**National expert for planning, preparing, and conducting an online, 2-day training and workshop on story telling in tourism for project partners of the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) of GIZ**

1. **Brief project information**

The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) is commissioned by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. It contributes to the GIZ programme objective of creating sustainable employment and better income opportunities within the framework of sustainable economic development for both sexes and all population groups, especially young people and including people with disabilities and members of ethnic minorities in Kyrgyzstan. In line with national strategies, the IRDP contributes to the development of regions, fostering the development of economic clusters. The target group is the rural population in Jalal-Abad region, in particular producers, small and micro entrepreneurs, their employees, and underemployed persons. The focus is on young people, women, members of ethnic minorities and people with disabilities. The Kyrgyz Ministry of Economy is the political executing agency.

The overall objective of the IRDP is to contribute to reduction of poverty in rural areas through economic and social development initiatives.

The specific objective is the improvement of income opportunities of the rural population in southern Kyrgyzstan with focus on Jalal-Abad Oblast to stimulate the local economy and social development.

With a geographical focus on Jalal-Abad Oblast, but not limited to its borders, it aims to achieve the specific objective through three interrelated outputs:

Output 1 aims to strengthen producers/cooperatives and tourism networks within the production clusters in order to increase efficiency and competitiveness in agriculture and tourism by improving their degree of organization and co-operation, thus enabling them to coordinate their efforts in production, processing, tourism packages, and marketing.

Output 2 aims to make services supporting social and economic development available for the rural population by increasing the variety, number, and quality of services for rural businesses, with focus on agriculture and tourism, and for the social needs of the population.

Output 3 aims to improve the capacities of local authorities, the civil society and the private sector to jointly implement projects through creation of an ongoing dialogue between the private and public sectors as well as civil society to identify and jointly implement measures that improve the framework conditions for socio-economic development. Core implementation element are Grant Agreements with civil society organisations / NGOs which participate in calls for proposals. The contracted NGOs / CSOs mainly implement activities for Output 1 and Output 3, while the IRDP team implements complementary activities under Output 2. All outputs together are expected to lead to bottom-up production clusters.

1. **Initial Situation / background for these TOR**

The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) is active in the Jalal Abad Oblast, which is in the south of Kyrgyzstan. One topic of the IRDP is to support the development of tourism in the targe region. The implementation partners are different NGOs. Within their projects the NGOs focus on different target groups, esp. youth and women (age 14-28) from the rural area. The NGOs are also supposed to integrate ethnic minorities and people with disability as beneficiaries into their work. Within their projects the NGOs conduct different activities like develop new tour-products and souvenirs, develop new places to rest (yurt-camps), provide trainings to improve service quality, cooking skills, working with social media, booking-platforms, improve general infrastructure and promote their work online (Visit Jalalabad ([Visit Jalalabad (cbtkyrgyzstan.kg, [Jalal-Abad Region: Kyrgyzstan’s Center for Green Adventures - Destination Jalal-Abad](https://jalal-abad.com/))](https://cbtkyrgyzstan.kg/category/visit-jalalabad/)). Other cross-cutting issues like gender, environmental protection, waste management must be considered too. In general, the target area – Jalal Abad Oblast - has various potential to be developed and further improved as a tourism destination. The development of tourism is also part of the Kyrgyz National development Plan. For people in some locations new and/or stable jobs in tourism and related businesses might be a reason not to emigrate to bigger cities or abroad.

1. **The objective of these TOR is**

To attract more tourist and sell more services and products, NGOs and their beneficiaries need to be trained in selling and marketing via story telling - for English, Russian and Kyrgyz Language. Thus, the aim of this TOR is to provide theoretical, methodical, and practical know-how to partner-NGOs and their beneficiaries in story telling in tourism (writing for web-presentation/Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and telling story during guiding work) with an international expert in lead. After the training, the participants should be able to transfer the theoretical part into their own practical work while implementing their projects. After the training/workshop the participants have to apply the learned content and use the new skills in order to:

* sell more tourism related products (overnights, tours, souvenirs, services, etc.) online (via websites, social media etc.)
* inform better through printing materials (flyers, brochures, …) and on product packages
* capture the tourists during tours, events and not only meet but exceed the tourists’ expectations.

