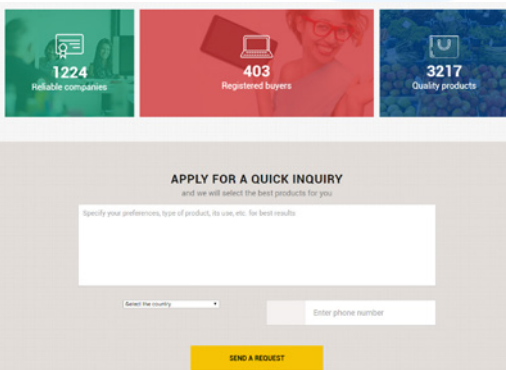




UNDP Deputy Regional Director visits Uzbekistan

From the 25th to the 28th of April, the Deputy Regional Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS Mr. Olivier Adam visited Uzbekistan to review the strategic results achieved by UNDP’s Country Office and its national partners, and to advocate for further strengthened cooperation. The visit comes at an opportune time, when the UNDAF 2016-2020 programme is beginning and nationalized SDGs are being elaborated on.

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Export Made Easy - Uzbekistan’s First National Electronic Trading Platform

“Our company specializes in producing and selling fresh and dried agro-produce, and we are interested in expanding to new markets. The new ‘UzTrade’ trading platform provides us with a channel to offer products to a larger circle of potential overseas buyers,” entrepreneur **Mr. Askar Kadirov** told UNDP staff at the opening of Uzbekistan’s first online platform for international business.

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Practical Manual on Regulatory Impact Assessment has been published by UNDP in Uzbekistan

A Practical Manual on Regulatory Impact Assessment was recently prepared and published within the framework of UNDP “Support to enhancement of lawmaking, rulemaking and regulatory impact assessment” project in cooperation with Institute for Monitoring of Current Legislation under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The main purpose of this Manual, developed in the framework of the joint project of UNDP “Support to enhancement of lawmaking, rulemaking and regulatory impact assessment” project, implemented with the Institute for Monitoring of Current Legislation under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, is the disclosure of the practicalities of RIA and its benefits, as well as to introduce readers with the specifics and results of the implementation of this system in other countries.

In particular, the Manual reveals the essence of the RIA, gives comprehensive explanation for «Better Regulation» concept, describes the main stages of the Impact Assessment procedures, cost-benefit analysis, including Standard Costs Model, the mechanism of public consultations. Also, a detailed review of the best international practices of RIA, such as UK, USA, Germany, Sweden, Russia and Korea, is included.

In addition, the information about the prerequisites, measures for the implementation and further improvement of RIA in Uzbekistan, is reflected in this publication. At the same time, the Manual presents certain practical examples of

the impact assessment of legislative acts.

This Manual is written, primarily for use of government bodies, legal acts drafters, as well as members of Parliament, legal practitioners and scholars during law making and rule making process.

The efficiency and quality of public administration and regulatory policy is one of the most important factors of success of ongoing social and economic reforms.

At the same time, it is important to define a systematic approach that allows public authorities at all levels to provide high quality lawmaking.

Ineffective regulation adversely affects the welfare of society and state, and leads to high costs for business and citizens, complicates the process of governance and may increase the level of corruption.

Most of the legal acts drafted and adopted at both departmental and government level, affect the interests of various groups of society, and while drafting, many aspects related to the possible consequences of enforcement of legal act for a particular group of individuals must be taken into account.

At the same time at the stage of drafting a legal act, many im-

pacts can be «invisible» or rather difficult to define. Therefore, in the lawmaking and rulemaking process the mechanisms to calculate in advance the impacts, as well as to determine who would be affected by adopted legal act, are extremely needed and important.

