Joint Programme Document

A. COVER PAGE

1. Fund Name: Joint SDG Fund

2. MPTFO Project Reference Number: PSP 2019 UZB

3. Joint programme title: Accelerating Agenda 2030 in Uzbekistan through inclusive transformation of the social protection system

4. Short title: Strengthening Social Protection in Uzbekistan

5. Country and region: Uzbekistan, Central Asia

6. Resident Coordinator (ad interim): Yu Yu, yu@unfpa.org

7. UN Joint programme focal point: Tinatin Baum, Chief of Social Policy UNICEF, tbaum@unicef.org

8. Government Joint Programme focal point: Rafael Klivleev, Head of the Section of the Ministry of Finance, RKlivleev@mf.uz

9. Short description: The Joint Programme will *support the Government in building and delivering a high-quality social protection system that offers all citizens of Uzbekistan – in particular, those at risk of being left behind – income security and social support throughout their lives.* Our mission is to harness the collective expertise and capacity of the UN family to overcome a key systemic barrier to achieving numerous SDGs: the fragmentation of social protection at institutional, policy and programme levels which results in ineffective leadership over significant component of government's portfolio of programmes aimed at population's welfare and in reduced impact of financial investments. This is particularly critical in the context of ongoing ambitious socio-economic reforms in Uzbekistan. We will support the Government in establishing a dedicated institution that will provide leadership and coordination to the social protection sector, as well as being responsible for overseeing the delivery of social protection schemes. We will support design of an integrated and costed long term national social protection strategy built on evidence and developed through wide multi-stakeholder consultations and citizen engagement. Jointly with the Government and civil society, by piloting the introduction of the International Classification of Functioning (ICF) in the assessment of disability and moving away from the current medical approach, the programme will enable greater access of persons with disabilities to social protection and promote their full inclusion into different aspects of social life.

10. Keywords: Integrated social protection system, disability, Uzbekistan, CRPD, ICF, child benefit, youth, women, inclusion

11. Overview of budget

Joint SDG Fund contribution	**USD 2,000,000.00**
Co-funding 1	USD 0
Co-funding 2	USD 0
TOTAL	**USD 2,000,000.00**

12. Timeframe:

Start date	**End date**	**Duration** (in months)
1 January 2020	28 February 2022	26 months

13. Gender Marker

Gender marker for this programme is **2.0**

14. Target groups *(including groups left behind or at risk of being left behind)*

List of marginalized and vulnerable groups	Direct influence	Indirect influence
Women	X	
Children	X	
Girls	X	
Youth	X	
Persons with disabilities	X	
Older persons	X	
Rural workers	X	
Migrants		X

15. Human Rights Mechanisms related to the Joint Programme

1. Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

1. Third Cycle (May 2018)

2. Human Rights Treaty Bodies

1. Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
2. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)
3. Committee on Civil and Political Rights aka Human Rights Committee (CCPR)
4. Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CECR)
5. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
6. Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

3. Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council

1. Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities (never visited Uzbekistan)
2. Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers (visited Uzbekistan in September 2019)
3. Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief (visited Uzbekistan in 2017)
4. Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (visited in 2002)

4. ILO Committees of Experts

1. C029 - Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)
2. C087 - Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
3. C098 - Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
4. C100 - Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)
5. C105 - Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
6. C111 - Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)
7. C138 - Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
8. C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
9. C103 - Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952
10. C102 – Minimum Social Security Standards Convention, 1952 (No.102)

Uzbekistan has ratified all eight ILO fundamental rights Conventions and all four governance conventions (Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No122), Tripartite Consultations (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976, (No144), Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No81), and Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No129) have been deemed a priority for implementation and are closely linked with this joint programme. Among the five technical Conventions ratified by Uzbekistan, the Maternity Protection Convention, 1952 (No 103) is directly linked with the joint programme.

List of Conventions ratified by Uzbekistan, and directly linked with Joint Programme

- Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)
- C122 - Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)
- C144 - Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144)
- C103 - Maternity Protection Convention, 1952 (No. 103)
- Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No81)

5. Regional mechanisms & others

This programme will contribute to the implementation of the obligations of Uzbekistan towards the social protection of its citizens in accordance with the Constitution of Uzbekistan and to the following documents on regional organizations and mechanisms:

- Conventions and declarations made within Shanghai Cooperation Organization
- Human Dimension documents of the OSCE
- Documents adopted within the CIS

16. PUNO and Partners

16.1 PUNO

- Convening agency:
  - **UNICEF Uzbekistan,** Mammadzade, Munir, UNICEF Representative, +998 712339512, mmammadzade@unicef.org, skype: mmammadzade@unicef.org
- Other PUNO:
  - **ILO Decent Work Technical Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia,** Koulaeva, Olga, Director, koulaeva@ilo.org; **Tel:** +7 495 933 08 10, skype: koulaeva@ilo.org
  - **UNDP Country Office in Uzbekistan,** Dimovska, Matilda, Resident Representative, matilda.dimovska@undp.org, Mobile: +99893-501-5003, Skype: matildadimovska

16.2 Partners

- National authorities:
  - **Cabinet of Ministers,** Kuchkarov, Jamshid, Deputy Prime Minister for Financial and Economic Issues and Poverty Reduction, +998 712077173
  - **Legislative Chamber and Senate of Parliament,** Xodjaeva, Mavlyudaxon, Chairman of the Committee on labor and social affairs, +998 712398707
  - **Ministry of Finance, Ishmetov Timur,** Minister of Finance, +998 71 239-12-52, info@mf.uz

- **General Prosecutor's Office**, Yuldashev, Erkin, Deputy Prosecutor General, +998 712334358
- **Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations**, Mukhiddinov, Erkin, First Deputy Minister, +998 712394121, info@mehnat.uz
- **Ministry for Mahalla and Family Support**, Makhmudova, Gulnora, First Deputy Minister, +998 71 203-01-40
- **Agency for Medical and Social Services under the Cabinet of Ministers**, Inakov Alisher, Director, +99871 239-4795
- **Youth Union of Uzbekistan**, Kattakhanova, Dilnoza, Deputy Chairman of the Youth Union of Uzbekistan, e-mail: d.kattakhanova@yi.uz, tel: +998 909964555
- **Centre "Mehrli qullar"** for supporting children and youth with disabilities, Shodieva, Rano, Chairwoman, +998 90 9060018, info@mehrli.uz
- **National Human Rights Centre**, Saidov, Akmal, Director, +998 71 2394339, info@nhrc.uz

- Civil society organizations:
  - **Association of DPOs and DPOs operating in regions of Uzbekistan**, Isakov Oybek, Chairperson
  - **National Association of NGOs of Uzbekistan**, Alimov, Nasim, Chairperson +(998) 90 175 67 01
  - **Independent Institute for Monitoring of Development of Civil Society in Uzbekistan** (NIMFOGO), Kamilov, Rustam, (+998) 71 230 62 40
  - **Uzbek Society of Persons with Disabilities** (+998) 71 234 97 11
  - **National Association of Electronic Mass Media of Uzbekistan**, Abdukhalikov, Firdavs, Chairperson, (+998) 71-237-2830, info@naesmi.uz

- Private sector:
  - Local entrepreneurs, who are willing to be part of social partnership projects and initiatives in the regions

- IFIs
  - **World Bank**, Novikova, Marina, Social Protection Specialist +998 781202476, mnovikova@worldbank.org

- Other partners:
  - **Development Pathways**, Kidd, Stephen, Senior Social Policy Specialist, +44 (0)1689 874 764, skidd@developmentpathways.co.uk
  - **Federation of Trade Unions of Uzbekistan**, Makhmadaliev, Bakhtier, Deputy Chairman +998 712522118, ijro@kasaba.uz
  - **Confederation of Employers of Uzbekistan**, Margishvili, Eka, Executive Director

JOINT SDG FUND

SIGNATU[redacted]

[redacted]/interim)

Signature and seal

National Coordinating Authority
Cabinet of Ministers
Jamshid Kuchkarov
Deputy Prime Minister for Financial and Economic Issue[redacted]
Date
Signature and s[redacted]

Participating UN Organization (lead/convening)
UNICEF
Munir M[redacted]
Date
Signatur[redacted]

Participating UN Organization
ILO Decent Work Technical Team and Country Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia
Olga Koulaeva, Director
Date
Signature and seal
[redacted]

Participating UN Organization
UNDP Uzbekistan
Matilda Dimovska, R[redacted]
Date
Signature and seal
[redacted]

B. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

1. Call for Concept Notes: 1/2019

2. Relevant Joint SDG Fund Outcomes

The proposed Joint Programme will focus on Outcome 1 of the SDG Fund outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Integrated multi-sectoral policies to accelerate SDG achievement, implemented with greater scope and scale

3. Overview of the Joint Programme Results

In this section, we set out the relevant outcomes and outputs that can be found in the Uzbekistan UNDAF 2016-2020.

3.1 Outcomes

- UNDAF Outcome 2. By 2020 vulnerable groups benefit more from an inclusive, financially sustainable and efficient social protection system.
- UNDAF Outcome 3. By 2020, children and women in need of protection are covered with comprehensive support in line with human rights standards.

3.2 Outputs

- Output 2.1: Government capacity is enhanced within social protection policy development and system reform.
- Output 2.2: Strengthened national capacities to develop and implement social protection policies in the context of ongoing and upcoming reforms.
- Output 2.3: Agencies capacitated to review policy and legislative framework on the social inclusion and re-integration of vulnerable groups (migrants, women, youth, people with disabilities), in line with international standards.
- Output 2.5: By 2020, national stakeholders are equipped with evidence-based policy advice, knowledge and tools to implement state programmes on PWD in line with UNCRPD

The joint programme results will contribute to the achievement of the aforementioned UNDAF outputs by enhancing central Government's capacity for better institutional coordination and programme-delivery functions. Its ability to develop a long-term vision and strategy for a sustainable national social protection system will also be strengthened. It will accelerate the re-integration and inclusion of vulnerable categories of the population through evidence-based social protection policy formulation. At the same time, it will test local initiatives led by people with disabilities and other socially vulnerable groups, thereby providing a basis for the full implementation of the UN CRPD, once it is ratified.

4. SDG Targets directly addressed by the Joint Programme

4.1 List of targets

The Joint Programme will focus on social protection and address **directly** the following national SDGs and targets:

Goal 1. Reduce poverty everywhere.

- **Target 1.3** Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.

The Joint Programme will also **indirectly** contribute to the following SDG targets:

Target 1.2 By 2030, reduce by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions.

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Target 5.c Fully integrate the principles of gender equality in the process of adopting government programs at different government levels.

Goal 10. Reduce inequality in all its forms inside the country.

- **Target 10.2.** Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.
- **Target 10.4.** Adopt appropriate policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality.

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

- **Target 16.7.** Increase participation of citizens, business entities and civil society institutions in the process of consultation and decision-making at all levels

4.2 Expected SDG impact

At present, while Uzbekistan invests a relatively large proportion of its GDP in social protection, there are significant challenges with the design and implementation of the system, which means that there are large gaps in coverage among key vulnerable categories of the population as well as relatively low coverage of the poorest households. The key impact of the project will be to bridge many of the gaps that have grown over the past twenty years, so that many more people will be able to access a high-quality social protection system across the lifecycle, thereby supporting the achievement of Goal 1, Target 1.3. A high proportion of those excluded from social protection are female and so, by expanding coverage, we will support the achievement of Goal 5. Further, by strengthening the delivery systems for social protection, we will ensure that the principles of gender equity are embedded within the adoption of key government programmes at all levels of government (Goal 5, Target 5.c). By supporting the government in developing a more inclusive social protection policy in line with Goal 10 (Target 10.4), we will enable Uzbekistan to further tackle inequality and create a fairer and more just society. Finally, by promoting more inclusive social protection policies that strengthen the social contract, we will help generate a more peaceful society in line with Goal 16. And, the project will also strengthen the participation of citizens, worker's representatives, employers and civil society in dialogue on national social protection policy, in line with Target 16.7.

5. Relevant objective/s from the national SDG framework

The Action Strategy for 2017-2021[1] has been formally adopted by the Government as the national development policy framework that is fully aligned with and contributes to the SDGs. The 4th pillar of the Strategy includes the following social sector priorities:

- Improving the system of social protection of the population and protecting health, increasing the socio-political activity of women through:
    - ensuring social guarantees to the population, strengthening social protection of vulnerable segments of the population and state support for the elderly and people with disabilities, improving social services, developing public-private partnerships in the provision of social services to the population;
    - further development and improvement of the system of medical and social assistance to pensioners, people with disabilities, elderly living alone and other vulnerable categories of the population to ensure their full participation in social, economic, cultural and political life (Action 4.2); and
- Improving state youth policy through:
    - social protection of youth, creation of decent housing and social conditions for young families (Action 4.5).

Furthermore, following concerted advocacy efforts by the UN, the 2019 annual state programme on implementation of the Action Strategy includes a number of relevant actions, including the creation of a special competent government body to support and provide social services to the elderly, people with disabilities and the disadvantaged groups of population (item 165 of the State Program For Implementation Of The National Action Strategy on Five Priority Development Areas 2017-2021 In The Year Of Active Investments And Social Development).[2] The new agency will be charged with the responsibility to provide support and social services, to design and implement rehabilitation programmes to elderly, CwD, PwD, elderly people living alone, children without parental care, low income families, families with many children, mothers with children up to 2 years old, and homeless people.

The Presidential Resolution #3808 of June 2018 on family support system strengthening envisions the following priorities for the Government's policy agenda over the next five years: a) development of the profession of social work; b) amendments to the law on social services for vulnerable people in compliance with international standards; and c) development of family-based alternative care for children without parental care.[3]

In October 2018, the Government completed the process of localizing the SDGs by approving 16 national SDGs, 125 targets, and establishing a national SDG Coordination Council headed by the Deputy Prime Minister – Minister of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan.[4] In March 2019, the SDG Coordination Council approved a list of 206 national indicators, including on social protection.[5]

[1] https://strategy.uz/index.php?static=prioritetnye_napravleniya
[2] https://strategy.uz/files/static/77041/stateprogram.pdf
[3] http://www.lex.uz/docs/3797628
[4] http://lex.uz/docs/4013358
[5] http://nsdg.stat.uz/

6. Brief overview of the Theory of Change of the joint programme

A brief overview of the Theory of Change of the Joint Programme is set out in the following sections. See the schematic representation in the Annex below.

6.1 Summary:

IF a national social protection strategy in line with the 2030 Agenda is developed jointly with relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries and is costed and financed **and, IF** an integrated social protection entity is designed and capacitated, with appropriate administrative systems and sufficient capacity to deliver effective, tailored-to-needs social protection for every citizen of Uzbekistan, including all children, **and IF** the ICF and CRPD-compliant schemes and procedures of disability assessment and social service delivery are piloted, providing evidence base for further development of inclusive social protection system,

THEN the Government will have an integrated and sustainable social protection system and the capacity in place to improve social protection coverage for all vulnerable categories of the population in Uzbekistan **and THEN** all citizens will be able to access adequate protection across the lifecycle while vulnerable people, and especially persons with disabilities and children, will be effectively protected from the potential risks and shocks resulting from economic reforms and will have greater opportunities to benefit from economic growth, leading to acceleration of progress towards SDGs 1, 5, 10 and 16.

5.2 List of main ToC assumptions to be monitored:

- The Government establishes a new entity to lead the national social protection sector, following its design by the programme;
- The Government adopts the Social Protection strategy, once drafted;
- The Government and civil society partners take the piloted programme on International Classification of Functioning (ICF) assessment for people with disabilities to scale by including it into newly designed social protection strategy and subsequent implementation;
- The Government ratifies UNCRPD and adopts a new law on disability;
- The political will to protect vulnerable citizens is sustained; and
- IFIs' advice on social protection and broader economic reform agenda supports the move to a more inclusive social protection system.

7. Trans-boundary and/or regional issues
Not applicable

C. JOINT PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

1. Baseline and Situation Analysis

1.1 Problem statement

Introduction

The years 2020 to 2022 will be an important period for the ongoing structural reforms in Uzbekistan. During this time, there will be significant changes to economic and social policy. The current Government has been in place for three years and is committed to changing Uzbekistan's social and economic model. It has already begun some major reforms which will continue in the coming years, almost certainly at a greater pace. If implemented well, these reforms could generate a positive transformation of the nation. However, if the right decisions are not taken, the negative consequences for the wellbeing of the nation's citizens could be significant. Social protection is a significant component of government expenditures and plays a vital role in providing income security to over half of the population. Yet, in recent years, the system has been weakening, with coverage of vulnerable people shrinking significantly, in particular among children, people with disabilities, unemployed, and older persons. The next two to three years offer a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to strengthen the national social protection system and ensure more effective coverage and support to those in real need. This section, therefore, sets out the current challenge and describes the importance of the proposed programme moving ahead.

Overview of changes since independence

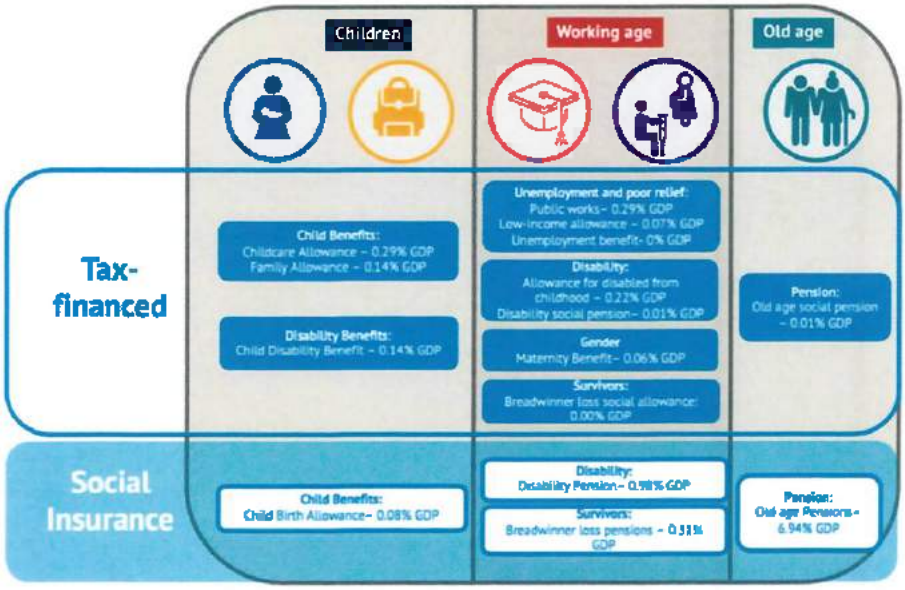
Uzbekistan used to have a comprehensive social protection system which was based on the principles of full employment, universal child support and guaranteed income security for persons with disabilities and older people, financed mainly through social insurance but complemented by general taxation. However, since independence, the national social protection system has undergone numerous changes although social protection continues to be defined as a basic human right (Constitution, Article 39).

The changes within the system point to a move from a predominantly social insurance-based system to a greater focus on social assistance and employer's liability as well as a fragmentation within and between social insurance and social assistance progammes and social welfare services. The most critical evidence of erosion of elements of universality are evident in the national child benefit system which used to be universal but is now highly targeted at families living in poverty (with large exclusion errors). Programmes for unemployed active age population are underdeveloped with scarce human and financial resources to manage them. Older persons of statutory pensionable age with family members who have sufficient means to care for them are no longer eligible for national social pensions. Furthermore, social insurance programmes which used to reflect all nine branches of social security are now fragmented and financed by general tax or are employer's liability as in case of maternity protection.

Investment in and financing of social protection

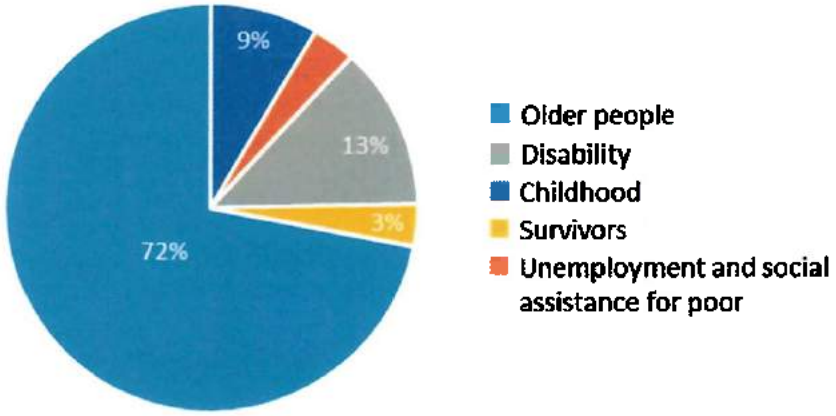
Uzbekistan's expenditure on social protection amounted to 9.7% of GDP in 2018 which, in principle, should provide the fiscal space for an effective and inclusive system, if well-designed. However, this disguises a fall in expenditures over time: for example, in 2011 the level of investment was 11.3 per cent of GDP. If this downward trend continues, the social protection system is likely to weaken further. Figure 1 outlines the main social security schemes mapped across the lifecycle alongside the level of investment as a percentage of GDP.

Figure 1: The national social security system in 2018, mapped across the lifecycle



However, the distribution of the government's investment in social security programmes is imbalanced. As Figure 2 indicates, around 72% of spending is on benefits for older persons, despite Uzbekistan having a relatively youthful population. Indeed, Uzbekistan's investment in old age pensions as a proportion of GDP is higher than in many high-income countries with ageing populations. Only 9% of social protection expenditures are spent on children (which includes maternity benefits) while even less is invested in unemployment and social assistance for poor households. The second highest area of investment is on persons with disabilities of working age.