All NGOs work and publish their materials in English, Russian and Kyrgyz Language. For this reason, the training needs to be in prepared in these languages. The training needs to meet the special linguistic and cultural aspects of both languages. To meet those goals, the training should be planned and conducted in a tandem (international and national expert situated in Kyrgyzstan). The client plans to hire an international expert and will support both sites in communication with each other, organize meetings, etc.

1. **Tasks / services to be executed**

The contractor is expected to execute all the following tasks in close coordination and communication with the international expert:

* Support the international expert in planning, designing, and conducting of an online 2-days-training / workshop on the topic story telling in tourism for NGOs and their beneficiaries who work in tourism in the Southern Oblast of Kyrgyzstan (Jalal Abad), prepare the training in Russian and KG-Language
* Consult and support the international expert regarding cultural aspects that are important in terms of communication and topics that might be interesting for tourism and useful as practical examples (e.g. historical places/traditions, …)
* As a part of the preparation the contractor is supposed to conduct 6 short interviews jointly with the international expert (max. 1h) with every NGO to get the necessary information needed for the training (see Annex 2 short description).
* Translate all training documents provided by the international expert into Russian and Kyrgyz Language for the training (presentation, hand out/manual, feedback tool)
* Co-moderate the training/workshop with the international expert and support with own qualification and experiences

**Background information**:
The international experts is supposed to prepare and submit the following document:

* presentation with a visual design that is easy to understand for participants (scribbles, explaining films, pictures, films). The goal is to develop a presentation that is easily to understand and easily to remember. Presentation can be used as hand out/manual.
* hand out/manual for all participants in English Language.
* feedback/evaluation-tool with questions about the content of the training, the methods applied during the training, further needs about the topic of the participants and performance of the trainers

Target Group and no of participants:

* NGOs, active in Jalal-Abad Region in the tourism sector, 20-25 participants
* participants from GIZ, appr. 10-15 participants
* In the whole appr. 40 people will take part.

The workshop should be conducted in English and in Russian (if needed, some parts can be explained in Kyrgyz) Language – especially the practical sessions should have a result in English, Russian and Kyrgyz Language.

1. **Period/Time Schedule, Location:** 06.09.2021 to 15.11.2021,
* 5 days preparation, including consultations with contractor and with international expert (total: 5 days)
* 2 days conducting online training/workshop (total: 2 days):
	+ 23.09.2021, 1 pm – 6 pm (KG-time)
	+ 30.09.2021, 1 pm – 6 pm (KG-time)
1. **Deliverables / Publication**
* All materials provided by the international expert in Russian and Kyrgyz Language
1. **Required Qualifications**
* Proof of min. 3 trainings conducted during the last 4 years within the relevant field of story telling in tourism in tourism or other comparable fields with NGOs
* Proof of working experience with international development organizations in Central Asia.
* Languages:
	+ Business English fluently
	+ Russian and Kyrgyz fluently

**Annex 1:**

Suggested approach of the training and workshop:

The content should be delivered in a suitable, varied and target group-specific way that integrates the experience of the participants. Theory should be explained and put in practice (e.g. mix of short lectures-sessions with presentation, examples/best practice and discussions/analyses/debriefings, role-games, group-working sessions, presentation of results and discussions/debriefings, …). The workshop is meant to be interactive. The theoretical parts should be put in practice by each NGO during the training. If possible, each NGO should work on their own project and develop one or several stories. After the workshop, the participants should be able to transfer the theoretical part into their own practical know-how.

All activities connected with the training and workshop are supposed to be planned, designed, and conducted in close cooperation with IRDP. It is not allowed to use zoom. The training can be done via MS-Teams. Concept board is allowed, tools like miro-board or mentimeter can be used for interactive parts, without sharing any personal or company data.

