

Capacity Needs Assessment of Transparency in the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus



Analysis of the survey

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Introduction:

The rapid assessment exercise aims to quickly examine the status quo of the transparency systems and related capacities to comply with the reporting requirements of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement of the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus. The key instrument for the assessment was the online questionnaire, elaborated jointly with the UNEP CCC and regional network coordinators. A list of targeted questions covered all respective directions of the climate transparency concept: (i) GHG Inventory; (ii) NDC tracking; (iii) Adaptation and Impacts, incl. loss and damage issues; (iv) Support needed and received. At the same time, the questions covered the topic of gender mainstreaming, existing BTR support and other support, provided within other international initiatives on climate actions transparency.

As of today, all 7 countries of the regional network for Central Asia and the Caucasus responded to the survey. These are: *Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan* (Central Asia) *Armenia and Azerbaijan* (Caucasus). The responses were duly assessed and in some cases, a referential analysis was performed. This included review and study of key findings of the gaps and needs analysis conducted by GHGMI/CAREC for the Central Asian countries and gaps and needs assessment for MRV and GHG inventories for the Caucasian countries within the national CBIT projects and EU4Climate.

The respondents represented the governmental organizations, which either coordinate the process of climate reporting and transparency actions, or support (expert level) these processes at the national level by contributing to the preparation of the NCs, BURs, BRs, NIRs, and NAP. **Annex 1** provides details about the respondents on survey from the regional network.

Part 1: Overall transparency system and status of reporting

Most of the countries of the network either submitted or are proceeding with the preparation of the 4th National Communication and first and second BURs. The countries of Central Asia (exception: Kazakhstan¹) are almost at the same level of their climate reporting status (see the Annex 1). All of them (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) developed or developing their 4NC and 1BUR. The situation with the Caucasian countries is different: Armenia and Azerbaijan developed their 4NCs and submitted 2BURs. Armenia is progressing even ahead by submitting its 3BUR. Azerbaijan is proceeding with its 3BUR at present.

The **overall status of the ETF-based transparency system** varies. For example, 50% of respondents assessed that their countries' transparency systems as *fair* meaning that the system was established but requires significant improvement. The second half of the respondents however, claimed that their countries stand at *"poor"* level, with their transparency systems either not established or the process has just been started. The only country which defined the overall national status of the ETF-based transparency system as *"good"* is Kazakhstan. This is due to the national Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) which is progressing well with the well-established transparency and MRV system.

¹ In accordance with the COP conclusion (FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.4, section V.C.) and following ratification by Kazakhstan of the Kyoto Protocol on 19 June 2009 and its entry into force on 17 September 2009, Kazakhstan is considered an Annex I Party for the purposes of the Protocol but remains to be a non-Annex I Party for the purposes of the Convention

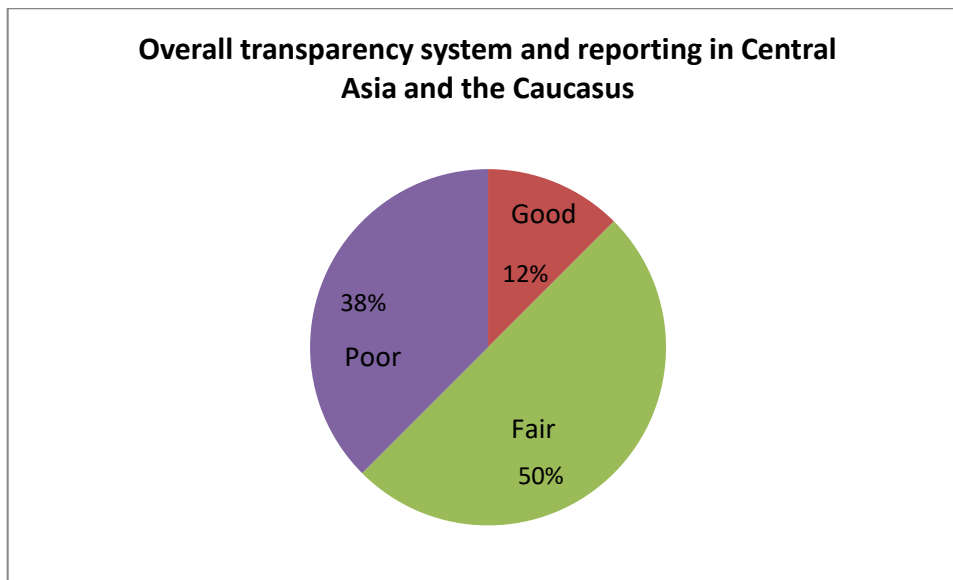


Fig. 1. Overall transparency system and reporting in Central Asia and the Caucasus

In terms of **institutional arrangements** for the transparency systems the situation is almost the same. The most of the respondents state that the institutional arrangements for the transparency system are established but require significant improvements and rate the overall level as **“fair”**. Kazakhstan, again, assessed its institutional arrangements for the transparency system as **“advanced”**, i.e. *fully established but requiring minor improvements*.

Elaboration of NDCs and NAPs, as well as other sector-specific state programmes (e.g. *Armenia’s 2022-2030 Energy Saving and Renewable Energy Action Plan*, and *Tajikistan’s 2030 National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy*) were stated as principle strategic documents and policies, which have benefited from the outcomes of the transparency system at the national level.

Part 2: Transparency support received and good practices and lessons learned in transparency

All the respondents stated that the main support they receive in transparency are mostly associated with **GEF enabling activities projects** on preparations of *National Communications, Biennial Update Reports*, which were and are being implemented through UNDP and UNEP as GEF implementing agencies in the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus.

The respondents also noted that at present, there are other types of support provided for the transparency improvement through:

- **ICAT/CAREC Initiative** on establishing the **Regional Climate Actions Transparency Hub (ReCATH)**: *Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan*
- **UNDP Climate Promise Project** (NDC enhancement, MRV establishment): *Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Armenia and Azerbaijan*
- **UNDP EU4Climate Project** (NDC enhancement, MRV establishment): *Armenia and Azerbaijan*
- **GCF Readiness Projects on development of NAPs**: *Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Armenia and Azerbaijan*

- **GEF CBIT Project:** Armenia (*UNDP implemented*) and Azerbaijan (*UNEP implemented*). Tajikistan (*FAO Implemented: Prodoc submitted*), Uzbekistan (*FAO implemented: Project started*) and Turkmenistan (*FAO initiated: PIF submitted*)

In the past, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan mentioned support provided through the UNDP/UNEP Global Support Programme (SGP) and UNFCCC Secretariat particularly in *improving their GHG Inventories*.