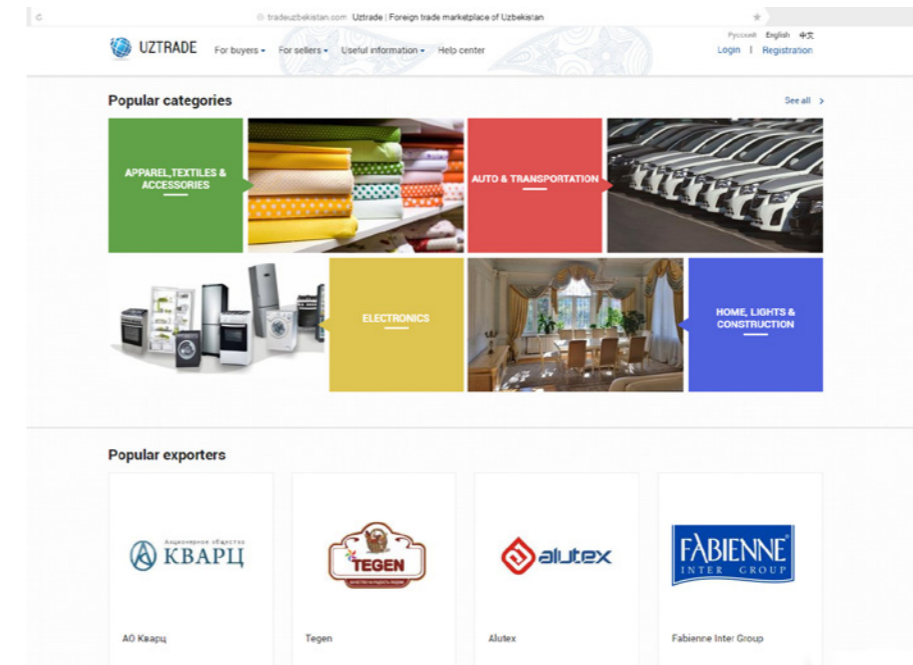
One of the main tools, affecting the quality of regulation is the Regulatory Impact Assessment system (RIA).

In Uzbekistan, RIA is being implemented gradually since 2008. Several legal acts were adopted to nail down the principles of regulatory impact assessment in the national legislation, the most important of which was the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of December 2, 2014 № 328 “On measures for implementation of System for Assessment of Impact of Legal Acts on Entrepreneurship”.

The implementation of RIA certainly will have a positive impact on the course of reforms carried out in Uzbekistan, especially in the field of public administration, and for this, RIA should cover equally impact assessment on the economy, the environment and the social sphere.



Export Made Easy - Uzbekistan's First National Electronic Trading Platform



Mr. Kadirov's goal is to turn domestic success into international trend-setting. His company Spectrum ITG exports fruits and vegetables, products that Uzbekistan is already renowned for, and the UzTrade website has been proved the best tool for facilitating this trade.

“I believe that through ‘UzTrade’ I will conclude more contracts and increase export volumes,” he said. “I would like to thank the website’s initiators and developers for their good job. The initiative was simply necessary in the era of e-commerce.”

Ground-breaking tool for business

“Bill Gates’s quote – “If your business is not on the Internet, then your business will be out of business”, absolutely applies to benefits of the newly established ‘UzTrade’ Electronic Trade Platform for Uzbekistan SMEs,” said website client Mr. Mumtoz Dalimov, from Tune Consulting LLC.

It’s inescapable that Uzbek businesses wishing to work in international markets need a website, but setting up

a page can be an expensive and difficult proposition. This is where the UzTrade website steps in, developed in a partnership between the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations, Investments and Trade of Uzbekistan (MFERIT), and UNDP’s ‘Aid for Trade’ project.

Think a social media site like Facebook, but designed first-and-foremost to break down the barriers between businesses and their clients.

UzTrade has a hotbed of tools, all designed to facilitate business transactions. Its content is segmented by products, categories and vendors, meaning its 1,103 manufacturers and 3,217 products ranging from stationary to strawberries can be accessed with just a few clicks. Companies and their staff are profiled on individual pages, giving businesses story and personality, while the website’s language changes depending on the user’s IP address.

Businesses can undertake every stage of their work through the website, from setting up contracts to contacting producers, and delivering products to buyers. The website also contains a

database and statistics about the international business market, including details of trade fairs – in essence it’s a way of getting business done online with a lot less cost.

“It should be noted that the development and maintenance of private internet web-page by SMEs, and ensuring its promotion and client attraction, are costly and resource-consuming activities,” said the Shohruh Khodzhaev, a representative of the ‘UzTadbirkorEksport’ specialized foreign trade company, who played a crucial consultant role on the website’s development.

“By creating their own virtual trade office on UzTrade, a user creates their personalized webpage. The webpage allows for relevant online negotiations, the inclusion or removal of products, running reports, uploading images, and promoting videos or photos,” He said. “In other words, by creating a trade office on UzTrade and setting up a personal home page, there is no need to create another website.”

A successful work in progress

On the May 3rd the website was launched by the UNDP ‘Aid for Trade’ project, at an event attended by 50 representatives of organizations and local SMEs, already with a strong business basis. Like all successful websites, UzTrade is a work in progress. In Mr. Khodzhaev’s speech, he indicated that discussions are on-going with Google and Yandex regarding the website’s SEO optimization, and that efforts have been taken to boost the website’s overseas profile. This will build a better experience and service for businesses like Mr Kadirov and Mr. Dalimov.

The ‘UzTrade’ website is a natural step in the ‘Aid for Trade’ project’s work to boost national business’s access to foreign markets.

