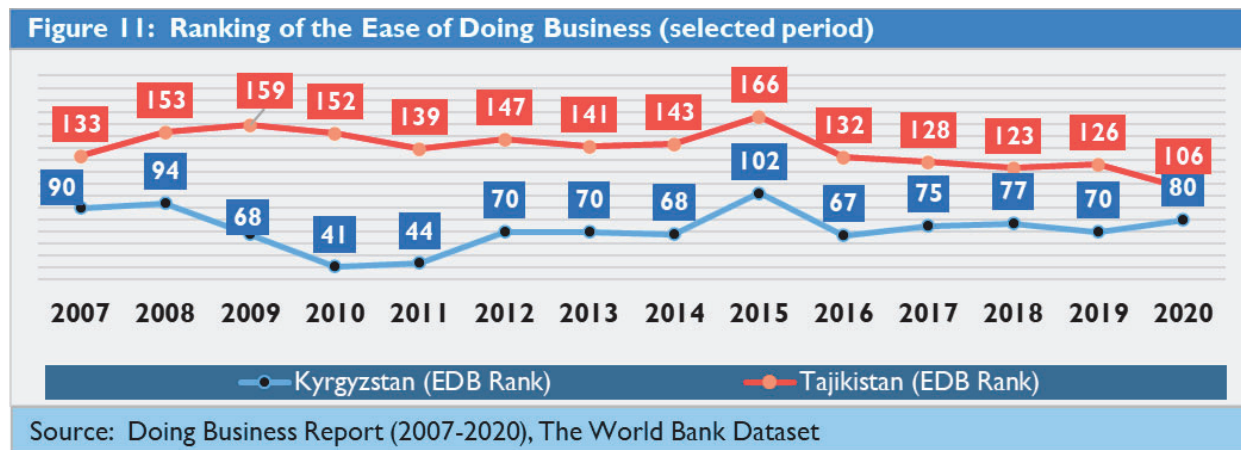
Assess the effectiveness of SABIT's process for selecting industries to target, with a focus on how well they are aligned with posts' Integrated Country Strategies or equivalent strategy documents for any given time, and inclusivity of other actors at post in the decision-making process.

¹¹⁴ S.M.A.R.T – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant/Realistic, Time Bound.

The evaluation team drew information from the targeted countries' Ease of Doing Business (EDB)¹¹⁵ ranking, Gross National Income (GNI), and Corruption Perception Index (CPI)¹¹⁶ ranking¹¹⁷ to address this evaluation question. The Evaluation Team also reviewed the ICSs, which articulate U.S. priorities in a given country, the changes in its business environment, and the protection of property rights in the targeted countries during the time period covered by the evaluation.

Business Environment in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan

World Bank data indicate that Kyrgyz Republic, a lower middle-income country according to 2019 data, improved its EDB ranking from 90th in 2007 to 80th in 2020. Tajikistan, classified as a lower-income country in 2019 data, ranked 106th in 2020.¹¹⁸ This demonstrates a less-favorable business environment than in Kyrgyz Republic (**Figure 11**).¹¹⁹ The CPI ranking for Kyrgyz Republic gradually improved from 150th in 2007 to 126th in 2020. Tajikistan fell from 150th in 2007 to 153rd in 2020.



From 2007 to 2019, SABIT trained Tajik and Kyrgyz beneficiaries in all dedicated sectors (**Table 14**). Overall, 20.5 percent¹²⁰ of the trained Tajik participants worked in energy and mining or in agriculture. The concentration of participants in these sectors was similar for Kyrgyz Republic (24 out of 129).

Feedback from U.S. embassy staff in the targeted countries indicated that none of them had been involved in selecting the sectors to be supported by the SABIT program. Embassy staff instead held more of an administrative and supporting role on the ground. Likewise, none of the SABIT alumni confirmed having ever taken part in a needs assessment conducted by the SABIT team.

¹¹⁵ The EDB is an annual report produced by the World Bank to assess the regulations (across quantitative indicators covering 12 components of the business environment) that enhance business activities in 190 economies and those that constrain it.

¹¹⁶ The CPI is published by Transparency International and scores countries on how corrupt their governments are believed to be. It ranks 180 countries (180 = highly corrupt).

¹¹⁷ These indicators, introduced by the World Bank, are widely used by governments, international organizations, and bilateral aid agencies for both analytical and operational purposes. For example, governments in Europe and the United States use these rankings to set rules regarding potential trade access for countries.

¹¹⁸ A lower rank is associated with more favorable business environment, e.g., Rank 1 = Most business-friendly environment.

¹¹⁹ A study contains quantitative measures of regulations for starting a business, dealing with construction permits, employing workers, registering property, getting credit, protecting investors, taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts and getting an electricity connection

¹²⁰ 42 out of 205.

Table 14: Breakdown of SABIT Participants by Sector and Country (2007–2017)

Sector	SABIT Participants from Tajikistan (% of total participants in the country)	SABIT Participants from Kyrgyz Republic (% of total participants in the country)
Transport Infrastructure	10.2%	14.0%
Transportation and Logistics	4.4%	1.6%
Industry (agriculture, food and wine, other)	18.0%	18.6%
Energy and Mining	20.5%	14.7%
Services and Hospitality	11.2%	15.5%
Healthcare Management	14.1%	15.5%
Municipal Services	3.9%	1.6%
Business Management	5.9%	3.9%
Business Services Development (Associations)	6.3%	4.7%
Governance	5.4%	10.1%

Source: SABIT Dataset, 2020.

Kyrgyz Republic: Strategic Priorities and the SABIT Typology

From 2007 to 2010, Kyrgyz participants took part in a range of trainings:

- Transport infrastructure (airport administration and road construction)
- Energy and mining
- Service and hospitality (tourism and hotel management)
- Industry (agriculture and beverage products processing and packaging)
- Business service development (associations of hotels and restaurants)
- Healthcare services (hospital administration)
- Governance (IPR)
- Municipal services (water resource management)

According to the ICS for Kyrgyz Republic, IP protection measures are not yet well-developed: “While the Kyrgyz Republic has a robust body of laws, regulations, and rules governing protection of IPR, and while the country is a signatory to several international treaties on the subject, enforcement remains problematic.”¹²¹

The selected sectors match with the following priority areas stipulated in the CDS of the Kyrgyz Republic for 2007 to 2010:¹²²

- Economic and trade potential enhancement with a focus on nine key sectors (energy, mining, agriculture, SMEs, construction, tourism, transport, communication and information, and innovation technologies)
- Combating corruption through political and public administration reforms
- Human and social development
- Provision of environmental sustainability

¹²¹ ICS: Kyrgyz Republic, 2019.

¹²² http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/prgm/cph/experts/kyrgyzstan/documents/CDS.2007_2010.pdf

In 2011 to 2012, following changes to the Kyrgyz Government system, the SABIT program continued to support traditionally important sectors of the country through the provision of internship opportunities in the following SABIT areas: transport infrastructure (focusing on airport development); transportation and logistics (focusing on cargo transportation services); industry (focusing on fruit and vegetable processing and packaging); service and hospitality (focusing on tourism); healthcare management (focusing on hospital administration); and municipal services (focusing on water resource management). In 2012, the program also started to build national capacity for energy efficiency in construction, a national priority identified in 2013 when Kyrgyz Republic enforced the Law on Energy Efficiency of Buildings. SABIT continued working on governance (focusing on IP commercialization) and business services development (focusing on SME associations). USAID also supported the SME-focused agenda and implemented the Women's Leadership in Small and Medium Enterprises Program from 2012 to 2015.

From 2012 to 2017, SABIT supported Kyrgyz participants from various sectors including agriculture, transportation, energy and mining, healthcare management, service and hospitality (tourism), information technology start-ups, and IPR protection. Elsewhere, the National Sustainable Development Strategy for the Kyrgyz Republic outlined the following key development priorities over a five-year period (2013 to 2017):

- Supporting healthcare reforms
- Improving business environment through managing state property and PPP, development of SME and development of IP and innovations
- Developing strategic industries, namely, agro-sector, energy and mining, tourism and service industry, and transport and communication

The Kyrgyz Government adopted the National Food Security and Nutrition Program (2015 to 2017) to ensure food availability through the development of the agricultural sector and the regulation of food imports and exports. As of October 2019, all Kyrgyz Republic air carriers remained banned from entering the airspace of the European Union (EU) because they failed to meet EU regulatory oversight standards.¹²³

Tajikistan: Strategic Priorities and the SABIT Typology

The business climate remains difficult in Tajikistan, both for domestic and foreign investors. In 2019, the U.S. Department of State reported that, "The main obstacles to increased investment flows are Tajikistan's authoritarian policies, geographic isolation, bureaucratic and financial hurdles, widespread corruption, a dysfunctional banking sector, non-transparent tax system, and countless business inspections."¹²⁴ Tajikistan's national development strategy, 2016 through 2030,¹²⁵ acknowledged its unfavorable business climate as one of the obstacles hindering national development. The strategy highlights relevant challenges including excessive and inefficient regulation, corruption, burdensome taxes and administration thereof, a high level of monopolization, and weak protection of property rights and the rights of entrepreneurs. Other challenges include water supply systems that are outdated and fail to meet the population's needs. The country only uses 17 percent to 20 percent of its water resources, and in more than half of the rural areas there is no centralized water supply and sewerage system. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO) confirm these findings and claim that Tajikistan's water supply is among the poorest in the world.

¹²³ The EU Air Safety List as of 2019, https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/air-safety-list_en.pdf

¹²⁴ 2019 Investment Climate Statements: Tajikistan, U.S. DOS.

¹²⁵ https://nafaka.tj/images/zakoni/new/strategiya_2030_en.pdf

SABIT participants represented the following sectors: transport infrastructure (10.2 percent), industry (18 percent), energy and mining (20.5 percent), service and hospitality (11.2 percent), and healthcare management (14.1 percent).

Conclusions on Evaluation Question 5

Assess the effectiveness of SABIT's process for selecting industries to target, with a focus on how well they are aligned with posts' Integrated Country Strategies or equivalent strategy documents for any given time, and inclusivity of other actors at post in the decision-making process.

SABIT's selection of industries in Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan were in line with the posts' ICSs and national priorities outlined in other relevant national strategic documents. The team found no evidence that SABIT actively engaged U.S. embassy staff, the SABIT regional coordinator or alumni associations, AmCham offices, national governments, and/or any national professional and business associations in the selection process. Apparently, the selection was mainly guided by desk research and by ICS documents.

The Evaluation Team plans to further explore the way in which industries were selected in all six countries (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Ukraine, and Tajikistan) before making a final conclusion on the efficiency of SABIT business model in this regard.

Evaluation Recommendations

On the basis of the aforementioned findings and conclusions, the Evaluation Team has developed preliminary recommendations that will be adjusted after the Evaluation Team completes its analysis in the remaining four targeted countries (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine).

Recommendations for CLDP Evaluation Question 1: To what extent has the CLDP business model of technical assistance supporting trade and other commercial reforms in the region been effective in achieving its aims?

- 1.1. Although currently deemed a success CLDP should reassess the effectiveness of bilateral, country-specific interventions within a larger context of TA provided by international actors and existing political and administrative limitations. It is advisable to focus (or continue to do this where it is not already done) on the top-priority topics in line with the country strategy and with consideration of eventual synergy with other U.S.-funded interventions and/or other donor-funded activities. Explore opportunities for the cooperation with local counterparts such as training centers and professional associations.
- 1.2. CLDP should consider utilizing more consultancies tailored to the needs of beneficiaries, possibly at the expense of traditional information-sharing workshops. Also consider including more hands-on opportunities with capacity-building efforts.
- 1.3. CLDP could further expand the practice of regional knowledge-sharing/capacity-building events that would bring together representatives of several countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.
- 1.4. CLDP should consider extending the TA planning horizon from one year to at least three years, with consideration given to cost-effectiveness of anticipated interventions and clear communication with the assisted organizations about status of planned activities.
- 1.5. Assisted organizations should be more actively included into the planning/design phase of the CLDP technical assistance model, and in its implementation (with possible pro bono or in-kind contributions from assisted organizations). CLDP should work with assisted

organizations to strengthen institutionalization of approaches promoted by the program. The best existing practice in this area should be supported and promoted during CLDP events. The selection of participants and the role of CLDP in the selection should be reassessed and renegotiated with the assisted governments and organizations. Following the participants' suggestion, sending invitations to a set of preselected and approved personnel may be recommended.

- 1.6. To strengthen institutional memory of the assisted organizations, CLDP could consider the following approaches: use capacities of operational training centers under assisted agencies; support an elaboration and adoption of standard operating procedures, manuals, and instructions based on new approaches; and renegotiate the standards of participants' selection. Inclusion of the relevant professional associations into a list of participants also could be beneficial.
- 1.7. An increased visibility, Program branding, and improved communication with assisted organizations may be recommended through the following:
 - Introduction of CLDP branding subcomponent into all Program's activities
 - Development and implementation of a communications plan for each assisted country, starting with counterparts/beneficiaries mapping and including identification of communication channels, communication points and protocol, and dissemination of M&E results
 - Possible inclusion of AmChams and/or the selected national professional and business associations into communications and knowledge management schemes to advance the program's visibility and promotion among public servants and professional communities in the assisted countries
- 1.8. Taking into consideration the important role played by the international donor community in the TA to the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, and relatively limited CLDP capacities in these two countries, strengthened coordination and cooperation with key development actors may contribute to the increased effectiveness of CLDP interventions through the following:
 - Regular revision of international TA initiatives in the target country
 - Coordination with other development initiatives funded by the USG as well as other donor agencies and IFI
 - Identification of unique opportunities to CLDP based upon the USG strategic priorities and Program's comparative advantages

Recommendations for CLDP Evaluation Question 2: To what extent has CLDP tailored its activities/model to adapt to country contexts, and if it has, have these adaptations been effective?

- 2.1. CLDP should continue tailoring its TA model to the development needs of Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan in consultation with governments of these countries and organizations to be assisted. Inclusion of leading national professional and business associations in the consultation process may also contribute to better Program tailoring. CLDP may consider refocusing bilateral, country-specific interventions from the information-sharing workshops (one-off events focused on a broader group of beneficiaries) to a strategically well-tailored series of interwoven interventions and consultancies.
- 2.2. Support to the regional WGs should be continued. Ideally, CLDP should develop and introduce a framework/protocol for direct communication with WG participants and their line managers between WG meetings. The issue of continuing intermittent or full-time presence of the preselected group of experts should be discussed with the assisted

organizations. Special attention should be paid to support the beneficiaries in adapting WG recommendations to national conditions.

- 2.3. CLDP should improve its communications strategy: better communication between CLDP and assisted organizations could contribute to more effective tailoring of CLDP interventions.
- 2.4. CLDP should consider incorporation of gender aspects into CLDP programming, including design of specific activities.

Recommendations for CLDP Evaluation Question 3: *What is the relationship between the costs vs. benefits of the CLDP technical assistance model? What other business model options might increase results?*

- 3.1 CLDP should start considering the cost-efficiency of its interventions for the future programming. To support this consideration, clear criteria of acceptable cost-efficiency and a methodology of its assessment may be developed and adopted by the Program.
- 3.2 A full-scale cost–benefit analysis is a lengthy and costly tool requiring specific skills. Taking into consideration additional time and resources needed for conducting a full-scale cost–benefit analysis, CLDP management may start with introduction of a simple matrix, bringing together direct and indirect benefits of intervention under consideration and related direct costs, to demonstrate anticipated “return on investment.”
- 3.3 Other feasible approaches to increasing cost-efficiency of CLDP activities may include the following cost-savings solutions:
 - Cooperate with other U.S.-funded initiatives in the targeted country.
 - Coordinate with other donor-funded programs and projects.
 - Use available local resources such as existing training centers under assisted organizations and national professional associations.
 - Include assisted organizations into the TA planning process (with possible pro bono contributions from assisted organizations).
 - Select cost-effective modalities (e.g., small seminar vs. big workshop, follow-up assistance after introductory workshops, remote and on-site consultations on topics identified in consultation with assisted entity, organization of site visits to less expensive countries with good international practices).
 - Provide support in creating professional libraries/e-libraries, translation and dissemination of relevant materials, etc.
 - Incorporate at least some elements of cost–benefit analysis in the identification and selection of specific CLDP interventions.