Potential South-South support within and outside the network:²

1. **Armenia:** NAP and Adaptation Planning: Armenia's NAP best practices; first steps towards establishing the MRV for mitigation (P&M)
2. **Azerbaijan:** Establishment of the sector-based MRV (case study: oil company Socar) - *tbc*
3. **Kazakhstan:** Institutional arrangements for GHG inventory process and national Emission Trading Scheme (ETS) mechanism
4. **Kyrgyzstan:** Methods and tools in assessing vulnerability index and determining indicators for NAP (incl. WEAP and CRVA models)
5. **Tajikistan:** national policy on adaptation and tracking the climate finance from international sources (but needs for tagged climate indicators)
6. **Uzbekistan:** Good practice on Uzbekistan's passing the voluntarily international GHG Inventory assessment with further QA/AC recommendations on its improvement

Yet, there are areas, where the countries highlighted their particular interest in getting new good practices and/or lessons learned from other countries. These are:

1. **Climate reporting and transparency for ETF:** getting support for BTR
2. **Effective institutional arrangement and legislative base** for establishing the transparency systems; assigning the roles and tasks of various stakeholders
3. **Transparency for GHG inventory:** institutional arrangements, best practices on software based estimations, new IPCC methodologies, data collection and management process
4. **MRV online platform** with legally bindings roles of each stakeholder/partner
5. **Effective models for GHG projections:** best practices from other countries
6. **NDC Tracking:** determining the indicators for tracking progress and climate reporting under the NDC
7. **Adaptation and Impacts:** assessing the effectiveness of the adaptation measures and determination of quantitative/qualitative indicators
8. **Loss and damage:** methodologies, tools and approaches in assessing and estimation of L&D
9. **Climate finance:** tools and mechanisms in monitoring of the external support received/needed; methods of climate finance tracking system

Part 3: Implementing the ETF and preparation for the Biennial Transparency Reports

In general, most of the respondents (70%) claimed that they are familiar with the ETF/BTR provisions but have less understanding on reporting templates (BTR). The remaining 30% is shared among those who state that they are well aware about the ETF/BTR provisions or not aware at all. The reason behind the highest awareness of ETF/BTR is that all respondents either work on climate reporting (NCs, BURs, BRs) or contributed to the preparation of their NDCs.

² This part is proposed based on 1) responses from the countries and 2) desk-review analysis

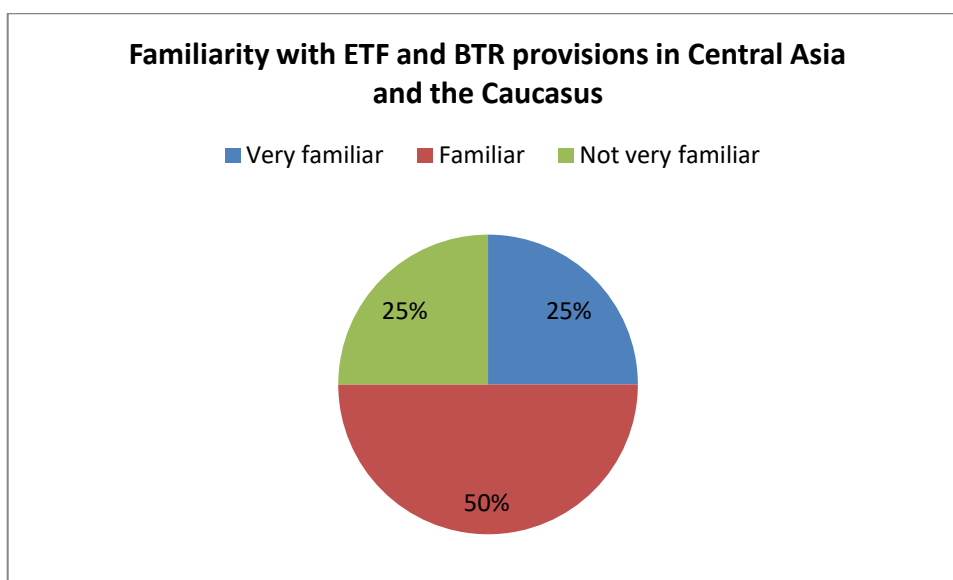


Fig. 2: Overall familiarity with ETF and BTR provisions in the network

The situation with BTR preparation for the region is also progressing. Three (3) countries out of seven (7) responded that nothing has been done for the preparation of the First Biennial Transparency Report (BTR), with four countries stating that the support for preparation of the BTR was requested. See the Table 1 for more details. The progress with BTR preparation is to the most extent dependent on the current state of NC/BUR submission to the UNFCCC. For example, Kazakhstan is finishing its 8th NC and once submitted, will be fully involved in the preparation of the Prodoc for BTR and request funding from GEF. Same refers to Azerbaijan, currently being busy with its 3BUR and Turkmenistan, which plans to submit its 4NC and 1BUR in 2023.

Table 1: Overview of the progress towards preparation of the first BTR

Country	Steps towards first BTR	Comments
Armenia	Yes	Support requested
Azerbaijan	No	
Kazakhstan	No	
Kyrgyzstan	Yes	Support requested
Tajikistan	Yes	Support requested
Turkmenistan	No	
Uzbekistan	Yes	Support requested

Key challenges, which have been commonly determined as those the countries face in implementing the enhanced transparency framework in a sustainable manner, are:

1. Limited institutional capacity and set-up, including absence of legal and normative documents on ETF and transparency
2. Lack of coordination between the responsible governmental bodies
3. Lack of technical capacities of the various groups (policy makers, experts) on transparency issues
4. Frequent turnover of the national specialists within governmental institutions (e.g. CC Centres)
5. Lack of data and information (incl. for GHG inventories, adaptation, finance)
6. Lack of finance and initiatives (projects) on transparency

Respondents propose that the obvious solutions to address these challenges could be:

1. Support in elaboration of legal and normative documents on climate transparency/reporting
2. Transfer from project-type exercise on preparation of the climate reports to the sustainable programme-based option (establishment or enhancing the capacity of the existing institution/centre, which deals with climate reporting)
3. Capacity building and raising awareness of policy makers and experts on different aspects of transparency
4. Resource mobilization and support in attracting new projects/initiatives on climate transparency and reporting
5. Development and effective operation of climate finance tracking system at the national level

Part 4: Assessment of capacities related to the four ETF reporting areas

This part of the survey aimed to assess the capacities related to the four ETF reporting areas, which are: (1) GHG Inventory, (2) NDC Tracking, (3) Adaptation and Impacts, (3.1) Loss and Damage and (4) Support needed and received.

The respondents claim that the institutional arrangements for *GHG Inventory* are either **good** (43%) or **fair** (57%). The exception is Armenia and Kazakhstan, which have built the advanced institutional arrangements for *GHG Inventory system*. For *NDC tracking* the situation is almost the same (43% for good and 57% for fair) for the exception of Turkmenistan, which reported on **poor** institutional arrangements for this particular area of ETF reporting.

For *Adaptation and Impacts* there were two specific questions, with one of it dedicated to the overall capacity on A&I reporting and another one highlighted the capacities on *Loss and Damage*. **38%** of respondents reported their country **capacities on A&I as good** with **62%** of interviewers assessing them to be **fair**. On L&D only **25%** stated that their domestic capacities are **fair**, with **75%** of people assessing it as **poor**.

The assessment for the (4) *Support needed and support received* is similar to L&D (above) with the same number of responses received for **(25%) good**, **(38%) for fair** and **(38%) for poor** level of the institutional arrangements.

