

Action Fiche for Central Asia

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title/Number	Operational short-term technical assistance related to the financial and technical cooperation with developing countries in Central Asia – DCI-ASIE/2010/022-143		
Total cost	3 000 000 euro EU contribution: 3 000 000 euro		
Aid method / Method of implementation	Project approach – centralised management		
DAC-code	99810	Sector	Technical Assistance

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Sector context

This financing proposal aims at providing financial provisions to run operational short-term technical assistance related to the financial and technical cooperation with Central Asia for the period 2010-2011.

2.2. Lessons learnt

In March 2009, the European Commission adopted the Financing Decision C(2009)2033 "Operational short-term technical assistance related to financial and technical co-operation with Central Asian countries". The resources made available under this decision were fully booked to provide operational short term technical assistance related to the financial and technical co-operation with developing countries in Central Asia.

Experience in Central Asia with the previous Short-Term Technical Assistance (STTA) programme has shown that the programme meets a vital need among the beneficiaries for adequately preparing and implementing the bilateral and regional projects and programmes.

2.3. Complementary actions

The support is acting in a complementary way to the other programmes in Central Asia, ensuring their proper execution following the CSP and MIP planning and commitments.

The Regional Strategy Paper for Assistance to Central Asia (2007-2013) aims to promote the stability and security of the countries of Central Asia, to assist in their pursuit of sustainable economic development and poverty reduction, and to facilitate closer regional co-operation both within Central Asia and between Central Asia and the EU. It has an indicative budget of €19 million.

Bilateral co-operation between the EU and the individual Central Asian countries accounts for most support and is programmed in line with EU country strategies which tally with the partner country's own national development and poverty reduction plans.

2.4. Donor coordination

N/A.

3. DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The overall objective of this EU support is to enhance the capacity of Central Asian countries to integrate into the regional and global systems, to reduce poverty and improve living conditions.

The purpose of this EU support is to provide adequate resources to finance short-term technical assistance to the Central Asian countries related to the financial and technical cooperation covered by the DCI Regulation.

3.2. Expected results and main activities

This facility ensures the delivery of ad hoc short-term technical assistance and the development of the overall co-operation agenda.

The activities that are expected to be funded may cover the entire full project cycle and therefore include among others:

- Identification/formulation/overall preparation of co-operation programmes in pipeline/evaluation;
- Feasibility studies, sectoral studies, country or region studies, studies on cross-cutting issues, horizontal studies in specialist areas;
- Technical follow-up.

In parallel, this facility is also meant to provide specific support activities, in several areas of work through:

- Studies, technical preparation of co-operation actions, seminar/workshop, other specific events;
- Ad-hoc training;
- Any other specific measure identified with partner countries appropriate to foster the policy issues in the EU-CA country agenda, at institutional, political, economic and social level.

The general results will be:

- Improved policy dialogue and mutual co-operation on key policy issues relevant to the EU-Central Asia countries strategic priorities;
- Improved expertise in various areas provided to Central Asian countries (project identification and formulation, feasibility studies, monitoring, information, evaluation and audit);
- Enhanced ownership among beneficiaries and therefore improved sustainability of programmes and projects.

The specific nature, content, objectives and expected results of each assignment will also be defined on a country by country level and on a case by case basis. Detailed terms of reference will be prepared and attached to each activity.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

Given the specificity of this operation there are no major risks and assumptions. However a fully successful implementation will depend on:

- Willingness of the Central Asian countries of continuing the process of improvement of their institutions;
- Keeping and improvement of the political, social and economic stability;
- Good knowledge of this instrument by potential users;
- Provision of assistance to the Delegations interested in the tool;
- Good EU internal co-ordination;
- Good management of the various contracts;
- High quality of experts supplied;
- Full involvement and support of beneficiary countries and related stakeholders in the implementation of the activities.

3.4. Crosscutting Issues

The European Commission recognises in full the importance of considering cross-cutting issues (i.e. gender environment etc.) during the design, formulation and implementation of projects.

In using the resources that will be made available under this financing proposal the Commission will make it sure that cross-cutting issues are duly considered in each funded activity.

3.5. Stakeholders

Commission, Central Asian beneficiary countries and specific development co-operation partners.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Method of implementation

Option 1, Direct centralised management

Services will be managed by the European Commission through the signature of service contracts following calls for tenders/framework contracts.

Activities will start in the second semester of 2010.

4.2. Procurement and grant award procedures

All contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure in question.

Participation in the award of contracts for the present action shall be open to all natural and legal persons covered by DCI Regulation. Further extensions of this participation to other natural or legal persons by the concerned authorising officer shall be subject to the conditions provided for in DCI, 21(7).

4.3. Budget and calendar

The overall budget for this programme is EUR 3 000 000.

Category Breakdown	EU	Total	Contracting/ Paying Authority
1. Services	3 000 000	3 000 000	EU
1.1. Short-term Technical Assistance	3 000 000	3 000 000	EU
Total	3 000 000	3 000 000	EU

Based on experience gained in the management of similar facilities, the following, indicative breakdown can be given: 60% for identification/formulation missions: 40% for preparation of studies and activities of technical assistance of various nature.

The operational implementation period will be 36 months as from the date of the budgetary commitment.

4.4. Performance monitoring

The activities funded under this operation will be monitored by the European Commission services.

Key indicators for measuring the performance of this operation will be:

- Demands of short-term technical assistance treated versus requests received;
- Short-term technical assistance activities delivered;
- Studies and reports submitted;
- Identification and formulation missions funded;
- Trainings carried out.

4.5. Evaluation and audit

The main purpose of this operation is to provide adequate resources to finance the provision of short-term technical assistance related to the financial and technical cooperation with the Central Asian countries covered by the DCI Regulation.

Some activities funded under this operation might be subject to evaluation according to EU rules (mid-term, final etc.), depending on their nature.

External evaluations and audits might be carried out by independent consultants recruited and contracted directly by the Commission in accordance with EU rules and procedures on specifically established Terms of Reference.

4.6. Communication and visibility

These actions will follow the rules applicable to the visibility of external actions as defined and published by the EU.

The Beneficiaries will take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union has financed the Action. Such measures will comply with the relevant rules on the visibility of external actions laid down and published by the Commission. In particular, the Beneficiary will mention the Action and the European Union's financial contribution in information given to the final recipients of the Action, in its internal and annual reports, and in any dealings with the media displaying the EU logo wherever appropriate.