Figure 2: Relative share of social security investment on categories of the population



Social protection is financed by a mix of social insurance contributions and general taxation. Until recently, both workers' and employers' made contributions to social insurance, complemented by general taxation. At the beginning of 2019, employees' social insurance contributions were discontinued. Instead, all citizens pay personal income tax at a flat rate of 18%, which reduces the progressivity of the overall tax and benefit system. It can be presumed that a share of this tax contribution to the general budget will be directed towards social protection

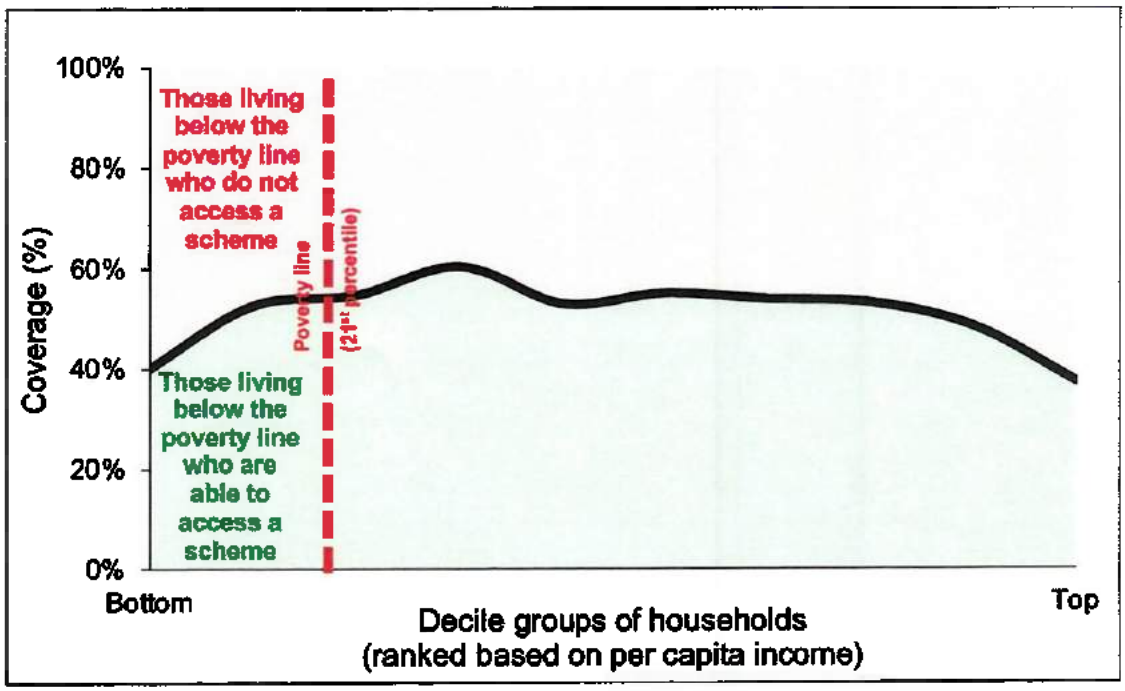
programmes, but there is, as yet, no clear evidence that this will happen. Employers contributions continue, but at a reduced rate for private sector employers. This signals a quite radical change in the approach to contributory social insurance and, as such, requires careful monitoring for impact.

Budgets for tax-financed schemes are established by the Ministry of Finance, based on proposals from the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR). However, the priority of the MELR is on employment which means that less attention is given to ensuring adequate funding for tax-financed programmes. Although budgets are proposed for the following three years, each budget is approved annually by the Parliament. With the recent decision to introduce a medium-term budgeting framework and a greater focus on results, innovations are likely to be introduced into the financing system. This will require the Government to develop a five-year plan for the national social protection sector.

Coverage and gaps across the lifecycle

Alongside the reduction in investment, the total number of social protection recipients fell from 8.1 million people in 2012 to 6.4 million in 2017, a fall of 21%. During this period, the greatest fall was recorded among children and the active age population, including persons with disabilities, while there is also a growing coverage gap in the old age pension system. Figure 3 shows the current coverage across the welfare distribution of the national social security system and indicates that around half of the population live in households with no access to social security, including over half of those living under a poverty line defined as 50% of median per capita income[6], despite a high level of expenditure. This indicates significant challenges with the design of the system.

Figure 3: Coverage of the population by the national social security system across the welfare distribution

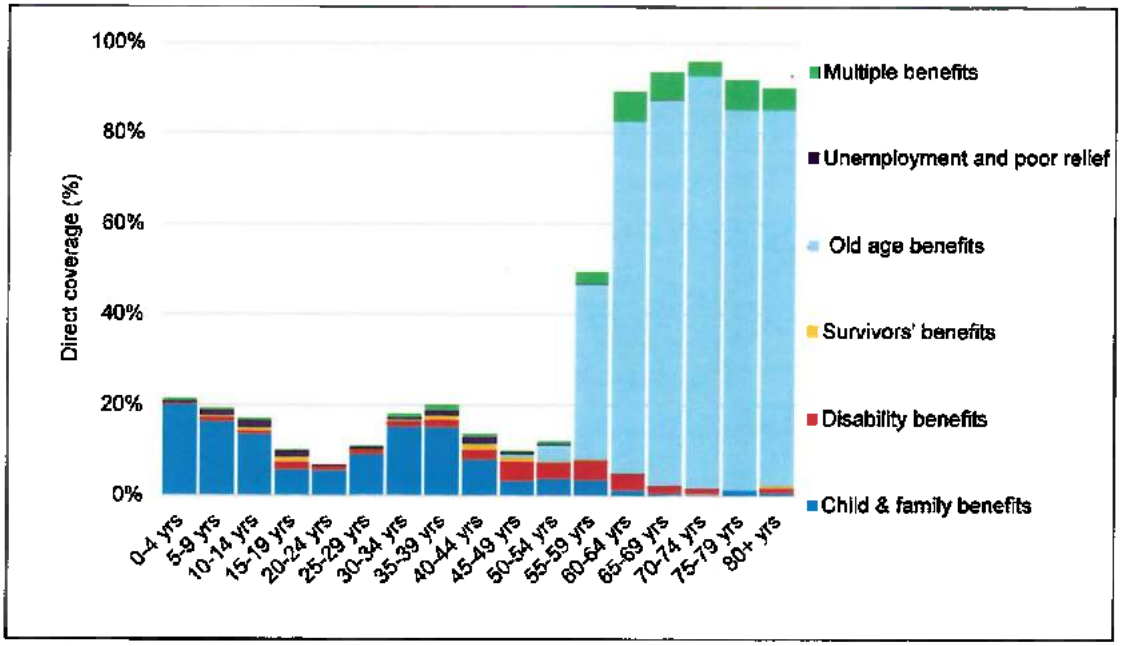


Gaps in the coverage of specific categories of the population, in particular those who are most vulnerable, are large. Figure 4 shows the coverage of different age groups across the population as direct recipients of social security, with major gaps across all age groups, apart from older persons. For example, 75% of eligible low-income families with children are not receiving benefits; and only 1% of the unemployed are receiving unemployment benefits, with only 10% having access to active labour market programmes. Even among older people, around 10% are unable to access

[6] The poverty line is defined as 50% of the median per capita income of the entire population. The estimation is based on data from a nationwide household survey, Listening to Citizens of Uzbekistan, conducted in July 2018.

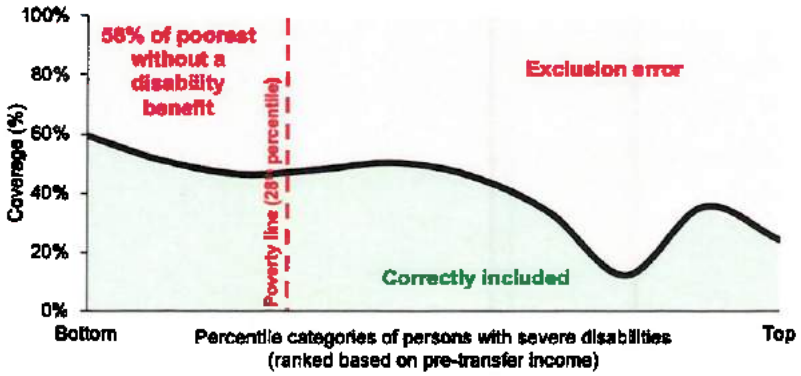
a pension and, as indicated earlier, this gap will grow significantly over the next 20 years, if no action is taken. Further, an estimated 40-60% of workers engaged in the informal economy are unable to contribute to social insurance or access social protection entitlements and services.

Figure 4: Percentage of the population receiving a social protection benefit according to type of benefit (direct beneficiaries), by five-year age group



According to recent quantitative research by the UN and World Bank – which used the Washington Group of questions on functioning – 54% of adults and children with severe disabilities are unable to access disability benefits, despite them being nominally universal, including many living in extreme poverty (see Figure 5). This indicates significant weaknesses in the design of the disability benefit system and the likelihood of a range of barriers. In fact, while the UN and World Bank survey has estimated that there are 4.5 million persons with disabilities – and 1.15 million persons with a severe disability – only 670,800 people are registered as disabled, which indicates an ineffective system of disability assessment.

Figure 5: Coverage of working age adults with severe disabilities by disability benefits, across the income distribution



There are also gaps in legal coverage when compared to international human rights mechanisms. The most notable include: around 10% of persons of statutory pensionable age who have adult children with means to support them

financially are not eligible for tax-financed social pensions; persons with disabilities whose disability is classified as less severe – but still incur additional costs – are no longer eligible for disability benefits; and the right of all children to social security is no longer practiced. When compared with internationally agreed social security guarantees systematised in the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102), Uzbekistan's social insurance system now effectively covers three out of nine risks, while another three (sickness, maternity and employment injury) are, in effect, employer liability. Unemployment benefits, despite being partially dependent on contributions are, in practice, tax-financed. Family benefits are fully tax financed. Neither social insurance nor tax-financed schemes are fully compliant with international human rights standards nor meet the criteria of effective coverage, adequacy and the existence of an effective participatory management system (in the sense of full involvement of state agencies, social partners and other interested parties).

Governance of the social protection system

Despite Uzbekistan having over 30 social protection programmes, there is no clear leadership of the social protection sector. Currently, responsibilities for the governance of Uzbekistan's social protection system are distributed among different ministries and further devolved to the local level. Overall leadership of the system after the recent process of government re-organisation is unclear, but it nominally comes under the Office of the President and the Cabinet of Ministers and has been allocated to the Information/Analytical Department within the Cabinet of Ministers. Responsibility for the main social security schemes is divided between: the Ministry of Finance, which is responsible for the drafting long-term costed National Strategy for Social Protection and Pension Fund – which delivers old age and disability benefits – and for the control of expenditures in other programmes; the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR), which is responsible for labour, employment and social protection policy making and the delivery of child benefits;[2] the Ministry of Health, which manages health-related programmes; the Agency on Medical and Social Services under te Cabinet of Ministers, responsible for the social services for the elderly and persons with disabilities; the Ministry of Public Education, which oversees small, in-kind schemes for schoolchildren; and the Ministry for Mahalla and Family Support, responsible for social work at local level. The involvement of the workers' and employers' organisations as well as representatives of civil society groups interested in social protection is very limited and on an *ad hoc* basis

Leadership of tax-financed programmes is particularly challenging. The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection was transformed into the Ministry of Labour in 2016 and further into the Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations in May 2017. The transformation has meant that social protection has been reduced to a small department, which manages low-income family allowances and child benefits. As the Ministry is focusing primarily on employment policies and programmes, little priority is given to these benefits, resulting in minimal support across government for child-sensitive social protection. Functions related to social care services for the elderly and disabled were transferred to the Ministry of Health in 2016.

Without clear leadership of the social protection sector, there is a real likelihood that the policy direction will continue to drift, resulting in lower budgets, lower coverage and growing gaps, with negative impacts on family wellbeing, social cohesion and economic growth. Therefore, there is a clear need to strengthen the governance of the social protection system to establish strong leadership while also establishing a clear and progressive policy direction.

Delivery capacity within government

The capacity to deliver cash-based social security programmes varies considerably across the sector. The Pension Fund – which delivers old age and disability benefits – has stronger delivery systems, which reflects the higher priority given by the Government to schemes. The operational delivery systems for child benefits (as well as for all other non-contributory cash benefits) are much less advanced and, to a large extent, are supported by volunteers and manual systems. There is significant scope to strengthen and professionalise the child benefit delivery system alongside the strengthening of social protection institutions. Further, as indicated earlier, weaknesses in the national disability assessment mechanisms mean that the majority of people with disabilities are excluded from the disability benefit system.

Social care services in Uzbekistan

Social care services in Uzbekistan are limited. State-organised social care services predominantly take the form of support for daily chores and self-care or placement in residential institutions. Around 11,200 older people, people with disabilities and children without parental care live in residential institutions. Further, official governmental data shows that, in 2016, there were 26,500 children living in various types of residential institutions and 63% of those were children with disabilities (16,695). There is limited funding for care in the community: only 16,200 older persons and persons with disabilities with no next of kin receive home-based social care support. Further, a mere 21,700 persons with disabilities were assessed as eligible for assistive devices and medical rehabilitation in 2017 and, of these, only 57% were actually accessing support. Services focused on the empowerment and self-representation of persons with disabilities are still few and far in between. Most are initiated by civil society organisations representing persons with physical and sensory impairments – so those with learning and intellectual disabilities miss out – and have limited funding.

Summary and opportunities

The past decade has seen a shift in responsibility for social protection responsibilities from the state to employers (maternity, sickness), families – in effect women (care and financial support for elderly and children) – and individuals (declining unemployment benefits, and emphasis on self-employment and similar programmes, with no clarity on their sustainability and the contributory capacity of participants). The latter particularly affects women as the bulk of this unpaid care work is performed by female family members, most of whom are of working age.

However, the Government is undertaking a series of ambitious socio-economic reforms and it is essential that a strong social protection system is in place to ensure that those negatively affected by reform are protected and no-one is left behind. An effective system is also needed to ensure that Uzbekistan can take advantage of upcoming economic opportunities, such as the demographic dividend resulting from a high proportion of children and young people in the population and be able to compete effectively in regional and international markets. Yet, the exclusion of the vast majority of children from the national social protection system is concerning and may negatively impact their development prospects and the quality of the nation's future workforce. Equally, the current design of the national social protection system is generating significant work disincentives, in particular among people with disabilities and women with children.

The good news is that the social security system as a whole is still funded at a level of 9.7% of GDP. This means that a careful re-design of the system and clear policy leadership could result in a significant closing of key gaps in social protection provision across the lifecycle, in particular among children, persons with disabilities and older persons, to ensure that no-one – in particular women and girls – is left behind. However, to achieve this, it will be necessary for the Government to develop a long-term strategic vision alongside a well-coordinated legal and policy framework. This, in turn, will require institutional reforms to ensure that leadership of the social protection system is consolidated and strengthened while programme delivery is enhanced and barriers to access are eliminated. Therefore, this joint programme sets out to support Uzbekistan's government and constituents to:

I. Design a national leadership and coordination entity that is capable of undertaking key policy decisions that will begin, in the short-term, to close important coverage gaps in the system – in particular among children and their families, people with disabilities and a growing gap among older persons – while strengthening the operational delivery of systems;
II. Design a comprehensive and costed national social protection strategy in line with international human rights mechanisms and social security standards, which: (i) develops a medium and long-term vision for the social protection sector; (ii) ensures that links are made between social insurance, social assistance, social support services and employment programmes; (iii) ensures that social protection priorities are aligned; (iv) ensures better coordination among agencies involved in design and delivery at all levels; and, v) is costed alongside an analysis of the medium and long-term fiscal space for social protection;

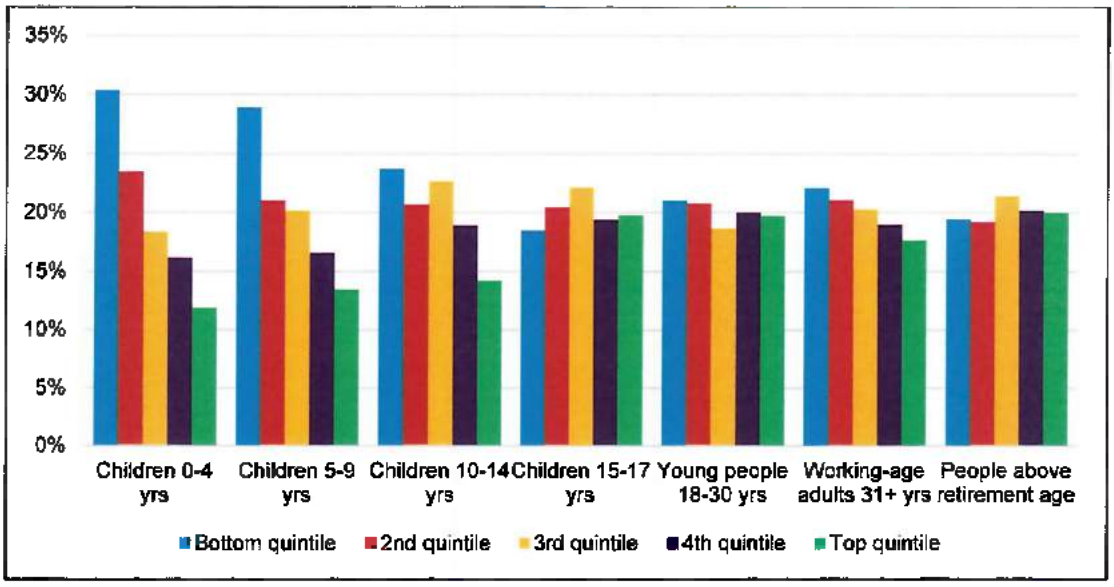
iii. Design, pilot the ICF and CRPD-compliant disability assessment and social service delivery schemes, analyze the lessons learnt from high impact integrated interventions for people with disabilities. These interventions and lessons learnt will inform the national social protection strategy and its implementation.

1.2 Target groups

As indicated above, despite a high level of investment in social protection, a wide range of vulnerable people and families are excluded from social protection. Based on the CODI Social Protection System Assessment and the Listening to Citizens of Uzbekistan Survey (L2CU) conducted by the UN and the World Bank, the following categories were identified as being in particular need of support from social protection and, therefore, comprise the key target group for this programme: children, low-income families, people with disabilities, older people without access to pensions, and young people not in education employment or training (NEET).

Children. Children are disproportionately represented among the poorest members of society. Around 30% of children up to 9 years of age and 24 per cent of children aged 5-14 years are in the poorest quintiles of the population. Among other age groups, the distribution across wealth quintiles is more even. Figure 6 provides more detailed information.

Figure 6: Distribution of different age groups across wealth quintiles



However, the level of investment in child benefits has fallen over the past two decades. While it was 1.6 per cent of GDP in 2000, by 2011 it had fallen to 1.24 per cent of GDP and it currently stands at 0.43 per cent of GDP, following a small increase in 2018 and 2019 (in addition, child disability benefits cost 0.21 per cent of GDP). Along with the reduction in investment, there has been a fall in the number of recipients. Since 2006, the number of households receiving the allowance for families with children has shrunk by 70 per cent, while the childcare allowance has seen a fall of 60 per cent since 2009. Currently, only 506,000 households receive the benefits, meaning that only 17% of children access them. Further For example, 67% of low-income families with children eligible for the childcare allowance (<2 years of age) cannot access it, while 88% of eligible families cannot access the allowance for families with children (2-14 years of age). Children between 14 and 18 years of age are not covered by child benefits. Further, due to the scarcity of child benefits, access to them is rotated across communities resulting in children rarely receiving support for more than one year. As a result, the advantages that could be derived from child benefits – which depend on their being accessed for a long period of time – are substantially reduced.

The low coverage of child benefits among eligible children indicates that families must overcome serious barriers in accessing the allowances. The barriers include a lack of information on entitlements, administrative difficulties in proving eligibility, limited financing and insufficient quotas. The low coverage was raised by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC Observation 13.1), which recommended that the Government should increase financial resources for the social protection of children.

Uzbekistan has a universal child disability benefit. However, only around 52 per cent of children with a severe disability between the ages of 3-17 years can access it, comprising 98,000 children in total. This potentially indicates significant barriers to access, including through the disability assessment mechanism.

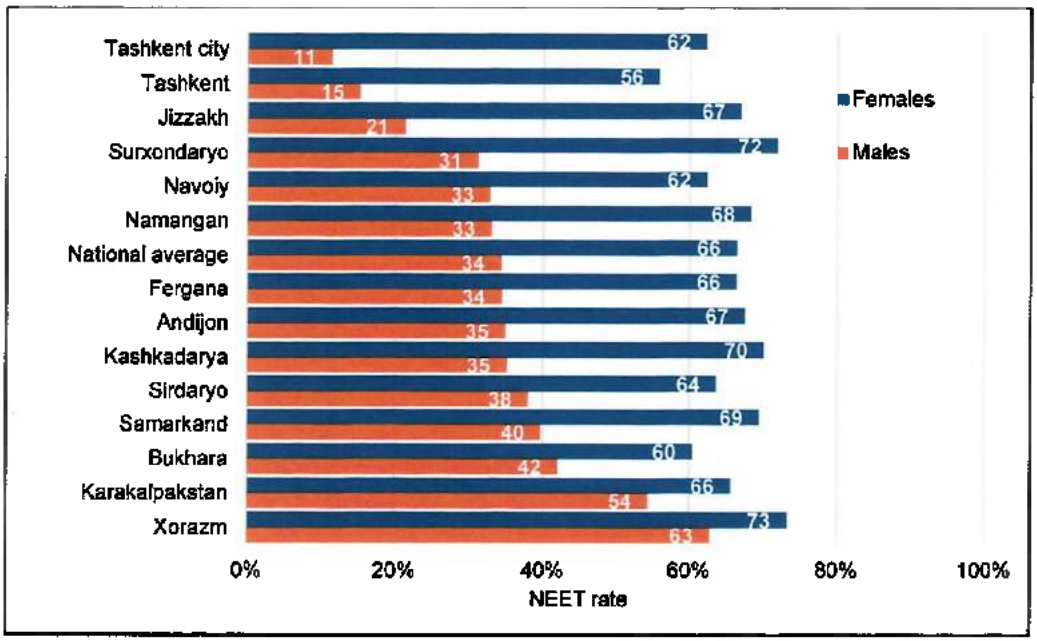
Insufficient financing and low coverage result in low impact and effectiveness of child benefits. For example, a recent study suggests that the relative contribution of the child benefit system to poverty reduction in the country – despite it being targeted towards low-income families – is minimal, at only 8 per cent. In comparison, old age pensions account for 77% of poverty reduction. This raises concerns about both about the coverage and adequacy of the child benefits while placing a significant burden on older people to financially support children.