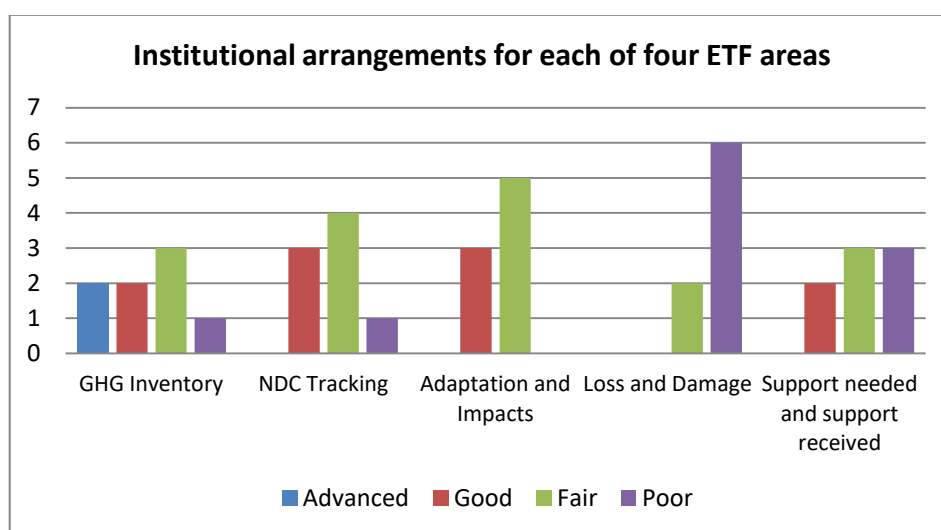


Fig 3. Institutional arrangements for each of four ETF reporting areas in Central Asia and the Caucasus

In terms of **technical capacities** related to the four of ETF reporting areas, the majority of respondents claim that their national level of knowledge of **GHG Inventory** and **NDC Tracking** is **fair**. On **Adaptation and Impacts**, their level of capacity is also **fair**, but in terms of **L&D they need considerable support**, assessing the level of national capacities as **poor**. On **Support needed and received** the situation with technical capacities varies between **fair** (56%) and (44%) **poor**.

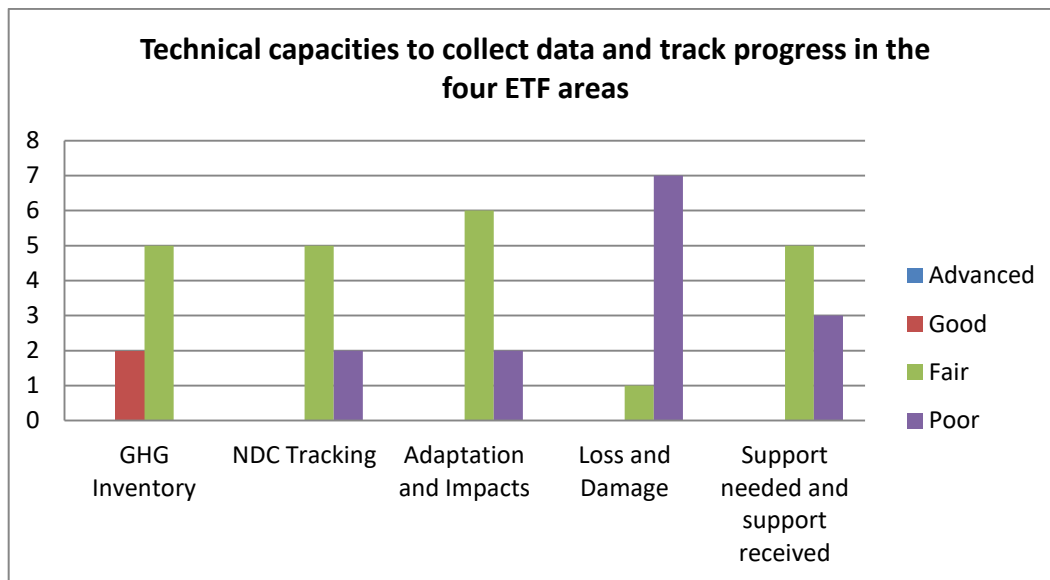


Fig.5 Technical capacities to collect data and track progress in the four ETF areas

4.1. Specific technical capacities related to GHG Inventories

All the respondents state that their national GHG inventories are already based on **2006 IPCC Guidelines**. For the purpose of GHG emissions estimation **all countries** in the region **use the online IPCC software**, with the exception of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, which do not use online software. Operational QA/QC procedures are fully existent in Kazakhstan and **are partially existent** in all other network member countries. The main reason is the project based nature of the inventory process and institutional barriers, which hamper the sustainable and effective QA/QC system in place. Uzbekistan however, mentioned that it passed voluntary GHG inventory assessment from the UNFCCC Secretariat and received recommendations on enhancing its QA system, which will be followed by for the next NIR process.

The respondents also added that the internal QA/QC process is assured through the independent experts, who check and verify the GHG inventories (reports). Before submitting the GHG inventory to the Secretariat, the NIR is circulated among key ministries and departments for review. On the one hand, this process is considered as domestic QA step, on the other hand it also brings some difficulties in postponement of the overall submission of GHG inventory (as part of the NC, or BUR), as the specialists within key line Ministries and Departments lack of expertise and require technical assistance and clarification on the findings of the national GHG inventory.

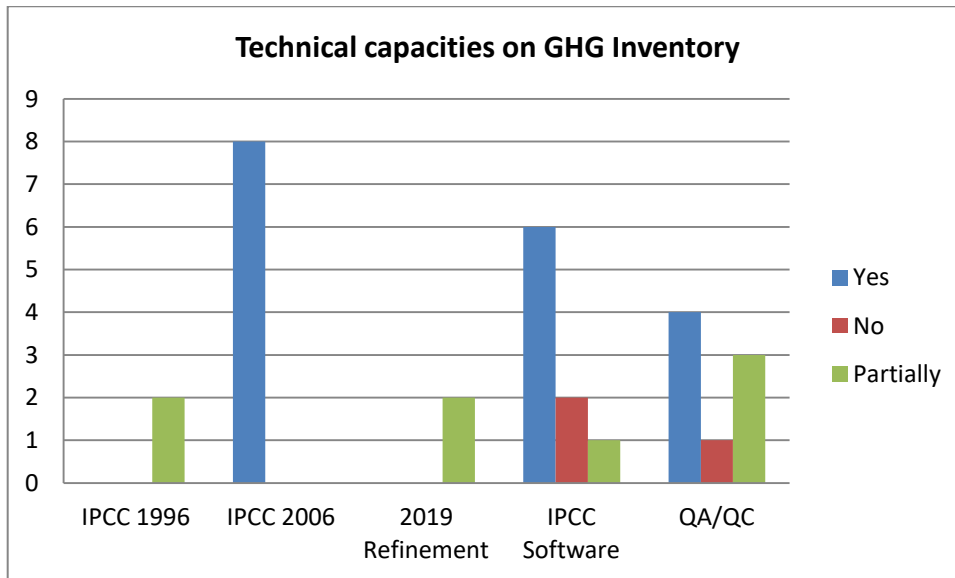


Fig. 6 Technical capacities on GHG Inventory

4.2. Specific technical capacities related to NDC tracking

Most of the countries reported that they use **LEAP model for projecting the GHG emissions** and their **experts familiar** with this model. In some cases the countries reported that they used **GASMO model** (Uzbekistan) and **statistical methods** of GHG emission projections (Turkmenistan). **TIMES, SD and CGE** models are used in Kazakhstan.

