



UNIVERSITY
OF CENTRAL ASIA

ANNUAL REPORT 2022



About UCA

The University of Central Asia (UCA) was founded in 2000 as a private, not for profit, secular university through an International Treaty signed by the Presidents of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, and His Highness the Aga Khan; ratified by their respective parliaments and registered with the United Nations. The Presidents are the Patrons of the University, and His Highness is the Chancellor.

UCA's mission is to promote the social and economic development of Central Asia, particularly its mountain communities, by offering an internationally recognised standard of higher education, and enabling the peoples of the region to preserve their rich cultural heritage as assets for the future. UCA brings with it the broader commitment and partnership of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN).

For more information: www.ucentralasia.org

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Cover photo:
Campus of the
University of Central
Asia in Khorog,
Tajikistan.







Message from the Chairman

I am delighted to present the University of Central Asia's (UCA) Annual Report for 2022. UCA has made impressive strides forward in the face of a challenging and uncertain environment. The year marked several important milestones for UCA including notable contributions to global research, increased community engagement, and empowering the economic potential of young men and women in the region.

Part of UCA's mission has been to establish itself as a world-class research university in the Central Asian region. This year the Graduate School of Development made global inroads in the area of climate change research. UCA's Mountain Societies Research Institute (MSRI) and the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat in Tajikistan created a pioneering model for large-scale avalanche deposit mapping. The model, named Snow Avalanche Frequency Estimation, was featured in Nature magazine's spring issue. The model fills an important global gap in data on the impact of avalanches in inaccessible regions.

UCA's engagement with academia and community is expanding, with the successful hosting of "The Seventh Transdisciplinary Conference on Imaging at the Intersections of Arts Science and Culture." The hybrid event in Naryn brought together practitioners, scholars and theorists across the cultural and creative industries. The conference featured speakers from the University of New South Wales, Concordia University, and the University of Paris bridging both borders and disciplines. The conference also highlighted the town of Naryn, with an international Nomadic film festival held at the UCA Naryn campus and art exhibitions in Naryn town.

UCA is making strong inroads in its commitment to empower future generations, especially women, with the skills and capacity to seize emerging economic opportunities. UCA's School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE) in the face of a contextually challenging environment, continued its efforts in

Afghanistan, with its learning centres admitting over 9,000 learners, of which 50% were women.

As UCA matures as an institution, an increasing number of alumni are gaining admission into world renowned graduate programmes. UCA alumni Bermet Burkhanova for example, secured a full graduate scholarship to Simon Fraser University to pursue her studies in computer science.

Looking ahead we are committed to expanding our reach and deepening our impact. Plans are underway to introduce new academic programmes, further our research capabilities, and extend our community development projects. UCA's MSRI launched a project funded by the World Food Programme to assess infrastructure vulnerability to avalanches along the Pamir Highway while UCA's CHHU published five original research papers on history and the philosophical heritage of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan as part of the unit's Research Paper Series.

UCA's progress is deeply rooted in the unwavering support from the Presidents of its Founding States—Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan—and the guidance of its Chancellor, His Highness the Aga Khan. This combined with the effective governance by our distinguished Board of Trustees, has been critical in enabling UCA chart its path forward in what has been a challenging environment. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, management, faculty, staff and students, I want to convey our gratitude to the Patrons of the Founding States, our partners in the Aga Khan Development Network, as well as all generous donors, well-wishers, volunteers, and partners for their continued support.

Dr Shamsh Kassim-Lakha
Chairman of the Board of Trustees



School of Arts and Sciences

The School of Arts and Sciences offers Bachelors Degree programmes with majors in Computer Science, Communications and Media, Global Economics, and Earth and Environmental Sciences at its residential campuses in Khorog and Naryn. Future plans include majors in Engineering Sciences and Business Management.

Research Cluster “Modernity in Central Asia: Identity, Society, Environment”

The Research Cluster established in 2021 aims to foster interdisciplinary research across faculty, students, and visiting scholars focusing on identity, social, and environmental transformations in Central Asia. The cluster organised several public lectures throughout the year on a range of issues from climate change to design thinking. One of the major highlights of 2022 was the inaugural International Conference - The Nomadic Image 2022.

Centre of Teaching, Learning and Technology

The Centre of Teaching, Learning and Technology (CTLT) has achieved several significant goals since its establishment in 2021 including the development of internationally compatible quality assurance frameworks for teaching and learning, implementation of curriculum mapping and grade inflation awareness workshops, course and student performance evaluations, and faculty performance evaluation policy reviews. The CTLT has also focused on professional development through training programmes on digital learning environment design, Moodle and MS Teams, and instructional skills workshops. The CTLT's outreach activities involved conducting workshops at Tajik National University, presenting curriculum mapping tools to Kyrgyz

universities, and attending international conferences on educational strategies and innovation.

Co-operative Education Programme

During the 2021-2022 academic year, approximately 250 internships were announced, and 180 students were employed. The Co-operative Education (co-op) department was active throughout the year bridging the gaps between industry professionals and the university. The department successfully organised career networking events in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, and Dushanbe, Tajikistan. To enhance the learning experience, industry experts like Davide Wise, a Senior Software Engineer at Facebook, and Daniel Low an Engineering Manager at Amazon were invited from Silicon Valley, to UCA's campuses to deliver guest lectures.

Co-op Programme further facilitated international exchange opportunities:

- Three junior students spent the Spring 2022 semester at the University of South-Eastern Norway (USN) through the Erasmus+ Learning Mobility Student Exchange Programme.
- One student participated in the Global UGRAD Exchange Programme 2022, attending a semester at Utah Tech University.



The Nomadic Image 2022 panel on the role of museums in shaping nomadic memories.

Alumni Statistics

In its short lifespan of five years, 123 students have graduated from the School of Arts and Sciences (SAS), of which:

123 

62% Employed

19% Enrolled in Graduate Schools

19% Gap Year/Job Seeker

UCA graduates have been accepted to some of the world's most renowned schools including Brown University and Simon Fraser University. Several students secured fully-funded Erasmus Mundus scholarships.

Computer Science



Communications and Media






Global Economics



Earth and Environmental Sciences



 Employed
  Graduate Schools
  Gap Year/Job Seeker

- UCA's Naryn campus also hosted a student from Norway as an exchange student in the fall 2022 semester.

Outreach Activities

The Department of Computer Science (CS) of UCA and Naryn State University (NSU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance educational and training opportunities for NSU faculty and students. CS faculty provided training to NSU students on the topic of Internet of Things, while NSU and UCA students attended boot camps to prepare for the International Collegiate Programming Contest at the Naryn Campus.

The Nomadic Image 2022

The Nomadic Image 2022, the 7th Transdisciplinary International Conference of Imaging at the intersections of Art, Science and Culture was held at the UCA Naryn Campus in September 2022. The event offered an exciting opportunity for international participants to connect with Kyrgyz and other Central Asian scholars and creative communities, to explore experimental imaging cultures at the crossroads between both East and West, and hypermodernity and tradition. The event was sponsored by UCA and organised in collaboration with the University of New South Wales, Faculty of Arts, Architecture & Design, University of Plymouth, University of California, Los Angeles, the Aga Khan Museum, Toronto, Kyrgyz National Museum of Fine Arts, Ala-Too University and Ololohaus.

International Partnerships

- A Memorandum of Cooperation has been signed by SAS and the School of Global Public Health of New York University to facilitate a bidirectional learning initiative with the goal of performing research at the intersection of climate change and machine learning/data science to identify and study locally relevant interventions in Central Asia.
- The SAS's Department of Communications and Media (CM) is in the process of signing an MoU with the Glasgow School of Art for partnerships in research, teaching, and faculty development. As part of this collaboration, UCA students participated in the winter school 2023 which brought together students from various disciplinary backgrounds allowing them to deepen and extend their knowledge and skills in an international and transdisciplinary learning space.

