

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR EXPERTS

Terms of reference for on-site activities and missions

Action code and partner country: SOCIEUX 2022-09 UZBEKISTAN

Action title: *Improving and structuring social services in Uzbekistan*

Partner institution: Agency for the Development of Medical and Social Services of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Activity number and title:

A. 1: Assessment of the infrastructure and resources for social and medico-social services provision in Uzbekistan to persons with disabilities and elderly people

Date of implementation of activities:

Activity 1: 10/11/2022 – 21/12/2022 (on-site 28/11-09/12/2022)

Expert positions and responsibilities (by activity):

Expert 1: Social Services
Policy and strategy making and development ; Service delivery

Expert 2: Social Services; Rights of People with Disabilities
Service delivery

Workload:

Expert 1 : 21 days

Expert 2 : 20 days

Call for experts' reference: **22-09/UZB/1**

Version - #: 2 ☒ Draft

☒ Final

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1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Country overview

Uzbekistan is a landlocked country located in Central Asia that borders the countries of Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. It is the most populated country in Central Asia, 34,2 million people. Its capital and largest city is Tashkent (almost 2,7 million people). Other big cities are Namangan (almost 0,6 million people) and Samarkand (0,53 million people). The distribution between urban and rural population is 50/50.

Uzbekistan is a post-soviet country. It was governed by the first president Islam Karimov till his death in 2016. After the transition of power in 2016-2017, some liberalization reforms were conducted, and modernization of the state and public services has been engaged. After an initial phase of market liberalization, Uzbekistan is moving into a more complex phase of reforms of land, labor, capital markets, and state-owned enterprises, but also health and social services. The most significant medium-term challenge will be ensuring reform inclusivity and transparency. To mitigate the economic, social, and health consequences of the pandemic, the Government has been taking anti-crisis policy measures.

Uzbekistan is a lower middle-income economy (GNI per capita is 1 750 USD in 2020). It is an important producer of agricultural products (including cotton) and exporter of natural gas, oil, uranium and gold. The informal sector is estimated at 45% of GDP, with almost as many people employed formally as in informal work. Unformal employment concerns above all agricultural sector (seasonal work) and services. The economy is also characterized by high inflation (14,7% in 2020). About 12% of the population live below national poverty line. HDI is 0.72 ranking Uzbekistan at the 106th position.

1.2 Sector situation

Uzbekistan has been undergoing a major socio-economic transformation since 2016. Social policy is an important priority for the government. The National Strategy for Social Protection 2021-2030 was approved in February 2021. It proclaims basic guarantees of social security and social assistance coverage of the population, which should be carried out taking into account good practices from abroad. The Agency for the Development of Medical and Social Services of the Republic of Uzbekistan is the main State administration in Uzbekistan in charge of social assistance and social services, from policy formulation in this area to services provision to final beneficiaries, as no ministry in charge of social affairs exists in the country currently.

Three main categories of beneficiaries receiving social services from the Agency are persons with disabilities including children, elderly people living isolated and in institutions, and victims of human trafficking. The main services provided by the agency and its decentralized branches are medical rehabilitation, basic assistive technologies (limb prosthesis and wheelchairs), housing in institutions, health resort treatment. Service offer is however quite limited and the quality of services is considered poor by the Agency as well as by users. In the request to SOCIEUX+, the Agency identifies the following challenges, which refer to its specific mandate but also to the broader sector of social services and assistance:

- an insufficiently formed system of effective management of the provision of medical and social services to persons taken into state care in residential care homes ;
- low quality of disability prevention and medical and social rehabilitation services;
- problems in the state of infrastructure of medical and social institutions in terms of creating favorable conditions for the elderly and persons with disabilities;
- the system of material incentives for workers in medical and social institutions needs to be improved;
- lack of organization on a systematic basis of spiritual, educational and cultural events in medical and social institutions;
- low level of quality of medical and social rehabilitation measures and psychological support for victims of human trafficking;

- dissatisfaction of persons with disabilities with the quality and system of prosthetic and orthopedic care.

