BOMCA 9

Border Management Programme in Central Asia (9th phase)

Programme is funded under the EU Development Co-operation Instrument (DCI)

BOMCA overview

Since its launch in 2003, the various phases of the BOMCA Programme have focused on capacity building and institutional development, developing trade corridors, improving border management systems and eliminating drug trafficking across the Central Asia region. Each new phase of BOMCA was designed to gradually build upon and consolidate the results achieved during the preceding phases of the Programme. During its earlier phases, the Programme channelled its resources towards creating modern border management infrastructure in 5 Central Asian countries.

Capitalising on the success of previous phases, this 9th phase intends to continue interventions in the area of institutional development, management of migration flows and trade facilitation. Its overall objective is to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of border management in Central Asia by introducing advanced elements of Integrated Border Management (IBM), assisting governments in developing and reforming their migration governance, mobility and trade facilitation policies, and strengthening capacities of Border and Migration Agencies, and thus contributing to enhanced security and economic development at the national and regional levels.

The 9th phase of the BOMCA Programme was launched in June 2015 for 36 months with a total budget of 4 954 784.93 Euro.

Dear reader!

In December 2016, our BOMCA 9 Programme reached a relative equator of its planned implementation period in Central Asia. Starting from June 2015, over 900 beneficiaries from 5 Central Asian countries have participated in more than 60 events of different scope – from national and regional workshops to technical assistance missions and study visits to the EU Member States. By summer 2018, the 9th phase of BOMCA foresees the implementation of almost 100 additional activities, including the delivery of technical equipment to CA border management agencies for the total amount of EUR 240 000 in 2017.

The professional law enforcement and customs institutions, together with the international organisation, as the members of BOMCA Consortium provide the best knowledge and expertise they have, and we trust this pro-

fessionalism to be of great benefit to colleagues from Central Asian institutions. Latvia and Lithuania faced and still face challenges by developing border security, migration management and trade facilitation instruments. Therefore, we share our knowledge and provide, with an open-minded approach, our lessons learned, in the spirit of shared professional values. By promoting the concept of Integrated Border Management (IBM) in Central Asia and IBM best practices, BOMCA 9 also keeps in focus the broader goal of supporting border security and regional cooperation for stability, as well as trade facilitation.

As it was announced on 29 November 2016 during the 2nd Regional Steering Group meeting, the EU is looking forward to extend BOMCA 9 until December 2019 with additional funding. We hope that Central Asian countries will use this opportunity to come together and, by way of cooperation, identify the mid-term and long-term support goals for the benefit of Central Asian people.

I wish all BOMCA 9 beneficiaries a sustainable pursuit of their professional endeavours.

Lieutenant Colonel Raitis Tiliks, BOMCA 9 Regional Manager

Attaché of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Latvia in the Republic of Kazakhstan and in the Kyrgyz Republic

State Border Guard Republic of Latvia

Component 1: Institutional development of border management agencies

Technical Mission on anti-corruption measures in Bishkek

Special emphasis of Component 1 activities in the last quarter was placed on anti-corruption component. In recent years, the topic of corruption came forward and became a focus of Kyrgyzstan strategies. Such attention to this issue is due to the understanding that cases of corruption are closely linked to the inefficiency of public administration and legal and social relations within the country .

To assist the Government in combating corruption in State bodies, on 3-7 October,2016 BOMCA conducted an advisory mission on supporting anti-corruption measures in the State Border Service of the Kyrgyz Republic and the State Inspection of Veterinary and Phytosanitary Security of the Kyrgyz Republic. BOMCA experts together with representatives of the Defence Council, Government Office, Border Service, and State Inspection shared their experiences in relation to the fight against corruption, effective provision and standardisation of public services and automation of government business processes. During the five-day work, the experts jointly reviewed the organisational structure, duties and procedures amongst the relevant agencies, carried out an assessment of conformity of organizational tasks, competences, rights and obligations of employees. Resilience of institutions to corruption was assessed and specific cases of corruption were analyzed. Action Plans, indicating short-term and medium-term objectives and priorities for the fight against systemic corruption within the Border Service and the State Inspection were jointly developed. After approval from the Defense Council, these plans were transferred to the relevant agencies for the introduction of anti-corruption measures such as structure optimisation, increasing of transparency and control processes, and procurement procedures reforms.