UNDP Deputy Regional Director visits Uzbekistan

From the 25th to the 28th of April, the Deputy Regional Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS Mr. Olivier Adam visited Uzbekistan to review the strategic results achieved by UNDP's Country Office and its national partners, and to advocate for further strengthened cooperation. The visit comes at an opportune time, when the UNDAF 2016-2020 programme is beginning and nationalized SDGs are being elaborated on.



During his four-day visit Mr. Adam took note of improvements UNDP has made in Uzbekistan, following the last UNDAF's completion and the end of the MDG era. His visit particularly focused on achievements in the legal and economic sectors, two fields where extensive international expertise and best practices have been utilized to enhance national practice and build global standing.

A highlight of Mr. Adam's visit has included a series of meetings with a number of key representatives of UNDP's main national partners, including the Minister of Economy of Uzbekistan, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, members of the committee of the Senate on Foreign-Political Relations and several others. During these meetings Mr. Adam strengthened bilateral cooperation between UNDP and national partners, took inventory of successful initiatives, and outlined plans for future joint efforts.

Additionally, during his visit Mr. Adam met with representatives from the Supreme Court of Uzbekistan, to review

efforts for strengthening public access to and trust in court systems. The impact of introducing E-SUD (e-justice) system was particularly reviewed, including its use as a means of scaling-up the accessibility and efficiency of Uzbekistan's civil courts, particularly for vulnerable population groups.

As part of continuing efforts to build Uzbekistan's business sector and progress further in the World Bank Doing Business ranking, the latter seeing considerable advancement in 2016, UNDP and its national partners have collaborated to strengthen reform to improve the business environment. Mr. Adam visited the Chamber of Commerce and Industry to discuss advancements made in this regard.

During the meeting Mr. Adam got acquainted with the significant scaling-up of the 'One-Stop-Shop' model of service provision within Uzbekistan, part of the process of developing Inclusive Markets. This 'single window' approach has made setting up a small business a less daunting task, encouraging many more entre-

preneurs to go into business. At the end of the meeting Mr. Adam commended Uzbekistan's progression in the World Bank Doing Business ranking.

UNDP Deputy Regional Director also visited the Tashkent's Earthquake Simulation Complex at the Institute of Civil Protection in Tashkent City. The facility serves to build public awareness of Uzbekistan's vulnerability to seismic activity, and educate the public on the best means of preparing for and behaving during earthquakes. By adopting strategies to increase awareness on the threat of natural disasters and building resilience to cope with them, the Complex is helping vulnerable communities as well as the responsible institutions to be better prepared when disasters strike.

It is expected that the visit by the Deputy Regional Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS Mr. Olivier Adam will further strengthen UNDP's position of confidence in Uzbekistan, leading to greater levels of achievement in the future.

Uzbek farmers to learn about apple production technologies and practices



The CCI and UNDP 'Business Forum of Uzbekistan (Phase III)' joint project through its inclusive and sustainable economic development component has developed a handbook on growing apples in modern high-density orchards and is planning to conduct practical trainings on this topic for Uzbek farmers.

In Uzbekistan, there are 120.5 thousand hectares of seed fruit orchards out of totally 261.8 thousand hectares of all orchards, 95% of which are apple orchards. This means that apple trees occupy approximately 44% of all the orchard areas. Apple as a crop is widespread due to its high endurance and adaptability to various soil and climatic conditions and equally high yields as well as its nutrient properties and high commercial and commodity value.

In his speech at the meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers convened to discuss the 2014-outcomes and the socio-economic development priorities for 2015, President Islam Karimov stated that the most important process to develop the country's agriculture in a sustainable and efficient way would be the sector's transition to using modern highly productive and intensive agricultural practices and technologies.

Currently, the country is actively introducing intensive agro-technologies that help double and triple yields. With ordinary fruit trees, for instance, it takes 4 to 5 years from planting the seedlings to seeing the first fruit, while intensive orchards come to fruition already in the second and third years.

However, the Uzbek farmers' lack of knowledge about the modern apple growing techniques leads to low yields, high production costs and limited export opportunities for the highly competitive product.

To improve the farmers' knowledge, the project developed a handbook on growing apple trees using intensive farming methods in Uzbekistan.

The handbook provides guidelines on some of the most effective apple cultivating technologies starting with planting the trees and all the way to pruning, applying fertilizers, controlling pests and diseases, harvesting the yields and marketing. The handbook also contains a business plan on how to create an orchard on one hectare land patch.

Additionally, the project has developed "pocket brochures" on key apple varieties, diseases and pests and ways to deal with them. The very handy illustrated pocket-sized cards are a convenient format to present background information.

The handbook will be published with the financial support from 'Sasol' representative office in Uzbekistan and the German Cooperation and Development Ministry's GIZ Programme 'Sustainable Economic Development in Selected Re-



gions of Uzbekistan'. The published materials will be distributed to the farmers of Uzbekistan free of charge.