Suggested Content

* Definition: what is story telling, origin, why is story telling effective (psychological effects/emotions), story telling and marketing, role of the recipient, goals. good/best practice, …
* Why is story telling useful in tourism – potential of story telling in tourism (e.g. holidays are connected with positive emotions anyways, visitor as hero, his journey, …)
* Structure of a story - transfer to the separate phases of a customer journey in tourism (before, during, after the journey)
* Process of developing story (e.g. defining goals, target group, emotions, topic, hero and his journey/mission/development/adventures, … (connected with activities, culture, traditions, heroes, myths, legends, etc. or regional products, landscape of Kyrgyzstan)
* Seeding/spreading the story (channels/web/social media, etc.)
* integration of influencer/bloggers (user generated content)
* Trends of story telling
* SEO-Writing (English, Russian)

**Annex 2****: Brief description about Partner-NGOs and their respective projects**

**The Kyrgyz Community Based Tourism Association (KCBTA)**

KCBTA started as the Women Promotion Project (WPP) of Helvetas, Kyrgyzstan. The WPP was to make rural women in the Naryn and Issyk Kul Oblasts familiar with market economy principles, and to motivate them to start or improve their own small business projects. The project, in its phase III, was restructured to focus on business sectors with potential to attract external cash to rural areas. Tourism was chosen as a priority sector. In 2003, the project was renamed to the Community Based Tourism Support Project, which has set up then the Kyrgyz Community Based Tourism Association "*Hospitality Kyrgyzstan*" as a membership-based association of community-based tourism enterprises in rural Kyrgyzstan. Nowadays, KCBTA supports destinations in developing **c**ommunity-**b**ased **t**ourism (CBT), provides support to its member organizations (CBT-Destinations) in developing tour products, marketing them at domestic and international markets, by conducting trainings and support in organizational development. KCBTA also represents its members’ interests in policy development at national level. KCBTA has 18-member CBTs, with a total of around 350 enterprises-families, out of which around 45 % women entrepreneurs. More information: cbtkyrgyzstan.kg. KCBTA implements two projects with IRDP.

Projects

1. “*Strengthening Rural Tourism development in Jalal-Abad region for income generation*” (together with *Fair and Sustainable Development Solutions” public fund (FSDS)*:

The proposed project has two specific results:

1) four existing Community Based Tourism (CBT) local associations of Sary-Chelek, Arstanbap, Jalal-Abad city and Kazarman are trained and equipped for improved and diversified tourism products/services

2) three new local associations are established and promoted in Toktogul, Padysha-Ata and Kara-Alma within economically vulnerable, but touristic attractive destinations. Both results are to contribute to profitable, competitive, and green tourism of Jalal-Abad oblast in generating jobs and alleviating poverty within tourism value chain.

The target CBTs and their associated service providers (together as project beneficiaries) will receive need-based skills and equipment provided by KCBTA (tourism related), FSDS (business related) and national experts (new product related).

The trainings and consultation will include

• legal issues,

• product development and testing

• green tourism,

• business planning,

• product marketing and sale,

• handling and other issues related to the provision of services to tourists.

As part of the project 175 CBT staff members (>50% women-accommodation) and 350 associated service providers (> 25 % youth, guiding services) will be trained and have implemented their knowledge in practice. In addition, local CBT associations of Jalal-Abad will take part in exchange visits and study tour on rural tourism for knowledge and experience sharing. For sustainability, the local CBT associations will be further promoted and linked with inter-/national tour operators and tourism partners. As a result, the rural tourism associations in Jalal-Abad will be able to increase the quality and quantity of products/services they provide to travellers, who visit and/or transit Jalal-Abad oblast. For its geographic location, Jalal-Abad has a potential to be a transit destination for travellers from South to North (and vice versa) of Kyrgyzstan as well as for the travellers in the Central Asia; opening of the border between the Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan contributes to this opportunity.

1. “*Women travel only*”.

Overall goal of the proposed intervention is to set up “Women-only travel” tourism in Jalal-Abad oblast. Women-only travel is a fast growing, multimillion-dollar tourism industry that has even a greater potential for Kyrgyzstan, especially for the Jalal-Abad region; due to its rich diversity in natural sightseeing, culture, tradition and women’s lives. Jalal-Abad has famous destinations such as Sary-Chelek or Arstanbap for instance, which could be easily accessible for women travellers. Populated by different nationals (Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Tatar) that practice different lifestyles (religious, secular, modern, nomad, soviet), these destinations have variety of traditions, cultures, and cuisine. So, there is a big contrast in women lives and gender equality in Jalal-Abad. As of today, no tour operator professionally promotes “women-only travel” in Jalal-Abad in order to show these diversities and varieties to the women tourists. By creating a “women-only travel” tourism product (segment) in Jalal-Abad, the project is to “*develop sustainable economic opportunities for women particularly in rural areas”* as defined by Lot-1 of the 3rd Call for Proposals. The project goal will be achieved by reaching the following specific results:

* 1. Women of four Community Based Tourism (CBT) destinations (Sary-Chelek, Arstanbap, Jalal-Abad city and Kazarman) have the capacity for “women-only travel” products and services
	2. At least 12 diversified “women-only” tours are developed and marketed
	3. Women providing tourism-related services (handicraft, food etc) adjusted their products fit for women-only travel
	4. Gender equality and women empowerment in tourism are advocated at the local and oblast level.