Professional Development

- The CS Department is in the process of establishing Central Asian Digital Resilience Academy (CADRA). Three faculty members and more than seven IT staff have received advanced training from Cisco in Networking and Cyber security.

Student Engagements

- CS students participated in the National Interuniversity IT hackathon in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and won the first prize.



Edil Baisalov, the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Kyrgyzstan (second from right), visited the UCA Naryn Campus to discuss prospective collaborations.



Strategic Priorities

The main strategic priorities for the development of SAS in 2022 comprised of

1. Research on climate change and modernity in Central Asia.
2. Digitalisation of the curriculum and e-learning projects.
3. Building rigorous system of academic quality assurance, and scholarship in teaching and learning.
4. Developing strong links with mountain communities.
5. Internationalization of education and research.

Photo: Dr Dmytro Zubov delivering the training on the topic of Internet of Things to Naryn State University students at the UCA Computer Hardware Lab.

- Seven student teams from UCA out of a total of 44 from all across Kyrgyzstan qualified for the Northern Eurasia Regional Contest within the International Collegiate Programming Contest.

Publications and Conferences

- UCA's visiting scholar, Dr Elira Turdubaeva published a book providing insights for media scholars, media practitioners, and those interested in media, communication industries and the communicative ecology landscape of Central Asia. The publication entitled "Mapping the Media and Communication Landscape of Central Asia: An Anthology of Emerging and Contemporary Issues", is co-edited with Evangelia Papoutsaki, Associate Professor at Unitec-Te Pukenga, New Zealand, and former professor at SAS. The work explores the interconnections between Central Asia's complex media landscapes and pressing regional issues, including labour migration, violent extremism, gender identity, the impact of climate change, and the influence of Russian media.
- In 2022, the CS Department published more than 40 research papers in well-reputed journals with good indexing. UCA faculty also co-authored several papers with the alumni, including a peer-reviewed publication entitled "A Cohesive Machine Learning-Based Model for Energy Consumption Prediction in Smart Homes" which was accepted for publication by IEEE Xplore.



International Office

The International Office (IO) brings a wide range of benefits to the institution and the broader communities by fostering collaboration in teaching, learning, and research, and promoting diversity and inclusion.

UCA has strengthened its partnerships with local community organisations and businesses to provide students with opportunities for internships, community engagement, and cultural immersion. These partnerships offer a more comprehensive and diverse range of learning experiences, while also fostering positive relationships and contributing to the development of the local community.

The Central Asian Faculty Development Programme (CAFDP)

CAFDP is a flagship programme that provides access and opportunities to qualified Central Asian candidates to study at UCA's partner universities. The Programme has developed key partnerships with some of the world's renowned universities that have allowed for co-funded scholarships to 23 Central Asian Fellows studying at 11 partner universities. These partnerships allow CAFDP Fellows to access world-class education and training, enabling them to serve as faculty members or staff at UCA or the wider AKDN upon completion of their studies. Through its network of partnerships, CAFDP is committed to promoting academic excellence, research collaborations, and professional development for its Fellows.

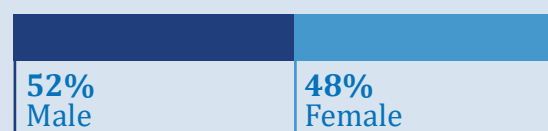
University of Cambridge and Cambridge Trust

UCA and the University of Cambridge have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which supports various collaborative initiatives between the two institutions.

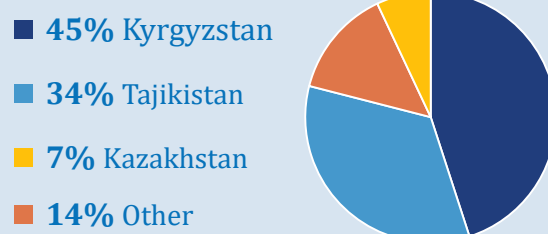
Through the MOU with Cambridge Trust, UCA graduate students receive co-funding for UCA studies and research at the University of Cambridge. This collaboration pro-

CAFDP Alumni Statistics

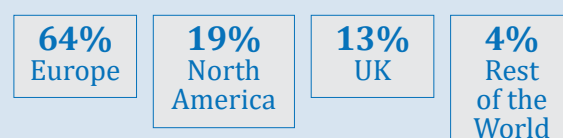
Gender



Nationalities



Partner Universities





Bermet Burkanova, a UCA alumna, pursues a graduate study at the Simon Fraser University on full scholarship.

vides additional support and resources for UCA graduate students, allowing them to benefit from the world-class facilities, expertise, and academic environment at the University of Cambridge. This co-funding initiative not only benefits individual UCA graduate students but also strengthens the academic and research capacity of both institutions.

This partnership enhances the academic and research capacity of both institutions and provides valuable support and resources for UCA graduate students.

UCA continues to build on these partnerships and collaborations to enhance and promote global solutions to the challenges facing our world. It will seek out new opportunities for collaboration with partners from different sectors and regions and work to develop innovative and effective approaches that can benefit all members of the university community.

DAAD German Academic Exchange Service

UCA has a longstanding partnership with DAAD and hosts a number of UCA-DAAD fellows, who are undertaking doctoral research in various fields. In late October, the International Office and DAAD office organised a one-day joint meeting with UCA-DAAD fellows in Bonn, Germany.

At the meeting, UCA scholars presented their research to DAAD officials and accompanying guests. The UCA scholars also had the opportunity to engage in academic discussions with DAAD officials.

UCA Alumni

IO was able to secure a full scholarship for Bermet Burkanova, an alumni student (2021) at SFU. Bermet was awarded a full scholarship to pursue her master's in computer science.

This is the second UCA alumni student to receive a full scholarship at SFU, a testament of the quality of education and preparation that UCA provides to its students, as well as the strong connections and support that UCA has with SFU.

Preliminary discussions were also held on how DAAD can continue to collaborate with UCA in other areas of exchange and joint research initiatives. These discussions highlighted the potential for further collaborations between the two institutions.

Simon Fraser University (SFU), Canada

SFU remains one of UCA's most significant partners. The two institutions collaborate to provide opportunities for UCA faculty and graduate students to study at SFU.

The Chairman of the UCA Board of Trustees, Dr. Shamsh Kassim-Lakha visited UCA faculty doctoral students at SFU. He also met with SFU officials to discuss the partnership between the two institutions and explored opportunities for further collaboration.



School of Professional and Continuing Education

The School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPCE) is the region's leading provider of short cycle professional education courses designed to improve employment and income-generating opportunities. These courses are offered at 16 learning centres, including six in Afghanistan. SPCE programmes are designed for young learners, youth, and adults in professional and vocational qualifications. Key objectives for SPCE's 2023 strategy include diversifying its online courses, improving employment qualification, and reaching marginalised students.

SPCE has successfully continued its cross-regional operations with impressive financial indicators. All SPCE locations focused on diversifying content for online courses, running start-up incubation and accelerators for entrepreneurs in remote areas, establishing a new niche in training delivery to businessmen, and boosting training for marginalised youth. SPCE focused its efforts on building staff and teacher capacity across all countries to boost digital literacy skills and adapt to online learning.

In 2022, SPCE offered a number of internationally recognised exams from Cambridge Assessment English. Approximately 400 tests were offered in learning centres in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. The most popular were language proficiency courses for young learners, which allows for gradual progression in language acquisition. The SPCE centre in Bishkek now offers computer-based and paperless exams reducing both the centres carbon footprint and costs of printed materials and shipping.