Furthermore, a series of trainings on the cultivation of apple orchards will be conducted for farmers. At least 400 farmers, including women, from six regions of Uzbekistan are expected to improve their practical knowledge through the workshops organized by the joint project.

These measures will help raise the farmers' awareness about cultivation of apple trees, introduction of modern technologies in agriculture and better yields through intensive farming technologies. Such improvements are expected to open up new opportunities in rural areas in terms of employment and income generation and improving living standards, while enhancing the competitiveness of Uzbekistan's agricultural products international markets.

The 'Business Forum of Uzbekistan (Phase III)' project is a joint initiative of UNDP and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and is aimed at improving the business environment through the introduction of online services, improved regulatory framework, and inclusive business models.

1966-2016: 50 years since the Tashkent Earthquake



Exactly 50 years ago, on April 26, 1966, at 5:23 am local time, a devastating earthquake occurred in Tashkent leaving homeless more than 300 thousand people out of 1.5 million of Tashkent residents. The capital was completely reconstructed over three and a half years. Entire residential areas have been erected in the suburbs of the city; older residential quarters in the centre of damaged Tashkent have been newly built up; new satellite-town Sputnik has emerged. Altogether, more than 1 million square meters of housing, schools, social, cultural, and administrative facilities have been built at that time.

Today, Tashkent is a city with modern architecture filled with an assortment of design ideas and engineering solutions where the crucial role is assigned to safety issues. It covers both structural stability and compliance with relevant rules and standards, and most importantly – ongoing work with population. The Government of Uzbekistan pays special attention to protection of population from emergencies and disaster risk reduction. The Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of

Uzbekistan with the support of UNDP in Uzbekistan acts as the initiator of large-scale events aimed at raising population awareness on Dos and Don'ts before, during and after such natural disasters as earthquakes, landslides, floods.

"We are actively involved in raising population awareness on dos and don'ts during earthquake related emergencies. For instance, from 19 to 20 April this year, we have arranged a series of demonstrative practical seminars in Akhangaran district, Tashkent region

and in Yunusabad district, Tashkent. Target audience of these meetings were students of secondary schools and representatives of mahalla communities," said Ulugbek Kodirov, Head of Department, Preparation of population and senior management of MES.

In the course of the events in schools, a scientific documentary film was demonstrated to the participants, as well as a number of presentations given by the specialists of MES and the Institute of Seismology of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan in which they provided detailed information about the nature of earthquakes, Dos and Don'ts before, during and after an earthquake. Short disaster simulations conducted jointly with Red Crescent Society of Uzbekistan helped students to enhance their first aid skills, demonstrate their knowledge of actions in non-standard situations gained in the Health and Safety lessons, and to take part in the creation of earthquake-resistant environment in the class.

"Thanks to simulation activities organized in our school today, we could demonstrate our knowledge of first aid treatment. Two of my classmates played a role of earthquake victims. One had a hand injury, the second – a leg injury. I have examined one of them and identified a tibia fracture; I was able to fix the fracture with help of two wood splints. Then we approached the aid station of the local hospital," told Nozima Yulchieva, student of the secondary school #12 in Akhangaran district, Tashkent region.

In addition to the above issues, seminars involving chairpersons and members of mahalla communities have also included information about assessment of vulnerability and capacity of the population preparedness to earthquakes, prompt data collection and compilation in the event of emergencies within the area of mahallas.



Another joint event initiated on the eve of the anniversary date was the contest held from 14 to 20 April for the best knowledge of the Dos and Don'ts during an earthquake. Relevant information was placed on the website of MES and UNDP and sent to the users of local mobile service providers. Over 30 thousand people showed interest, 720 sent their answers, 351 among which turned out to be correct. 20 winners have been randomly drawn and received the top prize – a smartphone and the opportunity to visit the Earthquake Simulation Complex at the Institute of Civil Protection of MES Uzbekistan.

"It was a pleasant and unexpected surprise for me that I was picked as the contest winner. I wrote how I behave during an earthquake. It is an interesting topic to me because I think that everyone must be aware of these simple rules. Thanks to this contest I learned many new things – we went into a fascinating excursion to the Earthquake Museum, I could experience the power of earthquake shocks on a special equipment – simulator. It was an incredible experience that I won't forget for long. Surely, I wish

nobody to be under destroyed buildings and go through the horror of panic, but I definitely know now how to behave and what shall be avoided," responded Zilola Mirzaeva, the contest winner.