The project direct beneficiaries will be 40 women members of fours CBT local associations, 20 women guides (girls), 60 women service/product providers, 8 girls to obtain driving license and women travellers from worldwide. Indirect beneficiaries of the project will be 128 family members of project beneficiaries, four local CBT destinations, local/regional government representatives, local women-committees, whose task is to mainstream gender equality in the social-economic development policies and plans.

Target beneficiaries will be provided with skill trainings (women tour products, digital tourism, communications etc.) and financial support to develop and improve “women-only travel” related products and services. All women taking part the project will be also trained for women leadership, gender equality and women empowerment in tourism. Within the project, 12 women-only products will be developed and marketed to attract domestic and, where feasible, international women travellers.

For sustainability, the project is designed to set-up “women-only travel” in Jalal-Abad on the basis of existing local CBTs, who have been in tourism over 15 years and have self-sustainable business infrastructure and capacity.

The project duration of 18 months is proposed to start with deep research on challenges and capacity of (CBT) destinations for “women-only travel”.

**Central Asian Alliance on Water**

The Public Association “CAAW” was established in 2002 and has been operating in Jalal-Abad, Batken and Osh in Kyrgyzstan and in South in Tajikistan. The main activity of CAAW is to facilitate rural socio-economic development that integrates various activities such as, improving access to water and sanitation, strengthening local governance, increasing farmers’ income, creating jobs, supporting women and youth initiatives. During the past 20 years, CAAW implemented over 100 projects in partnership with various international and donor organizations including EU, UNDP, UNICEF, UNWOMEN, Oxfam NOVIB, Canadian Embassy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, USAID, OSCE, ACTED, State Department for Development of Rural Water Supply and Waste Water Systems, KR. Few project-examples realized by CAAW are: 2012-2017: “Osh and Jalal-Abad Water and Wastewater Supply Systems” – Stakeholders Participation Program component”. The role of the CAAW was to form a dialogue platform between the Municipalities, City Councils, Municipal Water Companies (GorVodoKanal), Local Contractors and the customers based on the Osh & Jalal-Abad cities Strategic Development Plans. In 2016-2017 CAAW and ACTED implemented the project “AlaBuka - Partnership for Development: Promoting inclusive growth through community promotion of social and economic initiatives through capacity building of local WUAs”. 2017-2018 CAAW implemented the project “Strengthening the capacity of local authorities, rural public associations of drinking water users, Water User Associations in proper management in the system of safe drinking and irrigation water supply”. Here CAAW develop Local Economic Development Plans. From 2020-2021 CAAW (with co-applicant Women Peace Bank) implements the project**:** *Development of Dialogue between Public and Private Sectors and Tourism Enabling Environment in Jalal-Abad Oblast.*

The overall objective of the action is to develop tools fostering national strategic plan in improving conditions for income generating activities in rural communities.

Objective 1: to create a dialogue between public and private sectors as well as civil society to identify and implement jointly measures and investments that improve the framework conditions for socio-economic development.

Objective 2: to establish and build capacity of Local Tourism Development Platform (LTDP) of Jalal-Abad oblast on fostering destination governance, management and fostering destination marketing.

The Action will achieve these objectives through strengthening capacities of local authorities, civil society, and the private sector. The key constituents of the action will be public private dialogues and local social and economic development through rural income generating activities and social-economic development initiatives. The Action will contribute in improving general tourism conditions to create an enabling environment for tourism in the region, through indirect interventions and will includes such subjects as business environment, security and safety, human resources and marketing. Public Private Dialogue (PPD) will be the key element of the Action and stakeholders from public and private sector, as well as CSOs will be actively involved. Women, youth, disabled people, and minorities will be actively involved in all planning and implementation activities. Within project activities following major result will be achieved:

* establishment of Local Tourism Development Platform (LTDP),
* establishment of Tourism Coordination Council (TCC),
* capacity building of Community Based Tourism (guesthouses) members,
* support of at least 12 project initiatives, development of Interactive Mapping Platform (IMP)
* Development of Integrated Strategy for Sustainable Tourism,
* organize exchange visits to Model Accommodation
* development of Joint Marketing Strategy.

