Acceleration of the VPoA achievement in 7 LLDCs of NCA region:
review of national strategies

Savia Hasanova

Rationale

- The Vienna Programme of Action adopted in 2014
- High-level Midterm Review on the Implementation of the VPoA revealed challenges in 2019
- The Roadmap for Accelerated Implementation of the VPoA elaborated in 2020

VPoA Roadmap's priority areas	Vienna Programme of Action's priorities
Priority area 1: Transit, trade and transport facilitation	Priority 1: Fundamental transit policy issues
Priority area 2: Energy and ICT	Priority 2: Infrastructure development and maintenance
Priority area 3: Structural Economic Transformation	Priority 3: International trade and trade facilitation
Priority area 4: Cooperation between LLDCs and transit countries	Priority 4: Regional integration and cooperation
Priority area 5: Means of implementation and international support	Priority 5: Structural economic transformation
Priority area 6: Other areas	Priority 6: Means of implementation

Source: Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 and Roadmap for Accelerated Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs in the Remaining Five Years

National development strategies (NDS) of focus

Country	Overarching strategy	MTDPs
Azerbaijan	Azerbaijan 2030: National Priorities for Socio-Economic Development	State program of socio-economic development of the regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2019-2023
Armenia	Programme of the Government of the Republic Armenia for 2021-2026	Action Plan for 2021-2026
Kazakhstan	Kazakhstan-2050	National Development Plan of the Republic of Kazakhstan until 2025
Kyrgyzstan	National Strategy for Development for 2018-2040	National Program for Development of the Kyrgyz Republic until 2026
Tajikistan	National Development Strategy until 2030	The Medium-term Development Programme for 2021-2025
Turkmenistan	Programme of the President of Turkmenistan on the socio-economic development of the country in 2019-2025	Foreign Trade strategy of Turkmenistan for 2021-2030
Uzbekistan	New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026	

Priority area 1: Transit, trade and transport facilitation

Many of the countries focus more on development of internal transport corridors, connecting remote regions within the country.

Very few national strategies mention the sustainable, climate-and-disaster resiliene infrastructure

Several countries explicitly outline their infrastructure projects, such as building the roads, modernizing railroads and creating conditions for air transport development.

Country	Transport corridors mentioned in NDSs
Azerbaijan	none
Armenia	North-South Road Corridor Investment Program, construction of road
Kazakhstan	none
Kyrgyzstan	One Belt – One Road, construction of railroad Reconstruction of roads: Osh – Batken – Isfana – Hudgant; Taraz – Talas – Suusamyr; Launch of the international transport corridor Aksu
Tajikistan	Reconstruction of road Vose-Khovaling-Sayron-Karamyk (CAREC 3 and 5 transport corridors)
Uzbekistan	none
Turkmenistan	North-East and South-West transport corridors

Priority area 1: Transit, trade and transport facilitation (cont)

Majority of the countries do commit to simplification and cost reduction of transit and trade procedures.

Half of the countries refer to WTO in general in their strategic documents. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan most of all.

Countries focus on the export promotion and support of local manufacturers.

No mention of any cooperation agreements between the countries, except for Eurasian Economic Union.

Only three countries – Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan – somehow refer to international conventions in their development strategies.

Priority area 2: Energy and ICT

All the countries commit to developing renewable energy, energy efficiency and modernizing of energy infrastructure.

Cooperation:

Armenia: four-party (Armenia-Iran-Georgia-Russia) North-South Power Transmission Corridor initiative

Kyrgyzstan: joint energy markets within the EAEU, CASA-1000 project, opportunities to export energy to Pakistan, Afghanistan, East Asia

Kazakhstan: introduction of OECD best practices in technology, development of the Concept for Low Carbon Development until 2050.

Tajikistan: CASA-1000 project

All countries commit to digitalization, ICT development and digital solutions, particularly in governance

Priority area 3: Structural economic transformation

MSMEs development:

- state support of the SMEs by providing access to finance, simplification of regulatory procedures, decrease of state involvement;
- increased access to information, knowledge

Attraction of foreign and domestic investments is interlinked with the development of particular economic sectors. In almost all the strategies there are specific development goals for priority sectors, which imply investment attraction + private-public partnership in those sectors.

Every country has a separate section on the development of agriculture with focus on current global tendencies

Priority area 4: Cooperation between LLDCs and transit countries

Mostly refer to bilateral agreements.

Cooperation strategies are mentioned mostly in section on foreign policy in form of diplomatic relationships.

