



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra



**SWISS  
COOPERATION  
PROGRAMME  
IN CENTRAL  
ASIA**  
2026-2029

**FOREIGN POLICY  
STRATEGY  
2024-2027**



**INTERNATIONAL  
COOPERATION  
STRATEGY  
2025-2028**



**SWISS  
COOPERATION  
PROGRAMME  
IN CENTRAL  
ASIA  
2026-2029**



# Context

Switzerland and the Central Asian countries Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have a long-standing partnership in international cooperation dating back to the early 1990s, after the countries became independent amid the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

Switzerland's substantial engagement underscores the region's strategic importance: The Central Asian countries are members of the Swiss-led constituencies at the World Bank Group, International Monetary Fund and the Global Environment Facility. As part of these constituencies, Switzerland holds a seat in decision-making bodies and participates in global debates on economic, development and environmental policies. The combination of multilateral and bilateral commitments provides valuable expertise and credibility. It also strengthens Switzerland's standing as a trusted partner and bridge builder, enhancing the impact of its interventions at both levels.

Central Asia faces high vulnerability to climate change alongside structural challenges such as governance constraints, undersized and aging infrastructure and a challenging investment climate. While there is some progress on gender equality, human rights and civic space are under increased pressure and social inequalities are growing. Addressing these issues requires strengthened and context adapted governance and inclusive development.

Switzerland's engagement in Central Asia is particularly relevant in today's changing global and regional geopolitical landscape, given that the region borders Russia, China, Iran and Afghanistan. Regional cooperation between the three countries Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and beyond has gained momentum, driven by leadership changes, shared economic interests, and the need to manage transboundary challenges. High-level dialogues, easier border

crossings and agreements such as the Tajikistan–Kyrgyzstan border settlement, signal enhanced regional coherence, whereas the situation in Afghanistan has added complexity to the region.



# Results and lessons learnt 2022–2025

## Results 2022–25

Switzerland substantially contributes to the economic and social development of Central Asia and supports the building of responsive, inclusive institutions. Its strengths lie in reliability, impartiality and combining funding and technical expertise with policy dialogue. The Swiss cooperation programme is implemented by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO), with contributions from the Federal Office for Environment, the Swiss National Bank, the State Secretariat for International Finance and the Swiss Federal Office for Energy. A whole-of-government approach ensures the effectiveness of Switzerland's multilateral and bilateral engagement.

## Achievements 2022–25

*Water, infrastructure, and climate change*  
Through water diplomacy and support for national water reforms, Switzerland helped turn water scarcity from a potential conflict

source into a tool for cooperation, promoting trust, stability, and prosperity. Under the Blue Peace Central Asia initiative, a jointly operated hydro post on the Fergana canal (Uzbekistan–Tajikistan) – a pioneering project prioritised by both governments which serves as a model for regional scaling – improved transboundary data exchange and joint water allocation.

## *Governance, human rights and service delivery*

Switzerland strengthened institutions, improved public services and promoted human rights and civic space. In Kyrgyzstan, the Public Service Improvement project enhanced access to municipal services for over half a million people. In Tajikistan, the Access to Justice project created 68 legal aid centres (at which 64% of the consultations are for women), now fully funded by the Tajik Ministry of Justice. In Uzbekistan, 34 civil society organizations were strengthened in community-based projects and gender equality.

## *Inclusive sustainable economic development*

Swiss support in these areas focused on SMEs, youth, women entrepreneurs, digitalisation, market participation, finance access and financial stability. In Kyrgyzstan, it enabled a national green economy programme helping SMEs access new markets. In Tajikistan, it contributed to 1,500 new jobs, retained 2,000 existing jobs and mobilised USD 230 million in green finance. In Uzbekistan, a new dual education programme in hospitality was introduced, as well as a vocational education and training quality assurance agency and programmes for managers and teachers.

## *Regional cooperation*

Switzerland's impartiality and ability to convene fostered cross-border cooperation in water management, culture, trade, and labour migration, contributing to regional stability and conflict prevention.

# Switzerland's commitment – priority areas for 2026–2029

Switzerland remains committed to fostering a stable and prosperous Central Asia, enabling its population to live in resilient communities with sustainable livelihoods. Swiss cooperation focuses on priority areas which are key to advance the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in the region.

## **Water and energy**

Pressure on water resources is increasing, exacerbated by climate change, population growth and pollution and complicated by its transboundary nature. Water remains of strategic importance for Central Asia's food and energy security, the environment and political stability. The energy sector is a foundation and driver of the region's economic development. Yet rising demand and shrinking water resources threaten energy security. The Swiss cooperation builds on long-term engagement, expertise and trusted partnerships to support water reforms, integrated water management and regional cooperation, while raising Central Asia's voice in global climate and water processes.

- **Water governance:** Switzerland promotes river basin planning, data systems, strong institutions and reliable services for safe water access. Regional and transboundary cooperation are strengthened through empowered institutions, legal frameworks and trust-based dialogue, notably through the Blue Peace Central Asia initiative.
- **Climate resilience:** Through collaboration with the governments of the three countries, Switzerland supports urban planning and disaster risk reduction like early warning systems and rapid response to enhance community resilience and climate adaptation, emphasising regional solutions.
- **Energy transition:** Switzerland supports a faster shift to clean energy and better energy efficiency to boost investment and regional energy trade.