Recommendations for CLDP Evaluation Question 4: *What are the strengths and weaknesses of CLDP’s current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium to longer-term effects of their activities?*

- 1.1 Switching from the one-off model to a mid- or long-term TA model will allow CLDP to develop a forward-looking logical framework and TOC of the program (see Annex 4 CLDP/SABIT Theory of Change). Doing so would enable the program to develop a more comprehensive MEL system, including the design and implementation of evaluations to guide future program development.
- 1.2 CLDP should consider revising its current MEL practice and further developing the MEL system for activities implemented in the region (for both country-specific and regional

interventions). Revisions would likely focus on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, coherence, and contribution to anticipated impact of activities.

- I.3 The CLDP M&E system should be further formalized and institutionalized with a clear indication of its key elements, such as the following: *What information is collected and analyzed? How often and by whom? When should information be reported, and by whom/to whom? How are M&E data incorporated in the CLDP project management cycle? Which resources are needed to make this system operational?* This process will require development of a detailed MEL plan in conjunction with the Department of State and the CLDP team.
- I.4 Additional efforts and resources are needed to organize a consistent and reliable archiving system to track CLDP activities conducted in the assisted countries and their participants and trainers/advisors with contact information for use in follow-up.
- I.5 Information collected from the beneficiaries of the CLDP events should be standardized, systematized, analyzed, and used for program planning and implementation. It is especially important to maintain beneficiary contact information.
- I.6 Evaluation of country-specific events should be improved, including medium and long-term feedback collection mechanisms from CLDP beneficiaries.
- I.7 CLDP should conduct periodic external evaluations to improve organizational learning.
- I.8 CLDP's MEL system improvement should be supported with allocation of additional resources to this purpose so as not to undermine its implementation.

Recommendations for SABIT Evaluation Question 1: To what extent has the SABIT business model been effective in achieving its aims? and for SABIT Evaluation Question 2: Assess the extent to which, over time, SABIT has been able to influence directly a critical mass of business leaders in targeted industries.

The Evaluation Team recommends that SABIT continue its interventions in the targeted countries with an adjustment to its business model. First and foremost, SABIT should strengthen its cooperation with national business and professional associations and AmCham in both countries. While the SABIT business model supports the development of business associations through the business service development segment of its typology, the associations' role as change agents in the targeted countries needs to be strengthened to play a more prominent role in improving the business environment in both countries. Furthermore, the SABIT program needs to explore and elaborate a knowledge-transfer mechanism through national associations to increase a critical mass of business leaders influenced by SABIT interventions. The knowledge-transfer scheme might include mandatory presentations conducted by SABIT alumni for members of national professional and business associations about their SABIT program and experience received.

Likewise, the Evaluation Team recommends more engagement of association and AmCham offices to improve the efficiency of the SABIT business model with regard to potential follow-up opportunities provided to alumni. For example, nearly 50 percent of SABIT participants highlighted the importance of lifting the program's regulation that bans recurring participation of SABIT alumni in the internship and confirmed their interest in covering internship fees; more than 20 percent confirmed their readiness to fully cover participation cost.

The Evaluation Team also recommends that SABIT engage more women entrepreneurs in its internship scheme, particularly members of business and professional associations, or associations of women entrepreneurs. It might also be useful to develop additional selection criteria and conduct mandatory site visits to the organizations represented by the application to assess their growth potential and contribution to business climate improvement.

Recommendations for SABIT Evaluation Question 3: *What ways could SABIT amplify the results and positive effects of its program in the region?*

While the Evaluation Team continues exploring the SABIT program in other targeted countries, it recommends several strategic approaches to strengthening the SABIT alumni association:

- Introduce a competitive grant scheme for SABIT alumni for conducting in-country and regional events with involvement of other business and professional associations, including AmCham, national state-sector representatives, and national chambers of commerce.
- Strengthen organizational structure of the SABIT alumni association and explore integrating it into other related USG and non-USG alumni associations to make sure it becomes a self-sustainable and fully operational entity.
- Explore cooperation and communication channels between members of the SABIT alumni association in Central Asia and other targeted countries of the SABIT program.
- Introduce grant opportunities for non-SABIT business and professional associations to stimulate cooperation with the SABIT alumni association in Central Asia and other targeted countries.

Recommendations for SABIT Evaluation Question 4: *What are the strengths and weaknesses of SABIT's current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium to longer-term effects of their activities? With its business model, what options does SABIT have to enhance its monitoring and evaluation of its activities?*

The Evaluation Team recommends the development of a results-based MEL system that is widely used to monitor and evaluate a range of interventions at all levels (i.e., project, program, policy, and strategy). Traditionally, a results-based MEL system incorporates key strategic elements; as such, the team recommends that SABIT take the following steps:

- Gather baseline data to describe the situation before the intervention (this data would vary depending upon the indicator).
- Develop the TOC for the annual SABIT intervention and carry out a stakeholder mapping exercise to include key stakeholders of the sectors assisted by SABIT in a specific year.
- Introduce outcome-level indicators.
- Select outcome indicators to measure SABIT's progress toward its overall objectives.
- Design data collection instruments for outputs and outcomes.
- Develop data-gathering methodology and tools focused on the perception of change among stakeholders.
- Secure systematic, annual reporting with more qualitative and quantitative information on the progress toward outcomes.
- Conduct MEL in conjunction with the strategic partners (i.e., organizations represented by SABIT beneficiaries, national business associations, relevant public agencies, and chambers of commerce).
- Capture information on success and failure in achieving the desired outcomes.

In order to properly tailor the results-based MEL system to SABIT program context, the Evaluation Team recommends focusing on two imperative work streams:

- Develop a detailed MEL plan for the SABIT program, which will include the M&E framework, target indicators, selection and agreement on outcome-level indicators, data gathering methods and tools, the roles and responsibilities of SABIT staff and partners in implementing the MEL plan, and the plan's timeline. The MEL plan should also incorporate a detailed communication and information dissemination strategy that will target U.S.-based and

national stakeholders. Once designed, implementation of the MEL plan should be mandatory and the plan should be referenced throughout the year. The MEL plan should be developed in close collaboration with the Department of State, U.S. embassies, and the SABIT team.

- Modify the program's existing TA model to reflect changes in MEL system. This modification entails changes in SABIT's business process, data gathering, and reporting scheme, all of which should be reflected in human and financial resources allocated for MEL activities.

Recommendations for SABIT Evaluation Question 5: Assess the effectiveness of SABIT's process for selecting industries to target, with a focus on how well they are aligned with posts' Integrated Country Strategies or equivalent strategy documents for any given time, and inclusivity of other actors at post in the decision-making process.

As a preliminary recommendation, the Evaluation Team advises that SABIT conduct periodic needs assessments with involvement of all relevant national and international stakeholders. Although ICSs and other national documents capture and reflect national priorities and development needs, the needs assessment remains a valuable tool for achieving several key objectives. The needs assessment will accomplish the following:

- It will attract more attention to the SABIT program and increase its visibility among public and private sectors of the targeted countries.
- It will allow the engagement of more stakeholders, thus increasing ownership of results.
- It will allow increased awareness of potential follow-up activities and will reenergize existing efforts to obtain additional funds for joint projects, advocate for change, and improve the role and level of involvement of business and professional associations.
- It can serve as a valuable tool for internal MEL activities because it will provide an opportunity to take a fresh look at problems and determine whether there are any areas of improvement (what is working well and what should be replicated).
- It is a good strategy for involving various relevant stakeholders in important activities, to improve coordination, and to consolidate resources.

Annexes

Annex 1	CLDP/SABIT Evaluation Terms of Reference
Annex 2	Methodology
Annex 3	Cost–benefit Framework
Annex 4	CLDP/SABIT Theories of Change
Annex 5	The List of Stakeholders, Institutions and Organizations Consulted
Annex 6	Data Gathering Tools

Annex I. CLDP/SABIT Evaluation Terms of Reference

Department of Commerce Evaluation of Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) and Special American Business Internship and Training Program (SABIT) Projects in Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia

Nature and Purpose of the Evaluation

This evaluation will review assistance projects carried out by two offices of the Department of Commerce (DOC) in Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia: The Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) and the Special American Business Internship Program (SABIT). The objective of the evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of these partners' past projects, and to inform future funding decisions of the Office of the Coordinator of Assistance to Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia (ACE) and to identify and apply lessons learned from the evaluation to future DOC programming in the region. This evaluation will be a performance evaluation. The intended audience is ACE, DOC, SCA, EUR, and U.S. embassies in Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia.

CLDP largely implements discrete, targeted, and time-limited technical assistance to recipient governments, with a focus on trade, including World Trade Organization accession and membership requirements. SABIT's programming involves sending private-sector, mid- to senior- level businessmen and women to the United States to learn about U.S. best practices. Delegations are regional (i.e., made up of participants from countries in Eurasia with AEECA funding provided to SABIT) and industry-specific. The program is similarly time-limited, though SABIT maintains an alumni network of past SABIT interns. ACE is interested in the effectiveness of both offices' foreign assistance models given their time-limited nature. This evaluation will help to identify the results of the CLDP's and SABIT's operations in the region over the past five years, including country-specific variations.

This evaluation will include the following countries/operating units : Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and regional CLDP programs in Central Asia. Actual countries included may change during the process of finalizing the work plan with the contractor, but the above countries are indicative of the number of countries and the sub-regions that will be included in this evaluation.

Background and Current Status of the Effort

This evaluation will focus on activities implemented by the DOC in Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia over a 10-year period from FY 2007 to FY 2017 with funding from ACE. Between FY 2007 and FY 2017, the Department of Commerce received over \$54 million in funding for SABIT and/or CLDP, covering the following operating units: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, the Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and regional funding for Central Asia (in the case of CLDP) . Of these funds, SABIT received over \$20.4 million, while CLDP received about \$33.7 million during this period.

Both DOC offices contribute to the following joint regional strategy objective and sub-objectives for Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia:

- Objective: Promote fair and reciprocal trade and advocate for US companies;
- Sub-Objective: Reduce barriers to trade and investment;
- Sub-Objective: Diversify the trade markets of South Central and Eastern Europe and the Caucasus.

CLDP

CLDP works closely with the International Trade Administration and other Commerce bureaus to support legal and economic reforms underway around the globe. With financial support from the USAID and the DOS, CLDP provides training and consultative services to lawmakers, regulators, judges and educators seeking to improve the legal environment for doing business in developing and post-conflict countries.

The business model used by CLDP for providing technical assistance to countries is primarily through government-to-government assistance that focuses on laws, regulations and administrative practices affecting domestic and foreign investment and trade, particularly international economic agreements,

foreign investment laws, finance, intellectual property rights, public procurement, product standards, electronic commerce, insurance regulation, regional economic integration and government ethics. CLDP professional skills development activities focus on building the knowledge base and practical skills needed to effectively utilize these evolving legal structures and to bring new participants and new ideas into the commercial marketplace.

CLDP activities address issues that are the highest priorities for US businesses interested in country or region, though it also consults with embassies in selecting the issues it will address as well. Programs typically include placing expert advisors with host government ministries for periods of time ranging from a week to a year, providing legal training and conducting skills workshops and bringing policymakers, regulators, educators and businesspeople to the US for individualized consultations or training programs.

In EUR and Central Asia, CLDP does not have permanent in-country representation at posts, with the recent exception of Ukraine, where CLDP has one individual resident at Embassy Kyiv to coordinate its programming. Otherwise, CLDP relies on consultations with posts in person and through long distance communication to determine what technical assistance it will provide in the region under the authorities of the ACE Coordinator.

SABIT

SABIT has built its business model on industry-specific training for business leaders from foreign assistance recipient countries in the region, though depending on the industry host country government officials may also be included. Training takes place over a two- to three-week period in the United States, with relevant US government agencies, industry associations, and leading US companies serving as the training providers. Participants travel to the locations of these entities throughout the United States, and interaction with US government is often at local, state, and federal levels. US public officials provide information on regulations and legislation relevant to the industry of focus, while industry association officials provide training on the importance of cooperation, the rule of civil society and advocacy. US host companies provide training on current industry trends, and business/management topics. As applicable, participants also usually take part in seminars learning about project management, association development, small to medium enterprise development, standards, etc.

SABIT has two coordinators, one each co-located with the Commercial Service in Kyiv and Almaty. SABIT does not maintain a presence at other posts, but works with the Political/Economic sections at posts, and the DOC's Commercial Service in Moscow, Almaty, and Kyiv, to select industries of focus and the participants for the program each year. While SABIT focuses its interaction with participants on the visit to the United States, SABIT maintains communications with past participants, and works with posts to ensure they are included in alumni events hosted by the embassy. SABIT also implements its own alumni events at posts on a limited basis.

Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions of interest to ACE and DOC are as follows:

CLDP:

1. To what extent has the CLDP business model of technical assistance supporting trade and other commercial reforms in the region been effective in achieving its aims?
2. To what extent has CLDP tailored its activities/model to adapt to country contexts, and if it has, have these adaptations been effective?
3. What is the relationship between the costs vs. benefits of the CLDP technical assistance model? What other business model options might increase results? Please assess costs of other options.
4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of CLDP's current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium to longer-term effects of their activities? With its business model, what options does CLDP have to enhance its M&E of its activities?

SABIT

1. To what extent has the SABIT business model been effective in achieving its aims?
2. Assess the extent to which, over time, SABIT has been able to influence directly a critical mass of business leaders in targeted industries.
3. What ways could SABIT amplify the results and positive effects of its program in the region?

4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of SABIT's current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium to longer-term effects of their activities? With its business model, what options does SABIT have to enhance its M&E of its activities?
5. Assess the effectiveness of SABIT's process for selecting industries to target, with a focus on how well they are aligned with posts' Integrated Country Strategies or equivalent strategy documents for any given time, and inclusivity of other actors at post in the decision-making process.

Evaluation Design and Data Collection Methods

The evaluation contractor will provide an experienced Evaluation Team Leader who is an expert on performance evaluation methods and project design. The contractor will also provide technical experts in trade facilitation and private firm development with experience of working on these issues in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The evaluation contractor will also engage local in-country research experts in the countries of focus who will identify any available data that pertains to measuring the changes and desired impacts identified in the evaluation questions above, and collect initial data prior to field visits by the expatriate team.

The evaluation will be completed in three phases. In Phase 1, the contractor will develop a typology of the themes of assistance that CLDP implemented in each target country over the past 10 years and will review their outputs and outcomes in connection to the critique of the business model that the evaluators will apply to each of those parts of the typology.

For SABIT, the contractor will develop a typology of the business sub-sectors that were targeted in each selected country, over the past 10 years, and will review the volume of businesses affected and broader outcomes in each of these business sub-sectors in connection with the evaluators' critique of the SABIT business model and its integration with other USG assistance to those business sub-sectors.

The evaluators will carry out a review of baseline indicators, performance targets and other primary written materials relevant to the typologies defined above. The contractor's in-country experts will collect data about the extent to which measurable changes in the behaviors of CLDP and SABIT trainees in reference to the baseline data and program indicators. In the case of SABIT, the expatriate evaluators should also gather data from US –based companies and government officials participating in the program during the period of performance to gauge performance in terms of ongoing professional relationships and trade/commercial ties with trainees. This data will then be reviewed by the expatriate team members, who will document their tentative conclusions and hypotheses as an inception report prior to their travel to the field.

During Phase 2, the expatriate Evaluation Team will divide its fieldwork between the countries of focus, but in the case of SABIT, will also conduct research involving U.S. companies and Federal, state, and local government officials, though likely at a lesser level of effort than the country field work. The Evaluation team members will undertake a series of interviews and focus groups in each country and with relevant US –based participants for SABIT to investigate the evaluation questions, and prove, disprove or alter their desk study hypotheses from the initial data review.

The evaluation contractor will propose a detailed methodology for the fieldwork. In proposing a detailed evaluation methodology, the contractor should take into account that DOC may not have collected baseline data, monitoring data that DOC has collected may not be complete, and/or data may not be focused at the outcome-level. At a minimum, the field interviews and site visits should include fact-finding and in-depth discussion with a representative sample of the following:

- Participants in SABIT and CLDP training events in the countries of focus;
- Embassy personnel with knowledge of an involvement in both programs;
- For SABIT, US –based participants from companies and federal, state, and local governments that have participated in the SABIT program by hosting and/or training SABIT “interns.”

The Evaluation Team will summarize their initial tentative findings, conclusions and recommendations in a group briefing for the US Ambassador, DCM, assistance coordinator, and others at posts with an interest or stake in the evaluation prior to their departure.

