



## Governance, Human Rights & Service Delivery

### Strengthening the protection and promotion of human rights in Uzbekistan



*A practical part of the session for bus drivers on the rights and needs of persons with disabilities, picture by OHCHR*

The Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (OHCHR) has expanded its presence in Uzbekistan with the support of Switzerland. This offers an opportunity to intensify the human rights dialogue and strengthen the protection and promotion of human rights in Uzbekistan.

#### **Rationale**

With its reform course towards a people centred state, Uzbekistan has committed to improve the human rights situation in the country. The 2020 Presidential Decree on the human rights strategy provides for practical measures to harmonize national legislation with international standards. Changes in the legislative and policy framework, including the revamping of the Constitution in 2023, the introduction of new actions plans, such as the Human Rights Education plan, and the recent legal amendments to prosecute domestic violence demonstrate this commitment. Also, Uzbekistan has submitted the fourth report of the Universal Periodic Review to the Human Rights Council in November 2023.

#### **Country:**

Uzbekistan

#### **Duration:**

2023 - 2025

#### **Total Budget:**

CHF 570'000 SDC contribution  
to CHF 5'667'000 project

#### **Partners:**

State institutions, international  
development organizations  
and Civil Society organizations

#### **Implementing agency:**

OHCHR

Yet the implementation of these commitments has been slow, and pressure on civil liberties and civic space remains high. Access to justice and guarantees for the independence of the judiciary remain challenging. While there are some advances towards more democratic governance, political power and decision-making remains highly centralized. Of concern are the burdensome registration and reporting requirements for independent NGOs which is a challenge to the effectiveness of their work.

### **Overall goal**

Human rights in Uzbekistan will be strengthened, by ensuring justice for victims of human rights abuses, strengthening civic space and implementing UN Human Rights Mechanisms recommendations. OHCHR will provide capacity building to government and civil society stakeholders and support inclusive multistakeholder platforms for convening and dialogue. The main counterpart for OHCHR is the National Human Rights Center.

### **Outcomes and envisaged results**

- *The rule of law is promoted and accountability for human rights violations strengthened:* State authorities will lead a dialogue and gain expertise and capacity to apply international human rights standards. Victims of human rights abuses will have better access to justice and the litigation capacities of CSOs will be strengthened.
- *Civic space and people's participation are enhanced and protected:* Civil society actors are better equipped to actively participate in decision-making processes and exercise the right to freedom of opinion, expression and peaceful assembly. To enhance their capacities is key to strengthen monitoring and accountability on human rights in the country.
- *UN Human Rights Mechanisms are strengthened and human rights are integrated in sustainable development:* Uzbekistan will engage more with UN Human Rights Mechanisms and implement recommendations. Human rights are consistently integrated in sustainable development.

### **Target groups**

The project works with governmental, non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, including the ministries of justice, internal affairs, foreign affairs, social affairs, judiciary, and the Parliament and UN agencies. Beneficiaries on the right holder's side include Human Rights Defenders, civil society and women's rights organisations, lawyers and journalists as well as youth associations and persons living with disabilities.



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