**Youth of Osh Public Association:**

Youth of Oshhas been active in Kyrgyzstan for over 10 years. During its work, it has established itself as an expert organization with experience working with young people and youth policy. In recent years, the organization has been conducting its activities at the country level. The organization’s activity covers big cities and districts but also villages in the mountainous and border areas. The activities are based on the needs of young people. Youth of Osh supports and promotes their ideas, applying an innovative approach. The NGO calls on young people to be peace-loving and to respect the rights of every person; it promotes youth entrepreneurship, ideas of volunteerism, serving the community and civic activism. Youth of Osh helps young people getting new knowledge and life skills/competencies. By cooperating with government agencies, parliament, the civil and business community, the NGO contributes to the development of youth policy. The mission is: “We help the youth gain knowledge and skills for a high-quality life and development. More information: www.youthofosh.kg or in the social networks on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (youthofosh).

Project: *Developing a tourist destination in Jalal-Abad region “Visit Jalal-Abad”.*

The project involves assisting the Jalal-Abad region in developing tourism and strengthening the sector through the establishment of the “Tourist Destination Jalal-Abad” Public Union and the launch of the “Tourism Business Club” Program for youth. “Destination JA” which will bring together the representatives of the public, private and civil sectors and will serve as a unified platform for the implementation of initiatives for the development of the tourism and hospitality sector in the region and an educational centre for the providers of tourist services. The “Tourism Business Club” program will contribute to the generation of new innovations among youth and the subsequent support for young people’s business ideas in the field of tourism. Given the applicants’ successful experience in implementing projects aimed at the development of entrepreneurship among youth and in establishing a similar organization in the Osh region, we want to share our achievements, knowledge and successful experience with the colleagues and partners in the Jalal-Abad region and achieve the following main results:

* Establishment of Public Union “Tourist Destination Jalal-Abad” with executive staff, website, strategy, and work plan;
* Opening of Tourist Information Centre (TIC) in the city of Jalal-Abad and in the districts of the region, At the district level, these will be innovative yurt TICs in Sary-Chelek, Arstanbap, Kazarman, and Kara-Alma;
* Creation of new and improvement of existing tourism products;
* Training of hospitality sector representatives in marketing and management principles;
* Improving the quality of services provided to tourists in the city of Jalal-Abad and the Jalal-Abad region;
* Generation of innovative or supporting the existing youth business ideas;
* Raising awareness about the region among potential guests from around the world through conducting marketing activities involving well-known travel bloggers, posting information on travel forums and social networks,
* Development of human resources for the region’s tourism sector by means of enrolling young people in training courses for guides of mountain, cultural and adventure tourism; organizing guest lectures in Jalal-Abad universities and specialized and vocational training institutions with the participation of practitioners and experts in the field of tourism;
* Integration of various tourist stakeholders in the regions through the organization of joint public events, which will later turn into traditional tourist events, similar to Osh Fest, Alaykuu Fest, Festival of Yak and Horse Games in Alai, etc.

The overall outcome of the project will be an improvement in the quality of tourist services, and, consequently, an increase in the profitability of enterprises and households involved in tourism by means of creating a more diversified and improved tourism sector aligned with the current global trends that favour active involvement of youth and women.

**Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)**

ACTED is a French NGO and has been present in Kyrgyzstan since 1996. ACTED implements several projects aimed at increasing income opportunities and reducing poverty, particularly by supporting MSMEs in Kyrgyzstan. ACTED has been contributing to rural socio-economic development in southern Kyrgyzstan, through different projects, e.g. “Promoting Rural Prosperity through Local Initiatives in the Agro-Processing Sector“, “Support to Irrigation Infrastructure Development in rural areas of Osh, Batken and Jalal Abad Regions, “Community-Based Rehabilitation of Irrigation Infrastructure”, “Promoting Participatory Governance: Mobilizing Communities around Infrastructure”. Moreover, ACTED has successfully implemented projects on migration, joint forest management in Arstanbap. ACTED is also implementing one project of the 1st Call for Proposals. This project focuses on public private dialog and business enabling environment in the Jalal-Abad Oblast. Project: “Strengthening Networks and Capacities for Youth Income Generation and Diversification through Sustainable Woodcraft Value Chains and Connections with Tourism Sector”. Co-Applicant: **International Debate Education Association in Central Asia (IDEA):** The NGO was founded in 2016. IDEA specializes in its work in youth development and creating opportunities for young girls and boys, men, and women to realize their potential in social, civic, and economic life. A prominent example of this work is the "Demilgeluu Zhashtar" project, which is implemented jointly with the Aga Khan Foundation and USAID in the Kyrgyz Republic. This is a 5-year program aimed at increasing the civic and economic potential of young people from Jalal-Abad Oblast.

Project*: “Strengthening Networks and Capacities for Youth Income Generation and Diversification through Sustainable Woodcraft Value Chains and Connections with Tourism Sector”*

The project proposes to develop the capacity of a strong informal, existing network of young woodcrafters in Arstanbap and support them to build technical, business and networking skills needed to increase the quality and income raised through their outputs. Moreover, it will be implemented through a participatory approach from start to end, engaging the young woodcraft artisans as well as other stakeholders in the design and implementation of activities to ensure local ownership of the outputs and build local capacities to maintain them.

In the project’s inception phase, players along the value chain - young woodcrafters, forest agencies (leskhoz), wood suppliers, producers, wholesalers and customers/clients - will be engaged in a participatory analysis of sustainable woodcraft value chains, participating in research design and results’ validation and formulating recommendations - to ensure local ownership of the conclusions and subsequent solutions proposed in the framework of the project.

Under Outcome 1, a consultant will work with the network to jointly design actions and build capacities to improve communication and cooperation within the network. Furthermore, the young woodcrafters will be engaged in designing their own branding identity for Arstanbap wood handicrafts, and visibility materials. Further business development trainings under outcome 2 will underline the importance of strong marketing, actively encouraging the woodcrafters to continue using, developing, and maintaining the brand identity after the project ends. Finally, as part of Outcome 1, a Trade Fair Committee will be established within the young woodcrafters network to design, organize and host a local Trade Fair for woodcraft and handicraft products; they will collect small financial contributions from the 30+ businesses targeted to hold a stand at the trade fair, creating a sustainable model and the skills needed to continue hosting trade fairs after project end.

Under Outcome 2, module development efforts will be coordinated with the Technical and Vocational Education and Training State Agency (TVET) and educators in the local TVET schools in Jalal-Abad to ensure national and local buy-in during the early stages of the project. The aim is to pilot a new TVET module on Fine Carpentry and Entrepreneurship, collect data on satisfaction and performance, and eventually to institutionalize the module in other TVET schools. In addition to this, sustainability will be ensured through the selection of local wood masters in Arstanbab to carry out most of the project's capacity-building efforts, so that technical knowledge will remain in the community when external support comes to an end. Project activities will encourage peer-to-peer mentorship schemes, allowing trained young artisans to transfer knowledge to an expanding number of youths in the community.

Under Outcome 3, activities will aim to mobilize the young woodworkers to recognize the economic value in sustainable wood products and sustainable forest management, and equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to become advocates for sustainable forest management in their communities both during and after the project. Activities aim to build connections and open space for collaboration between the young woodcrafters’ network and other wood stakeholder groups, such as the Leskhoz forest agency. ACTED will mobilize them to design their own awareness-raising initiatives. The learning-by-doing experience will aim to encourage future activism among woodcrafters for sustainable management of wood resources.

Finally, the project will create sustainability through its strong synergies with similar interventions, especially other initiatives under the Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) as well as ACTED’s “Silk Road CBT” project which aims to boost the competitiveness of the community-based tourism (including handicraft) sector and the “Sustainable Energy for Tourism (SET)” project, both funded by the European Union. Several project outputs - including the research on local sustainable value chains, and business development modules, for example - can be shared, maintained, and further developed through other projects.