In Phase 3, as a desk effort after the completion of the fieldwork, the Evaluation Team will draft a full report on the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations and will submit this to ACE for review and comments no later than one month after return from the field. The Evaluation Team leader will provide a debrief to ACE and DOC, which can be in-person, or via DVC or teleconference, depending on logistics. ACE and DOC will review the draft report and provide consolidated comments within two weeks after receipt of the draft report. The contractor will then respond to any feedback and will finalize the evaluation report within two weeks after receipt of the feedback on the draft version.

Once the report has been finalized and approved by ACE, the Evaluation Team will hold and facilitate a planning workshop at the State Department or DOC. The main outcome of the workshop will be initial agreement on the part of DOS and DOC on follow-up action that the US government will make in regards to DOC programming in the region in response to the report. The evaluators should devise a workshop design that involves active learning, is engaging for participants, and can be completed within a three- to four-hour time frame at the maximum. The evaluators will document the discussion and outcomes of the workshop, and provide these notes to ACE in a Word file(s).

Evaluation Team

Size and composition: The Evaluation Team should consist of a Team Lead with senior-level experience in leading evaluations as well as two mid-level technical advisors/subject matter experts in private sector development and trade facilitation. The two mid-level technical advisors' expertise should also cover the use of training in delivering technical assistance in these areas. Finally, the teams should include at least one senior-level local evaluator/researcher/enumerator in each of the countries of focus, not including local interpreters. The Evaluation Team should include appropriate gender representation.

Qualifications: The required qualifications and experience of the Evaluation Team as a whole should be as follows:

- Evaluation methods and data collection skills (Team Leader)
- Technical competence in private sector business development and trade facilitation
- Work experience in the former Soviet Union
- Russian language skills
- Gender analysis skills
- Report writing skills
- Team management skills
- Effective and frequent communications with contract CORs and government technical representatives

Security Clearance: Security clearances are not required for members of the Evaluation Team. If this requirement should change, offerors should be prepared to obtain appropriate clearances post award, though ACE and DOC do not anticipate documents above the level of sensitive but unclassified (SBU) will require review. Contractor should meet DOS requirements for the handling and storage of any SBU documents received.

- *Proposed Personnel:* ACE fully expects that the individual team members identified in the proposal will be available to conduct the evaluation. At least 30 days prior to diverting any of the specified individuals to other programs or contracts (or as soon as possible, if an individual must be replaced, for example, as a result of leaving the employment of the contractor), the contractor shall notify the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) and the Contracting Officer (CO), and submit comprehensive justification for the diversion or replacement request (including proposed substitution(s)) to permit evaluation by the COR and CO of the impact on performance under this task order. The contractor shall not divert or otherwise replace any personnel without the written consent of the CO.

Timetable and Staff Time Allocations

The contractor shall complete the evaluation, with final report delivered, no later than six months after an award has been made. In their technical proposals, offerors should include a timetable for initial planning, data collection and analysis, report writing and final submission of the report. The timetable should be realistic given the vagaries of data collection, and should allow for sufficient time for DOS and DOC to

review draft deliverables, provide input, and revision if needed. In addition, a table of staffing days by task and team member should be included in the technical proposal.

Deliverables

The contractor will produce the following deliverables under an award to carry out this evaluation:

- *Evaluation Work Plan:* Once the contractor has signed the contract, the Evaluation Team will submit a detailed work plan for conducting the evaluation, including a timetable for submitting deliverables according to the three phases of the study.
- *Evaluation Design Proposal:* The contractor shall submit a detailed evaluation design stating how it will answer the evaluation questions, and the division of labor for various members of the team, including local consultants.
- *Progress Reports:* The contractor shall submit bi-weekly reports to ACE and DOC POCs on its progress in completing the evaluation work plan. These may be in the form of emails to the COR and government technical representative.
- *Weekly phone calls:* The contractor will schedule and coordinate logistics of a weekly call during the implementation of the evaluation with the COR and government technical representative, and designated POCs at DOC.
- *Evaluation Summary:* The contractor shall provide a publishable summary of the evaluation report, in addition to the full and final evaluation report. The contractor will write the summary for a public audience and it will not be included in the final evaluation report. The summary will be brief, not more than two pages and should not include confidential issues. It will include the title of the evaluation, date of the submission of the report, evaluation questions, data collection methods, key findings, recommendations, and use, if applicable.
- *Draft and Final Report:* Evaluation report shall be clear, concise, empirically grounded, and persuasive. ACE prefers brief, concise reports of no more than 15-25 pages (single-spaced). Details about research methodology, sampling, or research instruments shall be included as annexes. Given that the subjects of this evaluation are two distinct offices in DOC, the contractor should propose what it regards as the most effective organization of the report in terms of readability, clarity, and usefulness for end users, which will be subject to ACE's approval. Generally, the evaluation report shall contain the following items:
 - (a) Executive summary
 - (b) Description of the initiative, program, project of the activity
 - (c) Evaluation purpose and scope
 - (d) Evaluation design and data collection methods
 - (e) Data and findings
 - (f) Conclusions
 - (g) Recommendations
 - (h) Annexes:
 - a. The SOW
 - b. Research instruments
 - c. Details about data collection (sites visited, persons interviewed, nature of surveys, focus group conducted and documents reviewed.)
- *Evaluation highlights:* The contractor shall provide ACE with an evaluation highlights document of between four to eight pages, which expands on the executive summary but is significantly more concise than the evaluation report. The document shall cover all the main sections outlined above in the evaluation report, except annexes.
- *Workshop:* The contractor will also organize a workshop with key stakeholders in Washington, DC to discuss findings and recommendations, and to facilitate consensus on implications of the evaluation for future programming, and specific actions that ACE and/or DOC will take in response to the evaluation. The time for this workshop will be up to a half day.

Budget

Offerors shall submit a separate cost proposal itemizing costs for responding to this statement of work in the most cost effective way possible.

Logistics Support

ACE and DOC will provide the Evaluation Team with access to data and documents related to the projects of focus in this evaluation. Contractors will obtain their own visas and security clearances (if necessary), but ACE will assist team members in obtaining country clearances from the embassies involved in this evaluation. In-country logistics will be the primary responsibility of the Evaluation Team, including transportation, scheduling of appointments, and food and lodging. ACE, DOC, and the embassies, however, will provide contacts and contact information relevant to the evaluation to the Evaluation Team if needed, including with government ministries, civil society groups, program participants, and in the case of SABIT, US –based participants in the program. In most cases, security in the focus countries is sufficient that DOS does not anticipate that security transportation facilities will be required, but in the case of Tajikistan, security concerns may affect travel planning and the collection of data, and should be considered in consultation with the embassy when the evaluation design is being developed.

Also, in some countries, particularly in Central Asia, weather complications can interfere with logistics at certain times of the year, particularly if travel to interviewees outside of the capital is needed, and this should be taken into account if relevant in developing the field work schedule.

Annex 2. Methodology

Evaluation Team

The Evaluation Team consisted of the following international experts:

- Mr. Jim Phillips, Project Director;
- Mrs. Nelly Dolidze, Evaluation Team Leader;
- Mr. Alexander Groushevsky, Technical Advisor on Trade Facilitation;
- Mrs. Olga Moreva, Technical Advisor on Private-Sector Business and Training;
- Mr. Roman Pogojev, Evaluation Specialist; and
- Mr. Armando Rojas, Administrative and Logistical Assistant.

The Project Director, Evaluation Specialist, and Administrative and Logistical Assistant are full-time employees in IBTCI's head office. They oversee the team, and ensure quality assurance from beginning to end, including review, approval, and submission of all deliverables. The Evaluation Team Leader and Technical Advisors are consultants employed IBTCI for the purpose this evaluation.

Two local consultants, Mr. Talantbek Sakishev (the Kyrgyz Republic) and Mr. Firuz Odinaev (Tajikistan), and a local data collection firm, M Vector, supported the core Evaluation Team.¹²⁶ Local consultants supported in-country research needs, planning for team travel to each country, additional in-country data collection and processing, arranging interviews with relevant stakeholders, and translation/interpretation.

Evaluation Methodology and Data Collection Methods

The evaluation applied a participatory approach. All relevant stakeholders were included in the evaluation process in order to achieve a high level of ownership of the evaluation results. The evaluation methodology employed a range of data collection techniques including key informant interviews, online and phone surveys, group discussions, phone interviews, and document analyses. Quantitative and qualitative analyses ensured cross-validation of findings and conclusions. To address randomization bias, the Evaluation Team applied the expert sampling method and identified key informants who were able to provide valuable insights on account of their knowledge, experience, and expertise.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) employed semi-structured interview protocols with individuals or small groups of no more than two stakeholders who had specialized and in-depth knowledge of the project or related issues. These interviews provided first-hand insights on issues not easily identified through other data collection methods.

Group Discussions (GDs) were semi-structured discussions with groups of 3 to 12 individuals who had similar shared experiences (e.g., participation in SABIT delegations). Participants were not selected based on their technical knowledge or expertise on a particular subject matter. GDs helped answer the evaluation questions by drawing on respondents' attitudes, experiences, and perceptions in a manner that is harder to obtain through other data collection methods.

Online and phone surveys reached a large number of individuals who had participated in SABIT and CLDP activities. The surveys were designed to be completed in approximately 20 minutes so as not to fatigue the respondent or discourage participation, and to mitigate response bias. Participation was voluntary and documented findings remained anonymous, thereby safeguarding personal identifiable information. Local data collection firms conducted phone surveys/interviews to follow up with respondents in order to complete the questionnaire as dictated by the respondent.

The research team made up to three attempts to reach each target respondent before considering them a "non-response." Respondents contacted for phone interviews were selected from a pool of those who did not complete online surveys and whose phone numbers were available in the beneficiary database (updated by IBTCI).

¹²⁶ M Vector was selected following an open tender.

Stakeholders Consulted

In the course of the evaluation, the team reached out to the following clusters of internal and external stakeholders:

- SABIT program team in Washington, DC (USA) and Almaty (Kazakhstan);
- CLDP program team in Washington, DC (USA);
- Direct beneficiaries of CLDP and SABIT interventions;
- SABIT control groups consisting of SABIT non-beneficiaries; and
- Representatives of international organization operating in areas of CLDP typology.

The Evaluation Team conducted KIs and GDs with 199 stakeholders, beneficiaries, and non-beneficiaries in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. In the Kyrgyz Republic, the IBTCI Evaluation Team reached out to 104 stakeholders (38 percent female and 62 percent male). In Tajikistan the team reached out to 95 stakeholders (18 percent female and 82 percent male) associated with CLDP and SABIT interventions. The breakdown of KIs and GDs conducted and planned per program in each country is presented in Table 1.

In addition, the team gathered online and phone survey feedback from 240 CLDP/SABIT beneficiaries (18 percent female and 82 percent male) from Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic:

- SABIT: 191 responses¹²⁷ (the Kyrgyz Republic: 72 responses, Tajikistan: 119 responses)
- CLDP: 49 responses¹²⁸ (the Kyrgyz Republic: 27 responses, Tajikistan: 22 responses)

Table 15: KIs and GDs in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan (Planned vs. Actual)

	Planned			Actual			
	KIs (beneficiaries)	GDs (beneficiaries)	GDs (control groups)	KIs (beneficiaries)	KIs (experts)	GDs (beneficiaries)	GDs (experts)
Kyrgyz Republic							
CLDP	20	7	-	15	-	6	2
SABIT	20	5	2	35		6	2
Tajikistan							
CLDP	5	4	-	6	4	4	3
SABIT	20	5	2	31		7	7

Source: IBTCI Data, 2020

In addition to KIs and GDs, the Evaluation Team met with representatives of the World Bank, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ), International Trade Centre (ITC), Union of Private Sector Development of Tajikistan (UPSDT), Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), American Chambers of Commerce (AmCham) in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan, and the International Development Law Organization (IDLO).

Evaluation Limitations

Several inherent limitations to this evaluation are outlined below:

- 1 The lack of a comprehensive database of CLDP counterparts and beneficiaries that included detailed contact information represented a serious limitation to the evaluation. To overcome this challenge, the Evaluation Team used all the available data from CLDP (including the CLDP website) and had local consultants obtain necessary information from the in-country institutions assisted by CLDP.
- 2 Respondents included only those participants whose names and contact details were available. To address this implicit selection/sampling bias, the IBTCI team updated the CLDP database of beneficiaries to the extent possible. Those who participated in CLDP and SABIT activities in the early years of the evaluation period were more difficult to locate.

¹²⁷ 37 female and 154 male.

¹²⁸ 10 female and 37 male; one not identified.

- 3 Due to the sensitivity of the national contexts, some beneficiaries employed by state agencies either declined interview invitations or requested full anonymity. In some cases, the respondents preferred to avoid politically sensitive issues. To address this challenge, the Evaluation Team switched from group discussion to KII format as required.
- 4 Some CLDP beneficiaries did not recall their experience in the program because some activities were less systematic, compared with the interventions of other donors in which they had also partaken. This is recall bias.
- 5 The data in this retrospective study was self-reported, reflecting respondents' perception of programming in which they participated 2 to 12 years ago.
- 6 According to the ABRs, the CLDP closely cooperated with the State Customs Service of the Kyrgyz Republic regarding information and resources in the targeting and identification of counterfeit goods at the border and in Kyrgyz markets. Nevertheless, despite official invitations sent to relevant governmental agencies of the Kyrgyz Republic, none of the employees of the State Customs Service or the State Registration Service of the Kyrgyz Republic agreed to partake in an interview or a group discussion. Therefore, the Evaluation Team was unable to gather feedback from the State Customs Service on the benefits of CLDP intervention with respect to organizational capacity.
- 7 The Evaluation Team was unable to access official statistics for the cases of counterfeit detention to verify and triangulate the data acquired during interviews.
- 8 Due to the rotation of staff at the U.S. embassies in both Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic, the Evaluation Team was unable to reach some of the relevant officers in charge of their political–economic sections from 2007 through 2017.
- 9 The team decided that a cost–benefit analysis was not feasible as key stakeholders could identify neither all associated costs of CLDP interventions nor all benefit streams and their corresponding monetary values.
- 10 There were changes in government in each of the target countries since 2007, thus it was difficult to reach some alumni of CLDP activities.
- 11 The assessment of the value of working groups organized under the C5+I format was conducted only for two countries of Central Asia: the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan.

Annex 3. Cost–benefit Framework

Constructing a Cost–benefit Framework for Future Activities

To apply cost–benefit analysis (CBA) to CLDP activities, more explicit documentation of program logic and quantifiable objectives will be needed, with intangible objectives whose value cannot be monetized playing only a minor or marginal role. Extending the example provided in the text on EQ3, programming on strengthening procurement practices by enhancing the transparency and efficiency could be conducted if the following information were available:

1. Description of the Counterfactual

The starting point of any CBA model is a framing of the state of the world *without* any program activities. In this case, the CLDP work stream can be recognized as making an incremental contribution to a much broader effort led by the Kyrgyz Republic and supported by a variety of other external partners, so the counterfactual would need to describe the state of public procurement activities in the absence of any externally–supported reform efforts. This counterfactual would describe the various procurement agencies and the level of activity (including volume and cost of procurement) and would use data from the recent past to project a trend going forward without external support. In most cases, there is evidence of circumstances evolving (and often getting better over time) even without external action, and so the statement of the counterfactual cannot be simply a description of current circumstances but a plausible projection over the next 10 to 20 years of procurement *in the absence of external support*.¹²⁹ For CBA purposes, it is important that this counterfactual is described *ex ante* and subject to independent review to ensure the plausibility of the foundations of the resulting model.

The Counterfactual should describe the projected evolution of procurement over the lifetime of the project. In the case of governance reforms, a 10–year time horizon may be reasonable. Even though policy and institutional changes can persist much longer than this, it is also likely that circumstances around the institutions will change as a result of domestic policy, new technologies, or external events. As part of the subsequent sensitivity analysis on the CBA results, the analysts might relax this assumption and consider 5– and 15–year time horizons.