As indicated earlier, the social protection of children is also seriously hampered by a limited range of social services available for families with children. Current social services for children – known as Guardianship and Trusteeship bodies – are underdeveloped and not functioning effectively due to human resource gaps, insufficient funding and weak inter-agency coordination. They target mostly one category of children—those deprived of parental care—who are basically placed in residential care institutions. Services and interventions for prevention and response to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation are underdeveloped. The lack of comprehensive support and social services to families implies that very often placing a child into an institution is perceived as the only means to provide the necessary support. Anecdotal evidence shows that poverty itself – and the absence of effective child benefits – may be a significant contributing factor as to why a child may be placed to a residential institution, although, according to international standards, poverty should never be a reason for separating children from family care. Such an approach deprives many children in Uzbekistan of the right to grow up in a safe and nurturing family environment and instead places them in large scale institutional residential care. This type of care is particularly harmful to child development, in particular for young children. The rate of children living in residential care institutions is 255 per 100,000 child population. This is above the global average.

Low-income families. Although low-income families in Uzbekistan are entitled to a range of monetary and in-kind benefits that include a low-income family allowance, free or subsidized medical support and education and free winter clothes for schoolchildren, access is limited due to administrative barriers and insufficient funding. For example, only 25% of eligible households receive the targeted child benefits while 98% of low-income families are not receiving the low-income family allowance (material support), which, anyway, is rarely given for more than 3 months. In part, this is the result of: a lack of a systematic approach in needs assessment; no professional social workers being involved in the process of needs assessment and provision of social support; the support given being often based on available resources rather than needs of the recipients; and, the prevailing narrative in society being that low-income families should be grateful for any support, which is better than no support at all (in other words, social protection is perceived as a charity).

Young people not in education, employment or training. 42% of young people in Uzbekistan are not in employment, education or training (NEET). Nationwide, the female NEET rate is 66%, compared to 34% for young males. Among young people with severe disabilities, the NEET rate is 77%, rising to 91% of those with severe disabilities. There is also a significant variation of NEET rate among regions, as indicated by Figure 7.

Figure 7: Percentage of population aged 18-30 years who are not in employment, education or training (NEET), by sex and region



Only 8% of young people receive social protection benefits. Since 2013, families with adolescents aged 14-18 are not eligible for low-income family allowances, which creates a higher risk of children dropping out of school and entering into child labour. 37% of young people with severe disabilities are excluded from disability benefits. A very small portion of young people can access active labour market programmes and unemployment benefits.

The Government acknowledges the need to accelerate efforts to support young people in marginalized urban, rural or remote areas through the provision of formal and non-formal education opportunities, and labour market inclusion. The main policies supporting young people include state youth policy, the housing programme for young people, and the employment programme 'Youth is our Future'/'Yoshlar-Kelajagimiz'. However, their implementation is poor (due to the low rate of financial utilisation; weak awareness among young people) and often reaches mainly active gifted and talented youth, leaving NEET Youth further behind.

People with Disabilities. Despite a growing commitment from the Government to start ratification of the CRPD in Uzbekistan, half as many people with a disability report that they enjoy their rights as those without a disability. Currently, legal measures do not adequately protect disabled people from discrimination, indeed they sometimes generate exclusion. Psycho-social and intellectual disability are as routinely cited as a reason for removing legal capacity. People with disabilities are disadvantaged by the loose wording of current legislation which may allow others to make important decisions for them.

National legislation regulates issues of accessibility of transport, facilities and means of communication, and contains provisions concerning access to housing and social infrastructures, design, construction, and retrofitting of infrastructures. However, users with disabilities report insufficient access to essential public places, such as schools, hospitals, workplace, services (post office, cinemas, and shopping facilities) and homes. Less than 60 per cent of respondents rated it easy or relatively easy for them to attend these places. Apart from passenger cars and minibuses, transport is inadequately accessible to people with disabilities, who are often dependent on private cars and taxi services.

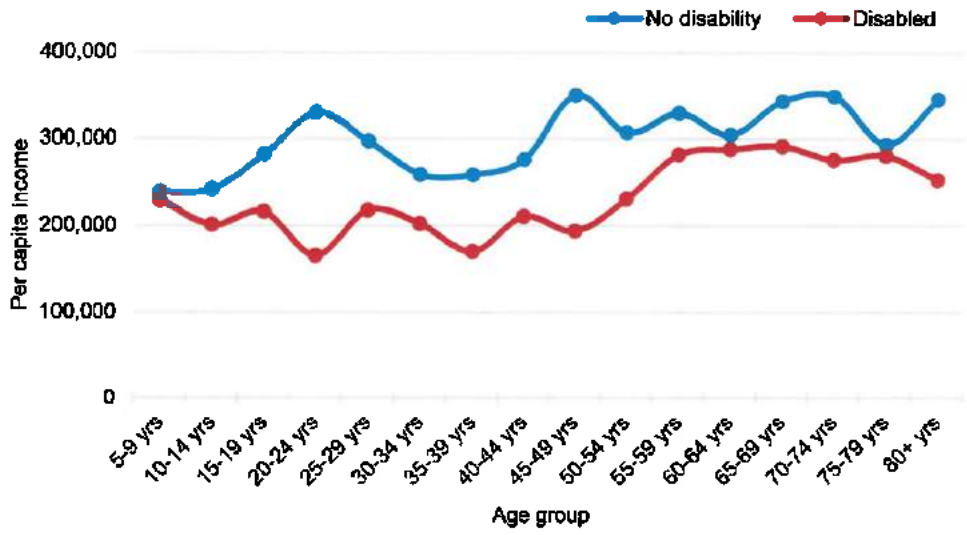
Disability is assessed using a blend of medical and charity models and, as indicated earlier, a high proportion of people with disabilities have not been recognised as disabled. The assessment itself is medical and focuses on impairment, rather than using a broader definition of disability that incorporates an assessment of the social and

physical environment. A wide range of disabilities, in particular those that are invisible, are likely to be missed in an assessment. In a UN survey, 42 per cent of people with disabilities and parents/guardians of children with disabilities assessed the procedure of applying for disability status as "difficult" and "very difficult". Those surveyed also reported that the costs associated with the disability eligibility procedure are often prohibitive. Although there is no formal payment for disability assessment, applicants are faced with costs such as transportation, collecting documents, informal payments, etc.

The law does not currently recognise the rights of people with disabilities to be included in the community or facilitate their participation. Rather than supporting independent living, provision is made in residential institutions. Of those who choose to live at home, almost none receive personal assistance from the state.

Households including people with disabilities tend to have lower incomes than other households. Figure 8 shows the median per capita income of the population according to their disability status. Overall, the median level of income for people with disabilities is around 18% lower than the median income for their non-disabled peers. The gap is particularly large for young people in their twenties as well as for those in their forties. As a result, people with disabilities are more likely to experience poverty (with a poverty rate of 26 per cent, compared to 21 per cent among non-disabled people). When the additional costs of disability are taken into account, the standards of living of people with disabilities – and their households – will be well below those of other households.

Figure 8: Median monthly per capita income of the population across age groups, by disability status



While persons with disabilities in Uzbekistan are eligible for pensions and benefits, as indicated earlier, many are excluded. Further, disability benefits do not take into consideration the type or severity of the disability nor the additional costs faced by people with disabilities. Indeed, the value of transfers to people with disabilities is below the subsistence level. Since 2010, those assessed as having a less severe disability have been unable to access disability benefits. Disability benefits are also not gender-sensitive and there are no gender-disaggregated statistics nor adaptations that take into account the particular needs of women with disabilities.

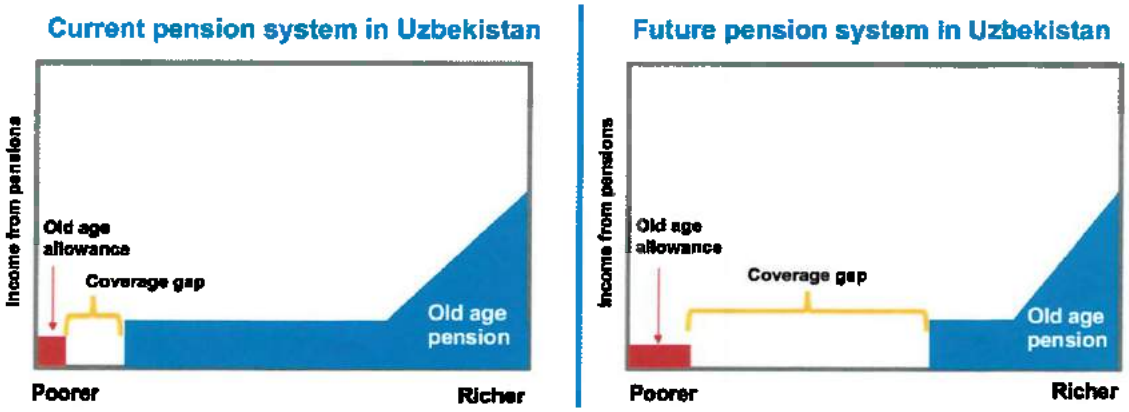
Disability benefits are not currently designed to support people with disabilities in employment. Indeed, there is a widespread belief – including among those undertaking disability assessments – that disability benefits should only be given to those without a job. As a result, only 10% of those receiving a disability benefit are in work. Yet, many people with disabilities in receipt of benefits are capable of working. Without a re-design of the disability benefit system, many people with disabilities will remain outside the labour force, resulting in lower incomes and a loss to the national economy. A key reform would be to introduce financial support for people with disabilities who are able

to work yet experience higher costs as a result of their disability and require financial support to access employment. Another important step is to introduce ICF and CRPD-compliant principles for formal disability assessment.

Many people with disabilities require access to a broader set of services than social security. Yet, because the national social work system is underdeveloped and lacks of targeting, many people with disabilities miss out on a wide range of legal, economic, psychological, educational, medical, rehabilitation and other measures which would improve the quality of their lives, creating equal opportunities for them to be an active part of the society and (or) expanding opportunities for them to independently provide for their basic needs. In order to improve the quality and access to the public and social services the Government of Uzbekistan is enhancing the network of the local Centers for Public Services working on the one-stop-shop principle. But the range of social services provided is not considering the needs of adults and children with disability.

Vulnerable older persons: as indicated earlier, the expansion of the informal economy and of lower labour force participation among women is resulting in a growing old age pension gap, which disproportionately impacts on older women. As Figure 10 indicates, this gap is likely to grow over time, given that the current tax-financed social pension is only given to those without family support. Increasingly, the requirement that family members care financially for their older family members of statutory pensionable age, make elderly dependent on others, impacting their autonomy and dignity. Further, families are having to transfer resources from their children to care for their elderly parents, which impacts on child wellbeing. It is urgent to introduce reforms to the old age pension system to return to universal coverage. In addition, disability prevalence is highest among older people, and they often experience greater challenges in accessing social care services than children and working age adults with disabilities.

Figure 10: The growing coverage gap in the pension system in Uzbekistan



1.3 SDG targets

a. Baseline data to measure progress

The proposed Joint Programme is focused on strengthening social protection policy, the governance of the social protection system and the delivery of integrated social protection programmes (in particular the child benefits and services) and enhancing services for people with disabilities. Therefore, by 2022, we would not expect to see much progress in terms of the SDG indicators that could be directly attributed to the programme. Rather, progress would happen in the years following the finalization of the programme and, if successful, we would expect that progress to be significant, in particular in Goal 1 and access to social protection.

Therefore, in this proposal we will focus on setting out the baseline data for each Goal 1 on which we indent to have a direct impact and Goals 5, 10 and 16, on which the programme will have an indirect impact.

Goal 1. Reduce poverty everywhere

- **Target 1.3** Strengthen the targeting and effectiveness of social protection system of the population, enhance the quality of social services, achieve full coverage of social protection measures for all in need
- **Indicator 1.3.1.** Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable

Baseline indicators

The baseline data for each of the programmes that we expect to influence are set out in Table 1. It gives the number of people or households in receipt of each of the key programmes in 2017. Where relevant, we have combined complementary programmes financed by social insurance and general taxation. The joint programme will attempt to monitor these indicators, using annual national administrative data.

Table 1: Number of recipients of key social security schemes, in 2017

Scheme	Number of recipients
Child benefits (Childcare and Family Allowance)	506,000 households
Child disability benefit	98,200 children
Working age adult disability benefits	489,000 individuals of working age
Unemployment benefits	13,200 individuals
Maternity benefits	84,000 individuals
Survivors benefits	196,000 individuals
Low-income allowance	61,500 households
Old age pensions	2,553,000 individuals

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

- **Target 5.c** Fully integrate the principles of gender equality in the process of adopting government programs at different government levels

National indicator and baseline data for Target 5c are not available. The Joint programme will advocate for its development and adoption. The Government recently adopted a new law on gender equality.

Goal 10. Reduce inequality in all its forms inside the country

- **Target 10.2.** Empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
  - **Indicator 10.2.1:** Proportion of people living below 50 per cent of median income, by sex and age
- **Target 10.4.** Adopt appropriate policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality

Baseline indicator

While official data is not available, based on the L2CU survey, it is possible to determine a baseline from 2018 for Indicator 10.2.1.:

- All: 21%
- Men: 20%
- Women: 22%

National indicator and baseline data for target 10.4 are not available. The Joint programme will advocate for the development and adoption of relevant indicators and measurement methods.

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

- **Target 16.7.** Increase participation of citizens, business entities and civil society institutions in the process of consultation and decision-making at all levels

National indicator and baseline data for target 16.7 are not available. The Joint Programme will advocate for their development and adoption. The Government recently adopted a new law on the protection of women from violence. There is a law on public oversight and the population can enjoy a number of digital platforms for online public consultations of draft legislation and file public petitions.

b. Analysis of interlinkages between the targets

There are clear interlinkages between the targets. The Joint Programme's main focus will be on Goal 1 and Target 1.3, with the aim of expanding the national social protection system in line with the right to social security for all and the goal of leaving no-one behind. A more effective social protection system will help achieve Goal 5. International evidence strongly indicates that social protection can open up more opportunities and choices for women. Affordable child care services, including for children and adult members with disabilities allow for greater participation of women in the labour force and society at large. For example, girls in receipt of child benefits – or who live in a household accessing social protection – are more likely to gain a good education and a better job; maternity insurance reduces discrimination in hiring women; and, old age pensions ensure that older women are able to maintain their place in society and retain their sense of self-worth. Social protection is a major tool for reducing inequalities in society and achieving Goal 10, in particular when linked to progressive taxation, labour market policies and social dialogue as a mean to uphold to international social security standards. Further, inclusive social protection systems – are a key instrument in building more peaceful and cohesive societies, as well as strengthening the social contract, which underpins the effective functioning of the nation state. As discussed earlier, there is also good evidence internationally that gender-based violence is also less likely in families that access social protection and have greater income security. Upholding the right to social protection is all the more important in a middle-income country context in times of comprehensive economic reforms where shocks occur more frequently, and poor households are more exposed and are often hit hardest. Piloting the ICF and CRPD-compliant disability assessment and social service delivery will contribute to estimation of potential differences between registered and unregistered PWD. Importantly, the pilots will produce the list of legal acts and business processes to be revised, and institutional arrangements to be set up for ensuring compliance of the social protection system at local level with the ICF and CRPD norms. Based on these results, the countrywide scaling up costs will be calculated.

c. Opportunities for systemic, accelerated change

At its core, the Joint Programme is focused on systemic and accelerated change. As discussed earlier, in recent years, Uzbekistan's social protection system has been moving backwards, with the level of investment falling and coverage shrinking. If action is not taken soon to reverse these trends, increasing numbers of vulnerable women and men will be left behind, with no income security or access to social services. The Joint Programme, therefore, will focus on systemic change by supporting governance reforms that will establish clear leadership of the national social protection system and strong institutions, including the development of a national social work system. Our intention is that this major systemic change will be in place by the end of the Joint Programme and, once the programme finishes, the UN will continue to support the further establishment of the social protection entity through its own (or additional) resources.

By designing a National Social Protection Strategy – with a clear and progressive vision to 2030 – we will bring about accelerated change in the way that social protection supports families and individuals across Uzbekistan. The UN SDG MAPS mission to Uzbekistan identified social protection as one of the potential accelerators for the achievement of SDGs and suggested to strengthen its national system, including by adopting nationally defined social protection floor. It has also stressed the need to promote gender equality and address current structural barriers women are faced with in the society, as well as when accessing social protection programmes and services. Following this recommendation, the Joint Programme will work on the participatory multi-stakeholder design of a national Social Protection Floor Recommendation, 2012 (No202). The National Social Protection Strategy will promote integrated approaches to achieve: i) universal basic income for children; ii) adequate schemes (contributory and tax-financed) for those in working age, from maternity protection to support for those who are unable to earn sufficient income or who face additional costs due to their disability; iii) universal and adequate income for persons in old-age ; iv) an effective social care and social work system (including aspects of care economy which particularly concerns women); and, v) access to health care. Importantly, given that Uzbekistan is initiating the development of education, health and employment policies, the National Social Protection Strategy will seek to create linkages through design of integrated approaches. Social protection strategy which will address barriers faced by persons with disabilities, thus contributing to the national commitment to implementation of principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It will also address the unequal position of women as per CEDAW recommendations in terms of access to particular services (for example design of community based services for children and adults with disabilities will free women from care duties and encourage labour force participation; introduction of social insurance scheme for maternity protection will prevent their discrimination at labour market) and adequacy of benefit schemes. Finally, the strategy will propose options for the progressive extension of social security while ensuring higher levels of protection to as many people as possible, guided by international social security standards and relevant human rights mechanisms.

The recently adopted Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Uzbekistan (03 July 2019) calls for establishment of the national Tripartite Commission on Social and Labour Issues. It is expected that the Tripartite Commission will become operational at the time of the initiation of the JP and it will form a sub-committee on social protection. Since social partners will participate in the design of the strategy, this process will accelerate National Tripartite Commission's contribution to social dialogue, national social protection legislation and policy making.

Further, a major systemic change planned by the Joint Programme is the establishment of a national social work system. This will be a major transformation in the social policy architecture of Uzbekistan and will be the beginning of a process of ensuring that the most vulnerable members of society receive the tailored support that they require. While we recognize that we will only establish the foundations of a social work system with the Joint Programme – by setting out a costed strategy for its introduction and the creation of an institution that will lead its development – it will provide the enabling environment and further support to the ongoing initiatives in social service workforce development, currently supported by the UN. This is a prerequisite for the success of the de-institutionalization reform.

Furthermore, by strengthening the delivery systems of the child benefits, we will ensure that barriers faced by vulnerable families that currently exclude them from the benefits will be tackled. Similarly, we will accelerate the inclusion of persons with disabilities within the disability benefit system through the implementation of a more effective and fair disability assessment system that is aligned to the principles of the CRPD.

1.4 Stakeholder mapping

Table 7 sets out the main stakeholders that will be involved in the Joint Programme. We outline their current role in the national social protection system, their role in the Joint Programme, their interest and their level of influence.

Table 7: Key stakeholders engaged in the Joint Programme

Stakeholder	Current role in social protection system	Role in the Joint Programme	Interest in the JP (high medium low)	Influence
President's Office (Department on Legal Expertise and Comprehensive Analysis)	Coordination and approval of legislative changes Legal expertise of draft laws and acts of President	Legal expertise, editing and approval of drafts of the legislative documents on social protection	medium	high
President's Office (Youth, Science, Education, Healthcare and Sports)	Coordination of legislative changes	Editing drafts of legislative documents	medium	high
Cabinet of Ministers (Office of Deputy Prime Minister for Financial and Economic Issues and Poverty Reduction)	Initiation of legislative changes, Setting the agenda for institutional reform; tasking relevant line ministries	Leadership of the Joint Programme Drafting and editing legislative documents	high	high
Cabinet of Ministers (Office of Deputy Prime Ministers for Financial and Economic Issues and Poverty Reduction)	Oversight over budget planning and execution Policy development in financing social protection programmes	Drafting and editing legislative documents	high	high
Ministry of Employment and Labour Relationships	Monitoring of delivery of social allowances to low-income families; Policy development and implementation of labour activation programmes	Coordination and implementation of labour activation programmes for PwD within the proposed pilot	medium	high
Ministry of Health	Policy development and implementation on disability assessment, provision of home care to solitary elderly persons, provision of	Coordination and implementation of disability assessment and provision of care to PwD and CwD	medium	medium

institutionalised care to PwD and CwD

Ministry of Finance	Budget planning and execution in financing social protection programmes Development of Single Registry for Social Protection	Drafting the social protection strategy, costing and financing new strategy and new social protection entity; assessing future fiscal space for social protection.	high	high
Pension Fund under the Ministry of Finance	Policy development and implementation (all social insurance and some tax-financed programmes)	Supporting the development of a state entity/mechanism resourced to implement comprehensive social protection programmes	medium	medium
Ministry of Public Education	Policy development and implementation of provision of institutionalized care to children left without parental care	Supporting development of a state entity/mechanism resourced to implement comprehensive social protection programmes.	medium	medium
Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support	Implementation of provision of support programmes for low-income families and women	Supporting development of a state entity/mechanism resourced to implement comprehensive social protection programmes which include gender perspective.	low	high
Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Uzbekistan	Protection of worker's rights	Advocating for adoption of social security rights, Participation in national social protection strategy design Promotes the rights of women workers Participation in creation of database of vulnerable women	high	medium
Employer's organisation		Presentation of employer's position vis-a-vis workers right Participation in national social protection strategy design	medium	medium
The Youth Union of Uzbekistan	Policy development and implementation of labour activation programmes for young people	Coordination and implementation of labour activation programmes for young people	low	medium

Association of Disability People Organizations	Public oversight Monitoring of state activities and accessibility issues	Piloting new initiatives	High	Low
Disabled People Society of Uzbekistan	Public oversight Participation in implementation of state programmes	Promoting policy work and advocacy with Government	Medium	Low
Regional and district/city khokimiyats (local government agencies)	Implementation of laws and state programmes on disabilities Management of local budget revenues and expenditures	Support in joint implementation of pilot initiatives	Medium	Medium
General Prosecutor's Office	Oversight of implementation of the State Programme on disability	Convening role to advocate for legislative changes and adoption of national strategy on social protection	High	High
Parliament (Legislative Chamber Committee on Legislation and Committee on Social Issues; Senate's committee on Gender Issues)	Review the bills and adoption of the laws	Conduct Joint Parliamentary Hearings on SDG Progress in the area of Social Protection Discuss draft legislation and legislative amendments on social protection	High	High
Ministry of Justice	Legal expertise of draft legislation and providing public services through Agency for Public services and One-Stop-shops	Business process re-engineering of local public services to persons with disabilities Ensuring accessibility of public services to persons with disabilities	High	Medium
Agency for Medical and Social Services under the Cabinet of Ministers	Assessment and certification of disability	Implementing partner in the pilot of ICF assessment system for people with disability	Medium	Medium

2. Programme Strategy

2.1. Overall strategy

The proposed Joint Programme's objective is to *support the Government in building and delivering a high-quality social protection system that offers all citizens of Uzbekistan – in particular, those at risk of being left behind – income security and social support throughout their lives.* Our mission is to harness the collective expertise and capacity of the UN family to overcome a key systemic barrier to achieving numerous SDGs: the fragmentation of social protection at institutional, policy and programme levels which results in ineffective leadership of a significant component of government expenditures and a reduction in its effectiveness. In the context of ongoing ambitious socio-economic reforms in Uzbekistan, ensuring leadership and a clear direction for the national social protection system is required. Transformative measures are needed to deliver enhanced social protection for all citizens, in particular disadvantaged groups, while accelerating progress across SDGs.