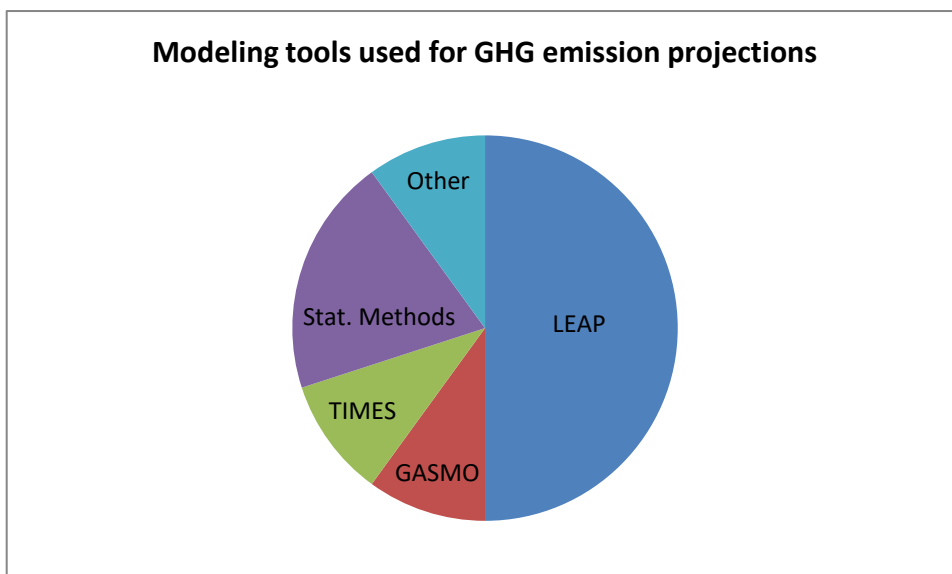


Fig.7 Modelling tools used for GHG emission projections

The most of the respondents (40%) reported that they have **identified the relevant indicators** to track progress towards the implementation and achievement of NDC, with 30% and 30% stating that they **partially** or **not yet identified** these indicators respectively. The interviewers highlighted that the set-up of the NDC Secretariat (Tajikistan) and NDC Implementation Plan (Kyrgyzstan) are the main indicators of their progress towards NDC achievement.

4.3. Specific technical capacities related to adaptation, impacts and loss & damage

In most cases, the vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning is mostly performed within the preparation of National Communication. For example, the countries used the climate change projections (e.g. *ECHAM*, *UKMOHadCM3*) which were considered as the main climate indicators (variables for T and P) to assess vulnerability and climate risks in each susceptible sector of development (1, 2 and 3 NCs) by involving the sector-based experts from climate vulnerable sectors, who made assessments and perform the research.

In some cases, the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus use more sophisticated approach and methodologies for adaptation. This became possible through the well progressing support provided by GCF Readiness Programme on NAP preparation. For example, **CRVA framework** was used in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan within the regional assessment of vulnerability ([CAREC 2020](#)). Armenia also used this tool. Additionally, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia use **WEAP model** (Water Evaluation and Planning System) to adequately plan water resources management in the context of climate change. **IWRM** (Integrated Water Resources Management³) is also the approach, which is used by the countries of Central Asia nowadays to manage water resources at the transboundary level in a complex and integrated way given the risks of climate vulnerability and change and its serious impact on water resources.

Climate risk and vulnerability assessment approach is also used to determine the most susceptible areas at the *sub-national level* (Tajikistan, Belarus). For example, in the frameworks of the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy preparation, Tajikistan used both national level approach (top-down) and community-based approach (bottom-up) to determine the most vulnerable zones and territories within the country and plan adequate adaptation measures, which are now integrated in the climate change adaptation policy.

Despite of the progress made in using the models and tools for vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning, most of the country-respondents face the *difficulties* in establishing the **domestic system of monitoring and evaluation for adaptation**. For example, only **12%** reported that they have established the M&E system for adaptation, with **63%** of reporters stating that they half-way to the progress (**partial M&E set-up**) and the remaining **25%** replied that they have **not yet established** the system.

³ Was not mentioned in the responses from the survey; personal observation and knowledge of the author

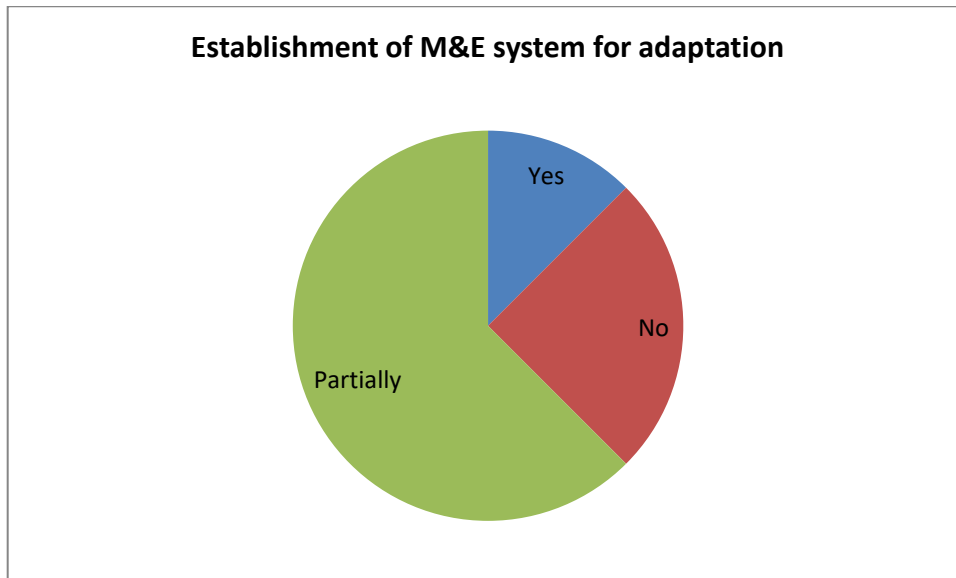


Fig. 8 Establishment of M&E system for adaptation

Only one country (**Armenia**) out of seven has already **developed the National Adaptation Plan (NAP)** and submitted it to the UNFCCC Secretariat. The rest of the countries (**Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan**) are in the process of its development with various levels of its finalization and progress. **Kazakhstan** is not developing the NAP yet.

Given the highest risk of susceptibility of the Central Asian and Caucasian region to climate-induced disasters (varying from high-mountainous relief to desert-type of terrain), the loss and damage is considered as a priority in the climate change agenda. Based on the results of the survey, **six** (6 out of 7) but one (Kazakhstan) countries claimed the necessity of L&D inclusion to NAP and climate adaptation policy. However, **absence of tools and methodologies** along with the **lack of technical expertise in estimating L&D** are the main obstacles for the proper exercise.

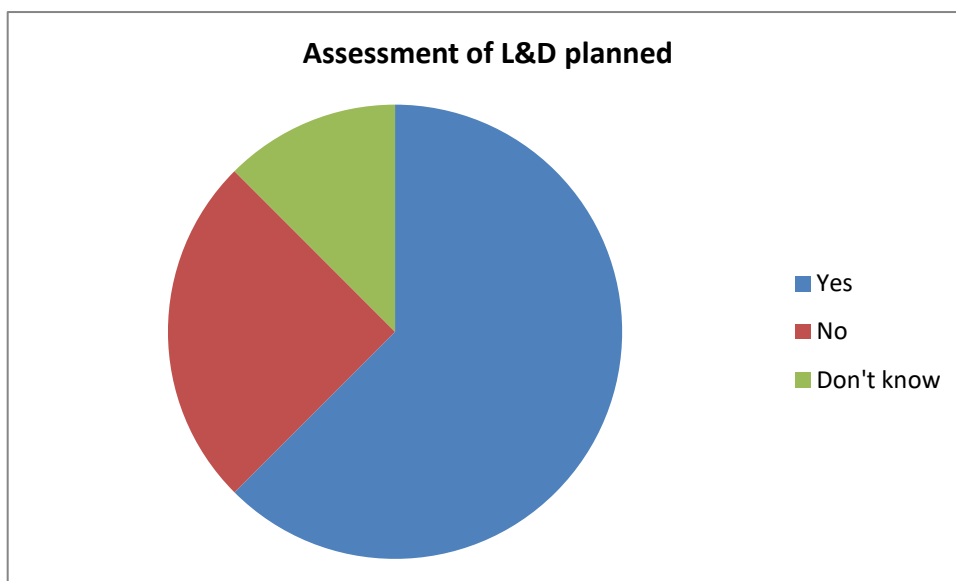


Fig. 9 Assessment of Loss and Damage planned

4.4. Specific technical capacities related to support needed and received (financial, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building)