2. Total cost of reform efforts

To construct a CBA model, analysts would need to start by describing a discreet set of actions by all players that will contribute to the outcome. Having incorporated local actions in the absence of external support into the counterfactual, the modeling of the work stream should include all relevant external support. The current documentation of activities by the World Bank, USAID, the Asian Development Bank and the EBRD would require further scrubbing to disentangle which elements of each institution’s work focused explicitly on introducing e-procurement and other relevant procurement reforms. These costs would need to be estimated by year rather than over broader multiyear periods as has currently been reported. Such data would be presented as follows:

¹²⁹ This projection going forward is important as it credits local actors with the ability to make improvements on their own without external support and allows an estimation of the improvement that will be made that is attributable to the external support. When program planners fail to account for this potential improvement in the absence of the program, estimates of impact will be biased, usually generating over-estimates of impact.

Total Costs of Relevant Program Activities (US\$ million)	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
CLDP		0.121	0.185		0.085	0.100	0.100	0.190
World Bank						0.500	0.500	0.500
					6.00	6.00		
USAID		1.613	1.613	1.613	1.613			
Asian Development Bank	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200			
			0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.200	
	0.125	0.125						
EBRD		0.100		0.100		0.100		
Total External Support	0.33	2.16	2.20	2.11	8.10	6.90	0.80	0.69
CLDP support (% of total)	0	5.6%	8.4%	0.0%	1.0%	1.4%	12.5%	27.5%

Source: Evaluation Team estimates assuming multiyear programs were evenly divided across all years and programs with some focus on procurement devoted 50 percent of the total budget to relevant procurement reforms. The EBRD budget are totally fabricated figures reflecting their minimal but non-zero engagement. All of these numbers except the ones provided for CLDP must be viewed as purely expositional in nature.

3. Public Procurement under Reformed Institutions and Practices

As a direct contrast to the counterfactual, constructing the CBA model would require an estimate of the evolution of procurement activities under a reforming set of institutions, policies, and regulations. This figure would be estimated on the basis of the projected procurement flows *without* reforms in the counterfactual, supplemented by an estimate of the increased value generated by the improving procurement system over time. These additional values require estimating both the average cost savings on procurement under the more transparent and competitive arrangements and any incremental increase in the value of the procurements taken.¹³⁰

4. Discounting Net Benefit Streams and Generating CBA Assessment

The ultimate objective of CBA is to generate summary statistics that provide the best estimate of the efficiency of the activity. This step requires first a comparison of the with-project procurement stream to those in the counterfactual and a subtraction of the annual costs to generate a yearly flow of net benefits. This net benefit stream would need to be discounted back to the initial year of the assessment (back to 2012 in the example above, or to the current year if the analysis were being conducted on activities proposed for the future).

The determination of the appropriate discount rate depends on the point of view of the analysis. If the analysis is examining the efficiency of the use of these resources in the Kyrgyz Republic, the official discount rate used by that government would be correct, especially given that this assessment incorporates contributions from other external actors whose discount rate may be different from that used by the US government.¹³¹

This analysis can produce a variety of summary statistics. If a Net Present Value (NPV) is generated for the work stream, and all of the overall results are attributed proportionally to each activity, then the NPV of the CLDP activities would be calculated as proportional to their contributions to the total discounted costs of all activities. Using a discount rate of 10 percent, the activities funded by CLDP between 2012 and 2020 represent 3.3 percent of all program activities over that time (in 2012–present value terms).

¹³⁰ For example, a procurement of equipment might yield both a lower cost and a higher quality of materiel, so an estimate of the cost savings might underestimate the true value to reforms that also generate qualitative improvements in procured goods and services.

¹³¹ The Government Accountability Office (GAO) requires that US agencies undertake analysis using both 3% and 7% discount rates as a form of sensitivity analysis, making this practice appropriate for consideration of the use of US funds. This practice is inconsistent with the more standard practice of using the local official discount rate. Most donors have traditionally used a discount rate of around 10% for low and lower-middle income countries, but economic suggests that lower discount rates are more appropriate in more prosperous countries.

These data could also be used to calculate the Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) and the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) for the entire work stream, and with the same assumption of equal proportional effects of all activities, these summary statistics would also represent the best estimate of the efficiency of CLDP activities (in other words, because this assumption treats all funding towards procurement reform the same, the BCR of the small CLDP activities would be the same as that of the larger activities funded by the World Bank, USAID and the ADB).

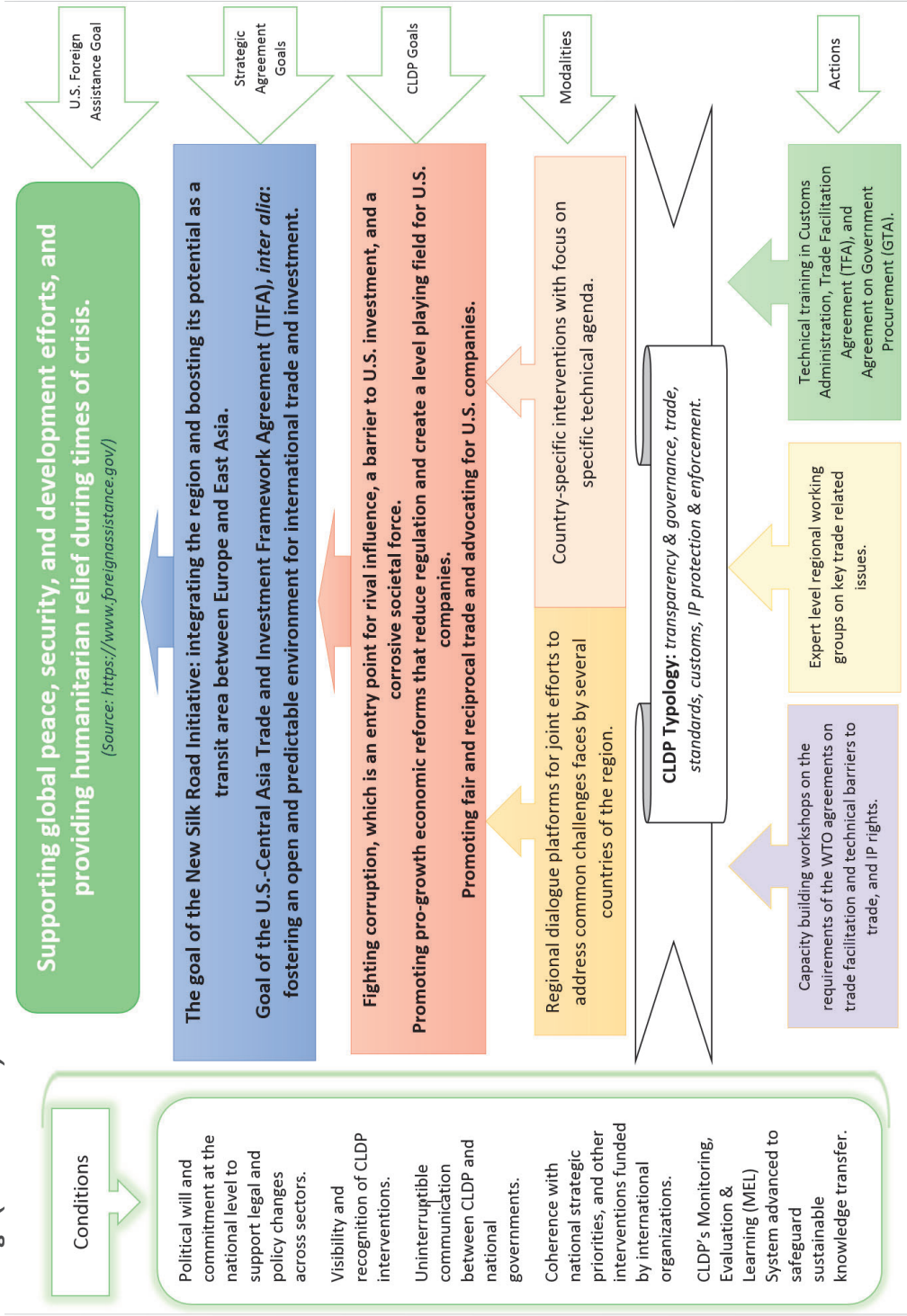
Conventionally, NPVs that are greater than zero represent efficient programs whose stream of discounted benefits exceeds their stream of discounted costs (inefficient programs will have negative NPVs). The same stream of benefits and costs will generate a BCR that is greater than 1.0 for efficient programs and an ERR that is greater than the relevant discount rate for efficient activities; by contrast, inefficient programs will yield a BCR that is less than 1.0 and an ERR that is less than the relevant discount rate (i.e., if the discount rate is 10 percent, any ERR below that level, even though it is a positive number, reflects an inefficient use of resources).

5. Consideration of Intangible Benefit Streams

In many cases, the assessment of an activity or work stream can be summarized with these statistics, but when activities have important additional impacts that have not been included, then these intangibles need to be considered in the context of the summary CBA statistics. These intangibles may be either positive or negative and should be described explicitly, along with their magnitude. For example, a program that was intended to generate significant savings in procurement and to generate positive economic relations between the US and the Kyrgyz Republic should note both the size and direction of *both* impacts. A project that has almost no impact on procurement outcomes and has a modest but positive effect on overall bilateral relations might still be considered to have failed to achieve its objectives. A project with large economic gains for the Kyrgyz Republic but that generates new tensions between the two countries would need to have a transparent but subjective assessment as to whether the large economic gains outweigh the modest negative effect.

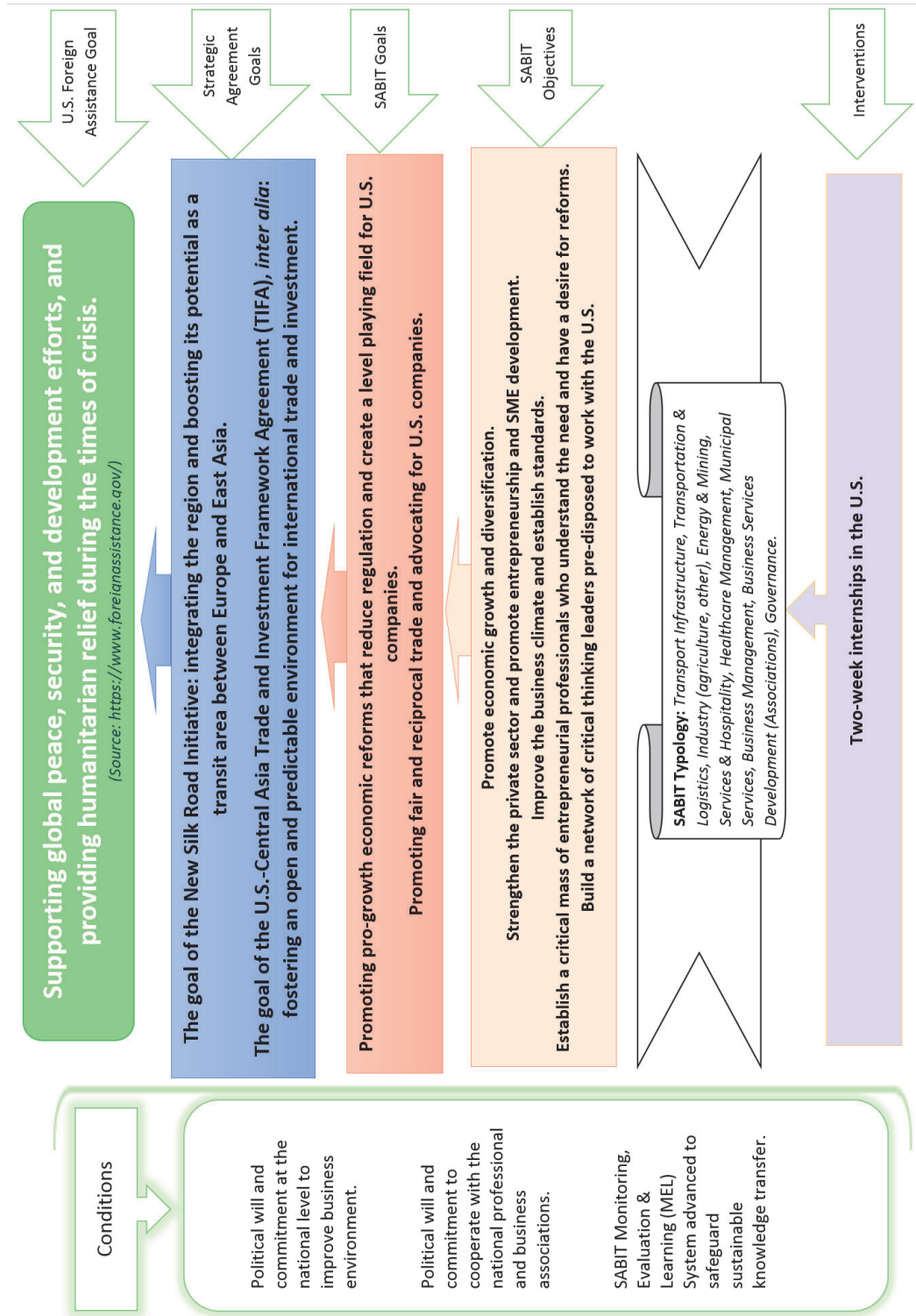
As a general rule, small changes in intangible objectives should not outweigh the assessment of the measurement of tangible, quantifiable outcomes in the CBA. In such cases, the effort devoted to the CBA is of relatively little value if the subjective assessments will yield the final evaluation of the activity. But in cases where the CBA results yield borderline determination of efficiency, then the consideration of intangibles is generally accepted as relevant for the final evaluation.

Annex 4. CLDP/SABIT Theories of Change CLDP Theory of Change (Central Asia)¹³²



SABIT Theory of Change (Central Asia)

¹³² The U.S. Foreign Assistance Goal, Sources: <https://www.foreignassistance.gov/>



Annex 5. The List of Stakeholders and Organizations Consulted

The List of Organizations Consulted for CLDP Evaluation

CLDP Evaluation Organizations in Kyrgyzstan	Number of informants
State Inspection on Veterinary and Phytosanitary Safety under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic	5
The Center for Standardization and Metrology under the Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic	4
Bishkek Center for Testing, Certification and Metrology, the Center for Standardization and Metrology under the Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic	3
Cataloguing and Classification Unit, the Center for Standardization and Metrology under the Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic	1
State Service on Intellectual Property and Innovation under the Kyrgyzpatent, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic	3
Department of Intellectual Property Rights Enforcement of Kyrgyzpatent, under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic	1
Division on Examination of Trademarks of Kyrgyzpatent, under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic	1
Rights Enforcement Department of the State Service on Intellectual Property and Innovation	1
Department of Tax and Customs Policy, the Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic	1
State Customs Service of the Kyrgyz Republic	1
Project Implementation Unit under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Kyrgyz Republic	1
Public Procurement Department of the Ministry of Finance of the Kyrgyz Republic	3
E-procurement portal representative	1
Training Center of the Ministry of Finance	2
Kyrgyz Center for Accreditation under the Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic	1
Prosecutor Training Center, Prosecutor General's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic	1
Higher School of Justice within the Supreme Court of the Kyrgyz Republic (Kyrgyz Judicial Training Center)	1
Bishkek City Court	1
Scientific-Research Center Biotechnologia under the National Academy of Sciences	1
Central Asia Development Corporation, Free Economic Zone	1
World Bank project on Public Procurement Capacity Building	1
International Development Law Organization (IDLO)	3
ADB project on Introduction of Electronic Procurement Systems	1
American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) in the Kyrgyz Republic	3
Association of Suppliers and Distributors, legal department and management	2
Association of Post-harvesting Producers, management and members	7
Association of women entrepreneurs Kurak, management and members	6
Procurement Unit of the JSC Kyrgyzneftegaz (Kyrgyz Oil Gas)	2
Procurement Unit of the JSC Manas International Airport	1
Procurement Unit of the JSC RSK Bank	1
Procurement Unit of the JSC National Electric Network of Kyrgyzstan	1
Procurement Unit of Unilever	1
Legal Unit of the State enterprise National Company Kyrgyz Temir Jolu (Kyrgyz Railroads)	1
Patent Attorney	1
EMARK Company	1
Iman and Co Ltd.	1
CAI Consulting	1
People who did not identify themselves (no organization's name and/or participant's name)	22