Tackling these problems through improvement and modernization of services provided to entitled beneficiaries is one of the priorities of the Agency. A new (improved) offer of services should be formulated in the form of a "policy Concept" that would further be developed and translated into norms to be integrated into the national regulatory framework referring to the provision of social assistance and basic social services.

1.3 Role of partner institution in the sector

The Agency used to be placed under institutional hierarchy of the Ministry of Health; after the reform of 2021 (decree the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. UP-6195 dated March 25, 2021) it is now under the Prime Minister's office. It has a network of regional branches and local divisions, as well as several institutions under its hierarchy (including residential care institutions and national and local rehabilitation centers).

The institutional mandate of the Agency according to the mentioned decree includes the following main functions and tasks:

- implementation of a unified state policy in the field of medical and social services for the elderly, persons with disabilities and other categories of the population in need of social protection;
- organizing and managing the activities of medical and social institutions, including "Muruvvat" orphanages for the children with special needs and "Sahovat" care homes for the elderly and persons with disabilities ;
- coordination and methodological guidance of the activities of state bodies and organizations for the provision of medical and social services to the elderly, persons with disabilities and other categories of the population in need of social protection;
- organization of scientific research and training of specialists in the field of medical, professional and social rehabilitation of persons with disabilities ;
- organization of measures to provide those in need with prosthetic and orthopedic products and technical means of rehabilitation;
- analyze and control the effectiveness of the provision of medical and social services based on advanced foreign experience and current development trends;
- service of medical and social expertise (disability assessment), organizational and methodological management of rehabilitation measures for persons with disabilities ;
- coordination of the system of medical and social rehabilitation and psychological support for victims of human trafficking;
- organizing the implementation of legislative acts on the rights of persons with disabilities.

2 ACTION DESCRIPTION

2.1 Overall objective

Access to employment and social protection is expanded to poor and vulnerable groups

2.2 Specific objective (s) (purpose)

S. 1: To contribute to introduction of modern approaches to social services provision in Uzbekistan

2.3 Expected results

R. 1: Good practices over structure, types, forms and mechanisms of provision of social services in the EU were presented

R. 2: Key steps and policy orientation documents to improve the quality of and the coverage by social services were developed

2.4 Final deliverables

D. 1: Assessment report social and medico-social services provided in Uzbekistan to PwDs and elderly people

D. 2: Study visit report (including identification and definition of services to be introduced in Uzbekistan)

D. 3: Concept note on the improvement and development of the system of social services provision to PwDs including children, and elderly people in Uzbekistan (providing priorities and steps to introduce new social services)

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 General methodology (of the action)

The present action will support the Partner Institution to develop and improve social services provided in Uzbekistan to the statutory beneficiaries of the Agency, in particular persons with disabilities and the elderly; development and improvement proposals shall in particular tackle the dimensions of types and forms, coverage, quality and accessibility of social assistance and basic social services provided by the Agency. It will help the Partner Institution to better fulfil its institutional mandate defined by the presidential decree of 25/03/2021 which is to develop and coordinate the introduction of new forms of social services to improve social protection of vulnerable groups.

The action will first focus on the assessment of the existing services provided by the Agency to key eligible groups of population (primarily persons with disabilities, including children, and elderly people living isolated or in institutions). Then a detailed presentation of services provided to similar population groups in the EU is given to the Partner to give a good understanding of the practical organisation of these services, the human and material resources needed, the roles of stakeholders and the possibility of adaptation of the services to the local context in Uzbekistan. Finally, a policy paper, defined "policy Concept", for the development of social services in Uzbekistan will be jointly elaborated. It will include key steps and strategic directions for the improvement of the offer of social assistance and basic social services deployed by the Agency.

The technical assistance methodology will be detailed by the mobilized experts. Notwithstanding this experts' responsibility, the overall methodology shall be centred on the international standards and EU good practice in the field of social services.

All activities are foreseen on-site.