Most of the countries (4 out of 7: Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) stated that their countries **track the international finance received**. However, this exercise is mostly performed in the frames of the targeted projects: e.g. NCs, BURs and NDC preparation. Armenia and Azerbaijan (2 out of 7) reported that their countries **partially track the international finance received**. At the same time, the countries recognized that they need more effective tools and instruments for tracking the finance and require capacity building to *adequately monitor the climate related expenditures*.

On estimation of the support needed, responses of all countries in the region look the same: 4 out of 7 member countries estimate the support needed, while 2 out of 7 countries reported that they do it *partially*. They specified that the support needed is estimated for **technology transfer and capacity building**.

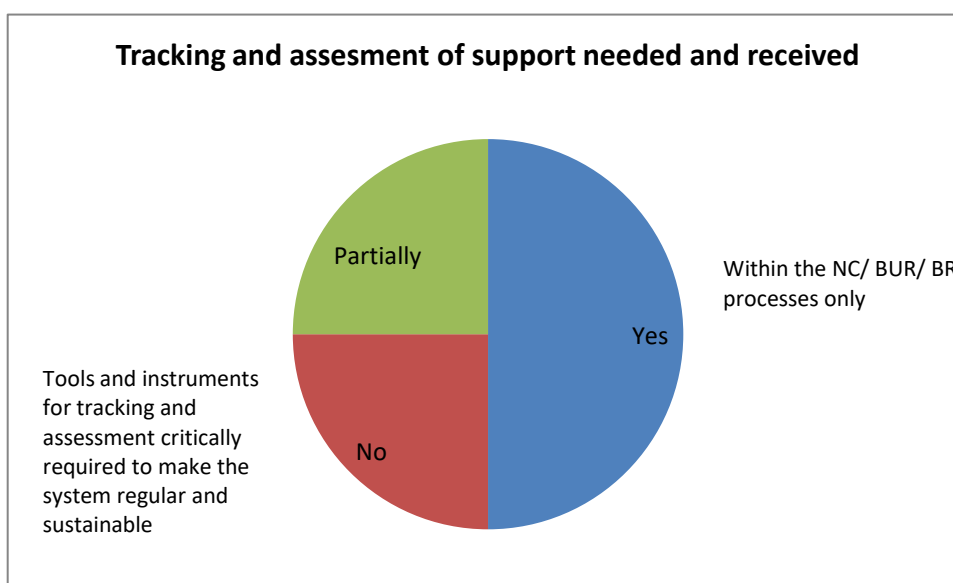


Fig. 10 Support needed and support received – tracking and assesment

NB: Yet, my personal opinion is that the countries are not well aware about the meaning of support needed in the context of climate reporting and ETF. This confirmation should be based on real time calculation and estimation of finance and support for each target category (e.g. technology, capacity building, etc), which is usually lacking in the countries of the region. E.g. there are very few countries, which estimated the cost of NDC implementation plan or the cost of adaptation and which is required for achieving the stabilization of climate change. Only Uzbekistan responded that the country did not assess the support needed as it did not conduct the technology needs assesment so far.

Part 5: Gender Mainstreaming

Relatively good progress has been achieved by all responsive countries in mainstreaming gender into climate change policy. However, the progress varies from country to country and the level of responsiveness to transparency system and climate reporting:

- For example, **4 out of 7 countries** (*Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan*) reported that they **collect sex disaggregated data in the national transparency system through the NC, BUR, and other reporting instruments.**
- **3 out of 7 countries** (*Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan*) claim that **specific gender-responsive indicators are being monitored in relation to climate actions/measures/projects**
- **2 out of 7 countries** (*Kazakhstan and Tajikistan⁴*) recognized that their countries have a Climate Change and Gender Action Plans with clear actions to support or strengthen gender mainstreaming in monitoring and reporting systems
- **3 out of 7 countries** (*Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan*) noticed that their countries have undertaken **capacity building for gender mainstreaming and inclusive processes for disadvantaged groups through the NDC indicators, transparency**
- Same amount, i.e. **3 out of 7 countries** (*Armenia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan*) reported that **gender analysis and sex disaggregated data is actively analyzed to influence climate policy, planning, and reporting**
- Again, **3 out of 7 countries** (*Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan*) highlighted that their countries **support inclusive approaches in analyzing the impacts of climate change and benefits of climate actions for the disadvantaged groups**

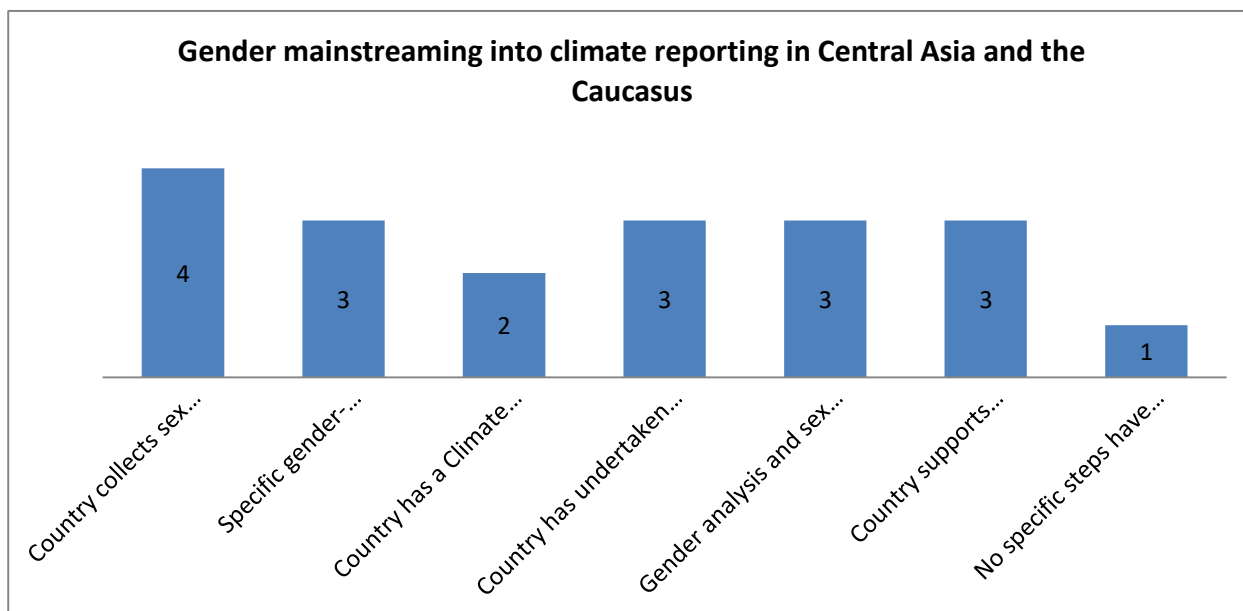


Fig. 11 Gender mainstreaming into climate reporting

First and for most, the gender mainstreaming in the context of climate transparency for all countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus are performed in the frameworks of NCs, BURs and other reporting information. In addition, given the requirements of large-scale projects funded by GCF, GEF and MDBs, the countries had to have a gender action plan to monitor the progress on gender mainstreaming process in the context of climate change. Again, since this is a requirement, most of the work on gender and climate change is done only within these project activities, not going higher to the policy impact level, unfortunately.