CLDP Evaluation Organizations in Tajikistan	Number of informants
Ministry of Economic Development and Trade	3
Department of Trade Policy and Consumption Market of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade	2
Regulatory and Foreign Trade Development Department of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade	1
Department of Technical Regulation and Standardization of the Agency on Standardization, Metrology, Certification and Trade Inspection under the Government of Tajikistan	2
Department of International Relation of the Agency on Standardization, Metrology, Certification and Trade Inspection under the Government of Tajikistan	1
Metrological Support Department of the Agency on Standardization, Metrology, Certification and Trade Inspection under the Government of Tajikistan	1
Trade Inspection Agency of Tajik Standard	1
International Relations and Information Department of Tajik Standard	1
Department of Phytosanitary Control and Plant Quarantine, Committee for Food Security under the Government of Tajikistan	2
State Inspectorate Service for Plant Quarantine and Phytosanitary Measures of the Ministry of Agriculture of Tajikistan	2
Department of State Veterinary Control, Committee for Food Security under the Government of Tajikistan	1
Committee for Food Security under the Government of Tajikistan	1
International Relations Department of the Customs Service under the Government of Tajikistan	1
Advanced Training Institute of the Customs Service under the Govt Government of Tajikistan	1
Office of Customs Control and Audit, Customs Service under the Government of Tajikistan	2
Department of Customs and Tariff Regulation and Currency Control, Customs Service under the Government of Tajikistan	3
Department for fighting against customs offenses, Customs Service under the Government of Tajikistan	1
Department of Customs Control of the Customs Service under the Government of Tajikistan	1
Customs Service under the Government of Tajikistan	4
Intellectual Property Department of the Ministry of Culture of Tajikistan	1
International Relations Department of the Ministry of Culture of Tajikistan	2
Tax Committee under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan	1
Statistical Agency in the City of Dushanbe	1
Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Institute of Biosafety Issues	2
Union of Private Sector Development of Tajikistan (UPSDT)	2
International Trade Center (ITC) Tajikistan	3
AmCham Tajikistan	1
USAID/Central Asia, Economic Growth Office	1
OSCE Tajikistan, Economic Unit	2
World Bank, Public Finance Management Modernization Project	1
GIZ Tajikistan, Administrative Barriers to Trade	1
Embassy of the United State of America, Political and Economic Affairs Section	3
People who did not identify themselves (no organization's name and/or participant's name)	15

The List of Stakeholders from KIIs and GDs in the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan

#	Name	Position	Organization	Program	Country
1	Kadyrkulov Nurlan	Commercial Deputy; General Director	Grant Start, LLC; Eco Agro LCC	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
2	Tian Evgeniy	Director	Food & Beverage Co, LLC and Association of Leading Restaurateurs and Hoteliers	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
3	Keneev Almazbek	Senior Engineer	Directorate for the construction of water facilities at the Water Resources Agency under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic; Previous: Bishkekvodokanal	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
4	Sadykakhunov Elyor	Marketing Director	Currently: LLC. Abdysh-Ata; previous: CJSC “Shoro”	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
5	Asylbaev Ulan	Director of External Relations	Previous Kyrgyz Konyagy	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
6	Makhmadiyev Akbarali Kaharovich	Senior Doctor	Licensing Unit, Ministry of Health of RK	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
7	Duishembiev Zhetimish	Regional Engineer	Ministry of Transport and Communication of KR; Investment project realization Group	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
8	Mamatov Kudretilla	CEO	Glavstroy, LLC	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
9	Shabdanaliev Temirbek Musaevich	Chairman	Freight Operators Association of Kyrgyz Republic	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
10	Abdulkarimov Evgeniy	CEO/COO	OPENCBS LLC	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
11	Sydykov Almaz	Manager	Arhstroinvest, Llc	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
12	Sharipov Shukhrat	Chairman	Association of Cooks of Kyrgyz Republic	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
13	Djakubov Nurlan	Commercial Director	LLC “Construction company “Avangard Style”	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
14	Konushbaev Emirlan	CEO	Too Ashuu Ski Resort	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
15	Ukubaev Turatbek	General Director	CJSC “Atalyk Group”; LLC Agr.Indstr.Complex “EldDan Atalyk»	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
16	Bukaeva Aisulu	Manager of Booking Dept. & Yurt Camp	Novi Nomad Travel Company	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
17	Kurbanova Ibaratkan	Director	Teik Trade LLC	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
18	Illiasov Ruslan	Coordinator	UNDP Project; Previous: PE Ruslan Illiasov	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
19	Musabekov Nurmat Bolotbekovich	Deputy Head of the Autom. Transport & railroad Dept.	Ministry of transport and roads of the Kyrgyz Republic	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
20	Kasymbekov Ryskul	Head of Management, Marketing and Intellectual Property Department	Technology Park of the National Academy of Science of the Kyrgyz Republic	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
21	Soorombaeva Ainur	CEO, Director	Medical Center “Aman EI”	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic

22	Sadriddin Roman	Executive Director	Pamir LLC	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
23	Makeshev Marat	Minority Owner of shares	Wesotra-Kyrgyz LLC	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
24	Ashyrkulov Kuban	General Director	CJSC Insurance Company “Kyrgyz Republic”	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
25	Primova Klara	Chairman	Agri-cooperative “AgroElita”	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
26	Gafirov Ulan Abdrahmanovich	Head of Mayor Administration	Mayor Administration of Kara-Balta city	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
27	Bukanchieva Damira	General Director	LLC. Tokmokplodoovosh	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
28	Aksakanova Aizat	Commercial Director	LLC. Tokmokplodoovosh	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
29	Novikova Elena	Director	LLC. “EcoFloris”	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
30	Oshkoeva Dilara,	Director	Association of Agri Food Processing industry	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
31	Sokoev D.	Director	LLC. Sokoev	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
32	Timoshenko Evgenii	Director	B.S.T.S. Technology LLC	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
33	Alymkulov Murat	Chief Engineer	EVOS, LLC	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
34	Selembaeva Ainagul	Director	Chui Regional Maternity Hospital	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
35	Djamgerchinova Klara	President	Ashimbai, Ltd.	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
36	Beishev Kubanychbek	Director	ArCont, LLC	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
37	Karmyshakov Daniyar	Civil Engineer	Archstroinvest, Ltd.	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
38	Mukasheva Elmira	General Manager	Baikhan Hotel	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
39	Keneeva Kunduz	Chairman	Public Council of the Ministry of Economy of KR	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
40	Shabdanov Eldar	Director	LLC. Park Palas, Hotel Ambassador	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
41	Orozbaev Aidar	Gen. Director	LLC. Bi Estate Group, Hotel Medison, Café “Bublic”	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
42	Asiveeva Shairkul	Co-founder	LLC. ABA Group; Café Food Zone	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
43	Madina Omuralieva	Gen. Director	LLC. Otpusk Travel	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
44	Mambetaliev Taalai	Gen. Director	LLC. Sayakat Tourism	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
45	Sharshenbekov Ernazar	Event Manager	JIA Business Association	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
46	Mambetov Sultan	Gen. Director	LLC. Asman Road	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
47	Asanbekov Timur	Manager	JIA Business Association	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
48	Ajimatov Nooruzbek	Finance Manager	LLC. Grand Trade	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
49	Bakytbekova Asel	PR manager	JIA Business Association	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
50	Zhaparov Meirambek	CEO	Mosdorstroy, LLC	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic

51	Abdubalieva Zhyldyz	Senior Pediatric Professor	KGMP and PK 9Medica University	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
52	Satybaldiev Adanbek	Director General	Avantia Tourism Company	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
53	Bidan Uulu Akylbek	Deputy Director	Osh Fruit and Vegetable Combine	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
54	Ismailov Kadyrbek	Director	Termodom-Yug, Ltd.	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
55	Saiitova Turdukan	Executive Director	Avantia Tourism Company	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
56	Kalicha Abdubalieva	Executive Director	Salkyn Ltd.	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
57	Timur Akbashev	Chairperson	Karakol Association of Tourism Providers	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
58	Nasyrbek Davletov	General Director	Altyn Suu, Ltd.	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
59	Kubanychbek Ismailov	Director	Issyk-Kul Oblast Regional Hospital	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
60	Aziza Iuldasheva	Executive Director	Jer Azygy, Association of Agribusiness of Kyrgyz Republic (AAK)	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
61	Bektenbek Omurbekov	General Director	General Director	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
62	Flora Rysmatova	Head of the Department, Director	Osh State University, Ltd “Ak-Kuu” med	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
63	Chynar Sattarova	Director	Ak Kuu Private Medical Clinic	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
64	Galbay Toktobaev	Doctor-statistician	Doctor-statistician	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
65	Abdurasul Zhanybekov	Director	Director	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
66	Aziza Yuldasheva	Director	Association of women entrepreneurs “Kurak”	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
67	Elisa Asenbekova	Member of the Board	Association of women entrepreneurs “Kurak”	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
68	Nargul Abdurakhanova	Executive Director	Association of women entrepreneurs “Kurak”	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
69	Tatiana Vorotnikova	Member of the Board	Association of women entrepreneurs “Kurak”	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
70	Balur Abdueva	Member of the Board	Association of women entrepreneurs “Kurak”	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
71	Dilar Ashimbaeva	Member of the Board	Association of women entrepreneurs “Kurak”	SABIT	Kyrgyz Republic
72	Tilek Tabaldiev	Head of Unit, the Internal Veterinary Supervision Department	State Inspection on Veterinary and Phytosanitary Safety	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
73	Kubat Kaseiinov	Deputy Director	State Inspection on Veterinary and Phytosanitary Safety	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
74	Gulnara Uskenbaeva	President	Suppliers Association (producers and distributors)	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
75	Erkin Sooronoev	Director	Bishkek Center for Testing, Certification and Metrology of Center for Standardization and Metrology	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
76	Zhanybek Chapaev	Director	Kyrgyz Center for Accreditation	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic

77	Saina Abdymomunova	World Bank Consultant	World Bank project “Public Procurement Capacity-Building”	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
78	Azizbek Ryskulov	Director	Scientific -Research Center “Biotechnologia” under the National Academy of Science	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
79	Kuban Aidaraliev	Senior Specialist	The Ministry of Economy	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
80	Bakytbek Samakov	Lawyer	Former Staff of State Service of Intellectual Property and Innovation	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
81	Ashirbai Jusupov	Leading Specialist	Project Implementation Unit under the Ministry of Agriculture	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
82	Antonina Rybalkina	Judge	Bishkek City Court	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
83	Bayaly Dosaliev	Deputy Head of the Procurement Department	The Ministry of Finance	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
84	Erke Turdumambetova	Training Center Director	Training Center of the Ministry of Finance	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
85	Akmatov Choponbek	Manager	EMARK Construction Company	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
86	J. Kadoeva	Senior Specialist	Training Center of the Ministry of Finance	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
87	Berdimamat Adanbaev	Director	Centre for Standardization and Metrology, the Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
88	Muhamed Kaparov	Deputy Director	Centre for Standardization and Metrology, the Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
89	Artyk Bazarkulov	Former Deputy Director	State Fund of Intellectual Property under the Kyrgyzpatent	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
90	Anar Mukanova	Senior Specialist	Bishkek Center for Testing, Certification and Metrology of Center for Standardization and Metrology	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
91	Maripa Esenkulova Tadjibaeva	Head of the Unit of Cataloging and Classification	Center for Standardization and Metrology under the Ministry of Economy	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
92	Joldoshbek Osmonaliyev	Head of Department of Veterinary, Sanitary Department	Veterinary Sanitary State Inspection Supervision	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
93	Melis Akjigit Uulu	Previous Director of Procurement Department	Ministry of Finance of Kyrgyz Republic	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
94	Manasbek Jakshybaev			CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
95	Aizat Baktybekovna	Chief Specialist, Department for Intellectual Property Right Enforcement	State Service of Intellectual Property and Innovation under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic (Kyrgyzpatent)	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
96	Almaz Yktybaev	Head of Unit	State Service of Intellectual Property and Innovation under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic (Kyrgyzpatent)	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic

97	Galiia Alymbekova	Deputy Director	High School of Justice within Supreme Court of Kyrgyz Republic	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
98	Kalygul Saliev	Consultant	International Development Law Organization	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
99	Ainura Chikirova	Advisor to Chairman	Central Asia Development Corporation, Free Economic Zone	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
100	Fred Huston	Regional Director	International Development Law Organization	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
101	Nurlan Duisheev	Judicial reform Advisor/E-Justice	International Development Law Organization	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
102	Zarina Chekirbaeva	Deputy Director	American Chamber of Commerce in Kyrgyz Republic	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
103	Malike Alenova	Event Manager	American Chamber of Commerce in Kyrgyz Republic	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
104	Natalia Mashirbaeva	PR & Membership Development Manager	American Chamber of Commerce in Kyrgyz Republic	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
105	Klara Primova	Member of the Association of Post-harvesting Producers and Chairwoman	Cooperative “Agroenita” and Association of Post-harvesting Producers	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
106	Gulom Gaphirov	Member of the Association Post-harvesting Producers and Head of Administration	Mayor’s office of Karaka-balta, Former Head of Ailana Processing Enterprise	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
107	Damira Bukanchieva	Member of the Association Post-harvesting Producers and General Manager	“Tokmok” Vegetabel Processing Company	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
108	Aizat Aksakalova	Member of the Association Post-harvesting Producers and Commercial Director	“Tokmok” Vegetabel Processing Company	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
109	Eelena Novikova	Member of the Association Post-harvesting Producers and Director	Ecofloris	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
110	Dilara Oshkoeva	Member of the Association Post-harvesting Producers and Director	Food Processing Company “APPK”	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
111	Djanybek Sokoev	Member of the Association Post-harvesting Producers and Director	Food Processing Company “APPK-Sokoev”	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
112	Timoshenko Evgenii	Director	B.S.T.S. Technology LLC	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic

113	Alymkulov Murat	Chief Engineer	EVOS, LLC	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
114	Selembaeva Ainagul	Director	Chui Regional Maternity Hospital	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
115	Djamgerchinova Klara	President	Ashimbai, Ltd.	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
116	Beisheev Kubanychbek	Director	ArCont, LLC	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
117	Karmyshakov Daniyar	Civil Engineer	Archstroinvest, Ltd.	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
118	Mukasheva Elmira	General Manager	Baikhan Hotel	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
119	Zhyldiz Abdubaliva	Senior Pediatric Professor	Osh inter-regional children`s hospital	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
120	Mairambek Zhaparov	CEO	Mostdorstroi, LLC.	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
121	Adanbek Satybaldiev	Director General	Avantia Tourism Company	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
122	Akylbek Bidan Uulu	Deputy Director	Osh Fruit and Vegetable Combine	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
123	Kadyrbek Ismailov	Director	Termodom-Yug, Ltd.	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
124	Turdukan Saitova	Executive Director	Avantia Tourism Company	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
125	Aziza Yuldasheva	Director	Association of women entrepreneurs “Kurak”	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
126	Elisa Asenbekova	Member of the Board	Association of women entrepreneurs “Kurak”	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
127	Nargul Abdurakhanova	Executive Director	Association of women entrepreneurs “Kurak”	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
128	Tatiana Vorotnikova	Member of the Board	Association of women entrepreneurs “Kurak”	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
129	Balur Abdueva	Member of the Board	Association of women entrepreneurs “Kurak”	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
130	Dilar Ashimbaeva	Member of the Board	Association of women entrepreneurs “Kurak”	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
131	Osmonaliev Alimbai	Procurement unit head	JSC «Kyrgyzneftegaz» (Kyrgyz Oil Gas)	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
132	Kambarov Suiunaly	Procurement unit expert	JSC «Kyrgyzneftegaz» (Kyrgyz Oil Gas)	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
133	Mamaev Maksatbek Docturbaevich	Procurement unit head	JSC «Manas International Airport»	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
134	Sulaimanova Saltanat Kuvanychbekovna	Procurement unit head	JSC «RSK Bank»	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
135	Chynaliev Altynai Beishenbekovna	Procurement and logistics unit expert	JSC «National Electric Network of Kyrgyz Republic»	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
136	Bisembina Saule	Accountant	National surgery center	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
137	Kim Elza	First category legal adviser	State enterprise National Company «Kyrgyz Temir Jolu» (Kyrgyz Railroads)	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic

138	Kochorov Orozaly	Deputy Chief Doctor	National Hospital	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
139	Erkulov Kantoro	Programmer	ADB project «Introduction of electronic procurement systems»	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
140	Arai Balayan	Corporate Representative	Unilever	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
141	Omurgul Sagynaliyeva Balpanova	Patent Attorney		CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
142	Andrey Viktorovich Bulba	Prosecutor Training Center	Prosecutor General's Office of the Kyrgyz Republic	CLDP	Kyrgyz Republic
143	Sharaf Davlatov	Director	AmCham Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
144	Abdurahmon Mahmadsheev	Senior Research Assistant	Academy of Agricultural Sciences	CLDP	Tajikistan
145	Abdusalomov Rustam	Expert	(IFC) USAID, UNDP, Customs Service	CLDP	Tajikistan
146	Almaz Saifutdinov	Economic and Commercial Specialist	Embassy of the United State of America, Political and Economic Affairs Section	CLDP	Tajikistan
147	Saidmumin Kamolov	National Program Manager	ITC Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
148	Alijon Aliev	Trade Facilitation Consultant	ITC Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
149	Kosim Kurbonov	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Consultant	ITC Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
150	Emomali Kholov	Chief Specialist	Department of Trade Policy and Consumption Market of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade	CLDP	Tajikistan
151	Olim Ashurov	Chief Specialist	Regulatory and Foreign Trade Development Department of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade	CLDP	Tajikistan
152	Daler Mahmudov	Specialist	Department of Trade Policy and Consumption Market of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade	CLDP	Tajikistan
153	Ms. Naima Normatova	Executive Director	Union of Private Sector Development of Tajikistan (UPSDT)	CLDP	Tajikistan
154	Mr. Abdullo Muhammadiev	Head of the Textile and Sewing Department	Union of Private Sector Development of Tajikistan (UPSDT)	CLDP	Tajikistan
155	Ms. Zamira Toshmatova	Economic Adviser	Embassy of the United State of America, Political and Economic Affairs Section	CLDP	Tajikistan
156	Haidar Miraliev	Chief Specialist of the Department of Technical Regulation and Standardization in Heavy Industry	Agency on Standardization, Metrology, Certification and Trade Inspection under the Govt of Tajikistan, Department of Technical Regulation and Standardization in Heavy Industry	CLDP	Tajikistan

157	Nurullozoda Tohir	Deputy Head of the Department of Technical Regulation and Standardization	Agency on Standardization, Metrology, Certification and Trade Inspection under the Govt of Tajikistan, Department of Technical Regulation and Standardization	CLDP	Tajikistan
158	Laili Maksudova	Head of the Department of International Relation	Agency on Standardization, Metrology, Certification and Trade Inspection under the Govt of Tajikistan, Department of International Relation	CLDP	Tajikistan
159	Jurakhon Rahimzoda	Head of the Metrological Support Department	Agency on Standardization, Metrology, Certification and Trade Inspection under the Govt of Tajikistan, Metrological Support Department	CLDP	Tajikistan
160	Jamshed Nosirov	Head of department	Department of Phytosanitary Control and Plant Quarantine, Committee for Food Security under the Government of Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
161	Tojibek Norov	Chief Specialist	Department of State Veterinary Control , Committee for Food Security under the Government of Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
162	Mirzozon Rozikov	Chief Specialist	Phytosanitary and plant quarantine supervision agency, Committee for Food Security under the Government of Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
163	Kalandarzoda Habibullo	Deputy head oa department	Committee for Food Security under the Government of Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
164	Mr. Edward Safaryan	Economic Officer/ Head of Economic Unit, OSCE Programme Office	OSCE Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
165	Ms. Mino Salmonova	Programme Assistant for Improvement of the Investment Climate OSCE Programme Office		CLDP	Tajikistan
166	Mr. Tojiddin Najmedinov	Project Management Specialist/Economic Growth Office	USAID/Central Asia	CLDP	Tajikistan
167	Hassan Aliev	Senior Public Sector Specialist	WORLD BANK, Public Finance Management Modernization Project (2 June 2015)	CLDP	Tajikistan
168	Kamoljon Makhmudov	Director	Academy of Agricultural Science, Institute of biosafety issues)	CLDP	Tajikistan
169	Safar Shodiev	Chief inspector	Customs Service under the Govt of Tajikistan, International Relation Department	CLDP	Tajikistan
170	(Hurshed Bazarov).	Head of the Institute	Advanced Training Institute under the Customs Service	CLDP	Tajikistan

	Amiriyon Yor Odina				
171	Jamshed Abduqodirzoda	Head of the Customs Control Department	Customs Control Department, Customs Service under the Government of Tajikistan (Lieutenant-Colonel)	CLDP	Tajikistan
172	Khurshed Khujamkulov	Head of department	Department of Customs and Tariff Regulation and Currency Control, Customs Service under Government of Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
173	Komer Mahmadyorzoda	Deputy head of department	Office of Customs Control and Audit, Customs Service under the Government of Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
174	Zarina Abrorova	Chief inspector	Department for fighting against customs offenses, Customs Service under the Government of Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
175	Timur Arabov	Chief inspector	Department of Customs Control, Customs Service under the Government of Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
176			Embassy of the United State of America, Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
177	Nozigul Khushvaktova	Program Coordinator on Administrative Barriers to Trade	GIZ,Tajikistan	CLDP	Tajikistan
178	Nabizoda Numon (Mukumov Nemon)	Head	Security department, intellectual property, Ministry of Culture	CLDP	Tajikistan
179	Jahongir Sadirov	Head of department	International Relation Department, International Relation Division, Ministry of Culture	CLDP	Tajikistan
180	Komila Boimurodova	Chief Specialist	International Relation Department, International Relation Division, Ministry of Culture	CLDP	Tajikistan
181	Alisheri Maruf	Expert	National Association of Small and Medium Business of the Republic of Tajikistan	SABIT	Tajikistan
182	Maruf Muhammedov	General Director/CEO	Eastera Company Ltd.	SABIT	Tajikistan
183	Naim Nazrulloev	Dean of the Department	Tajik National University	SABIT	Tajikistan
184	Almaz Saifutdinov	Economic and Commercial Specialist	Embassy of the United State of America, Political and Economic Affairs Section	SABIT	Tajikistan
185	Sobirzoda Ravshan	Managing Director	Inculerate LLP	SABIT	Tajikistan
186	Farid Shirinjanov	Manager	Segafredo Espresso	SABIT	Tajikistan
187	Tuighun Karimov	Executive Director	National Association of Restaurateurs and Hoteliers of Tajikistan	SABIT	Tajikistan

188	Rustam Murodov	N/A	Opened Stockholding Company “Intourist- Tajikiston”	SABIT	Tajikistan
189	Sadykov Sadyk	Financial Director	Hotel “Tajikistan”, Ltd.	SABIT	Tajikistan
190	Abualli Ismatov	Director	Pakrut LLC	SABIT	Tajikistan
191	Ashraf Ikromov	Executive Director	Zurmich LLC	SABIT	Tajikistan
192	Alamkhon Kurbonov	General Director	ABM Trans Service, LLC	SABIT	Tajikistan
193	Ms. Nasibakhon Aminova	Executive Director	National Association of Small and Medium Business, Tajikistan	SABIT	Tajikistan
194	Mr.Oybek Shodiev	Executive Director	Sujino Jamoat* Support Center, Panjakent District, Tajikistan	SABIT	Tajikistan
195	Ms. Gulnara Beknazarova	Head of the M&E Department	Z-Analytics LLC	SABIT	Tajikistan
196	Gulnora Saburova	Deputy Director	Diagnostical – treatment center “SHIFO”	SABIT	Tajikistan
197	Ms. Naima Normatova	Executive Director	Union of Private Sector Development of Tajikistan (UPSDT)	SABIT	Tajikistan
198	Mr. Abdullo Muhammadiev	Head of the Textile and Sewing Department	Union of Private Sector Development of Tajikistan (UPSDT)	SABIT	Tajikistan
199	Jamshed Hamidov	Deputy Head Doctor on First Medical Aid	City Clinical Hospital of Emergency Medical Aid of Dushanbe	SABIT	Tajikistan
200	Nizom Khakimov	Deputy (former)	Mayor of Dushanbe City	SABIT	Tajikistan
201	Ruslan Nazmiev	Project Manager	Project Implementation Unit for Roads	SABIT	Tajikistan
202	Mirzosafar Samiev	Chief Engineer	Oriyon LLC	SABIT	Tajikistan
203	Safarbek Muzaffarov	Director	Enterprise on Milk and Food Production and Processing “Ganj”	SABIT	Tajikistan
204	Bekzod Karimov	Designer	GM and Partners	SABIT	Tajikistan
205	Noyobsho Mizrobov	Head of Ground Handling Service	Dushanbe International Airport	SABIT	Tajikistan
206	Nimatillo Sohibov	Head of Technical Department	Research, Design and Surveying Institute, Ministry of Transport and Communications	SABIT	Tajikistan
207	Rano Sobirova	Director	Alp-Navruz LLC, Niche Tourism	SABIT	Tajikistan
208	Petrushkov Mikhail	Chairperson of the Board	Association “Center for business development of Tajikistan”	SABIT	Tajikistan
209	Umed Aslanov	Head of the Logistics and Distribution Department	Processing Cooperative “LimonParvaroni Bokhtar”	SABIT	Tajikistan
210	Shuhrat Karimov	General Director	Baltic Construction Company - Asia	SABIT	Tajikistan
211	Sultonmurod Imomov	Director	Fardo, LLC	SABIT	Tajikistan
212	Jamshed Rizaev	Commercial Director	Dunyo LLC	SABIT	Tajikistan
213	Niyatbekov Zariifbek	Deputy Director	Hairgoh Company	SABIT	Tajikistan
214	Salomat Gulakhmadova	Chief Medical Officer	Maternity Hospital #3, Dushanbe City	SABIT	Tajikistan

215	Ms. Firuza Makhmudova	Deputy Director	National Association of Business Women, Sughd Region, Tajikistan	SABIT	Tajikistan
216			Embassy of the United State of America, Tajikistan	SABIT	Tajikistan
217	Azam Shomirzoev	Deputy Director	Directorate for the Construction of Governmental Facilities of the Executive Office	SABIT	Tajikistan
218	Zumrat Mullodzhanova	Financial/Admin Manager	Guest House “Bahor”, but now she is working at “Comfort” guest house	SABIT	Tajikistan
219	Shuhrat Abdulloev	Executive Director	National Association of Small and Medium Business	SABIT	Tajikistan
220	Roza Kurbonova	Manager of Water & Sanitation Program	Kurgan-Tube Branch of the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development in Tajikistan	SABIT	Tajikistan
221	Azamat Inomov	Deputy Director	Institute of Water Problems, Hydropower, and Ecology - Academy of Sciences	SABIT	Tajikistan
222	Gulnora Razykova	Executive Director	Prospekt Medical Clinic	SABIT	Tajikistan
223	Abduhalim Odinaev	Chief Engineer	Mabets LLC	SABIT	Tajikistan
224	Abdullojon Solidjanov	Deputy Director	Sogd region government of water economy	SABIT	Tajikistan
225	Abdurahim Ismoilov	Director	Somon Company LLC	SABIT	Tajikistan
226	Abdurauf Imomov	Deputy Manager of Hospital Sector Asht District	Asht Central Hospital	SABIT	Tajikistan
227	Akpar Sharipov	Director	Poyavar, Llc	SABIT	Tajikistan
228	Boirjon Boirov	Manager	Hotel Vatan	SABIT	Tajikistan
229	Farrukh Aminov	Manager of Production/Dean of Faculty	Tinial, LLC / Polytechnic Institute of Technical University of Tajikistan	SABIT	Tajikistan
230	Habibullo Umarov	Chief Engineer	Open Joint Stock Company “Lal”	SABIT	Tajikistan
231	Mansur Eshonov	Director	Scientific Research and Design Institute SANIIOSP	SABIT	Tajikistan
232	Marufdzhon Abdurahmanov	Senior Planning and Health Care Sector Reforms Specialist	Sogd Obalst Health Department	SABIT	Tajikistan
233	Mirzonaim Muminov	General Director	LLC “OBI SHIRIN”	SABIT	Tajikistan
234	Nurali Murodov	Head	State Enterprise for Road Maintenance	SABIT	Tajikistan
235	Oybek Qodirov	Chief of Central Hospital	Central Hospital of Jabbor Rasulov District	SABIT	Tajikistan
236	Piruza Mahmudova	Deputy Chief Physician	Central District Policlinics in Jabbor Rasulov district	SABIT	Tajikistan
237	Pulot Ashurov	General Director	«Apricot and Company» OJSC	SABIT	Tajikistan
238	Rustam Mikarimov	Director	ROHI UMED	SABIT	Tajikistan
239	Shagarf Mullo-Abdol	Director	Pamir Sik Travel	SABIT	Tajikistan
240	Shavkatjon Nurmatov	Head Engineer/Technical Director	CJSC “EURO-ASIA 2005”	SABIT	Tajikistan

Annex 6. Data Gathering Tools

Tool 1: CLDP Guide for KIs and GDs

Tool 2: CLDP Online Survey Questionnaire

Tool 3: SABIT Guide for KIs and GDs

Tool 4: SABIT Guide for Non-participant GDs and KIs

Tool 5: SABIT Online Survey Questionnaire

Tool 1: CLDP Guide for KIs and GDs

GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KII) AND GROUP DISCUSSIONS (GD) WITH DIRECT BENEFICIARIES OF CLDP Target Group: Representatives of the Assisted Organizations and Professional Groups from Public, Private and Civic Sectors, and Academia.

INTERVIEWER: THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW ARE THE BASIC GUIDING QUESTIONS, WHICH SHOULD BE ASKED. HOWEVER, ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS CAN BE ASKED IF YOU FEEL THEY ARE APPROPRIATE AND RELEVANT TO THE PURPOSE OF THE INTERVIEW. AT THE SAME TIME, SOME QUESTIONS COULD BE DROPPED IF DEEMED INAPPROPRIATE FOR A SPECIFIC GROUP OR A PARTICIPANT.

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. We are independent consultants commissioned by IBTCI (International Business & Technical Consultants Inc.) to carry out an independent evaluation of activities conducted by the Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) in your country. This evaluation has the joint authorization of the CLDP Management Team of the US Department of Commerce and the Office of the Coordinator of Assistance to Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia of the US Department of State.

CLDP supports legal and economic reforms underway around the globe. CLDP provides training and consultative services to lawmakers, regulators, judges and educators seeking to improve the legal environment for doing business in developing and post-conflict countries. The objective of this evaluation is to measure the results and the effectiveness of the CLDP to inform future decisions and to identify and apply lessons learned from the evaluation to future programming in the region.

The discussion will last approximately one hour. It will include questions on the CLDP design and its effectiveness. We will also seek your recommendations how the CLDP could be improved.

Do you have any questions?

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

A1	Interview/ Discussion Date:		A2	Respondent's Name ¹³³ / Total number of participants:	
A3	Organization's name:		A4	Country:	Kyrgyz Republic Tajikistan Azerbaijan Georgia Moldova Ukraine Other (explain): _____
A5	Type of organization:				

SECTION I: Introduction

Goal: the goal of this section is to understand an extent of involvement of the respondent(s) in CLDP activities for better follow up questions.

1. Your organization participated in the CLDP. How did you get information about this opportunity?

¹³³ An attendance sheet to be used in case of group discussions.

2. What was the criteria for selecting participants from your organization?
3. Have you been involved in any CLDP activities or events? When and in what capacity? In what activities and events have you been involved?
4. Are you aware about similar technical assistance provided by other donors/international organization? Did your organization participate in it? Please, specify.

(HINTS FOR INTERVIEWERS: *it could be involvement in working groups, participation in capacity- building or legislative drafting workshops, travel to the US for consultations, work with legal experts provided by CLDP, participation in trade shows, business trips or other relevant activities.*

SECTION 2: Relevance of CLDP Interventions

Goal: EQ2. *To what extent has CLDP tailored its activities/assistance model to adapt to country priorities and needs, and if it has, have these adaptations been effective?*

5. Did you take part in or do you know if any assessment of needs and priorities in your sector were conducted for the CLDP activities?
6. In your opinion, how well are the CLDP activities adopted/relevant to your country needs and priorities? Please, provide some details.
7. Do you think that the CLDP design and its implementation met your professional expectations? and how?
8. How would you assess recommendations of consultants, experts and/or speakers involved in implementation of CLDP activities? Were their recommendations relevant and useful?
 - a. Fully relevant and useful
 - b. Rather relevant and useful
 - c. Rather NOT relevant/useful
 - d. NOT relevant/useful at all
 - e. I do not know
9. What did you like the most /least about the CLDP and its activities? and why?

