



PROJECT PROFILE

Partnership between civil society and authorities on gender equality in Uzbekistan

Photo: Civil Society and CSO partners and law enforcement officials participate in the national conference in Tashkent, July 2022. Olimjon Khalikov/ Istiqlol Avlodi (IA)

Project regions

Jizzakh, Samarkand and Namangan

Project implementors

National CSO Dialog and regional CSO Istiqlol Avlodi

Co-implementor and consortium lead

INGO Saferworld

Project donor

European Union

Project duration

April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2025

Background

While the Uzbekistan government has made progress toward women’s rights and gender equality since President Shavkat Mirziyoyev came to power, with a series of reforms including the establishment of rehabilitation centres, shelters and improvements to legislation and policies, there remain many cultural, political and social obstacles to implementation. Under a previous project, Saferworld and partners conducted an analysis in consultation with civil society and relevant government counterparts in July 2021 that identified GBV and harmful gender norms as among the main driving factors of conflict and violence in the country. The analysis found that there were many social barriers to progress toward gender equality, and that while services provided by shelters and rehabilitation centres for women are in high demand, they are constrained by limited coordination and capacity of the civil society organisations (CSOs) and the local authorities who run them.

As part of this project funded by the European Union, Saferworld and women-led partners Istiqlol Avlodi and Dialog will identify and address gaps in service provision, based on our experience working with multiple stakeholders to advance human rights and gender equality in Uzbekistan, and will work to enhance the quality of services provided by shelters, rehabilitation centres, the authorities and local CSOs.

Introduction

Saferworld and partners Dialog and Istiqlol Avlodi are working together to improve responses to gender-based violence (GBV) and address the harmful gender norms that lead to marginalisation of women and girls in Uzbekistan. Over the two years of the project, project partners will work to assess gaps and barriers to service delivery for GBV as well as the social factors that hinder reporting, and will seek to address these identified issues through targeted trainings, advocacy and small grants.



Funded by the European Union

Project stages

1. Development of one joint gap analysis to analyse needs and gaps, with the findings of this analysis informing subsequent project activities, as well as advocacy and communications.
2. Delivery of demand-driven capacity development and trainings for CSOs and authorities who run shelters and rehabilitation centres, as well as for community groups/individuals. Establishment of learning exchanges between relevant people and organisations across the country and region.
3. Support for development of action plans by CSOs, shelters, rehabilitation centres and community groups, with selected plans funded and provided with methodological support to ensure effective implementation. Action plans will aim to address gaps identified during the trainings and baseline assessment.
4. Production of a briefing paper and communications materials to share findings gathered from the baseline assessment and throughout project implementation, with national-level policy recommendations to be shared at a national roundtable.

Working with others

Project partners will work with:

- three CSO-run shelters and three state-run rehabilitation centres across project regions (chosen for trainings and capacity strengthening);
- women-led CSOs, including from Saferworld's previously formed Uzbek CSO network working on gender equality and GBV in all 13 regions;
- local authorities and *makhalla* (community) leaders dealing with vulnerable women and their families, including those who have returned from Iraq and Syria;
- Community Security Working Groups;
- the Republican Commission for the Enhancement of the Role of Women in Society, Gender Equality and Family;
- the Ministry of Preschool and School Education;
- the Ministry of Employment and Poverty Reduction (mainly with the Committee of Family and Women
- the Republican Centre for the Rehabilitation and Adaptation of Women).

Main outcomes of the project

1. CSOs and authorities lead in research producing ongoing analysis of the gaps in capacity, coordination and effectiveness of civil society and authorities implementing services in Jizzakh, Samarkand and Namangan (and nationwide). This will lead to a better understanding of the current picture in target regions and across the country.
2. Civil society groups (including those who run shelters, and other women-led CSOs), staff from state-run rehabilitation centres and community groups/individuals are better able to collaborate and provide effective services for survivors of GBV as well as to address harmful gender norms in their communities. Authorities are more gender-sensitive when responding to cases of GBV and – more generally – working with women and marginalised groups.
3. Authorities and CSOs who run shelters and rehabilitation centres (as well as other community-level organisations) are provided with flexible and accessible funding to design and implement initiatives that promote and respond to their priorities and broader women, peace and security (WPS) issues, including through working collaboratively with authorities in each location. They are able to address concrete problems identified during their analyses, including barriers to GBV services or forms of marginalisation against women and girls.
4. Local and national authorities better understand the harmful gender and social norms and related practices/traditions that drive violence against women and girls, and which negatively impact their safety and participation in decision-making. Authorities take steps to incorporate women's and girls' priorities into policy dialogue and development, and related government strategies.

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