⁴ NB: My personal opinion and knowledge on Tajikistan is that the country has a separate chapter on gender mainstreaming in climate change within the frameworks of the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, but not a stand-alone targeted document (e.g. gender action plan on climate change). Kazakhstan, on the other hand, did not tick this box but in fact, developed Gender and Climate Change Action Plan in 2021 (UNDP 8NC).

The issues of gender, women equality, fair access of women and men to natural resources and economic benefits acquired serious attention in the region of Central Asia and the Caucasus over the past few years. The national strategies for sustainable development and poverty reduction recognize the equal role women and men as well as prioritize the mainstreaming of gender in sector-based policy development. For example, most of the countries in the region have a section on gender mainstreaming in its development strategies. However, the National Climate Change Documents and Programmes sometimes lack details on data disaggregation, and indicators for tracking purposes.

At present there are no stand-alone and overwhelming documents and plans on gender and climate change. Kazakhstan has drafted the **Gender Action Plan for Climate Change in 2021** but not adopted it yet. Tajikistan performed its initial **Gender Analysis on Climate Change** in 2020 with its key outputs reported in the recent 4th National Communication of Tajikistan under the UNFCCC in 2022.

Collection of sex-disaggregated data on men and women is processed at the national statistics level. However, most of the indicators aligning gender and climate change are absent. For example, there are sex-disaggregated data on access of women and men to water resources, but one can hardly find the information on the number of women heading the climate change policy maker positions. Having said this, there are **no National Focal Points** on Gender and Climate Change under the UNFCCC. The only exception for the region is Kazakhstan, which has appointed its NFP in 2021. The personal observations show that before 2015, the national delegations to COP/MOP meetings were headed and represented by men only. Fortunately, the situation has been improved and women were empowered to join the official national delegations under the UNFCCC annual conference meetings. Yet, the representation of women in official national delegations can hardly meet the 50/50 percentage ratio.

In 2020 the topic of gender mainstreaming into climate change – specifically to National Communications and sharing the foreign experience with the Central Asian region was prioritized by the members of the Network in the context of UNDP/UNEP GSP Project. Hence, a series of dedicated events was conducted to support the capacity and skills of the gender and climate specialists across the region. Please, refer to the Annex 3 for technical support provided by GSP.

The main challenges behind the gender mainstreaming into climate actions transparency are the following and are common to the most of the countries:

- Lack of technical capacities on gender and climate change
- Absence of NFP on Gender and CC under the UNFCCC
- Lack of coordination between “gender” agencies (in most cases, these are Committees of Ministries of women and family affairs) and “climate” institutions (Hydromets and Ministries of Environment)
- Project based approach towards gender mainstreaming into climate change agenda (time and scope limited in its nature)
- No stand-alone or integrated programs or plan of actions on gender and climate change
- In some cases, the absence of gender-sensitive indicators for mitigation or adaptation measures and no M&E system for tracking purposes
- Men-headed agenda for climate change in most cases (regional peculiarity), which hamper the empowerment of women in decision-making processes

Part 6: Priority support needs

The **Table 2** below indicates the responses of the network's countries in urgent needs and priorities in aligning their climate actions with the requirements of the Paris Agreement on ETF and climate reporting.

As one can witness the **GHG inventories are not prioritized** for almost all of the countries for the exception of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. This is mostly explained by the difficulties both countries faced with transferring from the 1996 IPCC Guidelines to 2006 IPCC Guidelines.⁵ The IPCC software is either not used (Turkmenistan) or used partially (Tajikistan).

NDC Tracking does not seem a priority too for the most of the countries for the exception of *Uzbekistan*. However, if one asks the question about the needs and priorities for sharing good practices in establishing domestic MRV system for mitigation actions (P&M) as part of the NDC Tracking exercise, presumably all the countries would consider this as a high priority. This was the case of the GSP project in 2020. Out of 7 countries of the network, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan highlighted NDC Tracking as an important activity for capacity building.

Adaptation and Impacts are also priorities but to the most extent for the countries of Central Asia, namely, for Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, which expressed their interest in supporting them with establishing the M&E system for adaptation and assessment of effectiveness of adaptation measures, which have already been applied. Also, it would be critical to capacitate the experts on reporting requirements on adaptation within the ETF processes and share the best cases and practices of other countries, which have already progressed towards NAP submission and establishing the M&E system for tracking adaptation actions.

Nevertheless priorities on **Loss and Damage** were determined by more countries, i.e. **5 out of 7** would be eager to understand the overall concept of L&D and explore on **methods, tools, instruments and best practices on L&D estimations** and how other countries have progressed in this topic so far.

The topic on **Support needed and support received** has also gained the majority of positive responses. 7 out of 8 countries would be interested to learn about ***climate finance tracking tools and monitoring systems***. Moreover, they would be eager to learn on mechanisms, supporting the estimation of needs for further funding on capacity building and technology transfer.

Other type of priorities which were proposed by the countries are mostly associated with capacity building on cases and practices of the well effective and operational (online/offline) *MRV systems for transparency and reporting purposes; institutional arrangements for MRV systems; trainings on ETF and MRV for junior specialists of the national climate change agencies/centers; and support in development of first BTR* by involving national and international experts.

The issues of **gender and climate change** were not unfortunately included to the list of priorities. In my opinion the respondents, who filled in the survey were mostly dealing with the overall national climate policy, GHG inventories and adaptation with their skills and knowledge lagging behind the gender topic. At the same time, the network can both benefit and share from gender and climate change practices in reporting, and this thematic direction should not be neglected for capacity building or exchange purposes.

⁵ Gaps and Needs Assessment on Transparency Actions for Central Asia (GHGMI, CAREC and ICAT, 2022)

Table 2: Overview of urgent priorities and needs on transparency and climate reporting

	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan
GHG Inventory					- Best practices on IPCC 2006 methods - Training on the use of IPCC software	- Improvement of GHG Inventories - MRV for GHG emissions	
NDC Tracking					- Projections and models of GHG emission trends	- MRV for mitigation and P&M	- Indicators for NDC Tracking - MRV for mitigation and P&M
Adaptation and Impacts				- CRVA methods and tools	- M&E for adaptation (indicators)	- M&E for adaptation	- M&E for adaptation
Loss and Damage	+			- Tools and methods of L&D estimation	- Tools and methods of L&D estimation	+	+
Support needed and received	+	+		- Climate finance tracking and monitoring	- Climate finance tracking and monitoring	+	+
Other	- Best international practices of MRV online system - Market mechanisms	- Institutional arrangements for MRV system (TBD) - Review of BUR/GHG Inventory	- Review of GHG inventory		CB for the CC staff on ETF/MRV	- Enhancing GHG inventory for AFOLU and Energy Sectors - Modeling future climate - Projections for GHG emissions	
		- BTR development		- BTR development	- BTR development	- BTR development	- BTR development - Knowledge products on COPs (summaries with key decisions)

Conclusion:

Key findings of the rapid assessment showed that the region of Central Asia and the Caucasus are becoming more aware about the overall MRV and transparency system. While in 2019-2020 the national experts required more knowledge on the MRV and transparency systems and its alignment with the UNFCCC/Paris Agreement requirements, nowadays the situation is clearer.