SECTION 3: Outcomes of the CLDP

Goal: EQ1. *To what extent has the CLDP business model of technical assistance supporting trade and other commercial reforms been effective in achieving its aims?*

10. Do you know what was the main goal of implementing CLDP in your country?
11. What are main factors that affected the achievement of this goal (these goals)?
12. Which types of activities were used by the CLDP to share US/international knowledge and skills?
13. How effective was the CLDP approach to the technical assistance?
14. Can you compare CLDP with similar activities funded by other donors/international organizations (strength/weaknesses, other comments)?
15. Overall, how did CLDP assistance support **trade and commercial reforms** in your country/region? Please, specify and provide details/numbers when possible.

Examples of long-term outcomes are:

- *Changes in legal/regulatory framework through adoption of new laws;*
- *Improvement of the overall business enabling environment;*
- *Increased foreign direct investments;*
- *Reduction of barriers in international trade and increased cross-border trade;*
- *Development and institutionalization of commercial dispute and arbitration resolution services;*
- *Introduction and adoption of international standards;*
- *Improved protection of intellectual property rights;*
- *Improved customs processes/procedures;*
- *New free trade agreements; accession to WTO or other international trade organizations;*
- *Increased government transparency.*

16. How did you and/or your organization benefit from the CLDP activities?
17. Does your organization already apply approaches, tools, procedures, etc. suggested by CLDP? Please, specify.
18. How the approaches/models promoted by CLDP were disseminated within your organization or shared with any other organizations?
19. Were there any challenges associated with the CLDP?
20. Were there any other indirect results of the CLDP activities? Please explain.
21. **How sustainable** are the achieved results in a long term? Please, explain.

22. In your opinion, **would the same changes be achieved without CLDP** involvement? How?

SECTION 4: Cost–benefit Analysis

23. Could you please identify all potential benefits (direct and indirect) of the CLDP activity you participated in?

SECTION 5: Monitoring and Evaluation

Goal: EQ4. *What are the strengths and weaknesses of CLDP’s current monitoring and evaluation practice, particularly in relation to assessing medium- to longer-term effects of their activities?*

24. Have you ever been contacted by the CLPD staff and/or external or internal consultants (in the course or after the program) to request your feedback for the CLDP activities? How many times? Was it a verbal inquiry or in writing?
25. What kind of performance indicator would you recommend to monitor the program’s progress and achievements?
26. In your opinion, how could CLDP “catch” longer-term impacts of its technical assistance?
27. How would you recommend improving the CLDP monitoring practice?

SECTION 6: Recommendations

Goal: *Receiving recommendations how results could be amplified.*

28. What kind of model of technical assistance is needed to support your country’s social and economic development?
29. What could be changed in the program to increase its practical usefulness? Explain. What could CLDP do to amplify the results of the program?

INTERVIEWER: THANK RESPONDENT FOR HIS/HER TIME AND PARTICIPATION IN THE DISCUSSION.

Tool 2: CLDP Online Survey Questionnaire

Target Group: CLDP Participants in the assisted countries

(Recipients of CLDP services: lawmakers, regulators, judges, legal experts, and other participants/beneficiaries)

Estimated Time to Complete Survey: 20 minutes

INTRODUCTION

You have been selected to participate in the survey because you participated in one or several of the Commercial Law Development Program (CLDP) activities at some point in time during the 2007–2017 performance period.

As you may recall, the US CLDP supports legal and economic reforms underway in your country and around the globe. CLDP provides training and consultative services to lawmakers, regulators, judges and educators seeking to improve the legal environment for doing business in developing and post-conflict countries.

The objective of this evaluation is to measure the results and the effectiveness of the CLDP to inform future decisions and to identify and apply lessons learned from the evaluation to future programming in the region.

This survey has the joint authorization of the CLDP Management Team of the US Department of Commerce and the US Department of State.

Your participation is voluntary. There are no right or wrong answers. Please express your frank opinion openly. All individual responses will be treated in total confidentiality. The results of this survey will be aggregated across all respondents. Nothing you reply will be publicly attributed to any given individual and no personally identifiable information will be revealed in statements of findings. All qualitative and quantitative datasets will be anonymized.

Thank you in advance for your valued contributions to this initiative.

SECTION A: PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION

A1: Please, identify your sex:

1. Female
2. Male

3. I do not want to answer

A2: Please, select your country of residence:

1. Azerbaijan
2. Georgia
3. Kyrgyz Republic
4. Moldova
5. Tajikistan
6. Ukraine

Other (please, explain): _____

A3: Please, tell us about your current occupation.

1. Government representative (National/ Local Government, Ministry/Agency etc.).
2. Parliament representative (legislators, lawmakers, staff members).
3. Judicial institution representative (judges, court staff members).
4. Civil Society representative (CSO/NGO, professional association, community organization etc.).
5. Educators (law professors, teachers, instructors).
6. Independent experts (lawyers, consultants, industry experts etc.).
7. Business representative.
8. Mass media representative.

Other (please, explain): _____

A4: Did you take part in any CLDP activities or events? Please, list ALL CLDP activities and events you were involved in since 2007 (multiple response question)

1. Have not been involved in any CLDP activities or events since 2007 **Terminate interview!**

2. In-country capacity-building workshops
3. Legislative drafting workshops
4. Involvement in working groups
5. Consultations in the US
6. Participation in delegations to regional or international events, workshops, working groups, trade shows, knowledge sharing workshops and other events
7. Short term technical assistance or consultancy provided by US experts.

Other (please, explain): _____

A5: Was your CLDP involvement related to any of the following sub-sectors? Please, mark all relevant sub-sectors (multiple response question)

1. **Commerce** (entrepreneurship, contracts, arbitration, investment etc.)
2. **Customs** (classification and valuation of goods, compliance, procedures, customs labs, customs management and administration, trafficking, customs duties etc.)
3. **Intellectual Property** (IP enforcement and adjudication of disputes, IP laws and compliance, IP protection etc.)
4. **Standards and conformity** (international standards, such as ISO, HACCP, GAP etc.)
5. **Trade** (trade policy, trade agreements, WTO accession, trade associations, trade remedies, import/export promotion etc.)
6. **Transparency and Governance** (government procurement, state legislation and regulations, regulatory bodies etc.)

Other (please, explain): _____

A6: Approximately in what years were you involved in CLDP activities or events? Please, mark all relevant years (multiple response question)

1. before 2007
2. 2007
3. 2008
4. 2009
5. 2010
6. 2011
7. 2012

- 8. 2013
- 9. 2014
- 10. 2015
- 11. 2016
- 12. 2017
- 13. 2018
- 14. 2019

Other (please, explain): _____

SECTION B: To what extent has the CLDP tailored its activities/assistance model to adapt to country priorities and need, and if it has, have these adaptations been effective?

B1: In your opinion, how relevant were CLDP activities to your country context?

- 1. Fully relevant
- 2. Rather relevant
- 3. Rather NOT relevant
- 4. NOT relevant at all
- 5. I do not know

B2: How would you assess recommendations of consultants, experts and/or speakers involved in implementation of CLDP activities? Were their recommendations relevant and useful in your opinion?

- 1. Fully relevant and useful
- 2. Rather relevant and useful
- 3. Rather NOT relevant/useful
- 4. NOT relevant/useful at all
- 5. I do not know

B3: Was any staff of your institution/organization involved in identifying areas of necessary assistance or designing CLDP interventions?

- 1. Yes, my institution/organization was involved
- 2. No, my institution/organization was not involved
- 3. No answer, I Don't know, Not sure

SECTION C: To what extent has the CLDP assistance model of technical assistance supporting trade and other commercial reforms in your country been effective in achieving its aims?

CI: To what extent has the CLDP you were involved in helped you to achieve the following long-term goals? Please, mark your answer on a scale from 1 (not achieved at all) to 5 (fully achieved). Mark 'not relevant' if provided goal was not relevant to your CLDP.

#	Long-term goals/aims	1	2	3	4	5	Not relevant	I do not know
CI.1	Legal/regulatory framework has changed through development, amendment and/or adoption of new laws.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CI.2	Overall business climate has improved.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CI.3	Foreign direct investments into the country increased.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CI.4	Barriers to international trade reduced and cross-border trade increased as a result.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CI.5	Commercial dispute and arbitration resolution services developed and institutionalized.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CI.6	International trade or business-related standards were introduced and adopted at the country level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CI.7	Protection of intellectual property rights has improved.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CI.8	Customs processes/procedures have improved.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CI.9	New free trade agreements have signed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#	Long-term goals/aims	1	2	3	4	5	Not relevant	I do not know
CI.10	Accession of the country to new international organizations achieved/progressed (e.g. WTO).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CI.11	Government procurement has improved.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C2: Please, answer Yes or No to the following list of questions:

#	Questions	1	2	3	4
C2.1	Have you developed or amended any laws as a part of your CLDP involvement?	Yes	No	Don't know	Not relevant
C2.2	Has any developed/amended law been adopted by now?	Yes	No	Don't know	Not relevant
C2.3	Have you adopted any new procedures or management practices as a result of your participation in CLDP?	Yes	No	Don't know	Not relevant
C2.4	Have you become more familiar with best US and international practices in trade and wider economic reforms?	Yes	No	Don't know	Not relevant

C3: Have you obtained any new knowledge and skills as a result of your participation in the CLDP?

1. YES
2. NO
3. No answer, I Don't know, Not sure

If yes, please specify your answer about new skills obtained

C4: Did you apply new knowledge and skills you received as a result of your participation in CLDP in your organization? (One most relevant answer)

1. No, I did not find it useful and did not even try to apply it.
2. No, although I found it useful, I did not have a chance to apply it.
3. Yes, I found it useful, applied it in practice, but unsuccessfully;
4. Yes, I found it useful and successfully applied it/
5. No answer, I Don't know, Not sure

SECTION D: EQ3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of CLDP's current monitoring and evaluation practice?

D1: Have you ever been contacted by CLDP for a feedback about **results** of your participation in the program?

1. YES
2. NO
3. No answer, I Don't know, Not sure

SECTION E: Final Recommendations

E: What would you change in the CLDP to improve its effectiveness for promotion of trade, investment and economic growth and to disseminate better its results?

Thank you for your valued contribution to this evaluation.

Tool 3: SABIT Guide for KIIs and GDs

GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KII) AND GROUP DISCUSSIONS (GD) WITH DIRECT BENEFICIARIES OF SABIT

MODERATOR: INTRODUCE THE PARTICIPANTS TO THE EVALUATION AND OBTAIN THEIR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE VOLUNTARY DISCUSSION BEFORE THE DISCUSSION BEGINS

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon. My name is *[insert name]*. I am a representative of an independent consulting firm *[insert name of local data collection firm]* - commissioned to conduct an independent evaluation of the Special American Business Internship Program (SABIT Program) in *[country name]*. The team members accompanying me include an interpreter to facilitate translation (Insert name), other Evaluation Team members (Insert names and subject matter expertise) and note takers (Insert names).

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. You have been selected to participate in the discussion, because you participated in the SABIT Internship and Training Program in the past. We hope to conclude the discussion in about 60 minutes.

SABIT's business model involves sending business leaders, private-sector entrepreneurs and managers and depending on the industry, host-country government officials to the United States for a two to three-week training period with relevant U.S. government agencies, industry associations, and leading U.S. companies to the United States to learn about U.S. best practices.

The objective of this evaluation is to measure the results and the effectiveness of the SABIT program to inform future decisions related to the program and to identify and apply lessons learned from this evaluation to future programming in the region.

I would like to note that your participation is voluntary and there are no right or wrong answers. Feel free to express your opinion, nothing you say here will be publicly attributed to any given individual.

I will be moderating this discussion and will be asking you questions as well as guiding the overall direction of this discussion. The audio of this discussion is being recorded for our own record and analysis purposes. The rules of confidentiality also apply to the audio recording of this discussion. Some of my colleagues, who are also working on this research project, will be listening and taking anonymous hand-written notes of our conversation. Our primary objective is to understand your perspective and we may ask you a few follow up questions in response to what you tell us.

We would be grateful if people do not interrupt each other and only one person speaks at a time. If at any point I end up interrupting anyone, it will be purely to ensure that we cover all our issues of interest today. Thank you very much in advance for your participation and valued contributions to this initiative. We would also appreciate if you sign in an attendance time sheet for our own clerical purposes.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

MODERATOR: THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW ARE THE BASIC GUIDING QUESTIONS, WHICH SHOULD BE ASKED. HOWEVER, ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS CAN BE ASKED IF YOU FEEL THAT THEY ARE APPROPRIATE AND RELEVANT TO THE PURPOSE OF THE GD/KII

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

A1	Interview/ Discussion Date:		A2	Respondent's Name ¹³⁴ / Total number of participants: Male: Female:	
A3	Organization's name:		A4	Country:	Kyrgyz Republic Tajikistan Azerbaijan Georgia Moldova Ukraine Other (explain): _____
A5	Type of organization:				

ACQUAINTANCES

Now let's start by getting to know each other a little. Let's go around the table and everyone please introduce yourself and specify the business sector where you worked during participation in the SABIT Program, and the year of participation in the SABIT Program:

- Name
- Year of Participation
- Economic sector of the Organization (during participation)

SECTION A: EQ1. To what extent has the SABIT business model been effective in achieving its aims?

1. From what sources did you hear about the SABIT Program?
2. What were your primary objectives for participating in the program?
3. To what extent were you satisfied with your application selection process? Is there anything to be changes in this regard?
4. Please identify three mains activities/areas of SABIT Program that were the most/least useful for you? Why? What can be improved in this regard?
5. Please identify three main immediate outputs of the SABIT Program on your business?
6. Please identify three main mid- and long-term impact of the SABIT Program on your business/country?
7. Have you ever reached out to US companies (or have US companies reached out to your business firm) with new business proposals and/or transactions after your participation in SABIT Program? If yes, what was the result of your interactions?
8. As a result of the SABIT Internship and Training Program, have you played a role that influenced trade legislation or policies to improve the business environment in your country? How?
9. Do you see an impact of SABIT activities in your country? And what kind of?
10. Do you think that SABIT Program's helped to promote cooperation and trade with the US? Why?
11. In your opinion, have you even observed any significant changes (positive or negative) in your country's trade relations with the US over the past 10 years?
12. In your opinion, what do you consider to be persistent obstacles for increased cooperation between your country and the US businesses?

EQ2. Assess the extent to which, over time, SABIT has been able to influence directly a critical number of business leaders in targeted industries

13. Are you aware of any SABIT Alumni association and/or its events?
14. As a result of the SABIT Program, did you join and/or play a more active role in already established business association or supported the creation of a new one?
15. Would you like to obtain any post-US trip assistance, resulted from SABIT participation? (e.g. in establishing contacts with the US companies/organizations; obtaining information about business events, business opportunities; getting additional support in capacity-building; other – please specify).
16. Did you share any knowledge, skills, contacts or other information you received from the SABIT Program with non-participants? Explain.

¹³⁴ An attendance sheet to be used in case of group discussions.

EQ4. What are the strengths and weaknesses of SABITs current outreach, follow-up, monitoring and evaluation practice?

17. Have SABIT Program staff or in-country representatives ever contacted you or surveyed you about your participation in the program?
18. Did you obtain any feedback/follow up from the SABIT after your participation?
19. What would you recommend be done to monitor the SABIT program results?
20. What would you recommend for improving the program outreach?

EQ 5: Assess the effectiveness of SABIT's process for selecting industries to target, with a focus on how well they are aligned with posts' Integrated Country Strategies or equivalent strategy documents for any given time, and inclusivity of other actors at post in the decision-making process

21. In your opinion, how relevant are sectors/industries assisted by SABIT to your country's strategic needs? Why?
22. What can be improved in this regard?

EQ 3: What ways could SABIT amplify the results and positive effects of its program in the region?

23. What could be done by US contacts to amplify the positive results and effect of SABIT program, by your Government, by business community/associations and/or Academia to amplify positive results and effects of the program? Please specify.
24. What could be changed in the program to increase its practical usefulness?
25. Which national actors should be consulted while planning SABIT assistance?
26. If you participated in other similar capacity-building programs funded by the US or other donors what are the lessons you learnt from those programs?

MODERATOR: THANK PARTICIPANTS FOR THEIR TIME AND PARTICIPATION.