3.2 Planned activities (work plan of the action)

The following activities are currently planned for the action:

A. 1: Assessment of the infrastructure and resources for social and medico-social services provision in Uzbekistan to persons with disabilities and elderly people

A. 2: Study visit to learn practical organisation of social and medico-social services in an EU country for elderly people and persons with disabilities including children

A. 3: Formulation of a Concept note on introduction of a modern offer of social services to persons with disabilities, including children, and elderly people in Uzbekistan

The present terms of reference cover the services expected for activities of the above work plan:

- Activity 1.

3.3 Inclusion of cross-cutting issues

SOCIEUX+ recognises the importance to include cross-cutting issues in social protection, labour and employment policies and systems. The following cross-cutting issues are duly taken into account:

- Gender equality;
- Good governance;

- Human rights (including rights of children, people living with disabilities, vulnerable groups and minorities); and,
- Social and economic inclusion of vulnerable groups.

4 ACTIVITIES DESCRIPTION

4.1 Tasks

The action includes three activities.

During the first activity the experts will review and assess the services (medio-social and social) currently provided in Uzbekistan by the Agency (including its subordinate institutions) to specific groups of population: persons and children with disabilities and isolated elderly people and elderly people living in institutions. Currently these services are mostly provided by the Partner Institution, its regional and local branches as well as institutions under the Partner Institution.

The services shall be evaluated from the point of view of their 1) legal entitlement (legal coverage), 2) actual coverage, 3) adequacy (of benefits, services; including accessibility and relevance to the needs of target groups), and 4) sustainability (including efficiency). Gaps and uncovered needs shall be identified. Possible axes of development and improvement shall be identified; this will help to identify and formulate strategic priorities for the deployment of the remaining activities.

At this stage the experts shall consult the Partner Institution and its local representation(s) as well as other relevant parties, including ministerial representatives, local authorities, organisations of persons with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities, eventually other civil society organisations, professionals of medical and social care, and development partners represented in Uzbekistan (including UNICEF, UNDP, World Bank and UNFPA).

The team of experts will deploy a peer-to-peer methodology involving the Partner Institution relevant staff and other stakeholders in technical consultations.

The principal expert will lead the on-site mission. He/she will be responsible for the delivery of all deliverables of the activity (see below Section 4.2). He/she will be responsible for the preparation, coordination, implementation and reporting of the overall activity towards SOCIEUX+ A focal point from the Partner Institution will be appointed to closely work with the experts during the phases of preparation, implementation and finalization of the activity. This activity should take place on-site to ensure good understanding of the context by the experts, fluid contact with local stakeholders and efficiency of peer-to-peer cooperation.

Tasks:

Minimum tasks expected from the experts shall include:

- Ahead of the mission to get substantial knowledge of the local context; review any relevant background documents provided by the SOCIEUX+ Team and/or the Partner.
- Take part to the pre-mission briefing with SOCIEUX+ team (around 1 week before the start of the mission);
- Conduct preliminary contacts with the Partner in view of the preparation of the mission's methodology and agenda, to be transmitted ahead of the mission to the SOCIEUX+ team for approval;
- During the mission, to conduct consultations with the Partner's executives and staffs, as well as any other external actor that can support the positive deployment of the mission.
- To make themselves available for a meeting with the EU Delegation office in Tashkent;
- To present the outcomes of the mission to the partner in order to discuss and take into account comments on the contents of the deliverables before their finalization;
- At the end of the mission, timely submit to SOCIEUX+ of the final deliverables (10 working days after the mission), and be available to go through an eventual round of comments and adjustments in interaction with SOCIEUX+ and the Partner;
- To channel to SOCIEUX+ Communication officer any material that can be useful to inform the public about the activity (pictures, interviews, brief notes or articles);
- To employ the different templates and evaluation forms provided by the SOCIEUX+ team