**Fair and Sustainable Development Solutions” public fund (FSDS)”** was founded in 2014 in Kyrgyzstan with the purpose of “improving standard of living of vulnerable groups in Central Asia through facilitation of social integration and fair economic development of local communities”. Co-Applicant: “Center for civic society support: The **Public Fund Center for civic society support Jalal-Abad”** (CSSC) was founded in 1996 on the initiative of UNHCR and Counterpart Consortium international fund financed by USAID. CSSC implements projects on creation of communal organizations, identification of problems in communities and elaboration of development plans of municipalities. Young craftsmen in tourism in ayil aimaks Kashka-Suu/Padysha-Ata.

The Kyrgyz Republic’s Concept on Youth Policy 2020-2030 considers youth as one of the keys for the development of society. One of the main principles of the Concept is protection of the rights and legitimate interests of young people, non-discrimination of young citizens on age, gender, ethnic and other grounds, equal conditions for the full participation of young people in the socio-economic, political and cultural life of society. Nevertheless, government and social partners are aware that at present Kyrgyz youth, especially young women, are isolated from the economic and social processes taking place in the country, and this situation needs improvement. The closure of borders in connection with the pandemic has had a significant impact on the tourism business in Kyrgyzstan. Many young entrepreneurs, especially women, were left unemployed in rural areas. Almost 90% of the population in rural areas receive income from agriculture and tourism. Project partners Public fund “Fair and Sustainable Development Solutions (FSDS)” and Public fund “Civil Society Support Center-Jalal-Abad (CSSC-Jalal-Abad)” have combined their experience and resources to promote the economic inclusion of youth and women in the aiyl aimaks (AA) of Kashka- Suu in Jalal-Abad oblast.

Project: *Youth economic empowerment*

The project will actively promote economic inclusion and facilitate economic opportunities for young people aged 16-29 years. The proposed project aims to create conditions for expanding economic opportunities and employment of rural youth and women through joined women and youth-led groups to a cooperative and promoting a tourist yurt camp in the Padysha-Ata destination. The project team will closely work with youth and women households below the poverty line, women self-help groups as well as local retailers to facilitate to increased incomes and competitiveness of the target groups in terms of financial sustainability and tourism product diversification.

For achieving that the proposed project expects to achieve the following two expected Outcomes:

Outcome 1. Four women and youth-led groups joined to a cooperative and increase income through providing tourist services in the Yurt Camp (Padysha-Ata nature reserve).

Outcome 2.One Yurt Camp established with necessary equipment and provisions, and hosting local and international tourists

Within the framework of the project, the following Outputs are planned:

* Establishment of one cooperative on “Local Tourism Service” in Kashka-Suu AA.
* Capacity building of herbal group (HG) on collection, drying, storing and package designing of medicinal herbs.
* Build the capacity of the cooperative members for excellent tourist service delivery in the yurt camp during and out of the touristic season.
* Integration of services/products to local/regional tour product value-chains.
* Establishment of a Yurt Camp.
* Build the capacities of yurt camp`s residents for timely maintaining of the yurt camp and equipment.

In addition, the following project interventions as well as local initiatives will serve as a precondition for the sustainability of the project:

1. Establishment/foundation of a cooperative on “Local Tourism Services”: The cooperative members will receive incomes from selling of products and services in the yurt camp. It is assumed that the number of members of the cooperative will increase in the future, since the cooperative and the conditions created in the yurt camp will provide income opportunities for local residents of Kashka-Suu.

2. Set up of a yurt camp: The yurt camp will be designed as an ethno and tourist market for selling tourist products and services during the touristic season.

The cooperative and yurt camp will continue work after completion of the project.

3. Integration to tourism value-chains: Joint development of tour products/services together with Destination Jalal-Abad, Community Based-Tourism-Groups and regional tour operators will make tourism products and services more recognizable, demanded, useful and interesting. All those will be developed through participatory approach by many meetings and workshops.

4. Improved capacities of the cooperative members: Since the yurt camp will work only during the tourist season, the question arises of the employment of members of the cooperative outside the tourist season. The project assumes that the know-how and knowledge gained, learning handouts, consulting, and technical support in the form of equipment will help the members of the cooperative to engage in income-generating activities outside the tourist season. For this, the opening of one yurt in the district center for selling products produced by members of the cooperative: production and sell of patchwork goods, national snacks and food, souvenirs, and handicrafts, etc. Additionally, the project team will work closely with the members of the cooperative to create additional economic opportunities during the implementation of the project through meetings and business planning and development workshops.