Global evidence clearly points to the transformational, catalytic potential of a strong social protection system for access to health and education, income security, employability and decent work, and resilience-building throughout the lifecycle. If better use can be made of Uzbekistan's significant level of investment in social protection, the lives of millions of people could be transformed. However, this will require stronger leadership on social protection policy, an enhanced capacity to deliver programmes to the right people at the right time and a strategic vision for the next 5 to 10 years, which can influence and guide broader social and economic reforms.

The programme will provide a mix of capacity building, policy dialogue and technical assistance, aimed at building an integrated social protection system at institutional, policy and programme/operational levels. We will work across three main areas:

- We will support the Government to establish a dedicated institution that will provide leadership and coordination to the social protection sector, as well as being responsible for overseeing the delivery of social protection schemes. The focus will be on working alongside government to develop a costed proposal for the new entity which we expect to be approved before the end of the programme. At this stage, the shape of the institution is to be agreed with Government and it could, for example, comprise a new ministry, an institution reporting into an existing ministry or an institution within a powerful ministry or at a level above line ministries. Ideally, it will bring together both social security and broader social services, with the longer-term aim of establishing a formal social work system. We will build on what already exists at both national and local levels. At the same time, we will work with the Government to bring about improvements to those programmes with weak delivery systems, in particular the child benefit system, and development of social services required for the recently initiated de-institutionalization reforms. The creation of the institution will be closely linked to the development of a mid- and long-term National Social Protection Strategy, since the new institution will be responsible for its implementation.

  Specific activities to take forward this output will include: establishing a national team within the Prime Minister's office that will be responsible for developing the costed plan for the entity; short-term support from national and international experts to help develop the plan; short-term support from national and international experts to re-design the targeting and operations of the child benefits and develop an operations manual and training materials; modeling of integrated social protection programmes on example of children benefits and services; contracting of a MIS specialist firm to build an advanced electronic MIS (Single Registry for social protection), building on UNICEF's current initiative to build the Registry. Activities will also include training of trainers for government staff on integrated social protection delivery, and a study tour to a country with an effective institutional structure (likely to be Sweden). Incorporated within these activities, we will also develop a plan for the expansion of the national child benefit system, including feasible increases in numbers of recipients that can be implemented during the lifetime of the Joint Programme.

- The second area of work will be an integrated and costed long term social protection strategy with medium term action plan term built on evidence and developed through wide stakeholder consultations and citizen engagement. The strategy will address social insurance, social assistance and social services, while establishing links with education, health and labour market policies. It will be in line with the Social Protection Floor Initiative, international social security standards and human rights instruments. It will also address different vulnerabilities

across the lifecycle with an emphasis on the position of children, women and persons with disabilities, in particular those who are most likely to be left behind. It is expected that the strategy will play a key role over the next 10 years in ensuring that the government meets its obligation to enable access to the right to social protection for all citizens with a focus on most disadvantaged. The strategy will also outline a roadmap for building an effective social work and social care system, to provide tailored support to the country's most vulnerable citizens, including people with disabilities. Importantly, the strategy will be costed and will include a clear impact-based monitoring framework. Finally, in addition to a costing and simulation exercise, an analysis of fiscal space for social protection will be carried out in order to provide the government, constituents and stakeholders with the options for investment into social protection.

Specific activities to develop this output will include: the training of key stakeholders to strengthen their understanding of social protection and their capacity to engage in policy dialogue; regular short-term visits from ILO and other national and international experts to hold consultations with decision-makers and facilitate consultations with citizens and tripartite organisations, drawing on existing mechanisms for citizen engagement; a costings and simulation exercises – looking to 2030 – including the building of a simulation model; analysis of fiscal space options with support from short-term experts; and, the contracting of experts to support the drafting of the Strategy. Importantly, consultative process to develop national social protections strategy will create synergies with the work of recently established National Tripartite commission to extent possible.

- Our third area of engagement will be closely linked to other two. We will pilot innovative approaches to delivering integrated social protection for persons with disabilities. Specifically, this will include the consultation with DPOs in order to design "cash + services" programmes that include the provision of cash benefits linked to access to social services, vocational training and other labour market programmes and are important for certain groups of persons with disabilities. Through consultations, DPOs will contribute to re-design of existing processes in order to introduce the ICF.

  Specific activities to develop this output will include: capacity building of the Disability Assessment Commissions on application of ICF for persons with disabilities; piloting of disability assessment which based on ICF and UN CRPD; analysing existing obstacles for introduction ICF; design of business processes and normative framework that will allow to apply ICF and CRPD requirements in disability assessment; implementation of micro-grants programme jointly with DPOs and local authorities to support to local user-led pilot initiatives based on ICF; business process re-engineering of social services, which are provided in the social protection sector, according to CRPD and ICF requirements; development of the policy documents and draft legislation on disability issues, jointly with DPOs, in line with CRPD, CEDAW and ICF. Importantly, analytical consultations jointly with DPOs to national stakeholders on agency-specific and sector-specific disability indicators and data collections along with joint advocacy campains and policy consultations with stakeholders will support to introducing inclusive and innovative approaches to delivering social protection of persons with disabilities. Importantly, this work will support better data collection and data availability on disability.

Given that the programme will seek to directly influence government spending equivalent to almost 10% of GDP, it has the potential for significant medium and long-term impacts and will enhance outcomes in other areas of government spending, such as health and education, while contributing to economic growth. Over the past 3 years the UN has built a close and trusted relationship with the Government on social protection which will form a platform for the proposed programme. We believe that our contribution will be further enhanced given that our experience indicates that the Government is seeking external advice on social protection and, if convinced of its value, is willing to make significant changes.

The UN has a strong comparative advantage in engaging across all three areas of our proposed engagement. UNICEF has been advising the government on social protection reforms for the past two years, including developing policy proposals encompassing both reforms to schemes – in particular child benefits – and governance reforms while financing and providing technical support in the development of a national Single Registry. UNICEF already understands the sector well and has strong relations with key actors in Government. It also brings international experience in the development of child-sensitive social protection and institutional reform. The ILO leads on social security within the UN and, as a result, is well-placed to bring its international experience in the development of social protection policy to Uzbekistan. Indeed, it has successfully engaged with other governments in the region to

develop costed proposals for building national social protection floors which include gender equality perspective. UNDP brings many years of experience in engaging on disability in Uzbekistan. It will be able to draw on UNICEF's experience on child disability and social services as well as the ILO's experience in social security and active labour market programmes for people with disabilities while liaising with a joint initiative in ILO/UNICEF headquarters to develop more disability assessment mechanisms that are compliant with the CRPD.

The programme will work closely with the Government, bringing together the current main actors in the social protection sector, including the Cabinet of Ministers and the Ministries of Finance, Employment and Health. A joint Steering Committee will be formed on the basis of the UNDAF Results Group on Social Protection, comprising Government, social partners and the UN under the joint leadership of the Deputy Prime Minister for Financial and Economic Issues and Poverty Reduction and the Resident Coordinator. The programme itself is focused on strengthening government leadership and, if successful in building a new leadership and coordination entity, this institution will be able to ensure the implementation of the National Social Protection Strategy and the scaling-up of pilot initiatives. The financial sustainability of our work is assured given the high level of investment by government in social protection and the willingness of government in ensuring that these funds are used more effectively for the wellbeing of all citizens, whenever they become vulnerable.

Once the programme is completed, we expect the following key outputs:

- Costed plans will be in place for stronger and more effective institutional leadership of the social protection sector;
- Capacity of national partners to design and deliver integrated social protection programmes will be strengthened based on reformed child benefits and improved social services;
- A viable and innovative National Social Protection Strategy will have been developed with Government and be ready to be implemented by the new institutional leadership; and,
- A range of pilot initiatives to enhance the wellbeing of people with disabilities will have been tested to be scaled up by the new institution, with commitments set out in the National Social Protection Strategy.

This programme builds on a strong evidence base generated over the last two years, consultations (see section 11), and concerted advocacy by the UN on leaving no-one behind in the context of recent and future social and economic reforms. Existing UN-supported platforms and mechanisms, including the Accelerator Lab, SDG policy dialogues, U-report, as well as other integrated platforms will amplify associated policy advice and ensure highly participatory engagement, including with beneficiaries. There have been numerous consultations with government to develop this programme.

2.2 Theory of Change

Summary

IF a national social protection strategy in line with the 2030 Agenda is developed jointly with relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries and is costed and financed **and, IF** an integrated social protection entity is designed and capacitated, with appropriate administrative systems and sufficient capacity to deliver effective, tailored-to-needs social protection for every citizen of Uzbekistan, including all children, **and IF** the ICF and CRPD-compliant schemes and procedures of disability assessment and social service delivery are piloted, providing evidence base for further development of inclusive social protection system,

THEN the Government will have an integrated and sustainable social protection system and the capacity in place to improve social protection coverage for all vulnerable categories of the population in Uzbekistan **and THEN** all citizens will be able to access adequate protection across the lifecycle while vulnerable people, and especially persons with disabilities and children, will be effectively protected from the potential risks and shocks resulting from economic reforms and will have greater opportunities to benefit from economic growth, leading to acceleration of progress towards SDGs 1, 5, 10 and 16.

Detailed explanation: Theory of Change narrative

Our theory of change (ToC) links together the three main outputs from the Joint Programme. The detailed diagram for the ToC can be found in Annex 3 and we describe it further below.

There are three main building blocks to our theory of change for the Joint Programme, which will be taken forward simultaneously.

The first component of our theory of change is focused on building a social protection entity that provides leadership and direction to the social protection sector while also significantly enhancing the capacity of the Government to deliver its social protection schemes. Only if there is leadership of the sector and greater capacity to deliver schemes will it be possible for a new policy direction to be agreed and implemented. Further, it will be important to establish an institution that is able to provide leadership as a new social work system is developed throughout the 2020s. Without this leadership, the likelihood of a National Social Protection Strategy being taken forward is significantly reduced. And, if the social protection system is to ensure the equitable inclusion of girls and women into the sector, alongside programme designs that empower women and girls rather than undermine them, it will also be necessary to incorporate gender sensitivity in our training of those staffing the new institution.

However, building an institution that provides leadership to the social protection sector is insufficient. There also is a need for the Government to develop a long-term vision for the sector that underpins the creation of a rights-based, inclusive, lifecycle social protection system, which is the second component of our ToC. Therefore, we believe that, to achieve our objective, we will have to support the Government in developing a progressive National Social Protection Strategy that will guide the evolution of the sector up to 2030. And, if no-one is to be left behind, we believe that it will be critically important to ensure that the strategy focuses on the empowerment of women, children, people with disabilities and other potentially vulnerable categories of the population.

Further, to provide models for the implementation of key principles with the National Strategy, our ToC also proposes that we should work alongside Government in developing and implementing practical solutions that can be expanded from 2022 onwards. Therefore, we believe that if we can demonstrate more efficient operational delivery of the child benefit system, pilot specific high impact and integrated interventions for people with disability – with a particular focus on women – and build a more effective disability assessment mechanism, then we will build trust within Government which will make it more likely that our proposals on the new entity and the national social protection strategy will be accepted.

If all three of these interventions are taken forward, then we believe that the Government will establish, between 2022 and 2030, an integrated and sustainable social protection system with capacity in place to improve social protection coverage and quality for all citizens who experience vulnerability, while enhancing gender equity and women's empowerment.

As a result, vulnerable people, and especially children, women, and persons with disabilities, will be effectively protected from the potential risks and shocks brought by economic reforms and will have more opportunities to enter the labour market and benefit from economic growth, leading to an acceleration of progress towards SDGs 1, 5, 10 and 16.

We believe that our proposed theory of change addresses the structural root causes of the currently fragmented and ineffective social protection system in Uzbekistan, in particular with regard to the integration of people experiencing vulnerabilities, including girls, women and people with disabilities. Specifically, developing a National Social Protection Strategy and building an integrated and efficient institutional mechanism to implement the Strategy is the foundational change that needs to happen to achieve social protection for all and ensure that no-one is left behind. In the short-term, the child benefit system will be expanded and delivered more effectively and efficiently. An integrated services pilot for people with disabilities will provide a model for the Government to learn from and later scale up, with particularly catalytic effects on the well-being of people with disabilities, in particular women. Alternatively, if the proposed programme is not implemented, the social protection system is likely to be

further fragmented and reduced to a social safety net that offers no more than basic, highly targeted social safety net.

Assumptions

The following critical assumptions were identified for the TOC to become a reality. These assumptions will require sustained advocacy efforts by the UN and partners. They will also be systemically monitored and reported on. Key assumptions are:

- The Government establishes the Social Protection Leadership, Coordination and Delivery mechanism, once conceptually designed;
- The Government agrees to proposals to expand the child benefit system by reallocating funds, accompanied by improvements to its delivery system;
- The Government adopts the Social Protection strategy, once drafted
- The political will to protect vulnerable citizens is sustained;
- The Government ratifies UNCRPD and adopts new laws on disability;
- The Government and civil society partners take the piloted programme for people with disabilities to scale;
- IFIs provisions for social protection reform and their economic reform advice as well as Government's interpretations of this advice supports design of transformative social protection system.

2.3 Expected results and impact

Impact and outcome:

The expected **impact** of the Joint Programme is: *Vulnerable groups, and especially children, women, NEET youth, unemployed, and PWDs, are effectively protected from potential risks and vulnerabilities and benefit from more equitable access to resources, leading to acceleration of progress towards SDGs 1, 5, 10 and 16.*

The expected **outcome** of the Joint Programme is: *By 2022, the Government has an integrated and sustainable social protection system and initial capacity in place to improve social protection coverage for all citizens, in particular the most vulnerable, across Uzbekistan.*

Outputs

Output 1:

By 2022, an integrated social protection entity/mechanism with appropriate administrative systems and operations with sufficient capacity to deliver effective, tailored-to-needs social protection to every citizen of Uzbekistan is designed.

Led by: Deputy Prime Minister for Financial and Economic Issues and Poverty Reduction and UNICEF in partnership with other PUNOs and national stakeholders

Indicators:

- Institutional and costed design of an integrated social protection entity/mechanism exists and is submitted to the Government for endorsement (2019 Baseline – No; 2021 Target - Yes)

- Integrated social protection entity/mechanism with appropriate administrative systems with sufficient capacity is developed and ready for implementation (2019 Baseline – No; 2022 Target - Yes)

Strategic Interventions:

1. By 2021, Government is equipped with a costed institutional design concept for the integrated social protection system *[Assumption: Government adopts the concept of the integrated social protection system in line with the rights-based approach and commits sufficient resources]*

2. By 2022, Government has developed functions, standard operating procedures and protocols *[Assumption: Government is committed to develop the integrated social protection system]*

3. By 2022, Government has an action plan to operationalize the integrated social protection entity/mechanism *[Assumption: Government is committed to implement the action plan]*

4. By 2022, the Government has a capacity-building plan to operate the integrated social protection system in line with a rights-based approach, including training of trainers *[Assumption: The integrated social protection entity/mechanism is sufficiently resourced]*

5. By 2022, The Government has a model of integrated approaches in social protection on the basis of reforms in child benefits and social services

6. By 2022, the Government is equipped with a management information system (MIS) for two flagship programmes and capable of expanding in line with the strategic monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework for social protection *[Assumption: Government has the capacity to use the MIS]*

Output 2:

By 2022, a National Social Protection Strategy in line with the 2030 Agenda is developed and costed jointly with relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Led by: Ministry of Finance and ILO in partnership with other PUNOs and national stakeholders

Indicators: Existence of the Social Protection Strategy submitted to the Government for endorsement (2019 Baseline – No; 2022 Target – Yes)

Strategic Interventions:

1. By end of 2020, consultations on a National Social Protection Strategy – led by Government – have been held with social partners, citizens' groups and representatives, through an engagement mechanism that has been designed by mid-2020 and which is built on existing mechanisms. The Government adopted concept note outlining the shared vision of national social protection and its contribution to Agenda 2030

2. By mid-2021, Government discusses proposals and options for a progressive and inclusive National Social Protection Strategy designed through a multi-stakeholder participatory process including the National Tripartite Commission *[Assumption: Government is committed to design the national social protection strategy]*

3. By end of 2020, Government, Parliament and social partners have the capacity to design a social protection system in line with international social security standards *[Assumption: Government and social partners are committed to uphold to rights-based social security standards and engage in capacity development]*

4. By 2022, Government has a costed and progressive national social protection strategy that ensures no-one is left-behind *[Assumption: Government is committed to lead the process]*

5. By 2022, Government is equipped with the knowledge of the fiscal space for progressive social protection and the means to achieve that fiscal space *[Assumption: Government is open to transparently discuss public finance]*

Output 3:

By 2022, the Government of Uzbekistan has tested the disability assessment procedures and service delivery design based on ICF and CRPD norms and has taken on board relevant policy recommendations.

Led by: Ministry of Health and Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations and UNDP in partnership with DPOs and other national stakeholders

The main problem of the current disability assessment is the medical approach which does not fully provide an opportunity to employ the human-rights based approach while supporting people with disabilities. Therefore, the output will select one district (potentially in Tashkent city or Gulistan district of the Syrdarya region) to develop and pilot ICF and CRPD compliant disability assessment and social services aimed at providing equal opportunities and improving economic self-sustainability capacities of people with disabilities. The results of the pilot will be used to identify the benefits and risks of ICF introduction and cost its national rollout. All this will contribute to development of the upstream and downstream policy advice on introduction and fully-fledged implementation of the ICF and CRPD compliant disability assessment and social services in Uzbekistan. About 200 first registered persons with disability will be directly benefiting from the pilot interventions. And if the pilot is subsequently scaled up countrywide, the system will have an impact on the entire population of people with disabilities.

Indicators:

- Existence of lessons learned on results of pilot initiatives on ICF and options for scale up shared with the government for endorsement (2019 Baseline – No; 2022 Target – Yes)
- Proposal for building an adult social services system developed in line with CRPD requirements and presented to Government (2019 Baseline – No; 2022 Target – Yes)
- An improved disability assessment mechanism is piloted, probably based on the ICF and compliant with the UN CRPD, and which also reduces barriers to access (2019 Baseline – a poor quality medical model; 2022 –ICF and UN CRPD compliant mechanism is piloted)
- Number of DPOs, which strengthened their capacities on CRPD and ICF and participated in the design and implementation of the pilot initiatives (2019 Baseline – 0; 2022 Target – 10)
- Strategy on social protection includes measures on improvement of Knowledge, Attitude and Practices towards people with disabilities in accordance to the CRPD norms (2019 Baseline – No; 2022 Target - Yes).

Strategic Interventions:

1. By 2021, the ICF and CRPD compliant procedures of disability assessment are piloted to identify the impact and implications expected from ICF introduction and CRPD implementation at the local level. *[Assumption: Government approves the designed pilot initiatives]*

2. By 2021, the CRPD compliant social services for people with disabilities focused on inclusion into economic activities are piloted to demonstrate opportunities for quality and accessibility improvements at affordable costs for state budget. *[Assumption: Government approves the designed pilot initiatives]*

3. By 2021, Government has an extended capacity to revise legislation to align it with CRPD and to evaluate efficiency and effectiveness of the current state policies and programmes on social protection of PWDs via collecting disability related statistics in line with international standards and SDGs priorities / targets /

indicators. *[Assumption: The Government is considering the need to align the national legislation with the international human rights standards]*

4. By the end of 2021, pilot initiatives are designed and launched to deliver social services and benefits, using innovative user-led and citizen-centered forms and methods that are compliant with the CRPD jointly with DPOs, experts, stakeholders and beneficiaries *[Assumption: Government approves the designed pilot initiatives]*.

5. By the end of 2022, a CRPD compliant disability assessment mechanism has been revised and designed in collaboration with government, based on the ICF piloting results *[Assumption: Government is willing to move away from a purely medical model of assessment]*

6. By 2022, lessons learned on pilot initiatives are analyzed, codified and provided to Government through a series of policy papers and consultative workshops to fine-tune policy advice to Government *[Assumption: Government includes the tested pilots into Annual State Programme)*.