Moreover, a training seminar involving representatives of local and foreign mass media took place on 22 April. Specialists of the Institute of Seismology of the Academy of Sciences of Uzbekistan, State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Architecture and Construction, MES and a number of other agencies delivered a wide range of interesting and extensive presentations to journalists. They told about the nature of earthquakes, history of establishment of the Institute of Seismology in Uzbekistan, modern capacities of the building industry as a significant factor to ensure seismic stability of buildings, as well as about the activities currently implemented in Uzbekistan to raise the population preparedness to possible natural disasters.

Excursion to the Earthquake Museum covering a broad exposition of models of different buildings destroyed in 1966 combined with demonstration of the documentary film allowed mass media

representatives to learn about this natural phenomenon in more detail, to take a dive into the thick of the time. Guests also became familiar with seismographs of various epochs, methods of seismic stability, what is a seismic loading and how earthquake intensity was measured at different times. However, the brightest impression was left by the excursion to the Simulation Complex designed as a living room where every visitor was able to experience the power of earthquake shocks with a magnitude of up to 9.0 and their aftereffects. At this point, knowledge of Dos and Don'ts during and after an earthquake gained through the seminar became very helpful.

"Even in the event of a powerful earthquake, a building constructed in accordance with all norms and rules remains undamaged. Non-compliance with the building regulations that can lead to destruction of a building and non-compliance with safety rules can be lethal during shocks of any magnitude. Take the right position in a room and the risk of getting injured by the objects falling from shelves is minimal," noted Samandar Hikmatullaev, Head of Chair, Institute of Civil Protection.

Holding these events on the eve of the memorable date allowed demonstrating the development level of seismology in the country as a science, which arouses today a great deal of interest among foreign specialists. This is also another reason to point yet again at the capacities of modern urban planning, explain to citizens and demonstrate clearly the importance of compliance with safety rules and Dos and Don'ts to reduce earthquake risks as significant essentials on the way toward sustainable development.



Economic courts: How to increase the efficiency and transparency of the proceedings?

The Supreme Economic Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan held a press conference to present to the general public the latest changes and new developments in the legislation, as well as the results of introduction of modern ICTs into the courts, specifically, the recently installed system of audio-visual recording of court proceedings.



The particular system has been installed in 2015 on a pilot basis at the Supreme Economic Court, Tashkent city and regional economic courts, with the support of the joint project of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), "Rule of Law Partnership in Uzbekistan". The project is being implemented by UNDP within its effort to promote effective governance.

The press conference was attended by the representatives of mass media, business community, representatives of the Chamber of Commerce of the Republic of Uzbekistan, UNDP and the Office of the OSCE Project Coordinator in Uzbekistan, as well as the judges of the Supreme Economic Court. It should be pointed out that the judges of the regional economic courts of the country were also able to participate in the event by the means of audio-visual conferencing. During the press conference, the participants visited one of the newly equipped courtrooms, where they could observe the features of the installed equipment for audio-visual recording of court proceedings. Prior

to that, in September 2015, to ensure effective use of audio-visual recording system in the proceedings, the Supreme Economic Court, in cooperation with the joint project organized a special training that engaged 59 representatives of economic courts, particularly judges and other court personnel.

The use of the audio-visual recording system is foremost aimed at improving the quality and simplifying the process of protocoling, and in the future, the audio-visual recording can potentially eliminate the paper based protocoling. In addition, the audio-visual recording can serve as a measure to improve the discipline of both the parties and the judges. A complete audio-visual recording of the court proceeding can be provided to the parties on an information carrier, upon their request.

Overall, the introduction of audio-visual recording will help to automate commercial litigation process, and thus, not only enable transparency and efficiency of economic courts, but eventually, contribute to the creation of a favorable business environment. Importantly, contract enforcement being among the 10 indicators of Doing Business, stands for effective

and transparent litigation process, the availability of tools to protect the rights and interests of business community, and eventually leads to the boost in the confidence of private sector and investors that their legitimate rights and interests are protected.

It should be noted, that it is planned to develop proposals to the Economic Procedural Code, based on the results of the upcoming piloting of the system. Changes in the legislative framework will ensure sustainable use of this technology in the courts across the country.

It must be emphasized, that the Supreme Economic Court is a strategic partner of the joint project. Currently, the collaboration with the Supreme Economic Court is being expanded for 2016-2017, to cover a various activities, including, the introduction of a system of depersonalization of judicial decisions and their publication on the Internet, which will ensure consistency of judicial practice.

Introduction of ICTs into courts is among the priorities of the on-going judicial reform in Uzbekistan, aimed at improvement of access to justice and provision of favorable conditions for the growth of entrepreneurship.



UNDP's Global 50th Anniversary

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) held a celebratory event at its Uzbekistan Country Office, recognizing the 50th Anniversary of the agency's formation, and celebrating over twenty years of collaboration with national partners. Presentations of UNDP's global and national work was followed with traditional Uzbekistan cuisine, and a discussion of future directions for national work.

