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Research Article

UZBEKISTAN'S NATIONAL POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

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Ergashev Umid Arabboy ugli

National Information and Analytical Center for Drug Control under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT

This article describes the measures, main directions, uniqueness and features of the poverty reduction strategy in our country in recent years. In addition, the shortcomings of work on poverty reduction and ways to solve them are also highlighted.

KEYWORDS

Poverty, poor families, support, decree, strategy, economic, social.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty is found in both rich industrialized countries and poor agricultural countries. In poor countries, the poverty rate can cover 70 percent of the population. This indicator means that poverty is widespread enough to affect the country's macroeconomic growth and development. The incidence of poverty in low- and

middle-income countries is often associated with inequalities in income distribution, which also affects macroeconomic growth and development. Poverty reduction, equitable income distribution and economic growth are the development goals of poor countries.



In recent years, for the first time in our country, the existence of poverty among a certain segment of the population was recognized, and reforms were carried out aimed at reducing it.¹ In particular, on March 26, 2020, Decree No. PD-5975 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan “**On measures to radically update the state policy in the field of economic development and poverty reduction**” was adopted.² According to the decree, the Ministry of Economy and Industry of the Republic of Uzbekistan was reorganized into the Ministry of Economic Development and Poverty Reduction of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The ministry was assigned the following tasks to reduce poverty:

- Ensuring the inclusiveness of economic growth, development, implementation and coordination of poverty reduction strategies and programs in cooperation with government bodies, non-governmental non-profit organizations, public organizations, international financial institutions and foreign government financial organizations;
- Development of specific tools and mechanisms to reduce poverty, development and implementation of criteria for determining the level of poverty and methodology for its assessment, minimum standards and regulatory framework for social security, taking into account foreign experience;
- Implementation of measures to achieve national goals and objectives in the field of sustainable development, carrying out systematic work to

develop a methodology for calculating the subsistence minimum and the minimum consumer basket and studying the differentiation of incomes of the population, ensuring their consistency with state targeted programs.

In addition, in the Address of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to the Oliy Majlis dated December 29, 2020, poverty reduction is identified as a priority. In this regard, an important task of the day was the development of specific measures, the creation of a specific mechanism for reducing poverty.³

According to the **New Development Strategy of Uzbekistan for 2022-2026**, the following reforms and measures will be carried out to reduce poverty in Uzbekistan. There is a **goal 85**, the goal of which is to create new jobs in the country, increase the income of the population and thereby reduce poverty by at least half by the end of 2026. The goal includes development and implementation of government programs to reduce poverty. Moreover, creating of a unified electronic system for registering families, women and youth belonging to the category of poverty, by regions, cities and districts, preventing the risk of a return to poverty.

The uniqueness of the poverty reduction strategy in our country lies in the fact that first, support for entrepreneurship, improvement of activities of structures in the regions to reduce unemployment and poverty, secondly, organizing effective activity of the institute of assistant khokim of the district (city) on the

¹ Address of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev to the Oliy Majlis. <https://president.uz/uz/lists/view/4057>

² On measures to radically update the state policy in the field of economic development and poverty reduction. <https://lex.uz/docs/4776669>

³ Address of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev to the Oliy Majlis. <https://president.uz/uz/lists/view/4057>

development of entrepreneurship, employment of the population and poverty reduction.

It should be noted that **12-15% of the population** of our country or **4-5 million** people live below the poverty line. This means that their daily income does not exceed **10-13 thousand** soums.⁴ President Shavkat Mirziyoyev stated this at a meeting of video selectors on measures to reduce poverty on February 27, 2020.