Component 2: Institutional framework for management of mixed migration flows at borders

Training for law enforcement dog handlers in Tashkent

Further development of the legal and procedural instruments, introduction of advanced practices of cross-border mobility and addressing the multifaceted challenges caused by mixed migration flows are the key objectives of Component 2. A series of workshops and technical missions were carried out.

A three-day training for canine officers of border agencies of Uzbekistan was held in Tashkent on 25 – 27 October 2016, gathering dog handlers from the Training Centers of Border Guards and Customs Committee of Uzbekistan. Participants strengthened their skills in K-9 operations and learned advanced international practices in appropriate use of K-9 teams.

Coached by Jevgenijs Garkuls, Senior Inspector of the Dog Training Center of the Latvian State Border Guard College, participants gained an in-depth understanding of essential topics such as breeding , selection and testing of K-9 dog, senses cultivating, reflexes separation, instincts and methods of dogs training depending on age. A separate session was dedicated to the development of K9 behavior - active, hunting and aggressive.

Methods used during the workshop included positive and negative reinforcement, clicker method, work on dog reflexes etc. The delivery of workshop sessions was reinforced by the use of presentations, videos, handouts and complemented by practical work with puppies.

The workshop allowed to identify training needs of dog handlers, based on which the expert developed recommendations on further capacity building in K-9 area.

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Border guards are reinforcing identification and profiling skills

In October 2016 a series of national workshops on identification and profiling techniques for relevant national law enforcement experts of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan took place.

This BOMCA activity aimed to present the EU border guards good practices in the area of identification and profiling of different groups of travelers and to introduce modern mechanisms for the recognition of different categories of persons crossing the border.

"We brought EU good practices in effective identification and profiling of border violators. There are many modern approaches, sophisticated systems and IT technologies, but no IT tool could replace the human brain", said Mr. Madzuls, expert of the State Border Guard of Latvia.

During the workshops the trainees went through a number of key topics in relation to the operational and criminal profiling and identification of state border perpetrators, possibly wanted persons and other persons whose border crossing is in the focus of law enforcement and national security agencies. Components of identification such as face detection, assessment of danger, non-contact lie detection, analysis of traveller behaviour and countenance, and primary surveillance were tackled in detail and practiced.

Techniques of luggage and transportation means searches were also evaluated as an important part of the complex profiling process. The training process effectively combined theory and practical exercises, and was accompanied by interactive tools and methods such as presentations, practical examples, videos and visualisation slides.

Border guards of Central Asia exchanged experience on border check

A total of 20 border guards and customs officers from five Central Asian countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) were trained to use modern techniques and apply international standards in carrying out border checks. This BOMCA activity, conducted on September 20-22, 2016 in Almaty in cooperation with UNHCR, was aimed at strengthening the capacity of border

control officers in identification and profiling procedures. Participants broadened their knowledge of the EU standards in border control organisation and related legal base, including international principles in managing mixed migration flows in accordance with the EU standards and practices. Cooperation and coordination among the agencies involved in border control as well as collaboration among Plenipotentiary Border Representatives were emphasized as important aspect of effective border control. The issues of referral were also touched upon, including the provision of basic services to the most vulnerable migrant groups, needs assessment and further referral. A separate session

was dedicated to ethics and public service standards, which include sensitivity to gender, ethnicity, protecting migrants' data and respecting migrants' rights and dignity. The training enabled participants to better categorise the different types of persons crossing the borders, while also respecting document security, ethics and human rights .