In 1966 UNDP was established with a pledge to dedicate resources to eliminate development gaps and achieve global equality in standard of life, later encapsulated in the new millennia as the goal of Human Development. Over the last half-century UNDP has coordinated global efforts to limit hunger, disease, unemployment, gender inequality, infant mortality and environmental degradation, and address many other challenges on national, regional and global levels.

The last 15 years have seen an un-

precedented effort by UNDP, fellow UN agencies, civil society and government partners around the globe to eradicate extreme poverty and its facets, and the Sustainable Development Goals will build on these core efforts with their intended achievement by 2030. Within a twenty-year period in Uzbekistan,



UNDP has served as a vital resource aid speeding Uzbekistan's growth and development, through addressing global and regional economic and environmental difficulties.

"In the last 50 years UNDP has been at the forefront of development debates (human development, MDGs, SDGs). It was also on the frontlines of helping countries to implement reforms and of coordinating the UN development system. In Uzbekistan we have been proud of our close relationship with Government, NGOs and the citizens of Uzbekistan for the last 23 years."

A friendly football match between the teams of the United Nations Development Programme and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan was also part of the series of events held to mark the 50th anniversary of the Agency's formation and over twenty years of collaboration with national partners.

The match offered UNDP an excellent opportunity to mark this important date and thank its national partners for their longstanding fruitful cooperation.



Why putting climate change on paper will make a difference

Uzbekistan is a country of different environments – in the east the terrain is dominated by snow-capped mountains and grassy hillsides, while journeying west reveals extensively-farmed fertile lands, gradually shifting into dry regions and eventually the Karakalpakstan deserts and the Aral Sea's shores. What these vastly-different areas have in common is that the health of their environments, and the well-being of people who live there, are both vulnerable to the accelerating effects of climate change.

Proceeded by an uncharacteristically mild winter, a number of 2016 initiatives will focus on addressing Uzbekistan's climate change threats, and among these will include the promotion of the Climate Risk Profile (CRP) document, as an authoritative information source regarding climate change in Uzbekistan. Its creators, including UNDP and national research partners, hope it will both inform people of existing climate change induced risks and the way that they can be mitigated.

"This report intends to put the matter of climate change induced risks onto a national scale, an area not yet broadly considered, but one that can have a significant impact on Uzbekistan's future," said Ms. Natalya Agaltseva, the manager of UNDP Uzbekistan's Climate Resilience project, who coordinated the collective work undertaken by a group of experts of several institutions acting as invaluable sources of information during the reports preparation. "With this report we want to make climate change a factor more broadly-considered in national-level decision-making."

As a national first, the CRP document offers an authoritative review of where climate change is likely to have the greatest impact in Uzbekistan, what those impacts could be, and how they can be limited. It also takes into consideration that climate change will have different impacts on different areas, and so the responses have to be equally unique and innovative.

Using the existing national monitoring and meteorological technologies, and the recently upgraded Drought Early Warning System (installed at the National Drought Monitoring Centre established in Uzhydromet, in accordance with a Governmental Decree) and GIS mapping systems, the report has mapped where climate change-related

events, such as mudslides, avalanches, droughts, mudflows and flash-flooding are most likely to occur in Uzbekistan. While trends related to these events in Uzbekistan have been broadly understood, the CRP document has unified and officialised the information.

The report also details the short and long-term impacts of such events that could impact quality of life and standard of living in Uzbekistan. These could range from reduced agricultural outputs and efficiency, to broad-scale impacts on national economy, outputs and levels of development.

Last but not least the report offers recommendations for limiting the impacts of these events. These have included creating a concept note to unify the ministerial-level approach to tackling the key issue, that will drive institutional changes ranging from altering organizational practices to improving human capacities. It has also highlighted a need to educate experts and members of the broader population about climate change concerns, ensuring relevant information is delivered through the mass-media and other resources.

The report is part of a much broader initiative undertaken to create an active atmosphere of climate change resilience in Uzbekistan. Supplementing workshops promoting better agriculture and daily living practices, and the establishment of farmer information centres, the CRP will help encourage change on a higher level.

UNDP will continue to support the elaboration of legislative amendments, will foster support among its national partners, and will also maintain the CRP as a publicly-available resource. It is hoped it will be a lynchpin in keeping Uzbekistan's economy and quality of life, in all of its regions, secure in a changing world.



Aral Sea Shores – Evolved Communities

Every country around the world faces challenges. Some challenges are resolved through naturally changes over time, while others need focus, perseverance and thinking outside the box. As my home, Australia has no shortage of environmental, economic and particularly social difficulties – pride in my nation comes from its doggedly tackling these concerns for the benefit of all its citizens.