However, this finding is based on the responses of those authoritative people who filled in the survey. The newcomers or the junior staff of the climate change agencies in the countries of the region might have a different opinion and might want to acquire additional or basic knowledge on ETF and transparency. This is a case for Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan to the most extent. Given the delegated role on climate reporting agenda to the recently expanded Climate Change Centre within the Tajik Hydromet, or Kyrgyzstan's Climate Finance Centre or project office within the Ministry of Agriculture of Turkmenistan, which needs to deal with climate reporting and transparency issues, the capacity building for the basic principles of ETF and transparency within the Paris Agreement (incl. BTR development) might sound as a good idea.

Also, it should go without saying that the determined needs and priorities proposed by the countries in the survey should also be correlated with the initiatives, currently ongoing or planned at the regional or national level. For example, **improvement of GHG Inventories** (institutional arrangements, GHG emissions estimations based on the 2006 IPCC GL or other best practices) are prioritized within the ICAT/CAREC new

project on establishing Regional Climate Actions Transparency Hub for Central Asia (ReCATH), with all five countries to be benefiting from this particular activity on GHG inventory in 2023-2024.⁶ Same refers to the EU4Climate Project, which supported Armenia and Azerbaijan in enhancing their national GHG Inventories and MRV systems.⁷ Also, technical support is regularly provided by UNFCCC Secretariat on the use of IPCC Guidelines and GHG Inventory development.

It is important to build on the support, which was provided within the GSP project in 2020-2021. For example, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan were supported to develop comprehensive MRV roadmap for GHG Inventories with clearly described steps towards its enhancement and alignment with UNFCCC reporting requirements. This means that the support within the new CBIT-GSP Project should consider covering the follow-up actions or addressing recommendations in the assessment or road map.

On **NDC Tracking** one also should be aware about national-wide initiatives on NDC update, NDC Implementation Plan, NDC Financial Plan and other plans, which actually determine the progress of NDCs. These activities are to the most extent supported by UNDP Climate Promise Initiative, Eu4Climate and other international partners. GHG Projections and scenarios as part of NDC Tracking progress will be supported by ReCATH. However, little was done or yet proposed on introducing good practices of online and offline tools for establishing solid transparency systems for mitigation actions (P&M) as part of the NDC Tracking exercise. This exercise might be considered as one of the items for CBIT-GSP work plan for the network.

Priorities for **Adaptation and Impacts** highlighted by some countries should also be considered with caution. Most of the countries are nowadays developing their NAPs through UNDP (GCF readiness) and envisage to determine (or determining) the indicators for tracking adaptation measures and enhancing the institutional arrangements for adaptation. In case of planning activities with similar context for adaptation, CBIT-GSP should double check if this is planned within other transparency initiatives.

At the same time, on **Loss and Damage**, the global CBIT-GSP project might propose its support for almost all countries in the region as the interest in knowing how to estimate the L&D from climate impacts is relatively high. However, given the complexity of the proposed topic and instruments on L&D estimations, this activity might be potentially postponed to the next calendar year.

Support needed and support received was determined as a priority too and seems not to fall in separate initiatives. ReCATH is going to cover this gap by introducing the climate finance tracking tools, which are to be developed by ICAT by the end of 2024 only. Hence, there is a potential timeline in 2023 to start with CBIT-GSP support activities or exchange on climate finance topic, to fill the gap.

It is also critical to **reconsider the priorities for gender mainstreaming**. Although the countries have not determined gender and climate reporting as the top need, it is required to support the countries on gender and climate change reporting either as a stand-alone activity within the CBIT-GSP project, or in collaboration with other transparency initiatives (e.g. NAP, Climate Promise). At the same time, the countries of the region have progressed towards gender and climate change over the past two years and there is a need to refresh knowledge and exchange among the network countries on this topic.

⁶ Gaps and Needs Assessment on Transparency and Climate Reporting (available upon request from CAREC/GHGMI)

⁷ More details are at: <https://eu4climate.eu/mrvs/>

Preparation of BTR and transition towards ETF is critically important. The countries highlighted the need for capacity building on BTR development. The key items of the training agenda should be focusing on clarifying on templates, data and information, timelines, and other technical details of BTR requirements.

In summing up, the following directions are considered as commonly prioritized for the regional network of Central Asian and Caucasian countries in 2023 and 2024:

A. Regional (common to all countries of the network):

- **Thematic directions and proposed activities on capacity building for 2023**
 - **COP27 guidelines and support in BTR development:** reporting requirements, access to BTR funding, templates, timelines, good practices from other countries
 - **Institutional arrangements for transparency systems:** legal and normative base, online platforms, delegation of roles, best practices from other regions, etc.
 - **NDC Tracking:** indicators and good practices on MRV for mitigation (P&M)
 - **Impacts and adaptation:** methodologies and tools in assessing the vulnerability and climate risks, requirements on adaptation reporting, M&E system for implementation and tracking of adaption measures/actions
 - **Support received and support needed:** general concept of reporting under the SR&SN; good practices and approaches on tracking tools and instruments from other countries.
 - **Gender mainstreaming:** UNFCCC reporting requirements, support in introduction of tools, capacity building of gender experts, exchange of best practices and cases among the network members and with other experts from other networks (e.g. Eurasia)

- **Thematic directions and proposed activities on capacity building for 2024**
 - **Loss and Damage:** UNFCCC principles/decisions, tools and methods on L&D estimations, good practices from other countries.

The national or country-based queries are based on the findings of the survey and confirmed during the bilateral calls with the countries. Definitely, the proposed activities for 2024 will be discussed and re-confirmed by the end of 2023.

B. National (based on country based responses):

- **Proposed activities on capacity building for 2023**
 - **Armenia:** Establishing Online MRV systems – best international practices
 - **Azerbaijan:** Gap assessment and recommendations for institutional arrangements for the ETF or NDC tracking support exercise (TBD)
 - **Kazakhstan:** review of GHG Inventory (Energy: fugitive emissions)
 - **Kyrgyzstan:** climate finance tracking tools and systems
 - **Tajikistan:** Hands on in-country training on use of the IPCC software
 - **Turkmenistan:** Enhancing GHG inventory for AFOLU sector/Energy Sector
 - **Uzbekistan:** Determining NDC indicators for appropriate tracking

- **Proposed activities on capacity building for 2024**
 - **Armenia:** Market mechanisms
 - **Azerbaijan:** peer-review of 3BUR
 - **Kazakhstan:** review of the key sectors in GHG inventory

- **Kyrgyzstan:** loss and damage methodology and tools for L&D estimation
- **Tajikistan:** Hands on in-country training on Projections and modeling of GHG emissions
- **Turkmenistan:** Modeling of future trends of climate change, Projections and scenarios of GHG emissions
- **Uzbekistan:** best cases from other countries on drafting laws and legal base for GHG emission reduction and mitigation actions

Please, refer to the work plan with the proposed activities of the CBIT-GSP Project for the regional network of Central Asia and the Caucasus, which is a separate file (available upon request from the regional coordinator).