Tool 4: SABIT Guide for Non-participant GDs and KIIIs

MODERATOR: INTRODUCE THE PARTICIPANTS TO THE EVALUATION AND OBTAIN THEIR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE VOLUNTARY DISCUSSION BEFORE THE DISCUSSION BEGINS

INTRODUCTION

Good morning/afternoon. My name is *[insert moderator's name]*. I am a representative of an independent consulting firm *[insert name of local data collection firm]* contracted to conduct an independent evaluation of the Special American Business Internship Program (SABIT Program) in *[insert country name]*. The team members accompanying me include an interpreter to facilitate translation (*insert name*), other Evaluation Team members (*insert names and subject matter expertise*) and note takers (*insert names*).

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you. You have been selected to participate in the discussion, because you have not previously participated in the SABIT Internship and Training Program and we are very much interested in identifying your professional development interests and the business needs of your places of employment to improve the usefulness and relevance of future designs of the SABIT Internship and Training Program in the Eurasia and Central Asia regions.

We hope to conclude the discussion in about 60 minutes.

SABIT's business model involves sending business leaders, and depending on the industry, host-country government officials to the United States for a two to three-week training period with relevant U.S. government agencies, industry associations, and leading U.S. companies. All travel, accommodation, meals and training expenses are covered by the Program.

U.S. public officials provide information on regulations and legislation relevant to the industry of focus. Industry association officials provide training on the importance of cooperation, the rule of civil society and advocacy. U.S. host companies provide training on current industry trends, and business/management topics. As applicable, participants also

take part in seminars learning about project management, association development, small to medium enterprise development, standards, and other business-related topics.

I would like to note that your participation is voluntary and there are no right or wrong answers. Feel free to express your opinion, nothing you say here will be publicly attributed to any given individual.

I will be moderating this discussion and will be asking you questions as well as guiding the overall direction of this discussion. Some of my colleagues, who are also working on this initiative, will be listening and taking anonymous hand-written notes of our conversation. Our primary objective is to understand your perspective and we may ask you a few follow up questions in response to what you tell us.

We would be grateful if people do not interrupt each other and only one person speak at a time. If at any point I end up interrupting anyone, it will be purely to ensure that we cover all our issues of interest today. Thank you very much in advance for your participation and valued contributions to this initiative. We would also appreciate if you sign in an attendance time sheet for our own clerical purposes.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

ACQUAINTANCES

Now let's start by getting to know each other a little. Let's go around the table and everyone please introduce yourself and specify the business sector/industry of your firm, business association or government entity where you work¹³⁵.

- Name
- Organization, type/economic sector/industry.

MODERATOR: THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW ARE THE BASIC GUIDING QUESTIONS, WHICH SHOULD BE ASKED. HOWEVER, ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS CAN BE ASKED IF YOU FEEL THAT THEY ARE APPROPRIATE AND RELEVANT TO THE PURPOSE OF THE GD.

EQ1. To what extent has the SABIT business model been effective in achieving its aims?

EQ2. Assess the extent to which, over time, SABIT has been able to influence directly a critical mass of business leaders in targeted industries

1. Are you aware the SABIT Internship and Training Program (hereafter referred to as Program)? If yes, how did you learn about it? What do you know about the program?
2. Are you interested in establishing business contacts with the SABIT Alumni meetings? If yes, why?
3. Have SABIT alumnus ever shared their contacts, knowledge, skills, or other information learned from the SABIT Program with you or your business firm?
4. Are you an active member of any business association or business group? If yes, which one?
5. Have your firm had established trade cooperation with US business partners to sell or buy? If yes, did it result in increasing sales and/or purchases over time? If not, do you have any plans for pursuing medium- or long-term relations with US firms? If not, why?
6. Please advise what is needed to spur the trade with the potential counterpart in the US? What are the major obstacles?
7. Have you observed any significant changes (positive or negative) in your country's trade relations with the US over the last 10 years (i.e. increased trade, cooperation, new laws, simplified procedures etc.)? Explain.
8. Are there other bi- or multi-lateral trade exchanges and capacity-building programs, similar to SABIT, implemented by other donors? Clarify which donors when responding to this question.
9. If yes, how do you compare the SABIT program with them?

EQ 3: What ways could SABIT amplify the results and positive effects of its program in the region?

¹³⁵ An attendance sheet will be distributed among the participants.

10. SABIT program has three main objectives:
- Promoting fair and reciprocal trade with U.S. companies,
 - Reducing barriers to trade and investment and
 - Diversifying the trade markets of South Central and Eastern Europe and the Caucasus.

What recommendations for training content would you propose in order to achieve SABIT's objectives?
Which topics/types of activities are specifically interesting for you?

11. What formats would be the most effective: e.g. in-country training/internships? Group or individual internships in the US, one-country/ one-industry? Multi-country? Multi-industry?
12. How would you describe the preferred composition of future participants in SABIT?
13. What suggestions would you make to ensure that the program would be effective for promoting trade within the Eurasia and Central Asia regions, and the US (e.g., discussions focused on,
 - The Generalized System of Preferences (GSP, GSP+) that provides preferential duty-free entry for products from your country;
 - Legal issues related to the trade, any regulatory and/or policy changes that could be required to improve trade;
 - Corporate governance issues¹³⁶;
 - Other topics.

MODERATOR: THANK PARTICIPANTS FOR THEIR TIME AND PARTICIPATION.

Tool 5: SABIT Online Survey Questionnaire

ONLINE SURVEY of SABIT ALUMNI

Estimated Time to Complete Survey: 20-30 minutes

You have been selected to participate in a SABIT Alumni Survey because you participated in the SABIT Internship and Training Program at some point in time during the 2007–2017 performance period. This survey has the joint authorization of the SABIT Management Team of the US Department of Commerce and the Office of the Coordinator of Assistance to Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia of the US Department of State.

Your participation is voluntary and there are no right or wrong answers. All individual responses will be treated with total confidentiality. Nothing you reply will be publicly attributed to any given individual and no personally identifiable information will be revealed in statements of findings.

The objective of this survey is to try to estimate the results and the effectiveness of the SABIT program to inform future decisions related to program design and to identify and apply lessons learned from this evaluation to future programming in the region. Its primary objective is to understand your perspective about your experience with SABIT.

Thank you in advance for your valued contributions to this initiative.

SECTION A: PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION

A1: Please, identify your sex: (Q2)

- Female
- Male
- I do not want to answer

A2: Please, select your country of residence (Q3)

¹³⁶ Note: The term "corporate governance" refers to the collection of mechanisms, processes and relations by which [corporations](#) are controlled and operated.

1. Azerbaijan
2. Georgia
3. Kyrgyz Republic
4. Moldova
5. Tajikistan
6. Ukraine

7. **Other** (please, explain): _____ (100 characters) Official Code:

A3: Your business sector of focus (multiple response question) (Q4)

1. Agribusiness/Food Processing
2. Transportation/Logistics
3. Tourism/Hotels
4. Energy
5. Fashion/Textile
6. Healthcare
7. Mining, Oil/Gas
8. Construction
9. Water, Waste Management
10. Wood Processing
11. Other (specify): _____ (100 characters)

A4: SABIT Participant's Organizational Type: (multiple response question) (Q5)

1. Private Sector Enterprise
2. Government Organization/Agency
3. Business Association
4. Other (specify): _____ (100 characters)

A5: Approximately in what years were you involved in SABIT activities or events? Please, mark all relevant years (multiple response question) (Q6)

1. 2007
2. 2008
3. 2009
4. 2010
5. 2011
6. 2012
7. 2013
8. 2014
9. 2015
10. 2016
11. 2017
12. 2018–2019
13. Other (please, explain): _____

SECTION B: Critical Number of Business Leaders in Targeted Industries.

B1: What was your primary motivation/objectives for participating in the program? Select all that apply: (Q7)

1. Professional development
2. Business development
3. Access to new market and trade expansion
4. Establish business contacts with US and regional/national companies to explore new opportunity
5. Join a network of business leaders (regional and US) to promote foreign trade
6. Advance my-country business climate through improved laws and regulations
7. Advance my-country business climate through improved standards and operating procedures
8. Support economic growth and market diversification

- 9. Promote entrepreneurship and small and medium enterprise development
- 10. Other (specify): _____ (100 characters)

B2: How well did SABIT program meet your expectations/objectives? (Q8)

- a. Much better than expected
- b. Better than expected
- c. About what I expected
- d. Worse than expected
- e. Much worse than expected

B3. Please identify three main activities of SABIT Program you like the most: (Q9)

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

B4: Did you apply the knowledge and skills you learnt from your SABIT experience? (Q10)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not applicable

Please explain what you were able to apply: _____

B5. Were you able to share the knowledge and skills you got from your SABIT experience with other people in your country? (Q11)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not applicable

Please describe: _____

B6. If yes, can you estimate the number and describe the type of persons or organizations that benefitted from the information you shared from the SABIT Program?

a. Types and number of individuals potentially benefited: (Q12)

Business Leaders N=_____ Government officials N= _____ Business colleagues N=_____

Other (specify): _____ (100 characters)

b. Types and numbers of organizations potentially benefited: (Q13)

Companies N= _____ Business associations N= _____ Government agencies N= _____

c. Other (specify): _____ (100 characters)

SECTION C: Effectiveness of SABIT Interventions

C1: From what sources did you hear about the SABIT Program? (Q14)

Select all that apply:

1. Former SABIT Alumni
2. SABIT Alumni event hosted by the in-country US Embassy
3. US Embassy in your country of residence
4. SABIT Representative
5. Business Association/Chamber of Commerce in your country of residence
6. US Chamber of Commerce in your country of residence
7. Regional SABIT Coordinator in Kyiv
8. Regional SABIT Coordinator in Almaty
9. SABIT website
10. Local newspaper
11. Other (specify): _____ (100 characters)

C2: To what extent are you satisfied with SABIT in terms of its process of selecting the program's participants? (Q15)

- a. Very satisfied
- b. Satisfied
- c. Neutral
- d. Dissatisfied
- e. Very dissatisfied
- f. No opinion

C3: Is there anything to be improved during the participant selection process? (Q16)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. No opinion

What are your suggestions: _____ (100 characters)?

C4: Was your trip in the US well organized (logistics, transportation, visits, etc.). (Q17)

- a. Very well organized
- b. Well organize
- c. Neutral
- d. Disorganized
- e. Very disorganized
- f. No opinion

Describe: _____ (100 characters)

C5: How would you rate the overall usefulness of the SABIT Program for you and your business?

Select only one: (Q18)

- a. Very useful
- b. Somewhat useful
- c. Neither useful nor useless
- d. Somewhat useless
- e. Very useless
- f. I don't know

Describe why: _____ (100 characters)

C.6: What new information obtained by you during the SABIT program was the most useful to you and your business? (Q19)

Check all that apply:

- a. Legal issues (laws and regulations) related to the trade between your country and the US
- b. Policy changes that could be required to improve trade between your country and the US
- c. Generalized System of Preferences (GSP, GSP+) that provides preferential duty-free entry for products from your country to the US
- d. Business management issues and practices
- e. International standards (e.g. safety and quality of food products and production processes, international labour standards, etc.)
- f. Recognized trade reforms and advocacy for change
- g. Did not get any new information
- h. I do not remember
- i. Other (specify): _____ (100 characters)

C7: Did the information you received lead to any specific mid- or long-term impact? (Q20)

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not applicable

C8: If yes, please identify mid- and long-term outcomes of the SABIT Program on your business/country? (Q21)

- a. Received promotion in my organization
- b. Established (number) new trade and business contacts in my country
- c. Established (number) new trade and business contacts in the region and neighboring countries
- d. Established (number) new trade and business contacts in the U.S.
- e. Established(number) of national/regional/international business associations and /or work groups
- f. Expanded sales of my business
- g. Launched new trade/cooperation project(s) with (number) nation company(ies)
- h. Launched new trade/cooperation project(s) with (number) regional company(ies)
- i. Launched new trade/cooperation project(s) with..... (number) the US company(ies)
- j. Invested USD in my business within three-year period after the participation in SABIT Program
- k. Increased competitiveness of my business
- l. Received new financing of USD through grant and/or of USD through loan within three-year period after the participation in SABIT Program
- m. Business sales increased/decreased by % within three-year period after the participation in SABIT Program
- n. Export operation increased/decreased by % within three-year period after the participation in SABIT Program
- o. Import from the U.S. increased/decreased by % within three-year period after the participation in SABIT Program
- p. Promoted/participated in(number) of lobbying campaigns which positively influenced the business environment in the country
- q. Introduced new business practices in my organization
- r. Initiated _____ (number) legislation to improve business and investment policies/regulations/enforcement
- s. Improved organizational structure of your business
- t. Became more actively involved in developing and monitoring business policies/regulations
- u. Improved access of SME and private investors to government procurement/privatization process
- v. Not aware of any outcome
- w. Other: _____

C9: How would you rate the SABIT Program's effectiveness in promoting cooperation and trade with US companies?

- a. Very effective

- b. Somewhat effective
- c. Neither effective nor ineffective
- d. Somewhat ineffective
- e. Very ineffective
- f. I don't know

Please explain:

C10: In your opinion, have you observed any significant changes (positive or negative) in your country's trade relations with the US over the past 10 years.

Select all that apply:

- a. Yes, increased trade
- b. Yes, decreased trade
- c. Yes, increased cooperation
- d. Yes, decreased cooperation
- e. Yes, more simplified procedures
- f. No changes
- g. I do not know
- h. Other (specify): _____ (100 characters)

C11: Is there a community of SABIT alumni within your country (or region) that communicates regularly or periodically?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. I do not know

If yes, what entity organizes the meetings: _____ 100 characters)

C12: If not currently available, would you want to participate in SABIT Alumni meetings within your country if they were offered?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Cannot answer

Please specify _____

SECTION D: Selection of Targeted Industries and Relevance of SABIT Interventions

D1: What program objectives would you consider to be the most relevant to your/your organization's needs?

Select all that apply:

- a. Promoted fair and reciprocal trade within the Eurasia/Central Asia regions and the US
- b. Reduced barriers to foreign trade and investment
- c. Diversifying trade markets of South Central, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus
- d. Training with relevant US government agencies on regulations and legislation relevant to the industry of focus
- e. Training with relevant industry associations on the importance of cooperation, role of civil society and advocacy for legal and regulatory changes
- f. Training with relevant leading US companies on current industry trends, and business/management topics.
- g. Seminars conducted on project management, association development, small to medium enterprise development, standards, etc.
- h. Other (specify): _____ (100 characters)

D2: In the absence of established US business partners, does your firm currently have plans for pursuing medium- or long-term business relations with US firms?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Can't answer

d. Specify (optional) _____ (100 characters)

D3: In your opinion, what do you consider be persistent obstacles for increased trade between your country and US businesses?

Select all that apply:

- a. Lack of knowledge about changing US laws and regulations
- b. Lack of stable business-sector focused contacts
- c. Import and export restrictions
- d. Labour law requirements
- e. Strict environmental standards
- f. Risk and uncertainty
- g. Varying documentation requirements
- h. Other (specify): _____ (100 characters) Official Code:

SECTION E: Strengths and Weaknesses of SABIT's Current Outreach, Monitoring and Evaluation Practice

E1: Have you ever been contacted or surveyed about your experience in SABIT program

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I do not remember

Please Specify _____

SECTION F: Your Recommendations

F.1: Given your experience, what would you change to improve the application and selection process for participation in the SABIT Program?

Please describe: _____

F.2 What would you recommend be introduced or reinforced in the SABIT Program to increase its effectiveness in advancing regional cooperation and trade?

Select all that apply:

- a. Arrange delegations from the same country
- b. Continue diversifying targeted sectors
- c. Organize individual internships for business
- d. Increase duration of technical visits with the US host agencies
- e. Sponsor SABIT alumni to participate in international business conferences and/or trade fairs in business sectors of focus
- f. Maintain the database of US business contact disaggregated by business sector and industry
- g. Update SABIT alumni on legal issues (laws and regulations) related to the trade between my country, countries within my region, and/or the US
- h. Increase participation of government officials from the targeted country
- i. Updates on Industry information on regional and/or US trade-related issues
- j. Updates on policy changes that could be required to improve trade between my country, countries within my region, and/or the US
- k. Other: _____ (100 character)
_____ (100 character)
_____ (100 character)

F3. Did you participate in other similar capacity-building programs funded by the US or other donors?

Yes

No

If yes, where did you travel and who is the founder of your trip?

F4. If yes, what would be the lessons from those programs that SABIT needs to consider and incorporate in its activities?

Thank you for your valued contribution to this initiative!