One year passed since CCAMTAC was launched virtually, following the 2021 inaugural steering committee meeting. Many of us had expected that by now we would be back to face-to-face delivery of capacity development. Taking stock of the virtual experience so far, three main thoughts come to mind: (i) The virtual launch went smoother than imagined; virtual delivery works and has some advantages. It can be more inclusive than face-to-face delivery by allowing wider participation. And experts can participate more easily in a targeted manner. (ii) The disadvantages should not be overlooked. Virtual delivery tends to be more demanding for all, including participants: the pressure to continue to juggle the regular daily work appears stronger during virtual delivery than during offsite face-to-face interactions. Shorter delivery times (usually 3-4 hours a day compared to about 6-8 hours) leave less time for in-depth discussions. Also, our experience shows it is more challenging to kickstart new projects and build relations from scratch. (iii) I expect the center’s future activities to be blended but exactly how will require some experimentation and piloting, as soon as conditions allow for it. The right mix of delivery methods should support efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

During the steering committee update in December 2021, the steering committee endorsed the indicative work program for the remainder of this fiscal year. CCAMTAC is thankful for new or additional support from Georgia, Russia, Switzerland, and the United States’ intention to contribute to CCAMTAC.

This newsletter summarizes key capacity development activities between November 2021 and January 2022. In addition to bilateral technical assistance, regional workshops related to public investment management (PIMA) and revenue administration and the informal economy. Webinars and research seminars that covered climate change, analytical tools to analyze debt, the regional economic outlook, and fiscal modelling provided excellent opportunities to bring regional experts and practitioners together. For more information on CCAMTAC, as well as an introductory overview presentation, please check our website at https://ccamtac.imf.org.
Recent Activities by Workstream

Macroeconomic Frameworks

Azerbaijan: Training Core Modelling Group in Financial Programming and Enhancing Modelling Capabilities (November 22 - 26, 2021). The team began the groundwork for developing a macroeconomic projections' tool. Specifically, the team (i) delivered a training and transferred knowledge on the basics of financial programming centered around a comprehensive adaptive expectations template; (ii) presented the South Africa case study of the template; and (iii) agreed with the authorities on the minimal required specifications for the new projection and simulation tool.

Azerbaijan: Training Core Modelling Group in Macroeconomic Analysis (December 6 – 10, 2021). As follow-up to the earlier mission, in cooperation with the authorities, the mission team began strengthening the data management practices and data analysis skills in the real sector. Specifically, the team (i) reviewed and suggested improvements to the organization of macroeconomic data and databases, and quarterly macroeconomic situation reports; (ii) delivered training on the principles of macroeconomic diagnostics and techniques for building economic narratives; and (iii) together with the staff, estimated a simple structural vector autoregressive model and showed an initial assessment of the transmission mechanism of elementary economic shocks in the context of the last two business cycles in Azerbaijan.

Kazakhstan: Course on Financial Programing and Policies - Macro-Foundation Tool (December 6 – 10, 2021). The mission team delivered a hands-on training on the use of a new macro-foundation tool for forecasting and policy simulations in the context of IMF’s financial programming framework. The training was well attended by participants from the Economic Research Institute, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Finance, and the National Bank of Kazakhstan.

Uzbekistan: Enhancing Modelling Capabilities (December 13-17, 2021). As part of a multi-year CD program that started in 2019, the mission team deployed all planned upgrades to the Pilar 1 macroeconomic framework as agreed in May 2021, strengthening authorities’ analytical skills and improving macroeconomic forecasting and policy analysis that feeds into the economic policymaking process. Together with the Ministry of Economic Development and Poverty Reduction management, IMF staff pre-scope the pathway for the institutionalization of the macroeconomic framework. The virtual mission was also attended by participants from the Ministry of Finance, and the National Bank of Uzbekistan.