For Uzbekistan, a major challenge is the Aral Sea Disaster – a situation not created but inherited, but one whose repercussions are now coming to bear. While life can be difficult in this far western region, the combined efforts of UNDP, UNFPA, UNESCO, WHO and UNV, and tireless contributions by regional government, have shown what can be achieved.

The best way to see changes made by the Aral Sea UN Joint Programme is to visit communities and directly witness the work done there. The three districts benefiting most are Muynak, Shumanay and Kanlikul, some of the most vulnerable areas in the region, where 130,000 targeted individuals live. The joint programme's regional work has primarily focused on the human security approach, with the goal of making communities more resilient

to change, and helping people enjoy lives of fulfilment and dignity.

The localised success here has resulted from a bottom-up approach, where local development has been driven by over a thousand residents, approximately half women, who have played roles in formulating 54 Community Development Plans in the region with the support of the Joint Programme. Trainings have been conducted to ensure these plans are maintained and utilized into the future.

One area of assistance required by communities to different degrees has been improved infrastructure, especially better access to drinking water and energy provided through alternative energy sources. In a region with weather extremes, these services make all the difference to conditions in schools, hospitals and public buildings, and also at home.

“Thanks to the project’s implementation, more women obtain benefits related to the water supply project,” said Ms. Ziwar Begjanova, a resident of the isolated Nogai community. “This has reduced the time and burden of water carrying, allowing people to spend more time educating their children, which will in turn have benefits for the upcoming generation.”

While building infrastructure is an important step in establishing economically-sound communities, what is equally important is giving those community members economic resilience. In an environment like Karakalpakstan’s with inherent limitations, the challenge comes down to using existing resources in the best way without causing additional damage to the environment.

The success of entrepreneur Mirikhan Nurjaybaeva is a great exam-

ple of how small business can transform lives and expectations.

As a member of the Tikozek community in the Muynak district, the endless shells on the Aral Sea’s once-shoreline was forever a painful reminder. Now it’s a goldmine of potential. “As the sea has gone I used to wonder how to use the shells that now line the former seashore,” Ms. Nurjaybaeva said. “Thanks to the project’s support, I finally have the skills to use them and make an income.”

For communities that relied financially on the Aral Sea, its sudden disappearance left a gaping hole in their economies. Agriculture filled that space to some degree, an area in which the programme also offered

assistance, but with poor-quality soil and the threat of desertification always on the horizon the need for alternative business was all-to evident.

Bringing in as much foreign resources and expertise as possible, the UN Programme has in four years set up 189 alternative business and demonstration farming plots. Business opportunities have ranged from shell-based souvenirs like those made by Ms. Nurjaybaeva, to the honey produced by Kuralbay Nugmanov’s bee-keeping business, and an influx of tourism initiatives that profit from the area’s historic splendour.

The impact of these initiatives is hard to gauge, because the emphasis of work is always on knowledge-shar-

ing. 285 job places have been immediately set up, 128 employing women, but the total number of businesses created through informal knowledge exchange is estimated to be as high as 5,000. Always the businesses have targeted the most vulnerable community members, for whom the benefits of employment go beyond making money.

“Making profit is not my primary goal – rather I am overwhelmed by community with people and seeing happy faces of customers who purchase my products,” said Anisa Kudaibergenova, a resident with a hearing impairment, employed in a sewing workshop. “Most importantly, I have met several wonderful new friends here and my life has become more interesting.”

In the target districts, the joint programme has demonstrated that with a different perspective and with the effective application of skills, abilities and resources, communities in even the most vulnerable parts of Karakalpakstan can thrive economically.



Moscow Inlet for Small Business Exports

UNDP Uzbekistan: **Odinakhon Saidova** is one of many women entrepreneurs who have expanded their international range through the 'Aid for Trade' project's support.



«I was very afraid at first and even refused to participate in the event, but coworkers persuaded me to go because there would be experienced export company staff who would join us. Also my husband supported me with his faith. After that, things started moving.»

Odinakhon Saidova is a member of Uzbekistan's growing entrepreneurial society crossing more than one divide. By taking part in September 2015's 'World Food Moscow' exhibition in Moscow, with support from UNDP's 'Aid for Trade' project, she has demonstrated the dynamics of the new face of Uzbek business.

Since 2011, phases of the 'Aid for Trade' project have been working with small businesses throughout Uzbekistan to build their business connections overseas, as part of a push to develop the nation's small and medium business sector, while also growing Uzbekistan's image as a good option for overseas investment and growth.

Taking part in international business exhibitions has been a principal part of this work. Through the years, the 'Aid for Trade' project has supported the participation of over 60 businesses like Ms. Saidova's in 15 trade fairs, held as far from home as China's eastern urban hubs and setting up over 43 million US dollars in contracts.