Programmes and Key Statistics

Since the beginning of SPCE's operation, 215,241 students (53% women) have graduated from 16 SPCE learning centres across Central Asia and Afghanistan. The most popular short-term English language courses include the Academic Achievement Programme (AAP)

backed by Cambridge Assessment English standards, followed by international certification from Cambridge Assessment (English component), ICDL (IT component), Entrepreneurship and project-based courses such as cybersecurity, python, robotics, and digital marketing. During the reported period, 41 new concept notes and policies were produced, of which three are related to newly developed digital literacy courses to be taught in an online and blended format.

Major Accomplishments

SPCE offices delivered numerous online and offline short-term programmes, executive entrepreneurship training and professional development programmes, including training of trainers on social entrepreneurship, business planning, executive entrepreneurship training in IT, and tourism. SPCE is the only official centre for many international qualifications issued through the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL), Certified International Professional Accountant Examination Network (CIPAEN), Cambridge Assessment English Centre and Teaching Qualification Centre. Throughout 2022, SPCE provided professional training for internal and external instructors from Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Afghanistan.



Entrepreneurs attending a training on marketing at SPCE's Centre for Entrepreneurship in Naryn, Kyrgyzstan.

As part of its modernisation efforts at SPCE, a new student database SLCM (Student Life Cycle Management), will be integrated with SAP. The online registration will allow student service specialists to receive and process data instantly. The full roll-out is expected to be completed by the end of 2023.

Kyrgyzstan

- In 2022 Kyrgyzstan SPCE enrolled 4,151 students, 2,651 of which enrolled at the Naryn town-campus, while 1,500 enrolled at the Bishkek Learning Centre. The most popular programmes were short-term English language, Outreach ORT (unified exam), Entrepreneurship programmes; Digital Marketing, and Python & Cybersecurity, as well as preparation for international exams. Both centres launched new programmes in Financial and Digital Literacy responding to an increased demand for financial expertise among the younger generation.
- Kyrgyzstan successfully cooperated with international organizations such as AKF UK in implementing an Executive Entrepreneurship IT Training in Dushanbe, Kabul and Bishkek. Within the framework of AKF and USAID's Local Impact project both centres developed digital courses to boost digital literacy among marginalised youth. A UNDP-financed project aiming at providing 25 Afghan young women professional training in English language and IT is in progress for 18 women the remainder of whom will join the cohort in February 2023. A World Bank grant was also secured to train students in IT, which will be implemented in 2023. The Naryn team has been implementing the ACCESS programme sponsored by the US Embassy in Bishkek offering outreach programmes across madrassas in Naryn and the At-Bashy area.
- As an authorised ICDL and Cambridge Assessment English centre, SPCE Kyrgyzstan offered exams to nearly 500 people across the country. For the first time in its five year history, a Cambridge Assessment Awards Ceremony was held at 15 Preparation Centres. The managers and teachers of the preparation centres and teachers were recognised for their active engagement in the implementation of international education standards in private schools of Kyrgyzstan.
- The Naryn Centre for Entrepreneurship's training programme has been promoted by first introducing a 10-week training for four trainers, followed by a three month training for 80 participants. The graduates then moved onto business incubation, where 46 were

nominated for business acceleration in cooperation with Accelerate Prosperity Kyrgyzstan.

- SPCE's outreach component has been advanced with Kyrgyzstan Ministries, local authorities, and associations to expand its presence in the Chui and Naryn regions and offer online activities in the southern region of the country.

Kazakhstan

- SPCE Tekeli continued to direct its attention to meet the demand for English language skills by introducing English for Young Learners for the first time, upgrading Academic Achievement programmes, and preparing the academic content for IELTS exams, to be launched in 2023. This year, the center enrolled 398 students due to staff turnover and a change of strategy at the Almaty centre. All ESL programmes were adapted to an online mode of teaching to reach nearby villages and towns. Accounting Technology certificate programmes including Basic Accounting and 1C software were continued.

SPCE Enrolments 2022

Students enrolled – 25,341:

- 1,391 in Bokhtar (TJ)
- 6,765 in three centres of Dushanbe (TJ)
- 3,243 in Khorog (TJ)
- 354 in Khujand (TJ)
- 398 in Tekeli (KZ)
- 1,500 in Bishkek (KG)
- 2,651 in Naryn (KG)
- 9,039 in Afghanistan

SPCE plans to diversify the enrolment to reach people worldwide via online courses, as well as accessing remote areas via outreach programmes.

Programmes

Certificate Programmes	265
Short-term Programmes.....	8,913
Short-term Courses.....	11,324
TVET	123
Professional Development.....	144
Outreach Programmes.....	105
International Projects	3,706
Seminars	761

Total Enrolment25,341

- To attract school students, SPCE conducted professional orientation courses allowing Tekeli staff to run preparation courses for math and English allowing students to successfully enroll in BA programmes across Kazakhstan. A course on financial literacy was jointly held with the Credit Centre Bank, where bank employees delivered a session on savings and financial management. SPCE also organised a 'New Generation' summer school which included an English language component as well as computer graphics and creativity.
- SPCE in Kazakhstan has been actively working on raising awareness of its products and services by launching social campaigns in collaboration with Union of Craftsmen, the Tekeli Union of Volunteers, and the Tekeli Akimat. Events included activities such as a clothing exchange, demo-classes, and consultations.
- Another popular activity in Kazakhstan is the promotion of English language as part of the outreach programmes in Taldykorgan colleges. The programme focuses efforts on rural locations such as Balpyk Bi, an administrative centre of Koksus region. Following the signing of the Memorandum with the Zhetysay school-gymnasium, Balpyk Bi village is now open to

providing a platform for conducting English lessons to their students. These outreach efforts will be continued in the upcoming years.

Tajikistan

- Despite experiencing prolonged internet disruptions and temporary closure of the SPCE Learning Centre in Khorog, the Tajikistan team was able to enroll a total of 11,753 students and strengthen its financial position. The Academic Achievement Programme (AAP) successfully facilitated the admission of 92 graduates to local and international universities. The AAP is widely regarded as the flagship program at SPCE, as it equips students with the necessary skills to gain entry into universities both in Tajikistan and abroad. Notably, students were enrolled in 30 diverse programs spanning from Business Management to Psychology, in 13 countries across Europe, North America, Central Asia, East Asia, and South-East Asia.
- The licence for the official operation of Khujand learning centres was granted in 2022. The launch of creative summer school and digital marketing courses helped boost the performance of the centre. A new course on data visualisation will be delivered in Khujand and other centres across Tajikistan in 2023.



Training programme for electricians at SPCE's centre in Khorog, Tajikistan.

- The Khorog Centre of Entrepreneurship (KCE) launched a range of courses on Business Planning and Management. Over 400 people from various business areas including agribusiness, trade and services, and greenhouse development received training, and mentorship. Popular training in Financial Literacy across SPCE schools was also held for women from rural areas of the region to increase awareness of basic finance management. A key achievement of KCE was the successful tender bid for business training for 33 households under the Livelihood Restoration Sebzor hydropower plant project.
- The Postgraduate Preparatory Programme was suspended until further notice in 2022, however, four graduates of Cycle 6 received admission to the Institute of Ismaili Studies, the University College of London, and School of Oriental and African Studies in London for postgraduate studies in the fields of Islamic Studies, Humanities and Education;
- SPCE Dushanbe learning centres have been gradually strengthening its capacities in development and delivery of digital programmes and courses: cyber security, scratch; python levels 1 and 2, and digital marketing courses were delivered in 2022. Scratch and python courses have been delivered as part of the Academic Achievement Programme (AAP) since 2022.
- Centres in Dushanbe have also been working closely with the Ministries of Tajikistan. SPCE Tajikistan provided training on information and communication technology basics and awareness of digital interactive content creation tools to 116 staff members of the Ministry of Education and Science and its affiliated institutions. Additionally, SPCE Tajikistan works towards building the capacity of academic staff - 95 English teachers (32 secondary school teacher; 33 university faculty; 30 Afghan teachers - refugees in Tajikistan) received professional development training within the English Teaching Mentor project supported by the US Embassy in Dushanbe.
- TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) Tajikistan demonstrated remarkable progress in 2022 by attracting external grants and gradually expanding the programme. The Aga Khan Agency for Habitat and Local Impact project provided a construction training programme for electricians, plumbers and general constructors. The apprenticeship model, one of its kind in the region, allows trainees to undergo theoretical analysis and

simultaneous training with Pamir Energy, Nur center facility, Siyob and Roshtkala facility. Additionally, auto mechanics instructors and eight alumni were involved in repairing AKDN vehicles. Overall, 123 new students were enrolled in 2022. The centre is planning a major upgrade of software systems and professional development training among trainees.