Annex 1: Overview of the basic information about the network's commitments and reporting under the UNFCCC

1.1. Countries of Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan

	Kazakhstan ⁸	Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Uzbekistan
Paris Agreement	Signed: 2 Aug 2016 Ratified: 6 Dec 2016	Signed: 21 Sep 2016 Ratified: 18 Feb 2020	Signed: 22 Apr 2016 Ratified: 22 Mar 2017	Signed: 23 Sep 2016 Ratified: 20 Oct 2016	Signed: 19 Apr 2017 Ratified: 9 Nov 2018
NDC Status	First NDC submitted 6 Dec 2016	First NDC submitted 18 Feb 2020 Updated NDC submitted 09 Oct 2021	First NDC submitted 22 Mar 2017 Updated NDC submitted 12 Oct 2021	First NDC submitted on 21 Oct 2016 Updated NDC submitted on Jan 2023	First NDC submitted 9 Sep 2018 Updated NDC submitted 30 Oct 2021
NDC Mitigation component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Base year: 1990 - Unconditional 2030 target: 15% economy-wide reduction compared to base year - Conditional 2030 target: 25% economy-wide reduction compared to base year - Reduce GHG emissions in power sector by 15 % compared to the 2012 level - Increase share of renewable energy to 30%, including alternative energies 10 % - Reduce GDP energy intensity by 30% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Base year: not considered - Unconditional: reduce GHG emissions by 16.63% by 2025 and by 15.97% by 2030 - Conditional: GHG emissions will be reduced by 2025 by 36.61% and by 2030 by 43.62%. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Base year and GHG emissions level: 1990 - Unconditional: GHG emissions are not to exceed 60-70% of GHG emissions as of 1990 by 2030. - Conditional: not to exceed 50-60% GHG emissions as of 1990 by 2030 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Base year: 2000 - Energy sector priority Continued promotion of new technologies - Unconditional 2030 target: growth rate of GHG emissions less than GDP growth rate; reduction of carbon- and energy-intensities of GDP; increase in emissions to the projected level of 135.8 million tonnes and stabilization trajectory - Conditional 2030 target: zero growth in emissions, and possible reduction trajectory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Base year: 2010 - To reduce by 2030 specific greenhouse gas emissions per unit of GDP by 35% from the level of 2010
NDC Adaptation component	Indicative targets are not reflected in the first NDC but adaptation priorities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Water security, - Water use efficiency - Food security, Agricultural growth 	Vulnerable sectors which require rapid adaptation measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agriculture and water systems - Energy - Forests and biodiversity - Health care sector - Disaster risk reduction and investments to reduce losses and damage - Intersectoral directions "Climate Resilient Areas and Green Cities" and "Improving the Adaptation Reporting System". 	Vulnerable sectors which require adaptation measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Energy, - Water resources - Agriculture and forestry, - Transport and infrastructure, - Industry and construction <u>Crosscutting:</u> Health, Education, Gender, Youth, Migration, Environment, and Emergencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most vulnerable sectors: water, health and agriculture - Development of forest shelter belts to protect soils and infrastructure - Construction of the "Golden Century" lake to support water sector adaptation 	Vulnerable sectors which require rapid adaptation measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agriculture and water management - Ecosystems and forests - Adaptation for strategic infrastructure and production facilities. Additional focus on: Social sector; and minimizing vulnerability risks in Priaralie (Aral Sea coastal zone)
NAP Status	Not started	NAP Project (GCF Readiness) started	NAP Project (GCF Readiness) submitted	NAP Project (GCF Readiness) submitted	NAP Project (GCF Readiness) ongoing

⁸ In accordance with the COP conclusion (FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.4, section V.C.) and following ratification by Kazakhstan of the Kyoto Protocol on 19 June 2009 and its entry into force on 17 September 2009, Kazakhstan is considered an Annex I Party for the purposes of the Protocol but remains to be a non-Annex I Party for the purposes of the Convention.

Available UNFCCC reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Communications (NC1-NC3; NC4; NC5; NC6; NC7) - Biennial Reports (BR1; BR2; BR3; BR4) - Development of NC8 and BR5 ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Communications (NC1; NC2; NC3) - Biennial Update Report (BUR1) - NC4 is under finalization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Communications (NC1; NC2; NC3; NC4) - Biennial Update Reports (BUR1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Communications (NC1; NC2; NC3) - NC4/BUR1 preparatory process is ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Communications (NC1; NC2; NC3) - Biennial Update Reports: (BUR1) - NC4 process is ongoing
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1.2. Other countries of the network: Armenia and Azerbaijan

	Armenia	Azerbaijan
Paris Agreement	Signed: 20 Sep 2016 Ratified: 23 Mar 2017	Signed: 22 Apr 2016 Ratified: 09 Jan 2017
NDC Status	Updated NDC submitted 05 May 2021	First submitted 09 Jan 2017
NDC Mitigation component	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Base year: 1990 - Unconditional: 40 % reduction from 1990 emission levels by 2030. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Base year and GHG emissions level: 1990 - Unconditional: 35% reduction of total emissions level compared to the base year.
NDC Adaptation component	Vulnerable sectors which require adaptation measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural ecosystems (aquatic and terrestrial, including forest ecosystems, biodiversity and land cover) - Human health - Water resource management - Agriculture, including fishery and forests - Energy - Human settlements and infrastructures - Tourism 	Adaptation is not reflected in the first NDC separately, but there is a highlight for the need to “develop relevant adaptation measures for decreasing or minimizing the losses that may occur at national, local and community levels per sector.”
NAP Status	NAP submitted to UNFCCC 24 Sep 2021	NAP Project (GCF Readiness) started
Available UNFCCC reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Communications (NC1; NC2; NC3; NC4) - Biennial Update Reports (BUR1, BUR2, BUR3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Communications (NC1; NC2; NC3; NC4) - Biennial Update Reports (BUR1, BUR2) - BUR3 is ongoing

Annex 2: Capacity building on gender and climate change (GSP 2020 Support)

- [May 20, 2020: an introductory webinar for Central Asia](#), which provided general outlines and requirements on mainstreaming gender into climate reporting; introduction to the concept of gender analysis and gender action plan.
- [August 25, 2020: a regional webinar for Central Asia](#) aimed at providing concrete and practical examples taken from North Macedonia's gender sensitive case study on heating consumption patterns.
- [August 27, 2020: a bilateral consultation on gender and climate change](#), aimed to share experience from Serbia to Kazakhstan on how the gender mainstreaming was assured to climate agenda in Eastern Europe
- [September 2, 2020: a regional virtual workshop for Central Asia and Europe](#) (hosted by UNFCCC) to share relevant case studies, examples and lessons learned on the results, impacts and main challenges in integration of gender into national climate policies, plans and strategies.
- [October 26, 2020: National workshop on gender and climate change in Kazakhstan](#), to contribute to the national agenda and speak on global practices and UNFCCC decisions on gender mainstreaming into climate policy
- [December 15, 2020: National workshop](#) on introducing the results of the initial gender analysis on climate change to the stakeholders in Tajikistan
- To support the countries with more analytical work on gender and climate change, the following products were either produced or translated in Russian: initial **Gender Analysis on climate change for Tajikistan** (upon request at the GoT), [Gender Responsive Toolkit](#) and [Key gender info graphics](#).