**Women Peace Bank (WPB):** WPB was established in 2014 and operates in Jalal-Abad, Batken and Osh provinces of Kyrgyzstan. The main activity of WPB is to promote social and economic development of rural communities, which includes various activities such as improving access of women and youth to local services, strengthening local governance, increasing income of youth and rural women, creating jobs, supporting women and youth initiatives. Over the past 6 years, WPB has implemented more than 10 projects in partnership with various international and donor organizations, including UNDP, UNODC, DAI, SaferWorld, INL, US Democratic Commission, USAID, Freedom House, Internews, ACTED and local self-governance bodies in Jalal-Abad, Batken and Osh provinces of the Kyrgyz Republic.

In 2020, WPB is implementing a tourism related project in cooperation with CAAW in Jalal-Abad Province. A comprehensive assessment of tourism has been conducted, partnership with target AOs, district and regional tourism councils, forestry enterprises, nature reserves has been established, and women's groups have been created.

WPB has collaborated with women and youth in Osh and Jalal-Abad (providing counselling and psychological services to women and youth, conducting trainings for people and local authorities on mediation and conflict prevention). WPB mission: Integration and increasing civic engagement, economic empowerment of women and young girls in the Kyrgyz Republic by strengthening their capacity and promoting their rights and interests in the society, involving women and youth in local governance and civic participation.

Project: *Economic empowerment of youth through the development of adventure and mountain tourism in Jalal-Abad Province*

The project is planned to be implemented in 4 target communities of Jalal-Abad Province: Arstanbap AO, Kyzyl-Unkur AO of Bazar-Korgon District, Kargalyk (Kazarman) AO of Toguz-Toro District and Cholpon-Ata AO of Toktogul District. The project is not only aimed at the development of adventure and mountain tourism specifically, but also helps to improve economic position of the population, especially youth.

Promotion of employment and income generation for rural youth is the central mission of the project and its actions will address the following issues in the tourism sector of target areas: lack of youth’s knowledge and skills to improve services for adventure and mountain tourism; limited access to funds for the service provision (outfit, equipment, overalls, tools, etc.) and a lack of knowledge and skills to promote these services through online domestic and international platforms, social networks (3), low quality of services provided by tour operators (4); limited types of services offered by tour operators (5); lack of the youth network involved in adventure and mountain tourism (6); All these factors influence the income level of target youth groups and target communities. The intended goals of the project will be achieved through:

1. Organization of youth groups, their training in the adventure and mountain tourism skills; development of this type of tourism; training youth on legal basis of entrepreneurship and digital and SMM skills to promote these travel services through social media and international travel platforms.
2. Promoting sustainable cooperation of the involved stakeholders through the organization of exchange visits among youth groups in their communities in turn and to experienced service providers (“Kettik”, etc.), holding the Regional Cup of adventure and mountain tourism with the participation of a wide range of youth, entrepreneurs, potential investors, media, support in promoting a new travel service to the domestic and foreign markets,
3. Building a dialogue of youth groups with stakeholders: AO, administrations of forestry enterprises, national reserves, the Department of Tourism, Sports Committees to discuss topical issues; participation of youth groups in public hearings to include organization of large sports and cultural events on branding the area and attracting tourists into the SEDPs of AOs and participation of youth groups in budget hearings on the allocation of funds from the local budget for these issues. Youth groups will conduct these events in their communities together with AOs and other stakeholders.

The project will be relevant and unique in the tourism sector of Kyrgyzstan. The project will also create information content in the Kyrgyz and Russian languages about the entrepreneurial and labour activity of youth engaged in tourism in Jalal-Abad Province, where the youth themselves will create content for other youth based on the “peer-to-peer” principle. The project aims to provide traditional and digital tools, to introduce, tell, unite and help young people to launch new tourism routes and services in adventure and mountain tourism, to incorporate elements of digital entrepreneurship into tourism services, so that, ultimately, business income will increase. This project will allow at least 100 young people to see opportunities for starting and expanding their entrepreneurial activities. The project activities will follow the National Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development.