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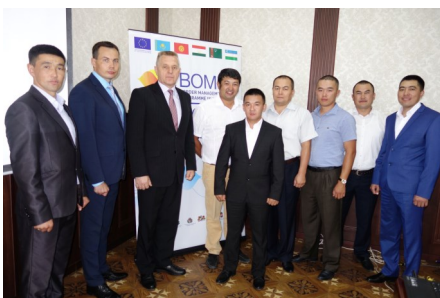## Strengthening green borders surveillance capacity in Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan

In November 2016 BOMCA carried out two technical assistance visits to Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan in order to provide advisory support to border agencies and strengthen their capacities in green border surveillance. While meeting representatives of the border security agencies, the expert team provided EU know-how in carrying out field assessments and needs assessments to enhance green border surveillance capacities. The meetings focused on several topics, including the legal framework for green border surveillance, the search for violators, technical means, planning of services and appropriate resources.

Special attention was given to the establishment of coordination mechanisms between and amongst the various border management agencies to enhance intra- and inter-service cooperation. Based on the meeting's findings and joint discussions, the EU experts will provide concrete recommendations on enhancing the efficiency of existing procedures and monitoring mechanisms, as well as on green border surveillance tactics.

Introducing principles of effective Plenipotentiary Border Representatives mechanism

A workshop for Plenipotentiary Border Representatives and their deputies was held in September and November in Bishkek and Dushanbe respectively, led by the State Border Guards of Latvia experts. National participants presented in detail their functions and roles in ensuring good-neighbourly relations and cooperation between the countries, in strengthening cooperation between border agencies, in ensuring adherence to laws at the borders, and managing incidents and routine issues at the borders. The European experts presented international experience and practical examples. Participants discussed existing forms of cross-border cooperation, challenges and principles of such cooperation. An analysis of existing agreements was conducted, and the basic rules and differences in their application were discussed. Based on the findings, experts will prepare recommendations for advancing Plenipotentiary Border Representatives functioning and cooperation.

Component 3: Adoption of trade facilitation regimes at borders

Tajik customs is enhancing risk analysis procedures

The 3rd Component of BOMCA 9 aims to introduce measures improving flow of goods efficiency at the borders, and thus facilitating regional and international trade. Workshops and working meetings are being held with national counterparts to reviews national legislation and its compatibility with international standards and agreements.

Reforming the risk management system will facilitate business growth by decreasing the risk of corruption and promoting integrity. A working meeting on international experience in administering customs risk management system was held in Dushanbe on December 06, 2016 bringing cus-

-toms officials and BOMCA experts from Lithuanian custom authority.

Meeting participants shared international experience examples and reviewed ways to enhance customs clearance procedures and facilitate trade in the CA region. European experts presented examples of productive co-operation between tax and customs authorities. Participants also discussed challenges in co-operation among international and national actors and ways to address them.

This BOMCA activity aims at advisory assistance and exchange of experience in the area of risk management and risk investigation. It will introduce measures improving the efficiency of controls and procedures applicable to goods and means of transport crossing the borders and thus facilitating regional and international trade.

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Introducing modern risk assessment systems of animals and plants import

Effective risk management systems in animals and plant import are a powerful tool that allow authorities to keep a proper balance between the facilitation of legitimate trade and prevention of illegal activities in the international trade chain. It is important to ensure that such a system is in place and is implemented properly. In October-November 2016 BOMCA expert team met with key national partners from phytosanitary, veterinary, quarantine and sanitary-epidemiological agencies of all Central Asian countries to jointly assess the existing national practices and procedures for risk analysis and control of imported animals, plants and food.

By reviewing and consolidating various existing national and international regulations, the experts discussed the possible advancement of a legislative framework that promotes a more harmonised approach to import control and create a more transparent, up-to-date and effective system of import controls, allowing more coherence in and integration of the different control mechanisms in place. The different approaches to the controls of food, feed, animals and plants were also assessed. European experts introduced the EU models and existing practices and tools available which can be implemented to support such legislation to ensure that all imported products are subject to conditions and controls directly proportionate to the risk they pose. Based on each mission's findings, a set of recommendations is being prepared for each country on risk analysis system for imported animals, food and plants, as well as working procedures for risk assessment in accordance with international standards.