Afghanistan

- Almost all centres managed to demonstrate great results, enrolling a total of 9,039 students in 2022. Darwaz learning centre experienced difficulties in operations the centre due to the ban on girls' education. Activities continued until the end of the final quarter of 2022, but will recommence at a new location and premises.
- Despite the challenges of securing grants, Kabul learning centre managed to run courses for young Afghan women as part of the UNDP project. The centre also facilitated an online Executive Entrepreneurship training as part of the Accelerate Prosperity Asia project.
- As part of a UNDP project Supporting Economic Women Empowerment, 21 female students started their learning process at the Kabul premises with courses being delivered offline. Presently seven female students continue studies in an online format.
- To boost online learning capacity, Kabul learning centre purchased a modern conferencing sound system to suit the standards of the online standard classroom. Two centres in Afghanistan started the Global Virtual School programme in ESL course with 15 female students. The course consisted of 12 sessions conducted by native speakers.



Graduate School of Development

The Graduate School of Development (GSD) serves as a hub for conducting multidisciplinary research. Its five distinctive but overlapping research institutes have established thematic expertise in the economies of Central Asia. The context for GSD's research and education are the mountainous regions of Central Asia where communities, economies and environments are confronting the challenges of development while also experiencing first-hand the effects of rapid climate change.



Institute for Public Policy and Administration

IPPA has sustained its involvement in the advancement of public policy in the Central Asian region through ground-breaking research and the dissemination of significant findings.

Using A Gender Lens in Research

The AGECS (REPAGE) project aimed to conduct research, educational, and policy-oriented activities on civil society and the promotion of gender equality. The project contributes to the creation of the socio-economic profile of women in Central Asia, and involves analysis of civic participation and sense of belonging of individuals in Kyrgyzstan based on analysis of Life in Kyrgyzstan data. IPPA's forthcoming two working papers within the framework of this component, include "Evidence of Gender Segmentation in Civic Participation in Kyrgyz Republic" and "Safety, Violence and Civic Participation from a Gendered Lens".

With FAO financial support, IPPA studied the gendered impacts of COVID-19 on agriculture, food security and nutrition in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. A study on "Assessing the Gendered Impacts of COVID-19 on Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan" provides insights on how best to deliver pandemic response and recovery programmes in vulnerable rural communities.

Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition

A country case study "RMNCH Trends, Equity and Nutrition Determinants Tajikistan: a countdown to 2015" aimed to strengthen country evidence and analytical capacity to inform country annual and midterm reviews of health progress and performance, with a focus on reproductive maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and nutrition. The study included rigorous analysis of national and subnational surveys, administrative and health facility data, health management information systems, and primary data gathered from interviews with national stakeholders.

Public Health and Education: Supporting the Community

To improve community health and wellbeing, throughout 2021, IPPA conducted research with a particular focus on children, women of reproductive age and adolescents.

WHO/EURO Rapid Health Equity Stocktake 2022 aimed to understand both how COVID-19 has impacted health inequalities across the WHO European region and to shape and support policies and alliances for health equity over the next two to five years. The main output is the final report that informed dialogue on equity responsive country and sub-regional recovery plans.

Private Sector's Role in Chronic Disease Prevention & Management in Kyrgyz Republic studied the role of the private sector in the management of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) in developing countries, with focus on the Kyrgyz Republic. The project aimed to harness global experiences and establish the roles of the private sector in chronic disease prevention and management.

Foundations for Health and Empowerment (F4HE) sought to improve community health and wellbeing, focusing on children, women of reproductive age and adolescents. F4HE examined the possibility of offering courses to train medical equipment technicians through UCA's School of Professional and Continuing Education. Research work included analysis of medical equipment procurement, user perspectives on medical equipment maintenance, analysis of current educational and training programmes in medical equipment, a report on medical equipment maintenance and repair issues, key needs, and recommendations for educational and training programmes on medical equipment.

The USAID funded project *Energy Access and Capacity Development in Health, Education and Administration: Comparative Assessment of Institutional Consumers* focused on research on energy access across various institutions in Afghan Badakhshan and the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO). This study assessed the relationship between energy access and capacity development in health, education, and administration sectors. Using a gender sensitive lens, IPPA research focused on factors of quality, reliability, sources, patterns and financing of energy access. Identification of the drivers of differences across these factors has the potential to unlock benefits in public sector capacity development.

Steps to Comprehend Informal Economy and Develop Social Partnership

IPPA conducted a multidimensional assessment to build evidence around informality in the women dominated textile and apparel cluster in Bishkek and Chui region. The in-depth and risk-informed assessment explored drivers of informality, the evolution of the cluster, contractual relationships between employers and employees, coping strategies and motivations of informal workers, the social contract between state and citizen, and specific difficulties faced by women and people with disabilities employed by the textile and apparel businesses. The assessment mapped key stakeholders, including informal actors less visible in the supply chain, and provided policy recommendations, targeting gender related gaps in the informal sector.

Infrastructure Investments in Central Asia

The OECD project *Orientation of infrastructure investments on the goals of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda in Central and Southeast Asia* has two IPPA components, including regional capacity development and peer learning and regional policy dialogues on sustainable infrastructure. IPPA is tasked with establishing of the Regional Knowledge Network (RKN) in Central Asia with a focus on Kazakhstan, Mongolia, and Uzbekistan, and knowledge dissemination and activities dedicated to other parts of the region - Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, as well as the organization of three summer schools for policymakers and national institutions.

The 2022 SIPA Summer School brought together 25 representatives from ministries, national agencies, and research institutes across Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, in the fields of national development and economy and finance, infrastructure, energy, transportation, and environment. Participants learned how to improve strategic infrastructure planning, evaluation and financing using international best practices.

In 2022, SIPA Summer School launched the SIPA Central Asia online platform creating the regional network of specialists.

Life in Kyrgyzstan Conference

In October 2022, IPPA organised the 8th annual Life in Kyrgyzstan (LiK) conference in Bishkek. The objective of the annual conference was to stimulate research exchange, promote evidence-based policymaking and dialogue on developmental challenges between academia, government, development, and non-governmental institutions. The conference covered topics ranging from climate change, agriculture and biodiversity to gender, demography, nutrition, informality in textile and apparel cluster, civic and community engagement, poverty, places of memory, and macroeconomic developments in Kyrgyzstan and other Central Asian countries.

Economic Literacy

To raise standards of economic literacy, IPPA launched a book entitled "Common Sense Economics" in Kyrgyz language. The book was presented at a half-a-day conference Akchasana in August of 2022 and was attended by 200 participants including Kyrgyz social media influencers, and academics. The Conference was organized to promote economic literacy and covered topics from investments and creative economics to financial literacy and career development. In 2023 the project will continue and will launch an Economics Olympiad among high school children in 2023.

Research and Publications

In 2022, IPPA published a series of research papers addressing critical issues in Central Asia, which can be accessed and downloaded from UCA's website at www.ucentralasia.org/publications.