What will happen next, after the Joint Programme is finalized

The Joint Programme will lay the basis for a major reform of the national social protection system, between 2022 and 2030. We will work very closely with Government in the establishment of the social protection entity, modeling integrated social protection for children, the National Social Protection Strategy, social insurance mechanisms, the pilot initiatives for persons with disabilities and the disability assessment mechanism. This will include working closely with key decision-makers. We will also take into account their concerns during the process and build their understanding of the value of building a more progressive social protection system. Therefore, we are confident that the Government will be in a position to undertake the reforms that will be proposed in the National Social Protection Strategy.

If the Government implements the reforms, we would expect to see significant changes in the national social protection system, gradually introduced up to 2030. The currently fragmented system of social protection will be transformed into an integrated shock-responsive system that effectively protects all citizens whenever they are vulnerable and in case of defined sets of risks across the entire lifecycle. We would hope for expansions in the child, disability and old age benefit systems, so that increasingly the more vulnerable members of these categories of the population would be included. Further enhancements would be in a more effective maternity and unemployment benefit systems. The current disincentives to work experienced by many people with disabilities and women – due to the design of the social protection system – would be eliminated and greater support put in place to enable women and people with disabilities to engage actively in the labour market. We would also expect that a national social work system would begin to be established, offering support to the most vulnerable members of society.

While in many countries, the expansion of social protection would require a major increase in budgets, we do not believe that this will be the case. Given that 9.7% of GDP is currently invested in social protection, prudent reforms and increases in efficiency will ensure that expansions in some programmes are possible while ensuring adequate benefits, in line with entitlements, for current recipients. However, we will support the Government in finding additional fiscal space if required, including through a more progressive tax system. Indeed, as the social protection system expands and citizens see that the Government is using their taxes wisely, we would expect to see a strengthening of the tax system and a reduction in tax avoidance. Given the Government's commitment to support transition from informal work to formal employment, we expect measures leading to gradual expansion of social insurance contributions which in turn would contribute to social protection budget.

The end of the Joint Programme will not mark the end of the UN's support to the Government as it seeks to strengthen the national social protection system. Each of the institutions involved in the Joint Programme will continue their engagement, recognizing that it will be important for continuing collaboration to enable the Government to keep the reforms on track.

Expected progress on the indicated SDG targets

We would expect progress across all of the indicated SDG targets beyond 2022:

- **Goal 1, Target 1.3:** As the social protection system expands, we would expect to see a reduction in national poverty, in particular as more families and individuals living in poverty are included within the system.
- **Goal 5, Target 5c:** The principle of gender equality will be firmly embedded within national social protection policy and more girls and women will be socially and economically empowered.
- **Goal 10, Targets 10.2-4:** The expansion of the national social protection system on an inclusive basis – linked to more progressive taxation – will reduce inequality and, by moving to more effective delivery systems for social transfers, there will be a significant reduction in discrimination within social protection.
- **Goal 16, Target 16.7:** We would expect a more cohesive society that opens the opportunity for greater democracy, while the threat of radicalization is reduced; due to greater income security in families, we would expect a fall in domestic violence.

Expected impact on the intended recipients

The potential impacts on the intended recipients are set out in Box 1, in the form of a story.

Box 1: Potential impacts of the programme on one girl.

To illustrate the type of impacts the programme could have, we can examine how the changes brought about could affect the life of Ozoda, an 8-year-old girl born with a physical disability, who is representative of many of those who would benefit from the programme. Ozoda's family lived in a remote rural area on a low income and care for a further two children. To sustain the family, both of Ozoda's parents had to work and could not afford for one of them to stay at home to care for Ozoda. There were also no community-based services to support the family and other public services were not accessible to people with disabilities. The family also experienced stigma when their neighbours and community members talked about Ozoda and other people with disabilities. There were only a few local NGOs in the capital city and regional centres, and they only provided very limited social services and rehabilitation programmes for children with disabilities. Ozoda's parents found it difficult to access a child disability benefit, so they only received the Family Allowance – a poverty-targeted child benefit – for a period of less than one year over the past three years, as the local authorities were under pressure to share it around as many families as possible. To a large extent, this was because social protection for children is still viewed as a charity rather than an entitlement. After struggling for many years to care for Ozoda, she was eventually sent to live in a residential centre for children with disabilities, located in the regional capital.

In contrast, upon successful implementation of the joint programme and the scale up of its results, the new Strategy will define social protection as an entitlement rather than charity, which will be very important for children like Ozoda and will effectively transform her relationship with the state. Having strengthened the delivery of core social security benefits for children by establishing a strong institution responsible for social protection, Ozoda and her siblings will be able to receive child benefits while Ozoda herself will access an additional child disability benefit. As a result, Ozoda will, once more, be able to live at home, within a family and community environment. The new integrated institution will focus on building a national social work system which will, over time, mean that key community-based and specialised services will be established – based on the pilots implemented by the programme – and Ozoda and her family will be able to access them. These services will have been co-designed with the participation of persons with disabilities and will be tailored to the specific needs of children (boys and girls), women and men with disabilities and be designed to provide appropriate support across the life-cycle. Taken together, these interventions will contribute to better social inclusion and integration of people with disabilities in society while overcoming stigma. Children like Ozoda and her siblings will grow up to lead more fulfilling lives and be much better placed to gain a good education and, eventually, jobs that provide secure incomes. More generally, all citizens will be able to receive the support they need whenever they are vulnerable, enabling them to be able to realise their rights and reach their full potential.

2.4 Financing

Justification for the budget

We believe that the $2 million provided by the SDG fund will deliver significant value for money. The programme will directly influence government decisions over a very significant area of expenditure, equivalent to around 9.7% of GDP, or US$4.5 billion annually. As indicated earlier, there is significant scope for re-designing the social protection system to cover major gaps in coverage across specific vulnerable categories of the population while building a national social work system and we believe that this could be done by re-prioritising expenditures within the current budget. The National Social Protection Strategy will outline how this could be undertaken gradually over the next decade while the new social protection institution will be able to ensure that the Strategy, and the changes it proposes, are implemented.

While, at this point in time, we cannot guarantee the changes that will result from the programme, our recent experience of good collaboration between the PUNOs, the Government, other development partners and IFI's– as well as the recent political changes in Uzbekistan – makes us hopeful that the programme could be transformative at a national level. The current level of investment in social protection offers the potential for prudent re-allocations of spending, without affecting legally acquired entitlements. Fiscal space could also be freed up to enable the gradual establishment of a comprehensive social work system. There is little doubt in our minds that, if the joint government/PUNO team can capture the imagination of the country's political leaders and key decision-makers, we can have a very significant impact. But, given the size of the budget that we are influencing, even small changes in the national social protection system will make the joint programme's investment of $2 million excellent value for money.

Furthermore, we would expect that, over time, there will be significant multipliers that result from the programme. For example: by expanding the child benefit system, many more children will receive a good education and gain better and more productive jobs, which will benefit not only the national economy but their families; and, by enabling more women and people with disabilities to access jobs through re-designs to a number of programmes that eliminate disincentives to work, family incomes will increase, while the economy will also benefit and the tax base would increase, potentially generating additional revenues for further improving the social protection system. As discussed above, there will be the option of identifying additional fiscal space options which will become available through a strengthened social contract, a reduction of tax avoidance and greater formalization of the workforce.

And, of course, our aim will be to ensure that there is no decrease in social protection funding. Due to a limited appreciation of the value of social protection in Government, there is a danger that this will happen over the next decade, as has occurred in the recent past with some schemes – such as the child benefits – which did not have champions within Government to defend them. The attempts to promote transition from informal to formal employment currently at an embryonic stage are expected to be expanded – there is indication of a need for ILO's technical assistance to develop such an action plan. This will include the issues related to social protection and social insurance contributory capacity, thus addressing financing issues in medium and long –term. Analysis of fiscal space for social protection as one of the activities under the Joint Programme will provide additional options for short and medium-term financing. Therefore, the joint programme will ensure that a team is in place that can help decision-makers understand the value of investing in social protection as well as the harm that could be caused to individuals, families, communities and the nation if the level of funding is reduced, and to provide evidence and options for additional sources of financing.

By building an effective national institution to oversee and deliver the social protection sector – and by collaborating throughout the joint programme in building more effective delivery systems for cash-based social security benefits (in services in the longer term) that take advantage of new technologies – we will significantly reduce the administrative costs of the overall social protection system (Single Registry). Similarly, the voucher system instead of state centralized procurement of assistive devices can be another benefit, which would decrease the cost of device and raise the quality and competitiveness among vendors and suppliers. At the same time, we will enhance the quality of delivery, ensuring that beneficiaries of programmes receive an improved user experience that respects their rights. To give a practical example, we will reduce the time and opportunity costs linked to applying for and receiving transfer payments while ensuring that programme operational processes are adapted to the needs of those experiencing limitations, such as people with disabilities, frail older people and carers of young children. This will generate higher value for money for families across Uzbekistan.

Therefore, there is little doubt that the proposed joint programme will generate significant value for money. For example, even if only 2% of the national budget is reprioritised to expand child benefits, this would imply additional funding of $90 million per year for children and $900 million over ten years. Consequently, any cost-benefit analysis of the joint programme, even within a pessimistic assessment of success, would be very positive.

We do not believe that there are alternative uses for the SDG funds that would deliver anywhere near this level of potential returns to investment in Uzbekistan. Nor are there alternative approaches that could have the same level of impact on the SDGs. A focus on, for example, piloting small livelihoods or labour market programmes would, in all likelihood, reach few people, even if successful and scaled up over time.

We have spent the past three years building strong and effective relationships with key actors in the social protection sector, which will provide an excellent platform for influencing policy. We also believe that the influence and impacts of the joint programme will be sustainable in the long-term. As indicated above, in contrast to many other low and middle-income countries, the level of funding required for an effective social protection sector has already been secured. Supporting the creation of effective leadership of the social protection sector, developing a long-term strategic direction for social protection policy, and enhancing delivery systems and innovative pilots that can be scaled-up, will lead to the sustained impacts of this programme. Indeed, as indicated above, the joint programme does not need to convince the government to increase its investment in social protection. Rather, we will be demonstrating to policymakers that they can make more effective and efficient use of existing funds, which will benefit not only individual families, but will contribute to strengthening the economy and building the social contract, which is essential in a country with particularly volatile a particularly volatile neighbours. If the social protection system in Uzbekistan were to shrink or collapse, the negative impacts on national social cohesion could be significant. In addition, the JP will identify additional sources of finance and fiscal space for social protection.

Addressing value for money within the joint programme

The PUNOs are committed to ensuring that we deliver value for money with programme funds. Using the PUNOs' knowledge about relevant and applicable international expertise, international consultants will be contracted through an open and competitive procurement process or through existing long-term agreements held by the UN with trusted suppliers. While assessing the technical proposals and financial offers of international consultants, the best value for money principles will be applied by the evaluation commission. National programme team members will be hired through local open and competitive recruitment process in line with PUNOs' rules and regulations.

Further, all procurement of goods will follow current UN practices, that ensure value for money. The majority of services and supplies will be locally procured, maximizing the cost, availability and relevance of the project deliverables to national stakeholders and partners. Access of PUNOs to global markets, availability of long-term contracts with vendors and exemption from taxes and duties will help the joint programme import the goods and services, when needed, at the most reasonable prices.

Addressing gender equality and women's empowerment

Across all 3 outputs of the project, a core aim of the programme will be to promote gender equality and women's empowerment:

- The proposals for the new social protection institution will encompass: a mission and vision that include gender equality and women's empowerment objectives; staff recruitment that promotes gender equality; staff job descriptions that include gender and women's empowerment objectives; equal pay and opportunities enshrined across the organization; the development of an internal gender equality strategy, alongside appropriate training; and, gender champions placed into senior positions across the organization.
- The re-design of delivery systems will take into account the particular needs of women across the lifecycle, as well as women with disabilities. For example, during registration and payments, attention will be given

to addressing the needs of carers of children, and staff responsible for administering the programmes will be given gender training and mechanisms will be established to ensure that there is no discrimination against women during programme delivery.

- The aims of gender equality and women's empowerment will be mainstreamed across the National Social Protection Strategy. Further, core programmes that will benefit women and girls will be prioritized, such as child benefits, social pensions (which mainly benefit women), maternity insurance and childcare. In addition, all programmes will be delivered to both women and men on an equal basis, such as disability and unemployment benefits. Overall, the reforms across the Strategy are likely to disproportionately benefit women given that many of the coverage gaps that need to be filled affect women more than men. The Strategy will also ensure that the monitoring and evaluation of programmes is undertaken using gender disaggregated data.
- The capacity building for application of social security standards will include strong gender component addressing issues of maternity protection; discrimination (with a focus on discrimination in the world of work); legislation review from gender perspective and gender responsive budgeting. It is expected that national partners will use presented tools for analysis of different sectoral and gender focused programmes, in particular national gender equality strategy; employment programme and the national budget analysis.
- The pilot initiatives developed for persons with disabilities will be designed to equally benefit women and men. Further, in contexts where disabled women are more disadvantaged than disabled men, the initiatives will be designed to address the imbalance. All staff involved in the delivery of the pilots – such as from DPOs – will participate in training on gender equality with particular reference to gender equality in the context of UNCRPD and will be encouraged to select and promote gender equality champions.

Leveraging broader financing

As indicated above, at the core of the Joint Programme is an aim of influencing government investment in social protection, including government funding of staff and administrative costs. Therefore, to a large extent, we will be leveraging broader government financing to take forward the objectives of the Joint Programme. While the Joint Programme will invest $2 million, the Government will also invest its own resources in supporting the reforms and expanding the social protection system both during the period of the Joint Programme and beyond. Further, by working closely with the Government, we will be able to support it in its negotiations with other donors, in particular the IFIs, and ensure that their support is in line with the National Social Protection Strategy and the broader reforms proposed by the Joint Programme.

2.5 Partnerships and stakeholder engagement

Leadership of government in the implementation of the programme

During recent years, the UN has built strong relations with key stakeholders across Government that are working on social protection. As a result, we have generated a strong commitment within Government for this programme. The programme will be led by the Deputy Prime Minister for Financial and Economic Issues and Poverty Reduction. A Steering Committee will be established, based on the UNDAF Results Group on Social Protection, which also comprises the most relevant Ministries engaged in social protection, UN Agencies and civil society partners. At an operational level, a technical working group will be comprised of UN agencies, all relevant government and civil society partners involved in programme implementation.

The unique contributions of the PUNOs and broader UNCT

Each of the PUNOs brings a particular comparative advantage and unique contributions to the joint programme. Over the past 2 years, UNICEF Uzbekistan team has been actively engaging with Government on options for institutional reform and will bring this expertise to Output 1. Further, UNICEF's expertise in shock responsive and child-sensitive social protection will play an important role in ensuring that the National Social Protection Strategy is child-sensitive and offers integrated support children need. The ILO has extensive international and regional

experience of engaging in social security policy development and will bring this expertise into the development of the National Social Protection Strategy and analysis of fiscal space. Additionally, ILO brings the voice of workers and employers into discussions on social protection and its links with employment and economic policies. Equally, UNDP has a long track-record of working with the Uzbek Government to strengthen the disability-inclusivity of social services and will bring this experience into Output 3. Further, UNDP has built good relations with national DPOs, which will be key partners in the delivery of Output 3. Each of the PUNOs will also be supported by their regional offices and headquarters.

The Joint Programme will draw on the expertise of other UNCT members, in particular UN Women, WHO, UNODC, FAO, and UNFPA in order to address cross-cutting issues of gender equality and women's empowerment, access to health, vital registration and labour market complementarities. Collaboration will be sought with: i) the World Bank intervention which aims to improve the inclusion of the most vulnerable families in the social assistance system and labour market, including those affected by the economic reforms; and, ii) EU Delegation programme planning and implementation which, at this stage indicates an interest in social sector governance, poverty alleviation, access to basic social services and reduction of inequalities.

UNDG Europe and Central Asia (ECA) Issue Based Coalition (IBC) for Social Protection will serve as a platform through which the UN's support to countries' efforts to design and strengthen social protection floor using a system-wide approach. The starting point for the engagement of the regional IBC in Social Protection is the recent brief with regional advocacy messages for social protection (https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/ShowRessource.action?id=55259) which can be further adapted to reflect Uzbekistan's context. Furthermore, IBC finalised mapping of social protection interventions in UNDAF's with an intention to inform new generation of UNDAFs making processes. Given that regional UNICEF, ILO, UNDP, WHO, FAO offices are members of this IBC the complementarities between the joint programme and UNDAF design on national, regional and global levels will be sought. Importantly, IBC organises periodical regional meetings, where exchange of lessons learnt between Uzbekistan and other countries implementing the SDG Fund joint programme can be organized.

ILO experience in social protection policy consultations

The ILO brings significant experience in an assessment-based approach to national dialogue on social protection. It has been used for the last seven years in more than 20 countries worldwide including Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. A national working group for strategy design is formed at the outset of the process. The group is responsible for planning and organizing the activities, providing technical inputs, briefing their respective agencies and partner organizations about the design process and regularly presenting on the progress and findings to high-level coordination committees. It is usually chaired by a leading national stakeholder and a development agency (ILO) to facilitate the process of lobbying to and endorsement by policy makers. The group initiates the process through a multi-stakeholder conference, supports identification of national priorities, setting up different working group depending on the priorities and needs and in general facilitates drafting process in terms of coordination and content analysis.

Such a process provides a medium for capacity development in the social protection area. Working groups in many countries have organized training workshops on social protection concepts and tools. Such an approach encourages national ownership of the process and its outputs and can assist technical staff to endorse the recommendations to the higher echelons of their agencies. It can also help countries to continue to use the adopted methodology on a regular basis.

Engaging with other stakeholders including representatives of target groups

While the Joint Programme will aim to work closely with Government, it will also be essential to incorporate a broader group of stakeholders in the programme. Consequently, a consultative group will be established that will incorporate social protection system users and their representative organisations. This will include, for example: organisations of persons with disabilities, young persons and women; academia and think-tanks; and, workers' and employers' organisations, linked to ILO tripartite mechanisms. It will be essential to include social protection system users and representatives of civil society within all three outputs. For example: in Output 1, we will consult with the recipients of social protection benefits, including those facing the greatest challenges of access, on how to improve delivery systems to make them more inclusive and address barriers experienced by disadvantaged members of society. A core component of Output 2 will be continuous consultations with workers's and employer's organisations as well as civil society organization organisations about the shape of the future social

protection system. In Output 3, disability persons organisations (DPOs) will be closely involved in both the design and delivery of pilot initiatives in line with ICF requirements. We will also look for other opportunities for consultation: for example, a recently adopted on the Tripartite Commission on Social and Labour Issues provides for a mechanism through which social protection issues will be addressed.

The Joint Programme will adopt a participatory approach to the development, implementation and evaluation of the programme. Particular attention will be paid to the empowerment of direct users of the social protection system, addressing the unequal position between representatives of decision-makers and beneficiaries of the system. The potential 'competition' between different beneficiary groups will be addressed from the perspective of equity and based on thorough consultations with interest groups.

A people-centred design will be particularly important in the design of the pilot schemes for persons with disabilities in line with CRPD and ICF requirements. This will not only involve disability people's organisations but also local government authorities, communities, makhallas, and the private sector.

3. Programme implementation

3.1 Governance and implementation arrangements

The Programme will be overseen by the Deputy Prime Minister for Financial and Economic Issues and Poverty Reduction in consultation with the UN Resident Coordinator and the three participating UN agencies. As indicated above, the UNDAF Results Group on Social Protection will serve as a Steering Committee for the programme. The Steering Committee will meet two times per year and will be responsible for approving programme plans and reviewing reports. In addition to the Deputy Prime Minister for Financial and Economic Issues and Poverty Reduction, it will also comprise Deputy Ministers from the following ministries: the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations (MELR), Ministry of Health (MoH), Ministry of Public Education (MoE), Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support, Ministry of Preschool Education, representatives of NGOs, and others. The group includes representatives of Federation of Trade Unions and National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (Employers) and civil society partners. From the UN side, the Steering Committee will be led by the UN Resident Coordinator.

At a more operational level, a Technical Working Group will be formed which will comprise the most senior members of Government and PUNOs who are directly involved in the implementation of the programme. The full Technical Working Group will meet on a monthly basis to review progress and adjust workplans. In addition, each of the three outputs of the programme will have joint PUNO and government teams who are actively engaged in taking forward the programme.

This arrangement will not only avoid the creation of parallel structures but will also fully integrate the programme management into UNDAF processes and substantively reduce coordination and transaction cost for UNCT and the Government. In addition, working groups – comprising both government and UN agencies – will be established for each of the outputs.

The Resident Coordinator will have the overall accountability for the programme. While all three participating agencies (UNICEF, ILO, UNDP) will work together on each of the three pillars of the programme, each will take a clear lead on the different pillars, leveraging their comparative advantages. The three PUNOs will meet regularly, with the RC Office, to jointly take stock of progress, lessons learnt, results and bottlenecks, and to recalibrate accordingly. Common 'key policy messages' will be agreed for advocacy with relevant national partners and IFIs, as and when needed.

Through the UNDAF Results Group, the three participating agencies will also ensure close and ongoing consultations with other key UNCT members including UNODC, FAO, WHO and UNFPA, to ensure that the evolving programme takes into account the expertise and priorities articulated by these agencies.

As co-chair of the Joint UNDAF-Government Results Group on Social Protection, building on its ongoing dialogue with the Cabinet of Ministers, UNICEF will lead the design and establishment of the integrated social protection entity, including capacity building on integrated social protection programme design, dialogue and short-term policy proposals on expanding the child benefit system and developing and supporting the pilot of an enhanced electronic delivery system for child benefits.

Building on its strong normative mandate, ILO will lead the development of the national social protection strategy. UNDP will lead on a catalytic pilot of high impact integrated interventions for people with disabilities, leveraging its successful experience in pilots and taking them to scale.