## Sustainable economic development

Despite economic conditions improving in the region, economic growth remains fragile amid a rapidly increasing young population and gaps in accountable governance structures. Hence, the need for enhanced public financial management, job creation and better investment climate. Ongoing reforms aim at mobilising domestic resources and private capital, enhance governance and ensure safe and regular labour migration. Switzerland supports these efforts by fostering transparent institutions and inclusive, climate-smart economies.

- **Governance and reforms:** Switzerland supports reform efforts to strengthen public finance management, tax policy and debt management, while fostering transparent, rules-based business environments that attract investments, including in green technologies. Digital literacy and IT

skills are promoted for economic and social transformation.

- **Inclusive jobs:** Switzerland engages in market-driven vocational training, entrepreneurship and employment programmes which target youth, women and labour migrants, with a focus on social inclusion and green skills.

- **Financial systems:** Switzerland helps to advance inclusive and resilient financial sectors through better regulation, modern payment systems and consumer protection. Small and medium-sized enterprises are supported to access finance and technical assistance with the aim of fostering innovation investments, sustainable use of remittances, and regional economic cooperation.

## Transversal Themes

Progress on poverty reduction in Central Asia

has come at the cost of raising inequalities. Switzerland supports accountable, inclusive institutions, democratic participation and environmental and social governance principles, while addressing corruption. Tailored local and regional initiatives promote **human rights, civic space and gender equality**. Climate action is mainstreamed through science-based water management, resilient infrastructure, sustainable value chains, the mobilisation of private-sector investments and climate finance.

Increasing focus is put on regional projects and initiatives across the three priority countries Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and where appropriate, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and beyond. This regional cooperation is instrumental in taking advantage of the joint opportunities and addressing shared water, trade and migration related challenges.

## Water and energy



## Sustainable economic development



## Human rights, civic space, culture and gender





# Approach and partners

The Swiss representations in each of the three countries are responsible for the implementation of the Swiss cooperation programme 2026–29.

Switzerland is among the biggest bilateral donors in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. It takes on a leading role in the donor coordination for better alignment with the priorities of the governments and increased effectiveness, in all three countries and on a regional level. At a global level, synergies are used between the bilateral and multilateral engagement of Switzerland. To stimulate local ownership, Switzerland strives to increase its locally led cooperation through partnerships with local public and private actors. The most important partners of the Swiss cooperation in Central Asia are local and national governments, UN organisations, regional and multilateral entities, international financial institutions, local, Swiss and international non-profit-organisations, as well as Swiss and national academic and research institutions. Effective and

efficient use of resources is ensured through a focused, integrated and coherent portfolio. The programme is managed in an adaptive way to respond to opportunities and emerging needs.

---

## Swiss Cooperation Programme Central Asia

---

### Indicative bilateral budget

SDC, SECO: CHF 154.4 million for the period 2026–29\*

---

### Zones of intervention

#### Tajikistan

GBAO, Sughd, Khatlon, Rasht

#### Uzbekistan

Tashkent Region, Navoiy, Samarkand, Bukhara, Qashqadariya, Surkhandariya

#### Kyrgyzstan

Batken, Chuy, Jalal-Abad, Naryn, Osh, Talas and Issyk-Kul regions

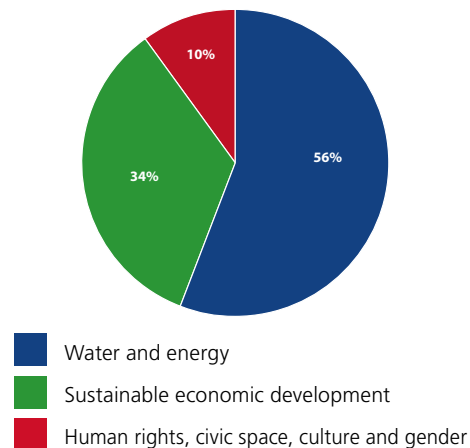
---

\* The information relating to the financial framework is indicative. It serves solely as a basis for the provisional expenditure plans, which are reviewed each year by the Federal Council and Parliament.

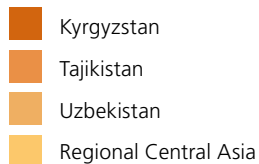
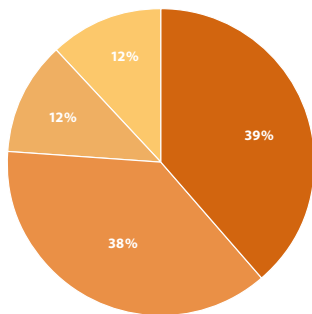
---

## Total Budget for CA Cooperation Programme 2026–2029

---



## Total Budget for CA Cooperation Programme 2026–2029 (per country)



*The borders shown on this map of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are for illustrative purposes only. Official border demarcation has not yet been fully announced.*



## Imprint

Published by:

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA  
Swiss Agency for Development and  
Cooperation SDC

Caucasus, Central and East Asia Section  
Eichenweg 5, 3003 Bern - Zollikofen  
[deza.ccea@eda.admin.ch](mailto:deza.ccea@eda.admin.ch)  
[www.deza.admin.ch](http://www.deza.admin.ch)

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,  
Education and Research EAER  
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO  
Economic Cooperation and Development  
Holzikofenweg 36, 3003 Bern  
[info.cooperation@seco.admin.ch](mailto:info.cooperation@seco.admin.ch)  
[www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch](http://www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch)

Layout:

Mark Manion, Communication Arts

Photos:

SDC

Bern, 2026  
© FDFA/SDC