Few countries refer to regional integration in terms of economic cooperation

Country	Focus on regional integration
Azerbaijan	-
Armenia	EAEU, CSTO, EU, CEPA, Eastern Partnership
Kazakhstan	Focus on EAEU, Different approach to working with OECD Enhancing cooperation with SCO, EU, CIS, ASEAN
Kyrgyzstan	UN, EAEU, CIS, CSTO, SCO, OSCE, Organization of Turkic States, Central Asia, EU One Belt - One Road
Tajikistan	One Belt-One Road, CAREC, CASA, South-South
Turkmenistan	Integrated transport and transit transportation within the Eurasian continent, reaching the sea terminals of the Black Sea and Baltic regions, South and Southeast Asia, and the Middle East countries
Uzbekistan	Mostly bilateral with countries of Asia-Pacific region UN, EAEU

Priority area 5: Means of implementation and international support

Except for Tajikistan, countries do not explicitly mention the mobilization of financial resources.

However, the majority of their strategic action plans imply attraction of funding from international development organizations for NDS implementation. Countries also mention the continuation of working with international development partners as the priorities of foreign policy.

Development of statistics: +++ almost in every NDS

The most “popular” convention in NDS is Paris Agreement or other on climate change.

Priority area 6: Other areas

Country	Climate change mitigation	Deal with the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis	Remove the barriers to achieving gender equality
Azerbaijan	"A clean environment and a country of Green Growth"	-	-
Armenia	2.8. Sustainable management of natural resources 4.10. Environmental protection	Not explicitly, but the Program mentions that the pandemic has had consequences.	State target Programs and measures for ensuring gender equality will be developed
Kazakhstan	Task 7. «Green economy" and environmental protection	A lot is said about consequences of COVID-19 pandemic, no separate priority	none
Kyrgyzstan	9.2. Sustainability of environment and climate change	Separate section on COVID-19 within the anti-crisis policy measures	Not explicitly, few measures related to girls and women empowerment
Tajikistan	Many measures + mentioning of global conventions		877. Achievement of gender equality at all forms
Turkmenistan	Rational use of natural resources, environmental protection, and addressing climate change	-	Not separately. Mentioned at section on demography
Uzbekistan	Overcoming existing environmental problems	Briefly. "Efforts are being made to prevent the re-spread of the coronavirus and to minimize its negative impact on the economy	Goal 69: Support of women and their increased participation in society

Gaps in NDS while implementing the VPoA Roadmap

Absence of clear quantitative targets.

Goals and objectives of the overarching strategies are not fully translated into the ones of the implementing programs.

The NDS do not contain any details and methodology on estimates of the financing needs.

The NDS do not have sections on financial strategies. Several paragraphs just mention that “the implementation of the program will be carried out at the expense of the budget, the private sector and donor funds”.

Action matrices sometimes indicate the source of funding, but do not indicate its amount.

Gaps in implementing the VPoA Roadmap (cont)

Issues of multi-stakeholder dialogues and experience sharing are not considered in any way.

Issues of participation in regional initiatives are only partially considered, which raises questions regarding the priority of initiatives mentioned versus ones not mentioned.

Although many of the reviewed countries are participating in multifaceted South-South cooperation, the national plans only mention the One Belt - One Road initiative.

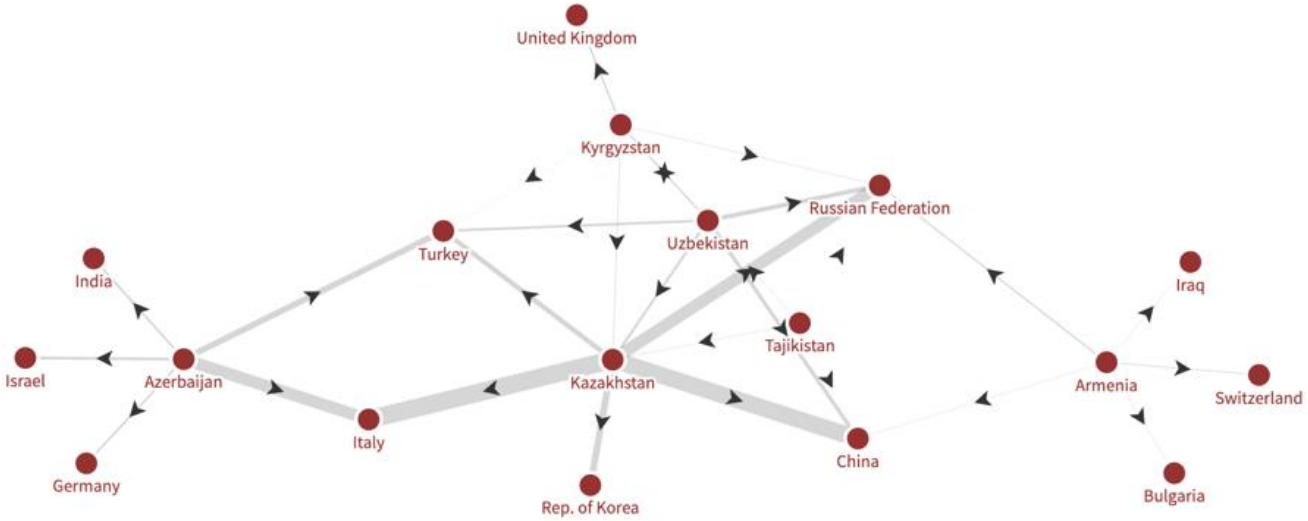
Virtually no indication that countries intend to somehow benefit from relevant international, regional and sub-regional conventions and other legal instruments.