To facilitate seamless engagement and coordination with the national partners and among the UN agencies, the implementation team is expected to co-locate either in the Deputy Prime Minister's Office and later when the social protection entity is established in the new Ministry/Agency for Social Protection. This will further reinforce national ownership and embed sustainability of results. The programme manager will be empowered to coordinate planning, implementation and reporting across three pillars of the programme, ensuring synergies and complementarities.

Civil society, disabled people's organizations, private sector, trade unions, and mass media will be important stakeholders through ongoing social dialogue, as well as being involved in the implementation of all three pillars. In particular, the DPOs will be engaged in the design, implementation and monitoring of the pilot programmes for the PWD. The NGOs, academia and other partners will be involved in the institutional design and social protection strategy development. Furthermore, the ministry will be sensitized to foster social service provision by local NGOs, under the Ministry's standard setting and oversight.

To ensure transparency, coherence, and to bring in all partners, the (already existing) UNCT-supported "SDG Policy Dialogue" forum will be used to convene at least three multi-stakeholder discussions, co-chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and the RC, during the programme.

The programme has strong ownership by Government and fits clearly with the government's aim to undertake social and economic reforms that enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of programmes. The programme will work directly on key priorities of government, including determining effective leadership and coordination of the social protection sector and developing a long-term strategic direction of the programme. It is, therefore, critically important that the programme is implemented in a way that ensures full government buy-in. Therefore, in taking forward the first two pillars of the programme, we will follow the following principles:

- The programme will produce a range of options for the Government to consider and, ultimately, the government partners will make the final decisions on the reformed institutional framework and the National Social Protection Policy.
- The proposals developed by the programme will be based on evidence. We will only work with consultants who are national and international experts in social protection and are able to bring evidence and experience from around the world. Each option proposed will clearly set out the pros and cons. We will subject all proposals for options to quality assurance by our regional and international headquarters. Therefore, the Government will be assured that the proposals we put forward are workable and will clearly deliver on their objectives.
- We will integrate capacity development across the whole programme, in particular for our partners and the decision-makers in Government as well as civil society partners. We will include training courses on relevant aspects of social protection across the programme and on-the-job training to government partners. We also propose a study tour to Sweden which will play a critical role in building knowledge on social protection systems and institutional arrangements (Sweden was chosen for the relevance of its history and its institutional framework to Uzbekistan). As a result of this capacity development, government partners and decision-makers will be in a much better position to make evidence-based decisions, which will deliver much stronger government commitment to implementing the final programme deliverables (i.e. the institutional framework and National Social Protection Strategy).

- We will contract leading experts to undertake aspects of the programme, working closely in partnership with relevant government staff. We will build a team for each programe pillar comprising of experts, Government staff and PUNO staff to ensure that all proposals have fully taken into account the reality of Uzbekistan and are regarded as feasible by Government, before they are presented to decision-makers.
- Further, throughout the programme, before finalizing the deliverables, we will ensure that they undergo a consultation process. This will involve workshops bringing together key stakeholders in Government, including Government staff, academics, think-tanks and representatives of civil society, workers' organisations and employers organisations. Key stakeholders will also be asked to comment on all drafts of proposals. As a result, we will ensure that whatever the programme proposes to government will have broader national support.
- Finally, we will involve key decision-makers across the programme, rather than presenting them with a fait accompli at the end of the process. Key decision-makers at Ministerial level will be on the joint programme Steering Committee and, as a result, will have frequent opportunities to discuss proposals as they are being developed. We will also put together six-monthly reports for government which will be shared with the key decision-makers.

Therefore, at the end of the programme, we believe that we will present proposals that already have strong buy-in across Government and have been already tested with key decision-makers. Further, by ensuring that the programme is regarded as a Government-led initiative, the final deliverables should only include proposals that the Government itself is, in fact, putting forward. We will also ensure that all proposals have taken into account the fiscal space for reforms and are financially feasible. To achieve this, we will work closely with the Ministry of Finance in ensuring that all proposals are costed and that funding is available.

The third pillar of the programme will engage at a more local level, testing innovative initiatives in line with ICF for people with disabilities that could be scaled-up nationally. Therefore, we will follow the same principles of strong stakeholder engagement and ownership but will focus more on regional and local government as well as disabled persons' organisations (DPOs). All initiatives aimed at implementation of CRPD and ICF will be developed in close collaboration with national stakeholders and we will closely monitor and evaluate the results so that, at the end of programme, the initiatives that are proposed for scale-up have been fully tested and that there is evidence that they can be scaled-up successfully. The key initiatives that can be introduced at scale will be integrated and costed within our proposals for the new social protection entity and the National Social Protection Strategy, so that there is strong buy-in for their scale-up. Further, we will work with the Ministry of Finance to ensure that our proposals for scaling up initiatives are fully costed and that there is funding available, if key decision-makers decide to move ahead with them.

3.2 Monitoring, reporting, and evaluation

Reporting on the Joint SDG Fund will be results-oriented, and evidence based. Each PUNO will provide the Convening/Lead Agent with the following narrative reports prepared in accordance with instructions and templates developed by the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat:

- *Annual narrative progress reports*, to be provided no later than, one (1) month (31 January) after the end of the calendar year, and must include the result matrix, updated risk log, and anticipated expenditures and results for the next 12-month funding period;
- *Mid-term progress review report* to be submitted halfway through the implementation of Joint Programme[7]; and,
- *Final consolidated narrative report*, after the completion of the joint programme, to be provided no later than two (2) months after the operational closure of the activities of the joint programme.

[7] This will be the basis for release of funding for the second year of implementation.

The Convening/Lead Agent will compile the narrative reports of PUNOs and submit a consolidated report to the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat, through the Resident Coordinator.

The Resident Coordinator will be required to monitor the implementation of the joint programme, with the involvement of Joint SDG Fund Secretariat to which it must submit data and information when requested. As a minimum, joint programmes will prepare, and submit to the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat, 6-month monitoring updates. Additional insights (such as policy papers, value for money analysis, case studies, infographics, blogs) might need to be provided, per request of the Joint SDG Fund Secretariat. Joint programme will allocate resources for monitoring and evaluation in the budget.

Data for all indicators of the results framework will be shared with the Fund Secretariat on a regular basis, in order to allow the Fund Secretariat to aggregate results at the global level and integrate findings into reporting on progress of the Joint SDG Fund.

PUNOs will be required to include information on complementary funding received from other sources (both UN cost sharing, and external sources of funding) for the activities supported by the Fund, including in kind contributions and/or South-South Cooperation initiatives, in the reporting done throughout the year.

PUNOs at Headquarters level shall provide the Administrative Agent with the following statements and reports prepared in accordance with its accounting and reporting procedures, consolidate the financial reports, as follows:

- Annual financial reports as of 31st December each year with respect to the funds disbursed to it from the Joint SDG Fund Account, to be provided no later than four months after the end of the applicable reporting period; and
- A final financial report, after the completion of the activities financed by the Joint SDG Fund and including the final year of the activities, to be provided no later than 30 April of the year following the operational closing of the project activities.

In addition, regular updates on financial delivery might need to be provided, per request of the Fund Secretariat.

After competition of the joint programme, a final, *independent and gender-responsive*[8] *evaluation* will be organizsed by the Resident Coordinator. The cost needs to be budgeted, and in case there are no remaining funds at the end of the joint programme, it will be the responsibility of PUNOs to pay for the final, independent evaluation from their own resources.

The joint programme will be subjected to a joint final independent evaluation. It will be managed jointly by PUNOs as per established process for independent evaluations, including the use of a joint evaluation steering group and dedicated evaluation managers not involved in the implementation of the joint programme. The evaluations will follow the United Nations Evaluation Group's (UNEG) Norms and Standards for Evaluation in the UN System, using the guidance on Joint Evaluation and relevant UNDG guidance on evaluations. The management and implementation of the joint evaluation will have due regard to the evaluation policies of PUNOs to ensure the requirements of those policies are met and the evaluation is conducted with use of appropriate guidance from PUNOs on joint evaluation. The evaluation process will be participative and will involve all relevant programme's stakeholders and partners. Evaluation results will be disseminated amongst government, development partners, civil society, and other stakeholders. A joint management response will be produced upon completion of the evaluation process and made publicly available on the evaluation platforms or similar of PUNOs.

[8] How to manage a gender responsive evaluation, Evaluation handbook, UN Women, 2015

3.3 Accountability, financial management, and public disclosure

The Joint Programme will be using a pass-through fund management modality where the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office will act as the Administrative Agent (AA) under which the funds will be channeled for the Joint Programme through the AA. Each Participating UN Organization receiving funds through the pass-through has signed a standard Memorandum of Understanding with the AA.

Each Participating UN Organization (PUNO) shall assume full programmatic and financial accountability for the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent of the Joint SDG Fund (Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office). Such funds will be administered by each UN Agency, Fund, and Programme in accordance with its own regulations, rules, directives and procedures. Each PUNO shall establish a separate ledger account for the receipt and administration of the funds disbursed to it by the Administrative Agent.

Indirect costs of the Participating Organizations recovered through programme support costs will be 7%. All other costs incurred by each PUNO in carrying out the activities for which it is responsible under the Fund will be recovered as direct costs.

Funding by the Joint SDG Fund will be provided on annual basis, upon successful performance of the joint programme.

Procedures on financial transfers, extensions, financial and operational closure, and related administrative issues are stipulated in the Operational Guidance of the Joint SDG Fund.

PUNOs and partners must comply with Joint SDG Fund brand guidelines, which includes information on donor visibility requirements.

Each PUNO will take appropriate measures to publicise the Joint SDG Fund by developing overall package of Joint Programme messages. All related publicity material, official notices, reports and publications, provided to the press or Fund beneficiaries, will acknowledge the role of the host Government, donors, PUNOs, the Administrative Agent, and any other relevant entities. In particular, the Administrative Agent will include and ensure due recognition of the role of each Participating Organization and partners in all external communications related to the Joint SDG Fund.

3.4 Legal context

Agency name: UN
Agreement title: Agreement on establishment of UN Interim Office in Uzbekistan
Agreement date: 04.12.1992

Agency name: UNICEF
Agreement title: Basic Cooperation Agreement between UNICEF and the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan
Agreement date: 19.12.1994

Agency name: UNDP
Agreement title: Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between UNDP and Government of Uzbekistan
Agreement date: 10.06. 1994

Agency name: UNCT
Agreement title: Annex D to Uzbekistan UNDAF 2016-2020, Legal Framework of the UNDAF for Uzbekistan 2016-2020
Agreement date: 26.05.2016

Agency name: ILO
Agreement title: Action Plan for 2019-2020 "Road Map" for implementation of the Decent Work Country Programme of Uzbekistan and extension of cooperation with International Labour Organization
Agreement date: 01.08.2019

Agency name: UN
Agreement title: Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialised Agencies
Agreement date: 18.02.1997

D. ANNEXES

Annex 1. List of related initiatives

Name of initiative/project	Key expected results	Links to the joint programme	Lead organization	Other partners	Budget and funding source	Contract person (name and email)
Strengthening the social work and social service workforce	Qualified social workers with university degrees in social work recognised and employed in statutory decision making or in social service providing organizations; Government is committed to effective long-term planning of social service workforce and aligning functions, competencies and qualifications with international standards	The proposed state entity/mechanism provides institutional space for the community-based professional social workers	UNICEF	Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Public Education, Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, National University of Uzbekistan, Women's Committee	200,000 USD; UNICEF	Furkatjon Lutfulloev; flutfulloev@unicef.org
Child benefits reform	Evidence-based proposal on child benefit reform is developed and submitted to Government	The proposal is in light of rights-based social protection strategy envisaged by the Joint Programme. The proposed state entity/mechanism would implement the child benefit reform.	UNICEF	Cabinet of Ministers, Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, Ministry of Finance	100,000 USD; UNICEF	Yulia Oleinik, yolienik@unicef.org

Childcare system reform	Policy of the Government focused on deinstitutionalization (development of family-based alternative care and family support services)	Designed and costed social protection strategy	UNICEF	Ministry of Public Education, Women's Committee, Republican Center for Social Adaptation of Children	100,000 USD; UNICEF	Furkatjon Lutfulloev; flutfulloev@unicef.org
Improving the quality of newborn care	Reduced newborn mortality; Enhanced preventive mechanisms to reduce disability among newborn children	Innovative high impact pilot programmes for PwD	UNICEF	UNFPA, WHO, Ministry of Health	50,000 USD; UNICEF	Fakhriddin Nizamov, fnizamov@unicef.org
Modelling home visiting services by patronage nurses from universal to universal progressive (implying more targeted visits and identification of risks groups)	Models of institutionalized home visiting by patronage nurses are developed	In designing the social protection strategy and a state entity/mechanism this initiative should be taken into account, as it overlaps with the social workers' functions	UNICEF	MoH	50,000 USD, UNICEF	Fakhriddin Nizamov, fnizamov@unicef.org
Support to implementation of Charter-based and Treaty Bodies recommendations in Uzbekistan (UPR) Project	Enhance quality of national human rights monitoring system through the widening use of the UN human rights protection system	Joint advocacy on CRPD ratification	UNDP	NHRC, Parliament, GPO, MoJ, universities	405,000 USD UNDP, UK Embassy	Guzal Adilova, guzal.adilova@undp.org
Empowering Women to Participate in Public Administration and Socio-Economic Life (WEP) Project	Pilot and scale-up innovations for women empowerment to ensure that women	Joint advocacy on gender mainstreaming and implementation of CEDAW committee recommendations on social protection of vulnerable groups of	UNDP	Women's Committee, Senate of Parliament, State Statistics	611,162 USD UNDP, UK Embassy	Dilfuza Abulkhasan, dilfuza.abulkhasan@undp.org

	fully participate in socio-economic life. Policy support on women empowerment in line with international human rights treaties.	women and women with disabilities		Committee, Ministry of Justice		
Support to enhancement of law making, rulemaking and regulatory impact assessment/Phase-2 (RIA-2) Project	Enhance the quality of legislation by improving the regulatory environment through participatory and transparent processes, alignment with evidence-based policy and international standards, and efficient parliamentary oversight mechanisms.	Joint advocacy on promoting legislative changes to Parliament	UNDP	Presidential Administration, Parliament, GPO, Cabinet of Ministers, MoJ, Universities	500,000 USD UNDP, UK Embassy	Azat Irmanov, azat.irmanov@undp.org
Support for the Implementation of a Decent Work Country Programme in Uzbekistan	The project focuses on promotion of decent work in the country, with a specific emphasis on the promotion of fundamental principles and rights at work, and is aligned with three priorities agreed with constituents:	Consultations with constituents leading to the design of a national social protection strategy Increased awareness of national constituents about ILO instruments and approaches to improve social protection system	ILO	Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion Federation of Trade Unions Confederation of Employers and Chamber of Commerce	6, 000 000 USD US Department of Labour	Anton Hausen Hausen@ilo.org

	1.Strengthening social partnership for the realisation of fundamental principles and rights at work 2.Fostering decent employment opportunities 3.Improving working conditions and social protection.	Joint advocacy to promote social protection			
Strengthening the social protection system project (loan)	Hardware for national rollout of Single Registry for Social Protection Improving effectiveness of active labour market programs	The UN is developing and piloting the Single Registry for Social Protection and the Government will use the World Bank's loan for the national rollout of the Registry (hardware procurement - $5M).	World Bank	Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations	50,000,000 USD Loan from IDA

Annex 2. Overall Results Framework

2.1. Targets for Joint SDG Fund Results Framework

Joint SDG Fund Outcome 1: Integrated multi-sectoral policies to accelerate SDG achievement implemented with greater scope and scale

Indicators	Targets	
	2020	2021
1.1: integrated multi-sectoral policies have accelerated SDG progress in terms of scope[9]		1*
1.2: integrated multi-sectoral policies have accelerated SDG progress in terms of scale[10]		1*
*National Social Protection Strategy		

Joint SDG Fund Output 3: Integrated policy solutions for accelerating SDG progress implemented

Indicators	Targets	
	2020	2021
3.1: # of innovative solutions that were tested[11] (disaggregated by % successful-unsuccessful) - Pilot on services for people with disabilities	1	2
3.2: # of integrated policy solutions that have been implemented with the national partners in lead - social protection strategy		1
3.3: # and share of countries where national capacities to implement integrated, cross-sectoral SDG accelerators has been strengthened - social protection agency/coordination mechanism		1

Joint SDG Fund Operational Performance Indicators

- Level of coherence of UN in implementing programme country[12]
- Reduced transaction costs for the participating UN agencies in interaction with national/regional and local authorities and/or public entities compared to other joint programmes in the country in question
- Annual % of financial delivery
- Joint programme operationally closed within original end date
- Joint programme financially closed 18 months after their operational closure
- Joint programme facilitated engagement with diverse stakeholders (e.g. parliamentarians, civil society, IFIs, bilateral/multilateral actor, private sector)
- Joint programme included addressing inequalities (QCPR) and the principle of "Leaving No One Behind"
- Joint programme featured gender results at the outcome level
- Joint programme undertook or draw upon relevant human rights analysis, and have developed or implemented a strategy to address human rights issues
- Joint programme planned for and can demonstrate positive results/effects for youth

[9]Scope=substantive expansion: additional thematic areas/components added or mechanisms/systems replicated.
[10]Scale=geographical expansion: local solutions adopted at the regional and national level or a national solution adopted in one or more countries.
[11]Each Joint programme in the Implementation phase will test at least 2 approaches.
[12] Annual survey will provide qualitative information towards this indicator.

- Joint programme considered the needs of persons with disabilities
- Joint programme made use of risk analysis in programme planning
- Joint programme conducted do-no-harm / due diligence and were designed to take into consideration opportunities in the areas of the environment and climate change

2.2. Joint programme Results framework

Result / Indicators	Baseline	2020 Target	2021 Target	Means of Verification	Responsible partner
Output 1: By 2022, an integrated social protection entity/mechanism with appropriate administrative systems and operations with sufficient capacity to deliver effective, tailored-to-needs social protection to every citizen of Uzbekistan is designed					
Output 1.1 indicator: Institutional design of an integrated social protection entity/mechanism exists	no	Yes	Yes	Report of national partners	UNICEF
Output 1.2 indicator: Integrated social protection entity/mechanism with appropriate administrative systems with sufficient capacity is developed and ready for implementation	no	No	Yes	Report of national partners	UNICEF
Output 2: By 2022, a national social protection strategy in line with the 2030 Agenda is developed and costed jointly with relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries					
Output 2.1 Indicator Costed national Social Protection Strategy is ready for implementation	no	No	Yes	Reports of national partners/constituents	ILO
Output 2.2 Indicator fiscal space for social protection analysed	no	No	Yes	Reports of national partners/constituents Reports of Ministry of Finance	ILO

Output 3: By 2022, the Government of Uzbekistan has tested the disability assessment procedures and service delivery design based on ICF and CRPD norms and has taken on board the relevant policy recommendations.

Output 3.1 Indicator: Existence of lessons learned on results of pilot initiatives on ICF and options for scale up shared with the government for endorsement	no	No	Yes	Reports of DPOs, national partners	UNDP
Output 3.2 indicator: Proposal for building an adult social services system developed in line with CRPD requirements and presented to Government	no	No	Yes	Reports of DPOs, national partners	UNDP
Output 3.3 indicator: An improved disability assessment mechanism is piloted, probably based on the ICF and compliant with the UN CRPD, and which also reduces barriers to access	a poor-quality medical model	a poor-quality medical model	ICF and UN CRPD compliant mechanism is piloted	Reports of DPOs, national partners	UNDP
Output 3.4 indicator: Number of DPOs, which strengthened their capacities on CRPD and ICF and participated in the design and implementation of the pilot initiatives	0	0	10	Reports of DPOs, national partners	UNDP
Output 3.5 indicator: Strategy on social protection includes measures on the improvement of Knowledge, Attitude and Practices towards people with disabilities in accordance to the CRPD norms	no	No	Yes	Reports of DPOs, national partners	UNDP

Annex 3. Theory of Change graphic

Insert the graphical representation of the Theory of Change. This could be even a simple diagram.

Impact: Vulnerable groups, and especially children, women, NEET youth, unemployed, and PWDs, are effectively protected from the potential risks and vulnerabilities and benefit from more equitable access to resources, leading to acceleration of progress towards SDGs 1, 5, 10 and 16.

Outcome: By 2022, the Government has an integrated and sustainable social protection system and initial capacity in place to improve social protection coverage for all citizens, in particular the most vulnerable, across Uzbekistan.

Output 1:

By 2022, an integrated social protection entity/mechanism with appropriate administrative systems and operations with sufficient capacity to deliver effective, tailored-to-needs social protection to every citizen of Uzbekistan is designed.

