

The State of Civil Society in Uzbekistan

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in partnership with the Institute for social and economic initiatives

The Public Chamber
under the President will
be formed

Immediate response
of NGOs to COVID-19
Pandemic

On April 16, 2020, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the establishment of the Public Chamber under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan was adopted.

Public Chamber under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as public chambers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, regions and the city of Tashkent, will be established in order to implement the new idea "The initiator of reforms – the society itself", outlined in the Address of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan of January 24, 2020, expand the scale of participation of the population in managing the affairs of the state and society, achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, establish close mutual cooperation of citizens, society and the state, as well as strengthen public control over the activities of state bodies and institutions.

The Public Chamber and the regional public chambers will become the permanent advisory bodies with the main activities:

- o establishment of a modern form of systemic and effective dialogue, uniting the efforts of the state, citizens, civil society institutions, aimed at further accelerated and comprehensive development of the country;
- o assistance in enhancing the participation of citizens in the affairs of the state and society;
- o the systematic study of the opinion of the population, discussion on the ground and in industries of urgent issues of concern to the population;
- o initiating fundamental and practical research in the field of development of civil society;
- o assistance in establishing practical and effective cooperation of civil society institutions in achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals;

The Public Chamber will consist of 50 members working on a voluntary basis. 18 members are appointed by the president from among citizens, representatives of NGOs, and the media, who have made a great contribution to the development of the society. Another 18 are accepted based on the decision of the Public Chamber and competitive selection of candidates submitted by NGOs, the media, and representatives of the general public. 14 members are members of regional public chambers; which ex-officio are their chairmen.

People across Uzbekistan are staying home and practicing social distancing to help flatten the curve. Yet quarantine and isolation can carry additional risks for families experiencing multiple stressors.

Small shared spaces, limited mobility, uncertainty about the future, and loss of income are just a few of the factors that can build to domestic violence.

The Nationwide public movement "Yuksalish", which is a platform for the network and capacity building of SCOs in Uzbekistan, with the support of USAID reacted to cases of domestic violence through its "Partnership for Innovations Program" jointly implemented by the Civil Society Development Association, which awards grants for community initiatives. Grant recipient Center for Development and Support of Initiatives "Nihol", has partnered with local activists on a volunteer basis to launch a Telegram channel (@psixologikmaslaxat) and Telegram bot (@psixologikmaslahat_GT_bot) on April 7 to provide free psychological counseling to citizens in crisis, especially people vulnerable to domestic abuse.

"During a pandemic, we have brought together professional psychologists, including those working in different CSOs, and united them on a volunteer basis to create a Telegram channel and Telegram bot," says the Executive director of "Nihol" Shirin Rashidova and adds that inquiries are addressed by school psychologists, psychoanalysts, certified psychologists with experience in psychological counseling, university professors, researchers, wellness specialists, and mental health specialists, including members of the Association of Psychologists of Uzbekistan. The Telegram channel and Telegram bot were launched on April 7, 2020. Since then, more than 300 questions have been answered through the channel, which has enabled the "Partnership for Innovation" Program and the Nationwide movement "Yuksalish" to support the families and contribute to domestic violence prevention



To learn more visit:

The Nationwide movement "Yuksalish"

<http://yuksalish.com>

The Institute for social and economic initiatives

<http://initiative.uz>