Revenue Administration

The Resident Advisor participated in a headquarter-led mission to Georgia (December 6, 2021-February 7, 2022) on reviewing progress with implementing revenue administration reform and discussing RA reform priorities going forward. She held meetings with relevant officials and prepared technical advice on improvement of individual performance management for revenue administration employees, enterprise risk management (ERM), business continuity planning (BCP), and reform
management. To ensure good coordination between the CCAMTAC, Fiscal Affairs Department (FAD) of HQ and the authorities, the advisor also joined selected meetings of the FAD HQ mission to Uzbekistan (December 13 – December 30, 2021). The mission reviewed the progress made by the State Tax Committee (STC) with the implementation of the 2019-21 tax administration reform strategy and provided advice to the STC and the Ministry of Finance to advance the development of the Medium-Term Revenue Strategy (MTRS) on the implementation of the 2019-21 tax administration reform strategy.

Public Financial Management

Armenia: Reformulation of Budget Department (November 1, 2021 - February 25, 2022). The CCAMTAC regional advisor and a short-term expert have been supporting the Ministry of Finance in clarifying the functions of, and restructuring, the Budget department. This is intended to pave the way for an improvement in the capacity of the department to enable it to lead and support effectively the further development of program-based budgeting, including the new rolling baseline system, implementation of the revised mandatory/discretionary distinction and fulfilment of the Ministry's gatekeeping role in the new public investment management (PIM) framework.

Georgia: Updating the Balance Sheet and Quantifying Climate Change Fiscal Risks (November 17 - December 15, 2021). A headquarter-led FAD mission updated the public sector balance sheet (PSBS) that was first estimated by a FAD mission in 2019. The coverage and quality of the data have improved significantly, particularly by the efforts of the authorities in improving the disclosures in their annual fiscal risks statements and in producing their first consolidated financial statements based on key International Public Sector Accounting Standards. At the request of the Minister of Finance, the mission updated the PSBS estimates that were first compiled for 2018, updating them to identify the impact of the pandemic. The IMF experts supported to produce the first quantification of climate change fiscal risks for Georgia, building on the qualitative assessment of Georgia’s climate change fiscal risks disclosed in the authorities’ 2021 Fiscal Risks Statement.

Kazakhstan: Accrual Budgeting (November 18 to December 3, 2021). The Ministry of Finance has had a long-standing vision to implement accrual budgeting, which required several reforms. Given notable progress in producing the second set of prospective financial statements for the Republican Budget sector (PCFS) in 2021, the mission reviewed the authorities’ plans, including the methodology and implementation challenges, for requiring prospective financial statements to be prepared in 2022 for 17 oblast-level (the first level of regional) governments. The approach reflects the methodology that has been applied for the preparation of republican (central) government prospective financial statements. There has been notable progress in institutionalizing the preparation of PCFS, including automation, and the authorities have renewed their commitment to improving the methodology. Some of these methodological improvements could be implemented in the first set of oblast-level prospective financial statements.

Uzbekistan: Strengthening Macro-fiscal Capacity and Fiscal Risk Analysis (November 15 – December 17, 2021). The Ministry of Finance has emphasized strengthening its macro-fiscal analytical capabilities and tools, supported by IMF CD. In line with earlier FAD advice, it established the Macroeconomic and Fiscal Analysis Department (MFD) in 2020. During the mission, a short-term expert has been working with the MFD to help strengthen macro-fiscal analytical capacities. In particular, he has been helping develop a macro-fiscal spreadsheet-based model to help support analysis of macro-fiscal risks; the robustness of fiscal forecasts used as the basis for budget
preparation; and, of various fiscal options to implementing the authorities’ proposed fiscal rules. This will help contribute to better designed and more credible fiscal policy and forecasts as well as improved capacity to analyze macro-fiscal risks.

Uzbekistan: SOE Fiscal Risks Assessment (January 11 – 28, 2022). Building on the July 2021 FAD mission, which conducted a preliminary risk assessment of the largest state-owned enterprises (SOEs), the short-term expert continued to work with the Ministry of Finance’s Macroeconomic and Fiscal Analysis Department (MFD) to assess fiscal risks related to SOEs. Building on preliminary analysis conducted during the mission in July 2021, the expert undertook a more in-depth analysis of relevant SOEs, helped to build capacity within the MFD to conduct SOE financial vulnerability assessments, and provide guidance on reporting and disclosing SOE related fiscal risks. In particular, the mission aimed to strengthen capacity within the Ministry to undertake ex-ante risk assessments of SOEs to inform decision making, aid control frameworks, and improve disclosure of SOE fiscal risks.