Mountain Societies Research Institute

Throughout 2022, the Mountain Societies Research Institute (MSRI) collaborated with regional and international research institutes and universities to tackle various challenges such as food security, livelihoods, sustainable water supplies, climate change, and air pollution in the region. MSRI initiated a new project focused on Natural Hazard Mitigation while also actively participating in training and capacity-building programmes to enhance climate change resilience and natural resources management.

Natural Resources Management and Food Security

The project *Conservation and Research of Wild Fruit Species in Western Tian Shan* funded by Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) entered its last year of implementation. Three field trips were conducted by MSRI to collect environmental data on walnut and fruit forests in southern Kyrgyzstan. An additional study site in Dashman State Nature Reserve near Arslanbob village was included in the research.

Under the Thrive GDA grant, MSRI concluded the implementation of three food security and livelihood related research projects with partner institutions in Tajikistan including Pamir Biological Institute (PBI), and Pamir Agriculture Research Center in Khorog, and the Botanical Garden in Kulab, Khatlon region.

MSRI successfully completed the research project on “Promotion of high yielding wheat crops through varietal screening to improve food security in the GBAO, Tajikistan” with PBI. During a three-year period, the Ishkashim Research Center of PBI conducted trials of 14 different winter and spring wheat varieties from Lanzhou Province China and Gilgit Baltistan of northern Pakistan. Results demonstrated that productive tillering (production of side-shoots) and other parameters of exotic varieties were lower compared to local varieties yet, exotic varieties exhibited improved results related to lodging and fungal diseases. The findings helped guide the decision to attempt hybridization of local and exotic

varieties to produce new, resistant varieties to diseases and lodging in 2023.

MSRI implemented a three-year project on “Conservation and restoration of unique local wild relatives of plants” in cooperation with Kulab Botanical Garden (KBG) of the Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan. During 2019-2020, MSRI organized surveys to assess and identify 19 endangered and threatened wild relatives of fruit trees in the mountains of Shamsuddin Shoin district of Kulab. The project facilitated the collection and preservation of seeds of endangered plants in the gene bank of KBG and established two nurseries with the involvement of local farmers.

MSRI worked with Pamir Agriculture Research Center (PARC) in Khorog on a research project to “Improve the quality of meat and dairy products by creating a hybrid breed of Pamir yaks through the separation of Mongolian and Turkish offspring”.

Climate Change

To evaluate the ability of global climate models, MSRI analysed the relationship between tree growth and hydrometeorological features. The results contributed to a publication on reconstruction of hydrometeorological data using dendrochronology and machine learning approaches to bias-correct climate models in northern Tien Shan, Kyrgyzstan. This research was conducted within a MoU signed between MSRI and the Government of Kyrgyzstan.



MSRI's Research Fellow measures water level at the glacier's foot.

In 2022, within the framework of E3C project, MSRI developed technical training for AKF-Afghanistan's mid-level managers, which will commence in 2023. The objective is to deliver basic training on the findings of the joint report developed with partners of E3C concerning Afghanistan's vulnerability to climate change. Another major achievement within this project was the publication of a script uploaded in Google Engine to map major avalanche deposits in Afghanistan and other mountain regions (journal: *The Cryosphere*, IF 5.8). The paper was selected by Nature as a Research Highlight in September 2022 and featured a short review of MSRI's method.

In October 2022, an MSRI Research Fellow was invited to join the Department of Meteorological Research Institute (MRI), Japan Meteorological Agency (Tsukuba, Japan) to research dynamical downscaling for Central Asia using MRI regional climate model known as NHRCM. Together with Japanese colleagues, he will run a high-resolution (5 km) climate model over all of Central Asia. High-resolution climate products lead to a better representation of finer-scale physical processes, as well as effects of details in topography, land-sea distribution, and land surface processes. The results of the research will help establish UCA as a major player for climate modelling in Central Asia.

MSRI organised a panel discussion on "Climate Change in Central Asia: from the Foundation in Physical Sciences to Local Scale Effects and Adaptation" at Life in Kyrgyzstan that featured presentations on reconstruction of hydrometeorological data with dendrochronology and machine learning and analysis of climate impact on local communities and agriculture in the Isfara/Aksuu River basin.

Natural Hazard Mitigation

In September 2022, MSRI commenced a new project funded by World Food Programme to assess infrastructure vulnerability to avalanches along the Pamir Highway. The project allowed for the significant improvement of the avalanches mapping script covering the entire territory of Tajikistan. In November 2022, MSRI received a World Bank grant to use the MSRI avalanche system (SAFE) in the Rasht Valley of Tajikistan. The MSRI's Director received an award to travel to Japan with an appointment as Distinguished Professor in the Institute of Global Innovation, Tokyo University of Agriculture & Technology. This appointment will support research and project funding on natural hazards, food security, and water-related issues.

Atmospheric Pollution

Results of a joint research project on air quality in Bishkek undertaken by MSRI, Ministry of Emergency

of the Kyrgyz Republic, and Kyrgyzhydromet were presented in a paper that examined the contribution of motor vehicle emissions to air pollution in Bishkek from 2015 to 2020. The COVID-19 lockdown that initiated in March 2020, greatly reduced emissions in Bishkek as quantified by air pollution forecasting using machine learning techniques. This research was conducted within the context of a Memorandum of Understanding signed between UCA and the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Migration

In September 2022, MSRI hosted researchers from Ethiopia, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Nepal, Thailand, and the United Kingdom for the final project meeting of the EU funded AGRUMIG Project. This research project conducted comparative analysis among focal countries to better understand the unique economic, institutional, and agro-ecological contexts that mediate particular relationships between migration and agriculture, as well as the role played by diverse governance actors throughout this process.

The event included meetings with local pastoral committees and visits to businesses established through social and financial remittances. The visit also

included a two-day Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) workshop to discuss research methodologies and relevant project updates.

Water in the Environment

Within the framework of USAID AEO project, MSRI has completed three reports on Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan related to water sources for hydropower, agriculture, and domestic supplies. These reviews focus on cryosphere sources of water – glaciers, snow, and permafrost, but also rainfall distribution. The aims of the reports were to assess current projects of national water-related agencies, summarise the national agencies needs in terms of water monitoring, and assess the current use of the cryosphere model (CHARIS) in Central Asia. As a follow-up to this project and the Afghan Climate Change project (E3C), MSRI prepared a paper on temporal and spatial patterns of precipitation and temperature in the Pamir with implications for future water supplies. The paper is currently under review in *Nature Water*.

As a follow-up of an IDRC (Canada)-funded project, MSRI worked with dispersed faculty members from Bamyan University, Afghanistan to develop a paper on water sources and quality of drinking water supplies in central Bamyan published by *Water*.



AGRUMIG project researchers visiting Kyrgyzstan.



Cultural Heritage and Humanities Unit

Cultural Heritage and Humanities Unit (CHHU) advances the University's mission of preserving and developing Central Asia's rich cultural traditions and heritage through research, documentation, teaching, and public outreach. CHHU works with a network of regional and international scholars, cultural practitioners, and institutions to achieve its goals.

Supporting Scholarship on Central Asia

CHHU continued to promote regional scholarship and build new dialogues on the cultural and historical heritages and identities of Central Asia. In 2022, two book publications focusing on archaeology of Kyrgyzstan and intellectual history of Tajikistan were released as part of the Cultural Heritage Book Series. The launch of "The Ancient Monuments of Tengir-Too" by Dr Kubatbek Tabaldiev, a leading archaeologist of Kyrgyzstan, brought together members of the academic community in Bishkek and received wide publicity through local media.