4.2 Deliverables

4.2.1 Pre-mission deliverables (to be transmitted to SOCIEUX+ FMT at least three working days ahead of the activity):

- P1: A methodological note (max. 3 pages), detailing the working approach, tools and methods to employed, a risks analysis
- P2: A preliminary agenda (max. 2 pages), detailing the meetings and working sessions to be held

4.2.2 Final deliverables (to be transmitted to SOCIEUX+ FMT no later than ten days after the activity's completion):

- D. 1: Assessment report on existing social and medico-social services provided in Uzbekistan to PwDs and elderly people (by the Agency including its subordinate institutions)
- ExMR: An individual Expert Mission Report in SOCIEUX+ format (template provided). This report is a confidential product intended solely for and use by SOCIEUX+. The expert team may also submit a single-joint ExMR report if they prefer to do so (see instructions on the template).
- ExF: An individual completed Expert Feedback Form completed online (see instructions and link on the ExMR template).
- AcR: A collective Activity Report in SOCIEUX+ format (template provided). This AcR is to be produced jointly by the mission team. It is intended for the Partner Institution, and will be shared, most probably, with key stakeholders of the action. The report will reflect the tasks conducted in during the activity. It shall provide a meaningful contribution towards the final deliverables of the action.

5 REPORTING AND SUBMISSION OF DELIVERABLES

5.1 Formats

All deliverables and products of the activity (notes, reports, presentations, etc) shall comply with the formats and templates provided by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

All deliverables are to be submitted in electronic in electronic editable versions [Microsoft Word 97-2003 [doc], PowerPoint 97-2003 [ppt] and Excel 97-2003 [xls]; or in equivalent OpenDocument format). Non-editable electronic document such as in Portable Document Format (PDF) shall not be accepted.

Templates for electronic presentations during the activity/mission are provided by the SOCIEUX+ Team. These templates are in Microsoft PowerPoint format and comply with the SOCIEUX+ Corporate Image standards. These templates are to be used as a sole format by all members of the expert mission team. They are to be used for all presentations by the experts during and for the activity/mission. The use by the experts of their own, or their organisation(s), templates or formats are not allowed unless otherwise instructed in written [by email] to the experts by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

All versions of deliverables or other products used or produced during activity/mission by the experts shall include the following disclaimer:

"Disclaimer:

The responsibility of this publication sole lies with its authors. The European Union, the European Commission, the implementation partners of SOCIEUX+ and the SOCIEUX+ Staff are not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein."

Please refer to the expert information package for further guidance on communication and templates.

All deliverables are to be provided in English or in Russian.

5.2 Submission and approval

All deliverables versions (drafts, final or other) shall be submitted directly and only to SOCIEUX+ Team, unless otherwise instructed in written [by email] to the experts by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

5.2.1 Pre-mission deliverables

- Pre-mission deliverables shall be submitted no later than 3 working days before the start of activity.
- Pre-mission deliverables will be shared and reviewed by the SOCIEUX+ and the Partner Institution. Feedback on the deliverables should be provided to the Principal Expert at latest 2 days before the start of activity or departure of the mission of the experts, whichever is the earliest. Comments and recommendation of this feedback shall be taken into account for the implementation of the activity/mission by the experts. Only the mission agenda shall be resubmitted with revision if requested by the SOCIEUX+ Team.

5.2.2 Final deliverables

- The first draft versions of the final deliverables are to be submitted no later than 10 working days upon completion of the activity or return of the experts.
- Feedback to the first draft version of the report should be provided 10 working days after its submission.
- Inclusion of the feedback on drafts versions is expected 5 working days upon reception of the comments by the principal expert. (In general, no more than one round of feedback and revision is required, unless the quality of the deliverables is considered unsatisfactory by the SOCIEUX+ Team or/and the Partner Institution.)
- Final versions of the deliverables should be approved or rejected no later than 10 working days upon their submission to the SOCIEUX+ Team.
- Final payments and reimbursement of travel costs to experts can only be authorised upon approval of the final version of the deliverables by SOCIEUX+.