Monetary and Foreign Exchange Operations

Uzbekistan: Strengthening Monetary Policy Transmission (December 1 - 20, 2021). The Central Bank of Uzbekistan (CBU) has made remarkable progress in reforming the monetary policy frameworks, implementing recommendations made during past missions in monetary and foreign exchange operations. The CBU sets the objective of adopting inflation targeting in the medium term. To assist with this goal, the virtual mission evaluated and advised the CBU on improving the operational framework of monetary policy to support the authorities in strengthening monetary policy transmission. The IMF staff assessed CBU's monetary policy operations and determined the factors that prevent an effective transmission of changes to the key policy rate and other instruments to lending and deposit rates and impacting inflation, as well as on developing a set of recommendations to address those impediments.

Regulation and Supervision

Georgia: Implementing IFRS9 (January 18 – February 3, 2022). The National Bank of Georgia (NBG), the main financial supervisor responsible for the supervision of commercial banks, as well as other financial services providers and intermediaries in Georgia, is in the process of transitioning its regulatory reporting and accounting to the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). To support the NBG, a scoping mission was conducted to assess the specific needs in relation to this transition, including (1) the data availability, (2) current supervisory approach towards the assessment of the asset classification and provisioning, (3) potential role of the IFRS 9 parameters and outputs in stress testing/assessment of Pillar 2 capital, and (4) divergences in IFRS9 ECL models across the banking sector.

Government Finance and Public Sector Debt Statistics

Kazakhstan: Enhancing GFS/PSDS (November 15-26, 2021). The purpose of this mission was to further improve fiscal and debt statistics for surveillance and dissemination and to establish a medium-term work plan on GFS and Public Sector Debt Statistics (PSDS). Officials from the Ministry of Finance, National Bank, National Bureau of Statistics, Social Security Funds, and the Problem Loans Fund, involved in GFS compilation, attended the sessions. To familiarize the new GFS team with the
Building Capacity in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Mongolia
Development Partners (External donors): ADB, China, Korea, Poland, Russia, Switzerland

The mission also provided short information sessions and hands-on training on (i) an overview of the GFS framework, focusing its use on data for policymaking; (ii) the need for consistency of macroeconomic statistics; and (iii) the use of the classification assistant and validation procedures. Following the mission work with the annual GFS data, the Kazakh authorities transmitted their annual GFS questionnaire to the IMF Statistics Department on December 2, 2021.

**Mongolia: Developing GFS** (December 1 – 8, 2021). After a one-year break caused by the pandemic, the authorities are keen to resume their annual GFS reporting and further extend the existing GFS series. This mission assisted the authorities in preparing GFSM 2014-based fiscal data for consolidated general government, including financial stocks and flows, for fiscal years 2019 and 2020 and extending the historical time series. The mission also discussed the draft CCAMTAC work plan being articulated by the Director of Treasury. The Treasury informed the mission of a plan to develop a GFS Compilation Manual in Mongolian over the next year. The authorities transmitted their annual GFS questionnaire to the IMF Statistics Department on January 26, 2022.

**Kyrgyz Republic: Enhancing GFS/PSDS** (December 6-17, 2021). After having discussed the progress on several methodological issues identified by the previous TA mission in April 2021, the mission team assisted the Kyrgyz authorities in further improving their fiscal and debt data for surveillance and dissemination purposes. The mission supported the compilers in preparation of the annual GFS 2020 dataset, notably the finalization of the reporting for Social Security Funds. In addition, the IMF staff addressed the possibility to resume quarterly GFS and PSDS reporting and guided the authorities in establishing the medium-term action plan for further improvements in GFS and PSDS.

**Georgia: Enhancing GFS/PSDS** (January 10 – 21, 2022). The mission followed the work of previous technical assistance missions assisting the authorities in sustainable compilation of GFS for non-market SOEs, which will be consolidated with general government GFS. The mission discussed the progress made with respect to establishing the appropriate institutional arrangements necessary for obtaining sound source data for such compilation. The mission also assisted the authorities with establishing a medium-term work plan for further improvements in GFS and PSDS, which should be transmitted to CCAMTAC in the coming weeks.