"The immediate impact of businesses successfully getting involved in trade fairs like 'World Food Moscow' is the establishment of lucrative contracts and more employment places – this is important" said

Shohruh Khodjaev of Uztadbirkoreksport Foreign Trade Company, established by the Government of Uzbekistan to support SME exports.

"It brings in new practices and technologies that build a business's international success, which can be shared among other entrepreneurs, while also giving foreign buyers a window into Uzbekistan's business potential. Most importantly it gives confidence to business, including women-led businesses, that accessing an overseas market is not an impossible dream.»

As co-manager of the LLC 'Agroproduct Export Agrofirma' that produces a range of fruits and vegetables, Ms. Saidova's success through the project has brought considerable benefits to both her own business and her broader community. During the exhibition she established a 100,000 US dollar contract with the 'Siberia Invest' company, for which she is process of sending a second shipment of produce.

Establishing this contract allowed her to take on an additional 10 hectares of land for growing legumes, which are in high demand in foreign markets. She also started building a cold storage unit for grapes, another product with significant export potential. By reducing product costs, Ms. Saidova has brought on 11 seasonal workers, and is creating additional employment opportunities for her community.

Ms. Saidova efforts have not just been about building her communities'

financial security, but also establishing a positive example for women throughout Uzbekistan. Her success is one example of a growing shift in the Uzbekistan's business world, where women are receiving stronger support from their families and husbands to pursue careers in national and international business. Ms. Saidova's work has been particularly inspirational, earning the "Best Project by Women Entrepreneur" award in 2013, while the 'World Food Moscow' exhibition gave her another opportunity to show what could be done.

"I was very impressed with the exhibition, because it was very interesting and useful for the cooperation and development of business, and presented an outcome to strive for," she said. "It is important to work hard and love what you are doing, and you will see results very soon."

Conducted since 2014, Phase III of the 'Aid for Trade' project has been the latest stage in a long effort to boost the development of small business in Uzbekistan, engaging with over 160 rural and urban businesses.

Efforts to grow gender balance in the business sector have included boosting the participation of women-led businesses in international business training projects, and providing key capacity-building and technological assistance. Particular focus has been on enhancing and strengthening public understanding of the important role women play in Uzbekistan's ever-expanding business sector.

Our publications

Cost of Doing Business in Uzbekistan (2016)

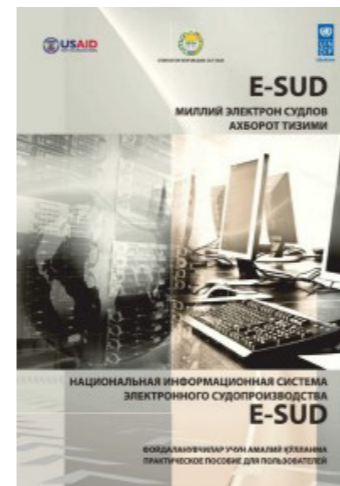


The "Cost of Doing Business in Uzbekistan (2016)" Publication is designed to support investment and business activities in Uzbekistan and provides comprehensive overview of the major costs of starting up and doing business including enterprise registration, labor costs, taxes and tax preferences, licensing, foreign trade procedures, customs payments and preferences, business services, logistics and other types of business information.

The publication is prepared in the framework of UNDP's "Aid for Trade" and "Business Forum of Uzbekistan – Phase III" projects in cooperation with the Ministry for Foreign Economic Relations, Investments and Trade of

the Republic of Uzbekistan and Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Uzbekistan, and published with support of GIZ Programme «Support to Regional Trade in Central Asia».

E-SUD National E-Justice System: User Handbook



This manual provides general information on the national information system of electronic case management - E-SUD, as well as detailed explanation of the work flow of the information system and procedure of filing applications/petitions to the civil courts. The manual is intended for general users, personnel of courts, judges, lawyers, experts in law, students and other interested readers.

The handbook is developed within the framework of the "Rule of Law Partnership in Uzbekistan" project, which is a joint project of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Uzbekistan, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and United Nations Development Programme.

The United Nations Development Programme is the UN's global development network. UNDP Uzbekistan has been operating in the country since 1993 and has cooperated with the Government on finding solutions to national development challenges. UNDP assistance in Uzbekistan focuses on two overall, inter-linked objectives; to support the Government in advancing economic and democratic reforms; and strengthening and fostering the participation of civil society in development processes at national and local levels. UNDP works in three thematic areas – economic governance, good governance and energy and environment.

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41/3, Mirabod Street, Tashkent, 100015, Uzbekistan
Tel.: +998 (71) 120-34-83; Fax: +998 (71) 120-3485
Email: registry.uz@undp.org
Website: www.uz.undp.org



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