



Shveysariya Konfederatsiyasi

Governance and Human Rights (Transversal theme)

EQUALITY: Strengthened Civil Society in Advancing Women's Rights and Empowerment in Uzbekistan (ACTED)



In Qarshi, teachers of School No.11 strengthened their skills to prevent bullying and digital violence through a training led by Yuksalish and ACTED under the SDC-funded "EQUALITY" project

Rationale

Uzbekistan has taken an important step towards gender equality, introducing new laws to protect women and girls. Under the national Gender Equality Strategy for 2030, the country criminalised domestic violence, penalised sexual harassment, and expanded access to state-funded legal support for those who need it most.

However, the path to equality is not without its obstacles. Deep-rooted discrimination against women, limited capacity resources within government institutions, and long-held societal beliefs continue to hinder progress. Women, particularly those who live in rural areas, often face high unemployment, limited access to the essential services, and economic exclusion, leaving them highly exposed to violence. Local governance, community leaders, and civil society organisations (CSOs) play a crucial role in turning the tide. By strengthening these groups and challenging harmful social norms, society can build a future where women are protected, empowered, and given equal opportunities.

Recognising these, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation supports Acted, an international non-governmental organisation in Uzbekistan to implement their «EQUALITY» programme to close the gaps and foster a more embracing and sustainable environment for fair and just treatment of women and

Country:

Uzbekistan

Duration:

2024 – 2028

Total Budget:

EUR 1'074'746 SDC contribution

Partners:

National Agency for Social Protection;
Ministry of Justice;
Ministry of Interior;
Ministry of Labour;
Committee on Family and Women;
Republican Centre for Rehabilitation and Adaptation of Women;
Local Government Authorities on Province and district levels;
Mahalla Committees;
Civil society organizations

Implementing Partner:

ACTED

Co-funded by:



girls across the country. As an international NGO, ACTED works in partnership with local civil society organisations to strengthen their capacities in the response and prevention of gender-based violence.

Overall Goal

The overall goal of the project is to advance gender equality in Uzbekistan by strengthening the civil society to prevent violence against women and girls, promote their economic empowerment, and enhance their societal participation.

Outcomes and envisaged results

- **Improved local support systems to address gender-based issues:** Civil society organizations and service providers will be better prepared to work with communities and relevant institutions to help prevent and respond to cases of violence against women in a coordinated and constructive way.
- **Increased economic opportunities for women in vulnerable situations:** Women who are disadvantaged or at risk will receive support to improve their skills and access livelihood opportunities, contributing to local economic development and social stability.
- **Strengthened collaboration on women's rights and protection:** Local CSOs will have enhanced capacities to engage in constructive dialogue and cooperation with decision-makers on matters related to women's rights and protection, both at the local and national levels.

ACTED formed a consortium with five local CSOs in four regions of Uzbekistan to improve service access, positively impacting families, communities, and civil society.

Geographic focus

The project will mainly operate through intervention in the Surkhandariya with "Ayol va Shodlik", Kashkadariya with Information and Consulting Resource Centre «Yuksalish», Khorezm with Khorezm Regional Centre for Support of Women and Children «Interbilim» and Tashkent regions with Centre for Special Protection and Education «Bely Parus» and Centre for Development and Support of Initiatives «Nihol».

Target groups

This project focuses on supporting women in vulnerable situations, particularly those affected by violence, by strengthening the systems and people around them. It equips local authorities and civil society organizations with the skills, resources, and tools needed to better respond to women's needs. Local NGOs will benefit from targeted training, small grants, and infrastructure support to improve their services, including efforts to help women reintegrate into their communities and access new opportunities.

Beyond institutional support, the project fosters positive social change. It engages men and boys to raise awareness and promote respectful behavior, provides psychological support to perpetrators to reduce repeat violence, and collaborates with businesses to encourage fair, inclusive workplaces. Together, these efforts aim to create a safer and more supportive environment for women and their families.

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