**Real Sector Statistics**

**Kazakhstan: Modernizing Price Statistics** (November 8-12, 2021). This was the first TA mission to Kazakhstan on scanner data (SD). The mission assisted the Bureau of National Statistics of the
Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of the Republic of Kazakhstan (BNS) with continuing its modernization of the consumer price index (CPI) by developing SD. The IMF expert provided an overall view of the data collection process and requirements, the mapping of products to a national breakdown of the Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose (COICOP) 1999, and the main methods for compilation. As BNS is expecting to have access to SD through an online platform made available by the State Revenue Committee (SRC), the mission recommended the SRC introduces SD in a stepwise approach beginning with food products and a small sample of the larger retailers.

**Azerbaijan: Developing the System of Quarterly National Accounts** (November 15 – 26, 2021). During the remote regional workshop in May 2021, the authorities requested a CCAMTAC TA mission on national accounts to develop GDP by expenditure estimates at constant prices. Following-up on the request, the State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan (SSC) received a TA in developing the system of quarterly national accounts (QNA). A detailed action plan was developed to compile and disseminate quarterly GDP by production and quarterly GDP by expenditure at constant prices. This in turn will allow the Ministry of Economy to use these data to improve the accuracy of macroeconomic analysis and GDP forecasting.

**Georgia: Strengthening Real Sector National Accounts** (November 15 – 26, 2021). The main topics addressed during the TA mission included improving the accuracy of QNA and the monthly rapid indicator of economic growth. The annual overlap technique in chain-linking the QNA was introduced and time series from 2010 were recompiled. As a result, the annual and quarterly GDP growth rates and volume measures in monetary terms are now fully consistent. The accuracy of the monthly indicator of economic growth was reviewed and recommendations were provided to improve its quality. Work on improving the monthly indicator of economic activity should continue in line with the action plan.

**Tajikistan: Enhancing Price Statistics** (November 29 – December 3, 2021). This was the first mission on the Residential Property Price Index (RPPI) to the Agency on Statistics of Tajikistan (TAJSTAT). With the guidance of IMF staff, the TAJSTAT obtained data and technical skills to compile a hedonic RPPI and discussed the most suitable data sources. RPPI helps to facilitate the assessment of developments and risks in property markets and thus provides a better understanding of the linkages between property markets, the real economy, and the financial sector stability.

**Uzbekistan: Enhancing Price Statistics** (November 29 – December 3, 2021). Following a wider TA mission on CPI in October 2021, this was the first TA mission on RPPI to the Central Statistics Committee (CSS). The mission reviewed the availability of source data, provided guidance on the different methods for compiling, and discussed the next steps for the preparation of an RPPI for Uzbekistan, including frequency. A reliable official RPPI for Uzbekistan is expected to facilitate the assessment of developments and risks in property markets. Similarly, providing
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Development Partners (External donors): ADB, China, Korea, Poland, Russia, Switzerland

policymakers with a deeper understanding of the linkages between property markets, the real economy and financial sector stability.

**Uzbekistan: National Accounts** (December 20 – 24, 2021). The State Committee on Statistics (SCS) has made good progress since the September 2021 TA mission on QNA. During the latest TA support, quarterly GDP estimates were compiled on a discrete basis, the new estimates of the balance of payments were included in the national accounts, time series of national accounts are revised following the System of National Accounts (SNA) 2008 standards and adjusted by applying benchmarks and seasonal adjustment methods. Discrete time series of quarterly GDP and the monthly industrial production index (IPI) are now compiled and will be disseminated beginning in February 2022.

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**Regional Activities**

As a part of CCAMTAC outreach, the staff continues to take part in meetings with country teams and authorities, intending to scope the existing and new technical needs, refine the workplan and increase awareness of capacity development activities available on a regional level.

**Workshops**

**Informal Economy from Tax Administration Perspective** (November 10-12, and November 18, 2021). The workshop was an opening event for the CCAMTAC’s Revenue Administration workstream and covered the topic that was identified as a priority by all the CCAM revenue administrations. The objective of the workshop was to improve the understanding of the characteristics of the informal economy in the region and share experiences and challenges that the revenue administrations face to reduce the share of an informal economy. As a result of the workshop, regional level peer-to-peer contacts were created and more detailed topics for further cooperation were identified.