AREAS FOR COOPERATION, NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND SUPPORT FROM DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Figure 1. Interlinkages of the top five export directions of the SONCA LLDCs

Sorted by the percentages of total export of each SONCA LLDCs in 2019

The width of the line represents the total volume of export to the country, the arrows - direction of export

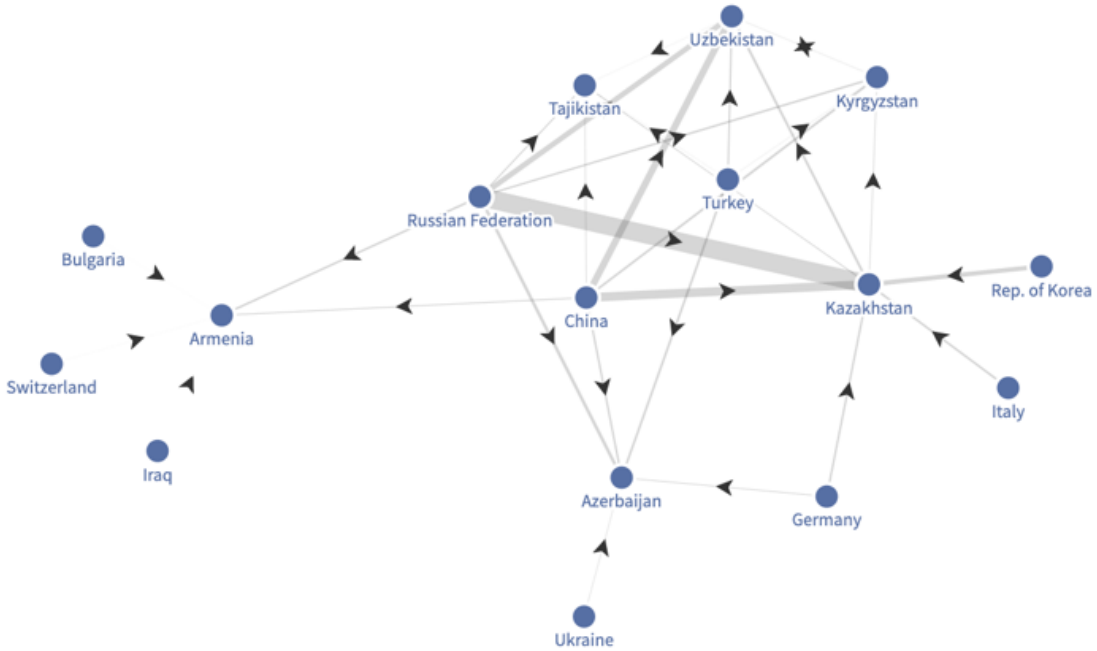


Source: Calculations of author based on UN COMTRADE data

Figure 2. Interlinkages of the top five import directions of the SONCA LLDCs

Sorted by the percentages of total import of each SONCA LLDCs in 2019

The width of the line represents the total volume of import from the country, the arrows - direction of import



Source: Calculations of author based on UN COMTRADE data

Technical assistance to support implementation of the Revised Kyoto Convention

Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan ratified the Revised Kyoto Convention only in 2020 and 2021.

Very low ranking in the World Bank Logistics Index (Uzbekistan – 117, Kyrgyzstan – 132, Turkmenistan – 142, Tajikistan — 147),

The implementation of the RKC could receive significant assistance from the development partners.

Intergovernmental Commissions' meetings as basis for identification needs for technical assistance

The Intergovernmental Commission is a special format (government to government platform) of international relations, which have been established for sake of discussion of cooperation issues between two countries.

44 bilateral meetings since 2017 (25 in 1.3 years)

Intergovernmental Commissions' meetings as basis for identification needs for technical assistance

The entire spectrum of issues envisaged by the Vienna Program of Action is covered by such bilateral institution meetings

Areas:

Technical assistance on the use of ocean ports of transit countries

Technical assistance on the development of transport corridors

Support in harmonization of legislation on market access in other countries

Assistance in the development of trade and logistics projects

Intergovernmental Commissions' meetings as basis for identification needs for technical assistance

Assistance to less developed LLDCs

- Increasing the level of environmental and technical safety
- Increasing the capacity of specialists in the agricultural sector
- Capacity building in the areas of IT security
- Increasing the potential for cooperation in the field of environmental protection
- Increasing the potential of tourism, including mutual one

Thank you!

Reach out to me: **saviya.hasanova@gmail.com**