An original book manuscript "The Needs and Litany: A Tajik Edition of Muborak Wakhani's Hajat va Munajat" by Dr Abdulmamad Iloliev was published and presented to the readers in Dushanbe. The paper "Development of Persian Philosophical Terminology by Nasir Khusraw: Knowledge and Its Perception" authored by Dr Leila Dodkhudoeva, prominent scholar of Tajikistan was also published online.

CHHU continued supporting scholars of the Institute of Humanities in Khorog, GBAO to complete "Pamiri Folktales", the fifth volume of the Pamiri Folklore Series. The volume to be published in four languages is currently being designed.

Five original research papers on the history, religious and philosophical heritage of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were completed by CHHU research fellows as part of CHHU's Research Paper Series. Dr Sunatullo Jonboboev wrote two papers on cultural synthesis of Christian and Muslim worlds and philosophy of Avicenna showing the importance of reasoning and intellect in Muslim history and society during the Middle Ages. Dr Chorshanbe Ghoibnazarov published his original paper "Musical Instruments and Expression of Identities: The Rabbob and Daf as an expression of multiple interconnected identities in Badakhshan, Tajikistan".

Aibek Baiymbetov completed research on Kyrgyz and Tajik pre-Islamic belief systems under the UNESCO Silk Roads Youth Research Grant program. Within this project, a documentary film was also produced engaging

CHHU Publications

In 2022, CHHU published a series of research papers addressing critical issues in Central Asia:

- Solfeggio Based on Kyrgyz Melodies and Songs (Ethnosolfeggio)
- Development of Persian Philosophical Terminology by Nasir Khusraw: Knowledge and Its Perception
- 'The Needs and Litany: A Tajik Edition of Mubarak-i Wakhani's Hājāt va Munājāt'
- Cultural Production Series: Cultural Heritage of Central Asia

The publications can be downloaded from the UCA website:

www.ucentralasia.org/publications.

local scholars and tradition-bearers in the discussion of Central Asian religious practices and identity. Altyn Kapalova co-authored a paper devoted to the 1916 tragic events in Kyrgyzstan: the paper includes new fieldwork materials from the Issyk-Kul region of Kyrgyzstan.

CHHU continued Oral History of Rural Kyrgyzstan research project that includes over 100 recordings of eyewitness testimony about rural life in the Soviet period from Naryn and Jalal-Abad regions. The interviews have been processed in collaboration with the “Sanjyra” research centre. They will be published online as part of CHHU’s Cultural Heritage Book Series.

Promoting New Cultural Production

Cultural heritages are dynamic because every generation interprets and contributes to unique identities. CHHU has launched a Cultural Production project to engage contemporary audiences in a dialogue on heritage using multiple formats such as creative texts, oral histories, films, photo essays, animation, and music performances. The project also aims to promote the creative industries, bio-cultural diversity and eco-cultural tourism and works with regional and international partners.

Two new products, including collection of short creative essays Cultural Heritage Central Asia, and an exhibition

catalogue Imagined Futures: Transit Corridors in High Mountain Asia, were released to share the stories of mountain communities through creative writing and art.

A CHHU research fellow has directed a documentary film Cold Wind Valley discussing the climate change’s impact on the glaciers of Kyrgyzstan. The film released on Pakistani TV channel and YouTube, was produced as part of AKU’s Voices from the Roof of the World project.

The short documentary film about the history of Cholok-Korgon fortress in Naryn has received an award in an international competition Media-Nauruz organised by the Altai State University in the Russian Federation. The film is one of eight documentaries entitled “Traces of the Past” devoted to the historical and archeological heritage of the Naryn region, supported CHHU.

CHHU partnered with the creative studio “7th Heaven” and the National Museum of History to present musical and fashion performance RUNA focused on the history of ancient tribes who lived on the territory of Eurasia. Through the performance, a group of talented young people working across fashion design, traditional music, jewellery, drawing, and theatre production raised the value and relevance of museum spaces, which can also serve as living art venues.



Opening ceremony of the traveling exhibition of Central Asian artists at the Kyrgyz State Historical Museum in Bishkek.

Since 2020, CHHU has contributed to a musical educational project, Kyrgyz Kairyk by bringing together talented young musicians to create original music. In 2022, Kyrgyz Kairyk hosted an international summer camp for musicians from Mongolia, Khakassia, Buryatia, the Altai Republic, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan who at the end of the camp presented 20 original musical pieces. Musicians and their music created symbolic Silk Road.

Developing and Supporting Museums Across Kyrgyzstan

For the past three years, within the framework of its Central Asian Museum Development Program, CHHU has been training museum staff, supporting museum events, consulting, and providing financial support to organise temporary exhibitions. In 2022, it continued supporting national museums of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to improve their management, build the capacity of museums workers, expand their audiences and announced a mini-grant competition to engaging local communities in the creation of museum content for museums to boost their activities at the local level. Over 40 museums submitted creative project ideas, and five rural museums in Kyrgyzstan and three museums in rural Tajikistan were identified as winners.

As part the “Resilient Silk Road Heritage Network” project supported by the Global Challenges Research Fund of the UK, CHHU organized traveling exhibitions of Central Asian artists in Peshawar (Pakistan), Tashkent (Uzbekistan), Dushanbe (Tajikistan), Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan), and Durham (UK). CHHU has published an exhibition catalogue *Imagined Futures: Transit Corridors in High Mountain Asia* and produced a documentary film “The Road of Hope and Heritage” by Aibek Baiymbetov reflecting on socio-economic impact of infrastructural developments in high Asia.

Promoting Arts and Culture in Naryn

CHHU together with Communications and Media Department of UCA's School of Arts and Sciences co-organised the “Nomadic Image” international conference in Naryn on September 23-25, 2022. The conference brought together Kyrgyz and international scholars, cultural practitioners, artists, and musicians. CHHU scheduled a busy cultural programme for the conference attendees and local communities in Naryn, that reflect the diverse components of CHHU's work, ranging from support of traditional musicians and local art institutions to experimental contemporary theatre and documentary film production.



A Kyrgyz musical ensemble performance at a cultural event organised by UCA.



Aga Khan Humanities Project

The Aga Khan Humanities Project (AKHP) is a network of partner institutions and instructors in Central Asia who deliver interdisciplinary humanities courses developed by regional and international scholars to explore enduring societal challenges and promote critical thinking, academic writing, and constructive debate.

Reconnecting with AKHP Partner Institutions

In 2022, AKHP conducted several field visits to Tajikistan and Kazakhstan to meet with active partners and explore their involvements and contributions to the Project's activities. Meetings were held with 195 scholars, including university rectors, AKHP instructors and new partners. Two research institutes joined AKHP: the Institute for Study of Asian and European Studies, Dushanbe and the Institute of Humanities, Khorog of the National Academy of Science of Tajikistan. In July 2022, the Ministry of Education of Tajikistan approved the Khorog State University's request for collaboration with AKHP.

Currently the AKHP network consists of 59 academic institutions and 282 individuals across Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan.

AKHP Digital Platform

Another important step towards strengthening the AKHP network was to create a digital platform which will be launched next year. The platform will host AKHP anthologies, teacher's manuals and other relevant learning resources. It will serve as a forum for humanities discussions, information sharing and the delivery of online professional development courses and lectures.

Curriculum Review and Translations

In April 2022 AKHP embarked upon a new project, which includes both the review and translation (from Russian and English into Tajik, Kazakh and Kyrgyz) of its curriculum materials. AKHP intends to review, update (with texts from Central Asian contexts), translate and

finalise one anthology per year. The project began with the Introduction to Humanities anthology, which was first reviewed and then translated by the Curriculum Review and Translation committee composed of regional scholars (Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan) and the AKHP staff. The revised materials were translated and reviewed in four languages (Tajik, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Russian). The final drafts will be completed by the end of this year.