**Strengthening Public Investment Management Institutions (PIMA)** (January 24-27, 2022). Effective public investment management is crucial for effective fiscal performance, macroeconomic stability and economic growth. And it is also necessary for effective budget preparation, budget execution, fiscal risks management, and all other aspects of public financial management. To help economic institutions to manage public investment more effectively, the IMF developed the PIMA tool. 71 countries have undertaken PIMAs globally so far, including four in CCAMTAC’s region (Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Mongolia). The development of PIMA is also scheduled for Uzbekistan. The workshop was held with the support of the Infrastructure Governance Facility – an IMF-Japan Capacity Development Partnership.

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Webinars

Engagement on Climate Issues (November 16, 2021). The IMF has been actively engaged on climate issues, given that climate change can impact trade and exchange rates, financial stability, growth and competitiveness, fiscal and debt sustainability, and social stability. IMF’s expert Kristina Kostial stressed that fiscal, financial, and structural policies are key levers to address climate change and that they fall under the Fund’s mandate and are aligned with Fund’s expertise. She discussed further actions and services that IMF will offer to its members to address climate-related challenges. Representatives of Georgia’s authorities continued the topic by reflecting the country’s experience in adding climate change and natural disasters to the fiscal risks. They also presented the Dynamic Input-Output model that was being developed to integrate climate change and reinforce policy analysis for climate-resilient economic development. For detailed information click [here](#).

DIGNAR-19: A Toolkit for Macro Policy Assessments of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Emerging and Developing Countries (November 23, 2021). Over the past seven years, the DIG and DIGNAR models have complemented the IMF and World Bank debt sustainability framework (DSF) analysis, over 65 country applications. During the webinar IMF economists presented an updated DIGNAR-19 model, a Dynamic General Equilibrium (DGE) model of a real small open economy, developed at the IMF to strengthen quantitative macroeconomic assessments and policy scenario analysis in Low-Income Developing Countries (LIDCs) and Emerging Markets (EMS) during the COVID-19 pandemic, which were already struggling with high debt levels and a low growth environment. For detailed information click [here](#).

The Middle East and Central Asia Regional Economic Outlook (REO): Analytical Chapter Outreach (December 9, 2021). IMF’s Middle East and Central Asia Department (MCD) staff provided an overview of analytical REO chapters. Employment in most countries remains below its pre-pandemic levels, which points to the risk of hysteresis where not all job losses can be recouped. At the same time, after a sharp hit, the corporate sector in the ME&CA faces a steady but uneven recovery. Without reforms, the growth rate required to stabilize unemployment and the corporate sector will be high in many countries. For detailed information click [here](#).
Research / Analytical Seminar

Ararat Fiscal Strategy Model of the Ministry of Finance of Armenia and COVID-19 scenario (November 4, 2021). During the seminar, the Ministry of Finance of Armenia's shared their path to building a solid analytical capacity in dynamic stochastic general equilibrium (DSGE) modelling. According to the Armenian team, the Ararat model was designed to match the Armenian economy in terms of size, structure, and other important characteristics. The model is widely leveraged to analyze the shocks and policies, as well as part of the Ministry's Forecasting and Policy Analysis System (FPAS). In addition, presenters shared their most recent assessment of the COVID-19 pandemic impact on the economy of Armenia. For detailed information click here.
## Appendix I: CCAMTAC Work Plan Implementation November 2021 - March 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<td>DB</td>
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### Building Capacity in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Mongolia

**Development Partners (External donors):** ADB, China, Korea, Poland, Russia, Switzerland

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**STA Fiscal**

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11
### Building Capacity in the Caucasus, Central Asia, and Mongolia

**Development Partners (External donors):** ADB, China, Korea, Poland, Russia, Switzerland

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#### STA Real

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#### CCAMTAC Events

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Useful links:

IMF press release on the opening of CCAMTAC (February 1, 2021)
IMF press release on CCAMTAC’s signing ceremony (December 24, 2020)
IMF.org/CapDev
IMF network of Regional Capacity Development Centers (brochure)
IMF network of Regional Capacity Development Centers (map)
Twitter.com/IMFCapDev
Facebook.com/IMFCapacityDevelopment
CCAMTAC website