Risks:

1. Government deprioritizes social protection
2. High staff turnover among key national partners
3. Establishment of the social protection ministry/agency is impeded by political disagreement
4. Government cannot identify sources of adequate funding/authority for the integrated social protection entity/mechanism

Strategic interventions:

1. By 2021, Government is equipped with a costed institutional design concept for the integrated social protection system [Assumption: Government adopts the concept and commits sufficient resources]
2. By 2022, Government has developed functions, standard operating procedures and protocols [Assumption: Government is committed to develop the integrated social protection system]
3. By 2022, Government has an action plan to operationalize the integrated social protection entity/mechanism [Assumption: Government is committed to implement the action plan]
4. By 2022, the Government has a capacity-building plan to operate the integrated social protection system in line with a rights-based approach, including the training of trainers [Assumption: The integrated social protection entity/mechanism is sufficiently resourced]
5. By 2022, The Government has a model of integrated approaches in social protection on the basis of reforms in child benefits and services
6. By 2022, the Government is equipped with a management information system (MIS) for two flagship programmes and capable of expanding in line with the strategic monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework for social protection [Assumption: Government has a capacity to use the MIS]

Output 2:

By 2022, a National Social Protection Strategy in line with the 2030 Agenda is developed and costed jointly with relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Risks:

1. Government deprioritizes social protection
2. Social dialogue does not reflect concerns in the social protection system

Strategic interventions:

1. By end of 2020, consultations on a National Social Protection Strategy – led by Government – have been held with citizens' groups and representatives, through an engagement mechanism that has been designed by mid-2020 and which is built on existing mechanisms.
2. By mid 2021, Government discusses proposals and options for a progressive and inclusive National Social Protection Strategy designed through a multi-stakeholder participatory process including the National Tripartite Commission [Assumption: Government is committed to design the national social protection strategy]
3. By end of 2020, Government and social partners have the capacity to design a social protection system in line with international social security standards [Assumption: Government and social partners are committed to uphold to rights-based social security standards and engage in capacity development]
4. By 2022, Government has a costed and progressive national social protection strategy that ensures no-one is left-behind [Assumption: Government is committed to lead the process]
5. By 2022, Government is equipped with the knowledge of the fiscal space for progressive social protection and the means to achieve that fiscal space [Assumption: Government is open to transparently discuss public finance]

Output 3:

By 2022, the Government of Uzbekistan has tested the disability assessment procedures and service delivery design based on ICF and CRPD norms and has taken on board relevant policy recommendations.

Risks:

1. Government may further delay the ratification of UNCRPD or ratify it with substantial reservations and declarations
2. Change in CSO legislation, which might make difficult the pilot initiatives to be led by DPOs.
3. Delay in announcement of legal experiment or creating another space for testing pilot initiatives
4. The responsible ministries may resist to accept the results of the pilot initiatives

Strategic interventions:

1. By 2021, the ICF & CRPD compliant procedures of disability assessment are piloted to identify the impact and implications expected from ICF introduction and CRPD implementation at the local level. [Assumption: Government approves the designed pilot initiatives]
2. By 2021, the CRPD compliant social services for people with disabilities focused on achieving economic self-sustainability are piloted to demonstrate opportunities for quality and accessibility improvements at affordable costs for state budget. [Assumption: Government approves the designed pilot initiatives]
3. By 2021, Government has an extended capacity to revise legislation to align it with CRPD and to evaluate efficiency and effectiveness of the current state policies and programmes on social protection of PWDs via collecting disability related statistics in line with international standards and SDGs priorities / targets / indicators. [Assumption: The Government is considering the need to align the national legislation with the international human rights standards]
4. By the end of 2021, pilot initiatives are designed and launched to deliver social services and benefits, using innovative user-led and citizen-centered forms and methods that are compliant with the CRPD jointly with DPOs, experts, stakeholders and beneficiaries [Assumption: Government approves the designed pilot initiatives].
5. By the end of 2022, a CRPD compliant disability assessment mechanism has been revised and designed in collaboration with government, based on the ICF piloting results [Assumption: Government is willing to move away from a purely medical model of assessment]
6. By 2022, lessons learned on pilot initiatives are analyzed, codified and provided to Government through a series of policy papers and consultative workshops to fine-tune policy advice to Government [Assumption: Government

Annex 4. Gender marker matrix

Indicator N°	Indicator Formulation	Score	Findings and Explanation	Evidence or Means of Verification
1.1	Context analysis integrate gender analysis	3	Clear analysis of the vulnerabilities that women face in social protection system. The causes of the gender inequality was analysed from the perspective of SDG 5.	Statistics, UN reports
1.2	Gender Equality mainstreamed in proposed outputs	2	All three outputs both explicitly and implicitly mainstreamed gender equality and women empowerment.	Theory of change, outputs and activities formulation
1.3	Programme output indicators measure changes on gender equality	1	Gender equality is mainstreamed across all outputs and indicators measuring empowerment of women and access to social protection rights from the perspective of SDG 5	Output indicators Reports
2.1	PUNO collaborate and engage with Government and social partners on gender equality and the empowerment of women	3	All PUNOs have consulted with government agencies which are members of UNDAF Social Protection Results Group. In addition, Women's committee of Uzbekistan is one of the partners of the programme. The Sub-Committee for Women of the Federation of Trade Unions of Uzbekistan will be actively involved in Output 2 addressing gender equality and the rights of women workers in the process of drafting national social protection strategy. Piloting ICF within Output 3 takes into account rights and needs of women with disabilities.	List of participants and minutes of the UNDAF Social Protection Results Group Meetings Minutes of the multi-stakeholders consultative process to draft social protection strategy reflecting participants gender equality concerns Number and quality of interventions in the draft strategy addressing gender based inequalities
2.2	PUNO collaborate and engages with women's/gender equality CSOs	2	PUNOs consulted with Women's Committee of Uzbekistan and DPOs who are promoting protection of the rights of women in difficult situations and women with disabilities. Youth Union was consulted with regard to girls with disabilities. The comments and feedback from CSOs were incorporated in the programme.	UN reports, minutes of meetings, media interviews and statements of CSOs
3.1	Program proposes a gender-responsive budget	1	Less than 15% of the total budget is allocated to gender equality	Budget breakdown and workplans
Total scoring		**2**		

Annex 5. Communication plan

1) Overall narrative of the joint programme

Key narratives:

1. **A new social protection system will serve the needs of all, especially the most vulnerable and foster an inclusive and equitable society in a dynamically changing Uzbekistan.**
2. **Long-term sustainable investment in an integrated social protection system will support vulnerable groups' integration into education, employment, and public participation.**
3. **Every person has the right to social security**
4. **All persons with disabilities shall enjoy the benefits of inclusive social protection reform, be active change agents for the transformation of social services and be able to contribute to the sustainable development of the country they live in.**
5. **Only a system that is well-coordinated can deliver.**

Expectations from the communication component:

- Promote the paradigm shift away from a charity-based approach to rights-based approach to social protection
- Highlight the effectiveness of good practices and solutions- innovations, compliance with international human rights commitments and an inclusive approach to social protection
- Increase the awareness of decision makers and beneficiaries - effective interaction for moving the social protection system reform agenda forward.
- Contribute to achieving the objectives of the Joint Programme by increasing visibility and promoting joint dialogues to ensure the scaling up and replication of the programme results.

2) Strategic approach to key audiences

Programme Outputs	1. **Integrated institutional design for social protection system**	2. **Social protection Strategy: inclusive, sustainable and integrated with other state programmes**	3. **Persons with disabilities as change agents and active users of social protection system**
Stakeholders	Central Government, Presidential Administration	Central Government, line ministries, republican CSOs representing different groups (youth, women, PWDs etc)	Regional and local government, line ministries, DPOs, local CSOs in regions, associations of private companies

Audience	Top decision-makers, senior level public officials, mainstream official media outlets	Top decision-makers, senior and mid-level public officials, mainstream and private media outlets	Decision-makers in ministries and local governments, mid-level public officials, private and regional media outlets, bloggers
	Strategic approaches		
Advocacy objectives	Establish a single agency for social protection to overcome fragmentation of institutional framework and ensure integrated approach to social protection. Develop family-based or community-based social services. Reform child benefits with a pathway for progressive expansion of coverage. Appropriate allocation of budget for social protection.	Adopt a sustainable, costed/evidence-based, rights-based and long-term visioning approach. Inclusion of international standards and conventions in the draft of social protection strategy Ensure public participation in the process of finalising the new strategy	Ensure that UNCRPD and ICF provisions are applied in social protection system and social services delivery mechanism Adopt case management approach and social work professionals for disability related services and benefits In line with CRPD principles, DPOs and PwDs should be fully engaged in design, implementation and monitoring of Government programme on social protection Ratification of UNCRPD
Media/promotion activities with objectives	Inviting media to meetings of Social Protection Results Groups and conferences of the joint programme to ensure a continued public discourse on social protection; and create sense of urgency among decision-makers. Publication and dissemination of analytical articles, TV programmes through mainstream media to ensure	Disseminating the policy research pieces in a simplified manner through media outlets to ensure that public has accurate information about the new social protection strategy. Media outlets and social media to promote public consultations on new social protection strategy to ensure public participation in governance	Involving local and private media during announcement and implementation of pilot initiatives in regions to disseminate information locally. Inviting media to public events co-organised with DPOs to highlight issues of PWDs to decision makers Preparation and dissemination of articles, TV, radio and internet products, which are co-prepared with PwDs and specialised

	evidence-based decisions for planning and implementation.	Inviting specialised media outlets to expert discussions and thematic workshops/seminars to validate the recommendations as technically sound.	journalists/bloggers to enhance visibility of the pilot project. Disseminating and promoting the results of pilot initiatives in private, regional and mainstream media outlets to highlight effectiveness of the project.
Programmatic approach	Demonstration of international standards and best practices Round table discussions with stakeholders and supporting public participation in the reform agenda Designing key strategic communication messages and discourse narratives for mainstream media outlets Ensuring donor visibility requirements during public events and preparation / dissemination of communication products	Demonstration of international standards and the best practices Promote publicly transparent and consultative process of designing new social protection strategy reform documents Round table discussions with stakeholders and supporting public participation of the draft strategy Designing key thematic communication messages and discourse narratives on social protection strategy for mainstream media outlets Ensuring donor visibility requirements during public events and preparation/dissemination of communication products	Demonstration of international standards and best practices in implementation of pilot initiatives jointly with DPOs and other stakeholders Ensuring compliance with HRBA, SDGs/LNOB, CRPD and ICF requirements in communication components of pilot initiatives. Support upscaling to national level based on success of pilot solutions and initiatives, with cross-learning and sharing. Designing key communication messages on social protection vis-à-vis disability issues and discourse narratives on inclusive model of disability for regional and mainstream media outlets Ensuring donor visibility requirements during public events and preparation/dissemination of communication products

3) Objectives of strategic communication plan

The overall strategic communication objective is to elevate the need for social protection strengthening in the context of ongoing reforms and to provide appropriate visibility to the joint programme and its results. The communication plan has been designed to accurately communicate about the social protection reform goals and progress to a diverse audience in Uzbekistan, with due attention to geographical, gender, age, disability and linguistic representation of audiences. The communication plan will be implemented in compliance with the UN communication standards, SDG Fund guidance and donors' expectations.

Indicators:

- Number of media products prepared and disseminated by the Joint programme. Baseline: 0, Target: 4 per quarter (two by UNDP, one by UNICEF, one by ILO).
- Number of shares and downloads of content information posted in official websites of PUNOs. A wide range of web-metrics and analytics tools will be used to compile and analyze the quantitative results of communication results. Target TBD by ILO and UNDP
- Number of likes and reposts in social media accounts of PUNOs with regard to joint programme communication materials and posts. These social media accounts include Twitter, Facebook etc. (Target: UNICEF Facebook 10 per post, Twitter 05 per post. UNDP Facebook 10 per post, Twitter 20 per post. ILO TBD)
- Commitment expressed by decision makers to adopt policy documents and legislative acts proposed by the joint programme. Baseline: No. Target: Yes
- Availability of effective mechanism to provide feedback and comments by people during public consultations to the draft policy and legislative documents, posted for online discussions Baseline No; Target: Yes
- Number of media reports highlighting the work of the joint programme team, PUNO and RCO, with regard to the implementation progress and results of the joint programme: Baseline: 0. Target: 10 per quarter.

The UN Communication Group and the PUNOs' Communications teams will be actively supporting the implementation of the Communication plan of the Joint Programme. Substantial matters on social protection will be aligned with the overall discourse and advocacy of UNCT related to poverty reduction, healthcare reform, employment, disability, governance reform, human rights and women empowerment.

The joint programme will provide inputs into the strategic interventions of UNCT and UNRC in the social protection reforms, led by the Government.

4) Main activities

Programme Manager will be accountable for monitoring and reporting on the communication plan, supported by inputs from communication officers of PUNO and UNRC.

#	Brief description	Methods and communication channels	Responsible PUNO and focal point	Resources to be invested	Timeline
1	Produce analytical communication products such as policy briefs and reports on integrated agency for social protection, new social protection strategy and disability issues	• Direct mail (to government, CSOs, DPOs and donors) • Printing and distribution at public and policy dialogue events • Public events • Print and electronic media • Web sites	All 3 PUNO and their communication teams	As per JP budget lines	Q2-4, 2020 Q3-4, 2021
2	Organize public events, roundtable conferences, seminars and presentations (means of online platforms). Invite media professionals and disseminate press releases.	• Print and electronic media coverage • Website(s) - announcement, news and materials • Newsletter to disseminate all information to key stakeholders.	Joint programme team and communication teams of 3 PUNOs	As per JP budget lines	Q1-4, 2020 Q1-4, 2021

		• Social media platforms (to disseminate information related to issues and results); blog posts and public discussions			
3	Preparing and disseminating articles in print media and broadcasting on electronic media. These could be thematic issues, news coverage or interviews with government representatives and partners	•Online news websites •Website(s) of Government and UN agencies to highlight articles / publications •Social media platforms to provide links, comments and public discussion	Joint programme team and communication teams of 3 PUNOs	As per JP budget lines	Q-2-3, 2020 Q-1-4, 2021
4	Create simplified communication materials for public consumption through media, from complex and technical reports, such as infographics, video materials flyers, and innovative products.	• Specialists to work with stakeholders to design products and disseminate these for Government agencies and local governments for decision making as handouts at events. • NGO partners to use these advocacy materials during	Joint programme team with communication focal points	As per JP budget lines	Q-4, 2020 Q-4, 2021

		engagement with partners. • Printed and electronic media to use this in their content dissemination. • Web sites, including partner e-resources to post it online •Newsletters to publish these materials for stakeholders. •Social media platforms and blogs to highlight these materials.			
5	Creating and publishing news stories in PUNOs' and partners' websites, and cross-posting these pages/posts in social media networks, and blogs	• Stories to be created and published on websites of PUNOs and national partners • Disseminated through social media networks	Joint programme team and communication teams of 3 PUNOs	As per JP budget lines	Q-1-4, 2020 Q-1-4, 2021
6	Designing and producing promotional materials as per UN and SDGs/donor requirements and	• To be distributed during public events	Joint programme team and communication teams of 3 PUNOs	As per JP budget lines	Q-2-3, 2020 Q-2-4, 2021

guidelines (including PSAs, booklets, flyers, banners, designs for pens, folders, notebooks used during public events)	• To be distributed during working and expert meetings • To be used as additional materials for the main publications and other products • Electronic versions of branded booklets to be disseminated on websites of PUNOs and national partners

The proposed basic set of monitoring indicators for the implementation of the Communication Plan:

a) Efficiency of organizing **a public event**
   - Turnout percentage of invited participants
     - Target: >50%
     - The actual percentage of participants in the event vs. expected will demonstrate two things:
       - Interest of a target group
       - Problems with access to the target group

b) Public event **media coverage**
   - Percentage of publications in the media vs. number of journalists attended
     - Target: >50%

c) **Gender**
   - Mention of gender disaggregated data in media reports

d) **Web resources**
   - Number of visits (trend-dynamics)
   - Average time on site (trend-dynamics)
   - Web analytics (which pages are most popular)

e) **Social media networks**
   - Growth/decline in the number of subscribers (trends, particularly linked with events)
   - Number of comments (trend dynamics) and nature of comments (positive/negative/neutral)
   - Using the "Share", "Like", "Dislike" etc (trend dynamics)

In case of force majeure, changes in the joint programme's communication/media activities will be made, in consultation with UNCG, UNRCO and all 3 PUNOs.

Annex 6. Learning and Sharing Plan

The joint programme has significant learning potential at national, regional and international levels. Uzbekistan is an almost unique case in the area of social protection internationally: it is a lower middle-income country that is one of the highest investors in social protection across low and middle-income countries. Yet, despite this funding, there are significant gaps in coverage and significant potential for transformative reform that enhances the wellbeing of all citizens whenever they are vulnerable across the lifecycle. It will be important to document the process of reform and ensure that learning is embraced at national, regional and international levels. As a result, learning – and the sharing of this learning – will be at the heart of the joint programme.

In this Annex, we outline our strategic approach to learning and sharing, the objectives and the main activities.

1) Strategic approach to learning and sharing

The scope of our learning and sharing

At the heart of our learning and sharing programme is our ambition to transform the lives of Uzbekistan's citizens by working with government to reform its investment in social protection which currently comprises a large part of government expenditure. The potential return, if the joint programme is successful, is enormous since the social protection system has the potential to reach all citizens whenever they are vulnerable across the lifecycle, offering them income security and tailored access to a range of social care services that go beyond the provision of cash. We aim to demonstrate what can be achieved by Uzbekistan – and other low- and middle-income countries – if countries commit to investing in progressive national social protection system that is focused on the realization for of fundamental human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment and inclusivity. In collaboration with the government of Uzbekistan, we will bring about a cultural change in how social protection is conceived, designed and delivered.

As we seek to bring about change in Uzbekistan's social protection system, there will be a range of sources of learning:

- We will undertake significant research and analysis to underpin our engagement in policy dialogue on social protection. This will include building evidence on the evolution and drivers of Uzbekistan's social protection system, its effectiveness and impacts, options for reforms which will include the development of costings and simulation models, and economic and social analysis to build the case for reform. In addition, we will build our knowledge on social protection in the region and internationally, assess the relevance for Uzbekistan of different experiences in social protection across the world, and undertake analysis of the international evidence.
- As we develop options for institutional reform, we will undertake research on governance and social protection within the region and across the globe, which can be applied to Uzbekistan.
- As we strengthen the delivery of operational systems, in particular of child and disability benefits, we will learn lessons on building effective and efficient delivery systems using innovative technologies. We will be able to document and share these lessons.
- A core challenge worldwide is how to undertake disability assessments that respect the CRPD's approach to disability. We will assess Uzbekistan's current system and develop and test an alternative approach which could offer lessons for other countries facing similar challenges.
- The integrated disability schemes that will be developed will generate lessons not only for Uzbekistan but for other countries where social protection systems are not disability inclusive. To date, there has been limited experience across low and middle-income countries in testing innovative approaches that build linkages between disability cash benefits and other services.
- Few low- and middle-income countries have effective social care and social work systems. We believe that our work to design the framework for a system will have significant international lesson-learning potential.

There will be five main audiences for the sharing of our learning:

- The Government of Uzbekistan, since it is critical that we influence and build the understanding of policymakers and the civil servants who support them, as well as Members of Parliament.
- Non-government actors in Uzbekistan who have a role in influencing government policy including civil society organization, the media, academia and think-tanks, employees' organisations and the private sector, including employers' and workers organisations.
- Governments in the Central Asian region that are dealing with similar challenges to Uzbekistan, in particular as the previous Soviet system of social protection breaks down and needs to be replaced by a different approach to social protection that is aligned to the current social, economic and political realities of the region.
- Other low- and middle-income countries that are seeking to build comprehensive social protection systems and will be able to learn from Uzbekistan on what works and what does not.
- United Nation's organisations worldwide which are seeking to promote social protection as one means of realizing the SDGs. We believe that our programme will be able to generate thought-leadership across the UN system

Some of the key learning that will aim to share will include:

- The value of moving from a charity to a rights-based approach to social protection that is able to offer all citizens support as they face risks and vulnerabilities across the lifecycle.
- The value of investing a significant proportion of government expenditure in social protection and how that can be further enhanced by reforms that are inclusive and aim to ensure access for all yet are also cost-effective and efficient.
- Many low- and middle-income countries experience the challenge of a lack of coherence, coordination and leadership in their social protection systems. Therefore, work to build an integrated governance system for Uzbekistan will offer significant learning potential for these countries.
- How to make social protection systems more disability inclusive, reforming disability benefits so that they support, rather than discourage, people with disabilities to access employment, and building linkages between cash-based benefits for people with disabilities and broader social services.
- Initiatives to strengthen social protection schemes and systems so that they more effectively promote gender equality and women's empowerment, including supporting women to enter the labour market.
- Transforming social protection systems to make them more child-sensitive.
- Building coordinated, multi-tiered social protection systems that comprise complementary social insurance and tax-financed benefits across the lifecycle and which deliver an effective social protection floor financed by general taxation while offering enhanced protection for those who are able to invest in contributory schemes.
- Strengthening operational systems for the delivery of cash transfers through the use of new technologies and designs that are compliant with human rights principles.

Methods, tools and instruments to be used in generating knowledge and learning

We will use a wide range of methods, tools and instruments to generate knowledge and learning. These will include:

- Literature reviews that access existing knowledge of social protection in Uzbekistan and worldwide;
- Analytical research using national household survey datasets and administrative data;
- The monitoring of pilot initiatives as well as small-scale evaluations.

- Consultations with key stakeholders, including from government, civil society, academia and programme recipients.
- Access to information on social protection held within PUNO agencies worldwide as well as datasets on social protection managed by other international agencies, such as the World Bank, FAO, ECLAC, UNESCAP, etc.
- Tools developed by the SPIAC-B UN interagency group for the analysis of social protection systems.

Methods, tools and instruments to be used in sharing knowledge and learning

We plan to use a range of approaches to share our knowledge and learning. These will include:

- Publications and blogs that outline the work we have undertaken;
- Videos that document the experiences of the project;
- A joint programme website where we will hold information relevant for the programme, including our own outputs as well broader information that will be of use to Uzbek stakeholders;
- Placing of our outputs on international websites that are used as sources of information on social protection, such as the ILO's GESS, socialprotection.org, UNRISD's human rights and social protection website and UN Sustainable Development Agenda Platfrom
- Webinars with other UN agencies across the Central Asia region working on similar issues.
- Webinars with socialprotection.org to share our learning internationally.
- Use of social media to disseminate our communications products.
- Attendance of PUNO and Government of Uzbekistan staff in international conferences to share papers etc.

To ensure effective dissemination of our learning in Uzbekistan and the Central Asia region, we will publish papers in both Russian and English while our website will have both Russian and English windows.

The joint programme learning and sharing plan will record the following segments:

• *Factual knowledge* based on evidence generated through measurable, observable and verifiable data collected in all stages of joint programme implementation. Data sources include national statistics, administrative data, independent and focused research on topics. This factual knowledge, with a particular emphasis on quality and accuracy of statistical data will be used for evidence based policy making within the joint programme for:

i. drafting national social protection strategy, and costing estimates;

ii. national partners capacity development for data collection, analysis reporting and monitoring on SDGs implementation.