AKHP Debate Club

The AKHP Debate Club was launched in 2012 as an initiative by Humanities in English (HiE) students and alumni in Dushanbe. It expanded to various institutions across the region through the efforts of network instructors and students. The organisational core of this voluntary effort is built by HiE graduates in Dushanbe. Since 2012, 980 students have participated in the debates (50% from Tajikistan, 37% from Kazakhstan, and 15% from Kyrgyzstan). AKHP supports the programme by organising training session tournaments.

Humanities in English

In 2022, AKHP in collaboration with the Humboldt University of Berlin organised a three-week international summer school session titled 'Past, Present, Future? Approaches to Cultural Heritage of Central Asia' in September 2022. Attended by students from Tajikistan, Germany, United States and Canada, the school provided participants with deeper understanding of the diversity of cultural heritage through mini-research projects. The highlight was an opportunity for international students to engage in an intensive course in Tajik language followed by language tandem events with local UCA students in Dushanbe. Alongside lectures and seminars on cultural heritage, the students participated in a training on key concepts and methods of cross debate format.

Six students completed Introduction to Humanities course in the spring of 2022 while 21 students started their studies in the fall and expected to complete their courses by the end of January 2023.

In collaboration with the Aga Khan Foundation, two trainings were conducted for approximately 60 youth aged 18-35 in Isfara and Khistewar, Tajikistan. These learning events help youth in conflict areas develop their human and social capital to prevent conflicts.

AKHP Debate Club

In 2022, the AKHP Debate Club celebrated its 10th anniversary by organising a two-day Tajikistan Debate Championship in Dushanbe. The tournament involved 55 students from across Tajikistan who discussed climate change and its impacts on human life, failing adoption homes and the moral issues behind euthanasia.

Second AKHP Annual International Conference

The conference entitled "Approaches to Humanities in Central Asian Contexts: Past and Present" was dedicated to the 25th anniversary of AKHP and brought together well-known scholars in the field of humanities from various academic institutions in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Russia. Presentations were made on new methodologies of humanities research and teaching in Central Asia and beyond. The Conference demonstrated the importance of how collaboration between academic institutions and AKHP can serve as a bridge between them.



Second AKHP Annual International Conference on Approaches to Humanities in Central Asia, Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

The Civil Society Initiative

Established in 2017, the Civil Society Initiative (CSI) is the only university-based programme in Central Asia focused on supporting civil society. CSI's mission is to promote a vibrant and capable civil society that actively contributes to social and economic development, enhances people's capabilities with the freedom and ability to function properly as members of human society. CSI enriches development thinking by highlighting both the importance of associational life in the well-being of communities and society, and the role of civil society organisations in empowering people with a voice on policy and governance. Within the framework of CSI, this endeavour focuses on women's voices, engagement and participation.

School for Advancement of Gender Equality

CSI with support from the Government of Canada-funded Regional Programme, Foundations for Health and Empowerment Education (F4HE), and Advancing Gender Equity through Civil Society (AGECS) has established a School for the Advancement of Gender Equality (SAGE).

SAGE aims to assist gender advocacy organisations and women led organisations in strengthening the capacity of gender equality and will focus on mentoring, on-the-job training and learning as well as peer-to-peer exchanges based on results of rapid gender analysis.

The Advanced Gender Advocacy Programme took place between January – April 2022 and included a total of 10 thematic weeks covering such topics as ecosystem for gender equality, gender advocacy, open data and others. The key competency of the course is recognizing gender perspectives in daily work and policy fields as a prerequisite for successful gender mainstreaming at individual, institutional and community levels. Approximately 56 attendees from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan took part in the course and 45 participants with the highest scores graduated successfully with completion certificates.

Key Highlights

- 56 attendees from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan took part in the Advanced Gender Advocacy Programme.
- 45 participants graduated successfully with completion certificates from the Advanced Gender Advocacy Programme.
- 18 applications were received from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan for the Small Grants Programme.
- 9 civil society organizations were selected for the Small Grants Programme.
- 31 successful graduates of the Advanced Gender Advocacy School, as well as 17 grantees from Kyrgyzstan and 14 grantees from Tajikistan participated in the Regional Gender Advocacy Forum.

Civic Check

During the reporting period from February to November 2022, CSI in partnership with the Soros-Kyrgyzstan Foundation conducted a study to assess the situation in the civil society of the Kyrgyz Republic based on “Citizenship Test” methodology. The test was conducted in several post-Soviet countries, including Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus. In March, CSI hosted a panel discussion to announce the results of the study which was attended by educators, government, academia as well as experts and researchers on civil law and social processes.

SAGE Small Grants Programme

With the aim of supporting and advancing gender equality in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan through participatory research and evidence-based approaches CSI launched the Small Grants Programme (SGP). The SGP received 18 applications from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. For the current cycle, nine civil society organisations were selected based on their experience, budget, workplans and anticipated impact.

Regional Gender Advocacy Forum

The Regional Gender Advocacy Forum which took place in November in Almaty, Kazakhstan, brought together 31 successful graduates of the Advanced Gender Advocacy

School, as well as 31 grantees (17 from Kyrgyzstan and 14 from Tajikistan).

The Forum established a platform for gender equality advocates in the region to share knowledge, support, and best practices. During the Forum, participants presented information about their organisations and shared best practices. They also shared the ways an ecosystems approach can guide strategic planning and increase impact.

CSI Talks

In December 2022, CSI hosted an event to discuss the Bill “On Ensuring the Right to Equality and Protection from Discrimination”. The participants delved into the implications of the disparities between the initial draft and the current version under consideration in public hearings and highlighted the challenges associated with passing the law. This event marked the inauguration of a series of roundtable discussions entitled CSI Talks. The primary objective of these discussions is to establish an ongoing platform for communication and interaction among stakeholders. CSI Talks aims to foster collaboration among various civil society actors, promote the exchange of information and best practices, and facilitate the integration of diverse perspectives.



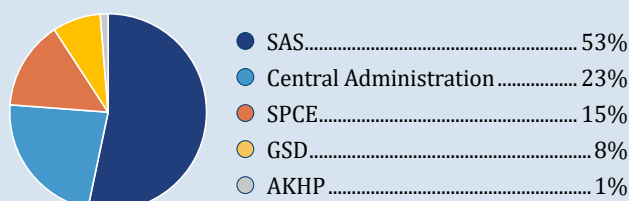
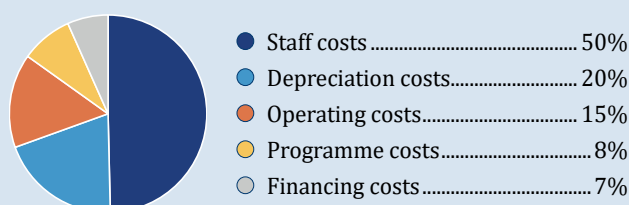
Participants of CSI Talks engaging in discussion of current and prospects for civic education in Kyrgyzstan.

Financial Overview

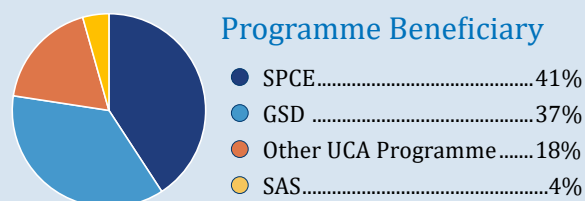
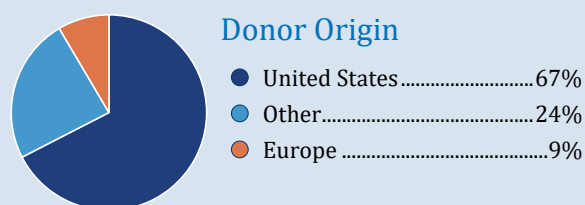
Total investments, grants and revenues, from inception until 2022: US\$ 405m



Operating expenses in 2022
Total operating expenses: US\$ 27 million



Distribution of grants received in 2022
Total grants received: US\$ 3.7 million



Human Resource Profile

Faculty and Staff





KPMG Taseer Hadi & Co.
Chartered Accountants
Sheikh Sultan Trust Building No. 2, Beaumont Road
Karachi 75530 Pakistan
+92 (21) 35685847, Fax +92 (21) 35685095

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Trustees of University of Central Asia

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

We have audited the annexed financial statements of **University of Central Asia** (the University), which comprise the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2022, income and expenditure account, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in funds balances and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the University as at 31 December 2022 and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs).