6 REQUIRED EXPERTISE

6.1 Expertise profile

Principal expert (Expert 1):

Area(s) of expertise: Social Services; Access to basic social services

Specific skill(s) of expertise: Policy and strategy making and development ; Service delivery

Requirements (essential/required):

- Education: university level (Masters or PhD relating to the subject are considered a plus);
- At least 15 years of relevant professional experience within EU public administrations or academia;
- Relevant experience in the area of organisation and provision of social services to different groups of vulnerable population;
- Experience of assessment of public policy or sectoral situation in social protection area;
- Acute sense of diplomacy and institutional relations.

Additional assets (advantageous in selection):

- Fluency in English, written and oral; working level of Russian language would be appreciated.
- Computer fluency (*Zoom, PowerPoint etc.*) and good presentation skills.

Expert 2:

Area(s) of expertise: Social Services; Rights of People with Disabilities

Specific skill(s) of expertise: Service delivery**Requirements (essential/required):**

- Education: university level (Masters or PhD relating to the subject are considered a plus);
- At least 10 years of relevant professional experience within EU public administrations or academia;
- Relevant experience in the area of organisation and provision of social services to different groups of vulnerable population;
- Good knowledge of social and medico-social services provided in the EU to persons and children with disability and/or elderly people and other vulnerable groups;
- Acute sense of diplomacy and institutional relations.

Additional assets (advantageous in selection):

- Fluency in English, written and oral; working level of Russian language would be appreciated.
Computer fluency (*Zoom, PowerPoint etc.*) and good presentation skills

6.2 Estimated workload

Activity 1

	Preparation	On-site work	Travel	Reporting & deliverables	Total
Principal expert (#1)	4	10	2	5	21
Expert (#2)	4	10	2	4	20
Total	8	20	4	9	41

7 APPLICATIONS**7.1 Call for experts**

All calls for experts for SOCIEUX+ activities are published online on the SOCIEUX+ website. Interested experts should submit their application on the SOCIEUX+ on-line expert database: <https://pmt.socieux.eu> (currently only available in English). The application process is:

1. If they have not already, experts create their SOCIEUX+ account by clicking on "Create an account" using an email address.
2. Login details for their account will be sent to experts by email, experts should create and submit their profile for review by¹:
 - a. Providing contact details
 - b. Providing information on the competences, skills and working history of the expert. Experts are required to provide only limited information through fields marked with an asterisk. However, *experts are encouraged to complete in most detail de sections on skills and competences as the SOCIEUX+ Team also regularly reviews profiles in the roster to identify and contact potential experts for future missions.*
 - c. Uploading of a curriculum vitae, preferably in Europass format².
3. Once their profile is approved by the SOCIEUX+ Team, they can apply to any available calls for experts accessible under the tab "Call for experts" and click on "Apply."

If more information is needed, please contact SOCIEUX+ by email at experts@socieux.eu with the reference number of the application.

¹SOCIEUX+ expert database and other management tools comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) -Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

²Europass templates for CVs are available here: <http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu/en/documents/curriculum-vitae/templates-instructions>

Collaborative or interested institutions wishing to make expertise available for a specific call for application may directly contact the team of SOCIEUX+ at experts@socieux.eu.

7.2 Selection of experts

In principle, SOCIEUX+ mobilises experts from the public administrations and mandated bodies of EU member states, and practitioners working for social partners, including:

- Practitioners, civil servants and employees from publicly mandated bodies;
- Collaborators and employees of social partner institutions, such as trade unions and employer associations; and,
- Academic and research institutions.

Active public experts from collaborative institutions are given priority in the selection. Private consultants may also apply. Their application will be considered in case an appropriate public expert cannot be identified.

Only short-listed applicants may be contacted. The selection process may include interviews by phone or other communication means.

Interested candidates may download the **Guide for Experts and Collaborative Institutions** with detailed information on contracting with SOCIEUX+ at www.socieux.eu

7.3 Contracting of public experts

Public experts can be in active duty or retired. Retired employees from international specialised agencies or cooperation agencies can also be mobilised, without regard to their former employer's collaborating with SOCIEUX+ on a specific action. Retired experts are considered as public experts for all purposes, benefits, and financial compensation provided by SOCIEUX+.