According to the results of studies conducted in this area, a low-income family consists of 7 people, the average age of the head of the family is more than 50 years, he does not have a higher education. In particular, 11% of heads of low-income families are unemployed, 93% of cases do not have higher education, and only 24% have specialized secondary education. 43% of low-income households do not have a permanent job. 93% not connected to central heating, 96% to central sewerage and 66% to central water supply.⁵

It is based on the experience of the country, and as examples of some factors that cause poverty in our country, it is possible to follow:

1. In all regions of Uzbekistan, the quality of education, the level of employment, housing opportunities and living conditions are not the same. For example, Kashkadarya region is considered the worst region in terms of the problem of poverty (700,000 people are poor). This is about 21% of the total population. Also, 500,000 people are poor in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, 500,000 in the Surkhandarya

region, 400,000 in the Namangan region, 210,000 in the Jizzakh region and 130,000 in the Syrdarya region.⁶

2. There are shortcomings in the regulation of land relations. the procedure and conditions for leasing land plots to farms do not allow the emergence of a class of small farmers.
3. Insufficiently created organizational and legal mechanisms aimed at supporting single mothers and citizens whose head of the family is unemployed. It should be noted that today the admission of children from the age of 2 to state preschool educational institutions has been established. However, this procedure does not allow women to work. That is, low-income or middle-income families cannot afford to send children under 3 years of age to non-state preschool educational institutions.
4. Differences in the distribution of incomes of the population also cause an increase in the level of poverty in our country. For instance, according to the Gini index, Uzbekistan's indicate was 32.40.
5. No attention was paid to the system of social protection as a factor in maintaining the stability of demand. It should be noted that the system of social protection is not only assistance to citizens of the state in social protection, but also the stability of demand, which affects economic growth. The reason is that the aid money provided by the state is spent directly on the purchase of food, the use of household services and participates in the law of supply and demand, which is the driving force of the economy.
6. The socio-economic development of rural areas is at an unsatisfactory level. According to available

⁴ Poverty level in Uzbekistan. What can be done to reduce poverty? <https://review.uz/oz/post/ozbekistonda-kambagallik-darajasi-kambagallikni-kamaytirish-uchun-nima-qilish-kerak>

⁵ Poverty in Uzbekistan and ways to reduce it. <https://review.uz/oz/post/ozbekistonda-kambagallik-va-uniqisqartirish-yollari>

⁶ Poverty in Uzbekistan and ways to reduce it. <https://review.uz/oz/post/ozbekistonda-kambagallik-va-uniqisqartirish-yollari>

data, most of the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan is considered rural, and 49.5% of the population lives in rural areas. Legislation aimed at the development of rural areas has been adopted in our country since 2000. In connection with the announcement of 2009 as the Year of Rural Development and Prosperity, certain activities were carried out in this direction.

In the period from 2003 to 2019, about 100 laws were adopted aimed directly at the development of rural areas, and several state programs were approved, but the development of all rural areas of the republic was not achieved.

Based on the foregoing, the following proposals can be made aimed at reducing the level of poverty in our country:

First, in order to create comfortable living conditions and the necessary infrastructure in rural areas, the introduction of minimum requirements for infrastructure facilities and the precise definition of sources of financing for their implementation. It is necessary to determine the number of banks, consumer services, hospitals, schools and public transport that planning to create in a particular area, based on the population.

Second, in order to strengthen the social protection system:

- Ensuring that the amount of maternity benefits is regulated by the provisions of the Labor Code;
- Setting fees for kindergarten for children from low-income families;
- Introduction of free packages of medical services for low-income citizens.

Thirdly, establishing of district offices of the Agency for Foreign Labor Migration in order to provide consulting services to persons wishing to work abroad and train them in the profession.

Fourthly, based on the experience of Singapore, it is necessary to organize training courses for citizens who do not have education and do not have a permanent job;

Fifthly, according to amendments and additions to the Tax Code based on Singapore experience, property tax on agricultural land should not be levied for 5 years from the moment of its issuance.

In addition, The Ministry of Public Education should implement social protection programs for children from low-income families, including free school textbooks, one-time allowances for school uniforms and other expenses for children from low-income families.

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