Capacity building in implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement

A technical assistance mission on trade facilitation measures was held in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in September – October 2016. International and local experts will gather together to discuss Kyrgyzstan's experience acquired during its membership in the WTO, current trade and customs procedures applied in the country after becoming a WTO member, its compliance with WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA) and elaborate recommendations for further measures to be applied in this direction. This BOMCA activity aims at advisory assistance to the CA countries in assessing their trade facilitation measures in order to support and build national capacities for the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).

During bilateral meetings and workshops, international and local experts reviewed the existing legal framework and appropriate administrative arrangements applied in the countries with special focus on legislative changes made after accession to WTO. Based on findings, discussions and exchange of views with national experts, a Comparative Analysis Report will be developed on the trade facilitation measures applied in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan and their compatibility with the WTO TFA provisions. This document will serve as the guidelines for advancing trade facilitation actions, which would foster future economic growth and prosperity of the countries, increase the attractiveness for foreign investment and accelerate their integration in the world economy.

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Support to cooperation and coordination mechanisms

Regional Steering Group Meeting gathers partners to sum up the achievements to date and outline plans for the future

In addition to the work done under the three main thematic components, in the last quarter of 2016, BOMCA held several events related to strengthening cooperation with the beneficiaries and international partners and promoting the EU and BOMCA goals to the broader public.

On November 29, 2016 Bishkek hosted the 2nd BOMCA 9 Regional Steering Group Meeting. Representatives of border and customs services, Foreign Ministries, and migration management agencies of all Central Asian countries, as project beneficiaries, together with BOMCA 9 Consortium partners and representatives of the European Union Delegation to the Kyrgyz Republic gathered in Bishkek in order to jointly assess Programme achievements through the year 2016, successes and challenges to date, and discuss the draft Work Plan 2017.

BOMCA importance as a unique regional programme aimed at enhancing cross border cooperation in Central Asia was reconfirmed by Mr. Cezare de Montis, EU Embassador to the Kyrgyz Republic . Presence of the key beneficiaries of BOMCA and leaders of three thematic components was key to hold constructive discussions and listen to comments, opinions and recommendations from the CA delegates' side, which were taken into account during the finalisation of the work plan for the year 2017. Taking into account the EU proposal to continue BOMCA 9 until December 2019, this year's RSG served also as a platform for an exchange of opinions about possible future activities after 2018 when the current phase 9 comes to the end. The meeting called on the ideas and proposals based on CA countries priorities on how to better shape the future support of the EU.

Being the second RSG meeting in the 9th phase of the Programme, the event was important in terms of mutual cooperation, joint presentation of achievements, evaluation of results, and feedback. RSG meetings take place on a yearly basis.

Bringing BOMCA goals to the general public

Border communities through the photographic lenses

At the end of October 2016, BOMCA office in Kyrgyzstan announced a competition titled "People living in border lands – mixture of cultures, unity of souls", for best photos reflecting life in Kyrgyz border areas. The competition was open to the general public and provided the space for people to share different views and express, through the photographic lens, a vision on the life of people living in Kyrgyzstan's border lands and how these different communities communicate with one another. The pictures had to conceptualise the following topics:

- Communication of people in borderlands;
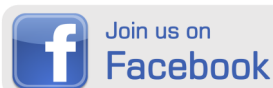- Influence of borders vicinity to the daily life

- Confidence building between ethnic communities.

From a number of pictures submitted, the selecting committee selected 3 best photos , reflecting in the best way the contest's topic. First winner was awarded with a semi-professional camera, 2nd and third places received BOMCA promotional prizes

This is Aibek and his friend Khurshed. In their native village Kok-Tash houses of Kyrgyz and Tajiks are "chess-board" located. In some places Kyrgyz houses are located in Tajik territory and conversely. There are 2 schools in the village—Kyrgyz and Tajik, which are divided by a road. Boys study in different schools and live in neighbouring houses. They are very close friends.

The photo was taken by Chingiz Shukurov, 26 y.o in border village Kok-Tash of Batken region. Chingiz participated in photo competition announced by BOMCA and was awarded with the 1st prize.

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