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the University in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with IFRSs, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the University's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the University or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

KPMG Taseer Hadi & Co., a Partnership firm registered in Pakistan and a member firm of the KPMG global organization of independent member firms affiliated with KPMG International Limited, a private English company limited by guarantee.



KPMG Taseer Hadi & Co.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the University's financial reporting process.

Auditors' Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditors' report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the University's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the University's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditors' report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditors' report. However, future events or conditions may cause the University to cease to continue as a going concern.

KPMG



KPMG Taseer Hadi & Co.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

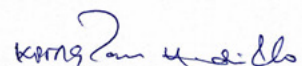
We communicate with Those Charged with Governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

The engagement partner on the audit resulting in this independent auditors' report is **Amyr Malik**.

Date: 07 July 2023

Karachi

UDIN: AR202210096hFdfQqs7O


KPMG Taseer Hadi & Co.
Chartered Accountants

Institutional Partners

The following institutional partners have contributed to UCA's programmes, and their support is gratefully acknowledged.

Aga Khan Education Services	European Commission
Aga Khan Foundation	European Computer Driving License Foundation
Aga Khan Health Services	Free University of Berlin
Aga Khan University	GFZ German Research Centre for Geoscience
Ala-Too International University, Kyrgyzstan	Glasgow School of Arts
Almaty Management University, Kazakhstan	Global Affairs Canada
Almaty Province Administration, Kazakhstan	Global Snow Leopard & Ecosystem Protection Program
American University of Central Asia, Kyrgyzstan	High Technology Park of the Kyrgyz Republic
Arabaev Kyrgyz State University	Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia
Association for Education Development in Kyrgyzstan	Institute of Global Innovation Research, Tokyo University of Agriculture & Technology, Japan
Australian National Institute of Business and Technology	Institute of Humanities in Khorog, Tajikistan
Awali Group, Canada	International Center of Tibetan Plateau Ecosystem Management Lanzhou University, Gansu, China
Badakhshan Teacher Training College, Afghanistan	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
Badakhshan University, Afghanistan	International Development Research Centre, Canada
Bamyan University, Afghanistan	International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center
Cambridge Assessment English	International Mountain Society
Cambridge Commonwealth, European and International Trust	International Potato Center Liaison Office, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
Center for International Private Enterprise	International Potato Center, Georgia
Central Asian Institute for Applied Geosciences, Kyrgyzstan	International Public Foundation "Roza Otunbayeva Initiative"
Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan	International Security and Development Center, Berlin, Germany
Certified International Professional Accountant Examination Network	Jalal Abad State University, Kyrgyzstan
CIDER, Justus Liebig University Giessen, Germany	Justus Liebig University, Giessen, Germany
Coalition for Equality in Kyrgyzstan	Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages
DAAD – German Academic Exchange Service	Kazakh British Technical University
Danghara State University, Tajikistan	Kazakh National Pedagogical University Abai
Delegation of the European Union in Kyrgyzstan	Khorog State University, Tajikistan
Department of Earth Sciences, Institute of Geographical Sciences, Freie Universitaet Berlin	Khujand State University, Tajikistan
Department of Education of Almaty Province, Kazakhstan	Kokand University, Uzbekistan
Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, Canada	Kulob Institute of Technology and Innovative Management, Tajikistan
Department of Tourism of Almaty Province, Kazakhstan	Kyrgyz Investment and Credit Bank
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, Germany	Kyrgyz National University
Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst, Germany	Kyrgyz Russian Slavonic University
Durham University, United Kingdom	Laajverd, non-governmental organisation in Pakistan
Economies, Halle, Germany	Leibniz Institute of Agricultural Development in Transition Economies, Halle, Germany
EFI - Economic Fundamentals initiative	
Embassy of the United States in Tajikistan	
Eurasian Humanities Institute	

London School of Economics and Political Science, United Kingdom
 Mercy Corps
 Michigan State University, United States
 Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sports of Kyrgyzstan
 Ministry of Digital Development of Kyrgyzstan
 Ministry of Economy of Kyrgyzstan
 Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan
 Ministry of Education and Science of Kyrgyzstan
 Ministry of Education and Science of Tajikistan
 Mountain Partnership of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation
 Mountain Societies Development and Support Programme
 Naryn Art Gallery, Kyrgyzstan
 Naryn Children's Arts School, Kyrgyzstan
 Naryn Historical and Ethnographic Museum, Kyrgyzstan
 Naryn Province Administration, Kyrgyzstan
 Naryn Province Drama Theatre, Kyrgyzstan
 Naryn Province Education Department, Kyrgyzstan
 Naryn State University, Kyrgyzstan
 Naryn Town Education Department, Kyrgyzstan
 National Academy of Science of Kyrgyzstan
 National Academy of Science of Tajikistan
 National Association of Businesswomen of Tajikistan
 New York University
 OECD, Paris, France
 OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
 Osh State University, Kyrgyzstan
 Overseas Private Investment Corporation
 Pamir Agriculture Research Center, Khorog, Tajikistan
 Pamir Biological Institute, Khorog, Tajikistan
 Pamir Energy Company, Tajikistan
 Polish Academy of Sciences
 Public Association "Center for Religious Studies"
 Public Association "Development Policy Institute"
 Public Association for Innovative Practices
 Public Foundation "Civic Participation"
 Public Foundation "Demilgeluu Ishker Ayaldar"
 Public Foundation "Podrugа"
 Public Organization "Friend"
 Public Organization "Otifa"
 Russian Academy of Geography
 Russian Tajik Slavonic University
 Seneca College, Canada
 Simon Fraser University, Canada
 Snow Leopard Trust
 Soros Foundation Kyrgyzstan
 Startups Incubation Center, Soonchunhyang University, South Korea
 State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry, Kyrgyzstan
 Stockholm School of Economics, Riga, Latvia
 Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
 Tajik National State University
 Tajik National University
 Tajik State University of Business and Politics in Khujand
 Tajik Technical University
 Tajik University of Technology
 Teacher Training College Ishkashim, Afghanistan
 Teacher Training College Nusay, Afghanistan
 Teacher Training College Shughnan, Afghanistan
 Tennessee State University, United States
 The Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil
 The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids)
 The International Centre for Research in Agroforestry – World Agroforestry Centre
 The World Bank
 The Worldwide Education Fund of the Dallas Foundation
 Tomsk State University, Russia
 United Nations Development Programme
 United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
 United Nations Population Fund
 United States Agency for International Development
 United States Institute of Peace
 United States Peace Corps
 University of Alberta, Canada
 University of Auckland, Australia
 University of Bern, Switzerland
 University of British Columbia, Canada
 University of Cambridge, United Kingdom
 University of International Business, Kazakhstan
 University of Oxford, United Kingdom
 University of Technology Sydney, Australia
 University of Toronto, Canada
 University of Victoria, Canada
 Ural Federal University, Russia
 World Food Programme
 Worldwide Initiatives for Grantmakers Support (WINGS)
 Zurich University of Applied Sciences Zertteu Research Institute





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125/1 Toktogul Street, Bishkek,
720001, Kyrgyz Republic
info@ucentralasia.org
www.ucentralasia.org



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