This is of importance for the joint programme itself but also in light of Uzbekistan's intention to participate in a Voluntary National Review Process in 2020 during the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

Data collection procedures include standardised SPIAC–B UN Interagency information and statistical data procedures, with an emphasis on Social Security Inquiry (SSI[1]) enabling reporting progress towards achievement of SDG 1.3 through which data is collected biannually worldwide. Thus, the tool provides for progress monitoring on the country level, but also for comparisons with other countries worldwide.

• *Expectational knowledge* – refers to knowledge rooted in expectations, judgments, attitudes and norms.

• *Know-how and methodological knowledge* which will record particular techniques, methods adopted to the country's context or developed within the joint programme. Lessons learnt recording different aspects of the implementation as well as perspectives of different stakeholders will be recorded in the form of *How to Guides* analyzed and validated with a dedicated group of direct partners prior to dissemination. The ultimate goal is to capture an effective sequence or process with enough accuracy so that it can be repeated with the same good results.

All this data will be codified and stored on joint programme online platform. The joint programme online platform will be administered by the joint programme monitoring officer and open for use to national partners and diverse other users.

The joint programme team will, in consultations with national partners, select most relevant/illustrative knowledge products and share them on the regional level within participating PUNO. For example, ILO maintains a global knowledge sharing platform[2] on the extension of social security aiming to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas, capture and document experiences, identify knowledge gaps, create new knowledge and promote innovation. Based on the Web 2.0 approach, the platform promotes user interaction, social network creation and content syndication. The content is organized geographically and by topic. The platform contains pages dedicated to the design and implementation of the SPF at national levels enabling an opportunity to users to follow SPF-I national processes worldwide. Regional and subregional ILO experts including experts from the International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin (Turin Centre), serve as a primary vehicle for collecting and assessing these critical knowledge and gaps in the regions. This then informs research projects undertaken at headquarters and contributes to scaling up the knowledge harnessed and solutions to close the gaps. Furthermore, a dedicated Global Flagship Programme Building Social Protection Floors for All webspace https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/Flagship.action enables good practice examples sharing and interactions between implementers, partners and donors.

Overall, throughout the lifespan of the joint programme up to 15 knowledge products will be developed and disseminated. Indicative topics include:

• Case studies – contribution of social protection to SDGs; the role of national tri-partite commission in designing social protection system capturing processes of participatory decision making; identification of fiscalspace for social protection; social norms and practices towards inclusion of persons with disabilities; initiation of people-centred intervention design on a local level;

• Infographics- presenting data collected through human stories and visualising contribution to achievement of SDGs

• Short video- stories – presenting selected joint programme interventions through impact on lives of individuals

• 'How to guides' explaining the process of institutional design; design of functions; participatory processes leading to social protection strategy design; steps and requirements needed for costing; conduct people-centred design

The main criteria for selection of topics for knowledge programmes is a need to understand and analyse the issue in a real-life setting. Although knowledge products will be primarily exploratory and explanatory in nature, illustrating *what, why and how* something happened and what is or is not expected to be an impact, they will also have an evaluative element, which will be derived from joint analysis with partners whose inputs will be used to validate to analysis.

2) Objectives of learning and sharing

The main objectives of the of learning and sharing plan are:

i. Capture, analyse, systematise, interpret and disseminate knowledge and experience accumulated during Joint Programme implementation with the audience identified earlier, in the section *The scope of learning and sharing;*

ii. Generate the evidence about contribution of investment into social protection to poverty reduction, social inclusion and resilience building

iii. Ensure that JP partners, constituents, civil society and other relevant collaborators, as well as UNCT have a clear and common understanding of the social protection system, its contribution to achieving of SDGs and in particular to the principle of leaving no one behind

iv. Create synergies between JP and other interventions implemented by UNCT, development and national partners.

Indicative list of indicators includes:

- Number of policy briefs produced, disseminated and used for policy making;
- Number of policy briefs produced disseminated and used to inform budgetary allocation
- Number of national policy discussions based on analysis of national social protection strategy costing and fiscal space analysis
- Number of video stories produced; broadcasted and number of views
- Number of infographics produced; disseminated and quoted
- Number of references to JP analytical products in national policies, UN Agencies development partner's reports and programmes/projects
- Number of media reports in national printed and electronic media

3) Main activities

Main activities	Methods/tools	Responsible organisation/focal point	Resources	Timeline
Conference on outcomes of UN JP	Conference co-organized with the government with involvement of thought leaders, civil society and SDG Fund donor member states	UNICEF (together with UNDP and ILO)	$20,000	2020
Capacity building of national counterparts on SPF and social security standards	Conferences Workshops Technical assistance to Government entities, workers'and	ILO Technical advisor	$ 90 000	2020-2021

	employer's organisations			
	Civil society organisations			
Analytical products	Reports	ILO	$ 32 600	2020-2021
	Policy briefs	Communication for Development Specialist		
Visual products	Infographics	ILO, UNICEF	$ 11 000	2020-2021
	Video stories	Communication for Development Specialist		
Analytical products and visual materials	Reports	UNDP	As per JP budget line	2022
	Policy briefs	Task Manager		
	Infographics			
Capacity building of national counterparts on CRPD and ICF requirements	Conferences	UNDP	As per JP budget line	2021-2022
	Workshops	Task Manager		
	Technical assistance DPOs, line ministries and local government organisations	Subject matter consultants		

Annex 7. Budget and Work Plan

7.1 Budget per UNSDG categories

UNDG BUDGET CATEGORIES	PUNO 1. UNICEF		PUNO 2. ILO		PUNO 3. UNDP		TOTAL	
	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contribution (USD)	**Joint SDG Fund (USD)**	**PUNO Contribution (USD)**
1. Staff and other personnel	245,518		147,864		80,617		473,999	
2. Supplies, Commodities, Materials	1,000		0		20,000		21,000	
3. Equipment, Vehicles, and Furniture (including Depreciation)	10,900	0	4,600	0	50,000	0	65,500	0
4. Contractual services	607,478		275,403		101,215		984,096	
5.Travel	89,000		25,635		40,000		154,635	
6. Transfers and Grants to Counterparts	50,000		0		50,000		100,000	
7. General Operating and other Direct Costs	24,141		13,788		32,000		69,929	
Total Direct Costs	**1,028,037**	-	**467,290**	-	**373,832**	-	**1,869,159**	-
8. Indirect Support Costs (Max. 7%)	*71,963*	-	*32,710*	-	*26,168*	-	***130,841***	-
TOTAL Costs	1,100,000	-	**500,000**	-	**400,000**	-	**2,000,000**	-
1st year	**500,000**		**200,000**		**214,906**		**914,906**	0
2nd year	**600,000**		**300,000**		**185,094**		**1,085,094**	0

7.2 Budget per SDG targets

SDG TARGETS		%	USD
1.3	Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable	100	2,000,000
TOTAL		**100**	**2,000,000**

Given the focus of the programme on strengthening social protection systems, the programme will be contributing directly to achieving the SDG target 1.3.

7.3 Work plan

The Programme Manager will be responsible for planning, monitoring and reporting. The post is budgeted under the output 1. The programme evaluation is budgeted under the Output 1. The Communication Officer will be responsible for managing the communication strategy and activities, in close consultation with the Programme Manager. Stakeholder Engagement Officer will focus on consultations and advocacy on right based social protection and promotion of social protection floors, in the context of social protection strategy development. The post is budgeted under output 2.

Please refer to the table below or double click the MS Excel icon to open on separate MS Excel window the Budget and Workplan of the Joint Programme on improving social protection system in Uzbekistan

Outcome	By 2022, the Government has an integrated and sustainable social protection system and initial capacity in place to improve social protection coverage for all vulnerable groups in Uzbekistan.															
Output	Annual target/s		List of activities	Time frame								PLANNED BUDGET				PUNO/s involved	Implementing partner/s involved
				2020				2021									
	2020	2021		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Overall budget description	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contributions (USD)	Total Cost (USD)		
Output 1: By 2022, an integrated social protection entity/mechanism with appropriate administrative systems and operations with sufficient capacity to deliver effective, tailored-to-needs social protection to every citizen of Uzbekistan is designed	Institutional design of an integrated social protection entity/mechanism exists	Integrated social protection entity/mechanism with appropriate administrative systems and operations with sufficient capacity is developed and ready for implementation	Develop the concept for institutional design of the integrated social protection through participatory process and cost its implementation	x	x	x						The budget will be used to provide the best international and local expertise to develop an institutional framework for Social Protection and a roadmap for its implementation.	818,442	0	818,442	Lead: UNICEF (with involvement of ILO and UNDP)	Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Mahalla and Family Support, President's Administration, Cabinet of Ministers, relevant line ministries, Prosecutor's Office
			Develop functions, standard operating procedures and protocols for the new institutional design			x	x										
			Prepare an action plan to operationalize the integrated social				x	x									

			protection entity/mechanism													
			Develop a capacity-building plan to operate the integrated social protection system in line with the rights-based approach (including the training of trainers)						x	x						
			Develop and operationalize management information system Single Registry for Social Protection for two flagship programmes and capable to expand in line with the strategic monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework for social protection	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					
			Model integrated approaches in social protection on basis of reforms in child benefits and services		x	x	x	x	x	x	x					
			Testing social services based on case management						x	x	x					
Output 2: By 2022, a national social protection strategy	Shared vision of a national social protection system	Costed national social protection	Develop a concept note outlining the shared vision of		x	x	x					The budget will be used to produce and	333,748	0	**333,748**	ILO	Ministry of Finance, President's

in line with the Agenda 2030 is developed and costed	exist, capacity of national partners to design the strategy in line with SPF and Agenda 2030 expanded	strategy is ready for implementation	national social protection and its contribution to Agenda 2030									disseminate a number of analytical policy documents for evidence-based decision making through engagement of international and national consultants, organizing various events to present and discuss relevant issues with all stakeholders					Administration, Cabinet of Ministers, relevant line ministries, Prosecutor's Office, Workers' and Employers' Organizations
			Assessment of the Impact of COVID 19 on labour markets, incomes and living standards and social protection system response. Assessment of options to extend the unemployment protection to informal workers														
			Capacity building of national counterparts on Social Protection Floor, social security standards, promote gender equality and gender responsive budgeting, measuring informal employment		x	x	x	x	x	x	x						
			Draft national social protection strategy (through a participatory consultative process)					x	x	x	x						
			Conduct costing exercise for the national strategy					x	x	x							
			Conduct analysis of fiscal space for social protection					x	x	x							

Output 3. By 2022, the Government of Uzbekistan has tested the disability assessment procedures and service delivery design based on ICF and CRPD norms and has taken on board the relevant policy recommendations.	At least 10 DPOs participated for the design and implementation of the pilot initiatives on ICF. The ICF & CRPD compliant procedures of disability assessment are piloted. The CRPD compliant social services for people with disabilities focused on achieving economic self-sustainability are piloted. The Government of Uzbekistan has an extended capacity to revise legislation to align it with CRPD and to evaluate efficiency and effectiveness of the current state policies and programmes on social protection of PWDs	About 200 first registered persons with disability will be directly benefiting from the pilot interventions. And if the pilot is subsequently scaled up countrywide, the system will have an impact on the entire population of people with disabilities. The CRPD compliant disability assessment mechanism has been revised and designed. The lessons learned on pilot initiatives are analyzed, codified and provided to Government through a series of policy papers and consultative workshops.	1.1. Development of training modules and conducting trainings for representatives of VTEK and VKK and DPOs on application of ICF in day-to-day activity of the disability assessment Commissions for adults and children with disabilities. 1.2. Piloting of application of principles and approaches on disability assessment which based on ICF and UN CRPD	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Consultancy fee, travel, equipment purchase, microgrants, event management services, translation, design, printing, supplies, and communication, utilities, office running costs	$ 284,783.00	0	$ 284,783.00	UNDP	DPOs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Mahalla and Family Support, regional khokimiyats, Association of DPOs, NANNOUZ
			1.3. Analysing existing obstacles for introducing ICF and design business processes and normative framework that will allow to apply ICF and CRPD requirements in disability assessment.		x	x	x	x	x	x	x					

			2.1. Launch and implementation of micro-grants programme jointly with DPOs and local authorities to support to local user-led pilot initiatives based on ICF. Monitoring of these initiatives jointly with DPOs. Provide inputs to the draft TORs and functional responsibilities of the new ministry/agency for social protection. 2.2.Business process re-engineering of public services, which are provided in the social protection sector, according to CRPD and ICF requirements. Cooperation with Agency for Public Services on streamlining and digitizing the selected public services to PWDs. Provide results to the new ministry/agency for social protection and preparatory work				x	x	x	x	x	x											

			on national social protection strategy. 2.3. Consultations with local stakeholders, communities, NGOs, private sector and other representatives of beneficiaries on co-design of micro-grant programme on social partnership, PPP and public oversight on disability issues, by applying ICF and CRPD requirements.														
			3.1. Recruitment of project team and core experts to provide analytical, data and communication support to the project implementation 3.2. Analysis the results and impacts of pilot initiatives in regions on the	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x						

			social rights of persons with disability (aggregated by sex, disability category and age) and formulate policy recommendations on further replication. Provide inputs to the preparation of the National Social Protection Strategy.																
			3.3. Prepare knowledge and communication products and printing of the results of the pilot initiatives on ICF after peer-review by DPOs. 3.4. Conduct stakeholder and donor events, jointly with DPOs. 3.5. Organize a republican conference, jointly with DPOs and UNCT, to discuss the results of the project and present codified lessons learned and policy recommendations to decision-makers and donor community.			x	x	x	x	x	x								

			3.6. Development of the policy documents and draft legislation on disability issues, jointly with DPOs, in line with CRPD, CEDAW and ICF. 3.7. Conduct joint advocacy campaigns and policy consultations with DPOs and other stakeholders on CRPD ratification, implementation and monitoring as well as ICF implementation. 3.8. Capacity development activities, jointly with DPOs, for State Statistics Committee, sectoral ministries and other stakeholders on disability statistics collection, analysis and aligning them with SDG indicators related to disability issues as well as ICF.		x	x	x	x	x	x	x						

			3.9. Provide analytical consultations jointly with DPOs to national stakeholders on agency-specific and sector-specific disability indicators and data collections and disclosing disability statistics in open data format. 3.10. Organize a series of SDGs and ICF related consultations with involvement of DPOs and national stakeholders	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x										

Joint Programme Management	List of activities	Time frame								PLANNED BUDGET				PUNO/s involved	Implementing partner/s involved
		2020				2021									
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Overall budget description	Joint SDG Fund (USD)	PUNO Contributions (USD)	Total Cost (USD)		
Output 1: By 2022, an integrated social protection entity/mechanism with appropriate administrative systems and operations with sufficient capacity to deliver effective,	Programme Manager (NOC)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	2 years x $57201 (NOC level step 3 salary)	$ 114,402.00	$ -	$ 114,402.00	UNICEF	President's Administration, Cabinet of Ministers, relevant line ministries, Prosecutor's Office, Ministry of Finance,
	Communication Officer (NOB)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	2 years x $43376 (NOB level step 3 salary)	$ 86,752.00		$ 86,752.00		
	Programme Associate (G6)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	- 2 years x $22182 (GS6 level step 3 salary)	$ 44,364.00	$ -	$ 44,364.00		

tailored-to-needs social protection to every citizen of Uzbekistan is designed	Office ICT	x	x							- $2000 * 4 ICT set (laptop, monitor, docking station, keyboard, mouse) for Personnel - $400 * 1 pcs. MFU printer - $25 * 4 pcs. Office phone	$ 8,500.00	$ -	$ 8,500.00		Ministry for Mahalla and Family Support
	Office Furniture	x	x							- $600 * 4 sets of office furniture (i.e. desk, armchar, cabinet, bookshelves)	$ 2,400.00	$ -	$ 2,400.00		
	Rental of Office Space and Utility costs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	- 12.5 sq.meters per person * 4 personnel working full-time * 15$/sq.meter * 24 months - no rent free space available in UNICEF Office	$ 18,000.00	$ -	$ 18,000.00		
	Connectivity charges	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	- mobile phone sim cards: 4 personnel * $10 per month * 24 months - internet: $20 per month * 24 months	$ 1,440.00	$ -	$ 1,440.00		
	Stationery	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		$ 1,000.00	$ -	$ 1,000.00		
	Transportation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Hiring taxi company $50/per months x 24 months	$ 1,200.00	$ -	$ 1,200.00		
	Miscellaneous	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	- Bank comission - Other Operating costs	$ 3,500.00	$ -	$ 3,500.00		
Output 2: By 2022, a national social protection strategy in line with the Agenda 2030 is developed and costed	Social protection technical advisor NOA	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	National technical staff	$ 76,800.00	$ -	$ 76,800.00	ILO	President's Administration, Cabinet of Ministers, relevant line ministries, Prosecutor's Office, Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Mahalla and Family Support
	Stakeholder Engagement Officer (100%) NOA	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	National technical staff	$ 38,400.00	$ -	$ 38,400.00		
	Administrative Assistant (50%)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	X	Technical staff	$ 32,664.00	$ -	$ 32,664.00		
	Rental of Office Space and Utility costs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	- 12.5 sq.meters per person * 2 personnel working full-time * 15$/sq.meter * 24 months - no rent free space available in UNICEF Office	$ 9,000.00	$ -	$ 9,000.00		

	Connectivity Charges	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	- mobile phone sim cards: 3 personnel * $10 per month * 24 months - internet: $20 per month * 24 months	$ 1,200.00	$ -	$ 1,200.00		
	Stationery	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		$ 1,038.00	$ -	$ 1,038.00		
	Transportation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	Hiring taxi company $41/per months x 24 months	$ 1,000.00	$ -	$ 1,000.00		
	ICT Equipment	x	x							- $2000 * 2 ICT set (laptop, monitor, docking station, keyboard, mouse) for Personnel - $300 * 2 pcs. mobile phone	$ 4,600.00	$ -	$ 4,600.00		
	Other operating costs	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	- Bank comission - Other Operating costs	$ 1,550.00	$ -	$ 1,550.00		
Output 3. By 2022, the Government of Uzbekistan has tested the disability assessment procedures and service delivery design based on ICF and CRPD norms and has taken on board the relevant policy recommendations.	SC holders (Task Manager and AFA)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	2 SC holders. 24 months duration of contract. Average 3-5% payroll increase annually.	$ 80,617.00	$ -	$ 80,617.00	UNDP	DPOs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Finance, Ministry for Mahalla and Family Support, Ministry of Justice, regional khokimiyats, Association of DPOs, NANNOUZ
	Local consultants	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		$ 1,000.00	$ -	$ 1,000.00		
	Supplies	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		$ 5,600.00	$ -	$ 5,600.00		
	Office rent	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		$ 3,600.00	$ -	$ 3,600.00		
	Communication (Internet, phone)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		$ 3,600.00	$ -	$ 3,600.00		
	Staff travel	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		$ 6,000.00	$ -	$ 6,000.00		
	ICT equipment	x	x							Computers, printer	$ 5,000.00	$ -	$ 5,000.00		
	Office furniture	x	x							Office table, chair, shelf	$ 5,000.00	$ -	$ 5,000.00		

	Utilities	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		$ 2,400.00	$ -	$ 2,400.00		
	Taxi services	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		$ 2,400.00	$ -	$ 2,400.00		
Final Programme Evaluation	Contractual services						x	x	x	Hiring a team of international and national consultants or contracting the company to conduct the final programme evaluation	$ 93,555.00	$ -	$ 93,555.00	UNICEF	

Annex 8. Risk Management Plan

The joint programme will focus and analyse both external and internal risks. Programme team, PUNOs and UNCT will review the status of the risks as per matrix below on quarterly basis. In addition, programme team will identify and manage specific risks that may threaten achievement of intended results, and monitor the fulfilment of risk mitigation activities. Areas of strength and weakness will be reviewed by programme team and used to inform decisions to improve programme performance. Depending of risk nature, the due attention will be paid to compliance with UN Charter, international human rights law and especially UNCRPD.

Risks	**Risk Level:** (Likelihood x Impact)	**Likelihood:** Certain - 5 Likely - 4 Possible - 3 Unlikely - 2 Rare – 1	**Impact:** Essential – 5 Major - 4 Moderate - 3 Minor - 2 Insignificant - 1	**Mitigating measures**	**Responsible Org./Person**
Contextual risks					
Change in reform priorities may limit fully-fledged implementation of the programme	15	3	5	This Joint Programme, through UNDAF Social Protection Results Group and UNRC, will advocate for the importance of social protection system strengthening and appropriate budget allocation in line with the provisions of international human rights treaties, ratified by Uzbekistan, accepted UPR recommendations, and the concluding observations and recommendations of Treaty Bodies and ILO CEACR. Moreover, UNCT will leverage its advocacy for ratification of UN CRPD.	All PUNOs and RC
Large scale economic shock from the ongoing reforms leading to shrinking fiscal space for social protection	12	3	4	Strong advocacy on the essential role of social protection in times of economic reforms to mitigate the impact of risks and economic shocks on the population. Using the main principles of UNCRPD, all PUNOs and RC will advocate for the keeping a sufficient and adequate fiscal space for the Government's social protection programmes.	All PUNOs and RC

Programmatic risks					
High staff turnover among key national partners	12	3	4	Participatory approach to programming by involving multiple stakeholders and diversifying implementation and policy communication channels to reduce the impact of individual changes.	All PUNOs and RC
Institutional risks					
A social protection coordinating entity and the SP strategy may become a political compromise with a partial mandate, maintaining the fragmented system.	12	3	4	UNCT, under leadership of UNRC, will conduct high level policy advocacy with decision-makers and opinion-makers as well as donors including IFIs, with reference to national SDGs targets and indicators, to convince national partners to apply an integrated approach to social protection system.	UNCT