Short-listed candidates may be required to provide the contact of employer or proof of their ability to be directly contracted under their status as civil servant or public employee.

7.4 Financial compensations

Contract officials or active-duty or retired employees are entitled to standard fixed allowances of 350 euros per working day worked. The fees of private consultants are negotiated according to their number of years of relevant expertise and the standard scale of SOCIEUX+.

Retired experts are assimilated to public employees for all intents and purposes, benefits and financial compensation provided by SOCIEUX+.

National regulations on remuneration and compensation of public employees and civil servants applies and may limit the payment of allowances by SOCIEUX+. The responsibility for compliance and verification lies with individual experts and their institutions of origin. The payment of income or other taxes is the sole responsibility of the mobilised experts and/or their organisations.

7.5 Travel costs

All travel expenses for the mobilised experts (public, private or international institutions) are covered by SOCIEUX in accordance with the **Guide for Experts and Collaborative institutions** with detailed information on contracting with SOCIEUX+ (version as on date of signature of the contract).

8 COMMUNICATION & VISIBILITY

SOCIEUX + can use its communication channels, such as the web, newsletter and other media, to share information about the implementation and results of the activities. For this, contributions of the experts mobilised are expected. The experts may be requested to provide such contributions in the field of communication as photographs, provide short texts, and interviews.

Short briefings, before and after the mission, with the Communication Officer of SOCIEUX+. These briefings will provide the opportunity to identify communication opportunities and strategies.

For specific activities, visibility products, such as brochures, USB sticks, notebooks and pens, can be made available to experts for on-site distribution.

9 CODE OF CONDUCT

The experts mobilised by SOCIEUX+ will provide technical assistance from the preparatory stages of each activity to the delivery of products. The SOCIEUX+ Team will assist experts to fulfil their assignments by supporting and advising on the preparation of background materials before meetings. The SOCIEUX+ team will collect feedback from partner institutions and relevant stakeholders to ensure that mission reports and recommendations are delivered to national authorities, the EU Delegations in the partner countries and EuropeAid.

The experts mobilised are not representing SOCIEUX+ or the EU. Technical opinions and recommendations expressed are their own. They shall not express negative opinions on the implementation of actions supported by SOCIEUX+ to third-parties. Nevertheless, they shall be aware of SOCIEUX+'s objectives and functioning, and promote its services at the best of their knowledge, whenever possible and feasible.

The experts shall perform their duties in the Partner Country in a way that is fully compliant with and respectful of the local institutions, policies and cultural behaviours. They shall particularly adopt a culturally-sensitive behaviour in their way to deal with the local counterparts.

10 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

11 ANNEXES

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ABOUT SOCIEUX+

The European Union (EU) promotes and maintains dialogue on social protection and inclusive employment policies with an increasing number of partner countries. This effort has been confirmed by the European Commission (EC) Communication COM (2016) 740 final - "Proposal for a new European Consensus on Development, entitled *Our world, our dignity, our future*. A significant number of cooperation initiatives in these fields are funded by geographic or thematic instruments of the EU in different countries. Those initiatives are highly structured and address the medium- to long-term needs of partner countries. However, short-term measures and peer-to-peer cooperation to promote the development of social protection systems are needed to complement the EU's cooperation with third countries. SOCIEUX+ - EU Expert Facility on Employment, Labour and Social Protection responds to this need.

The SOCIEUX+ facility was setup by the EU through co-funding from France, Spain and Belgium and the resources managed by the European Commission's Directorate for Development and Cooperation (EuropeAid). The facility is implemented by a partnership composed of development cooperation agencies from Member States: Expertise France (the partnership lead), Fundación Internacional y para Iberoamérica de Administración y Políticas Públicas (FIIAPP) from Spain, Belgian International Cooperation on Social Protection (BELINCOSOC), and the Belgian Development Agency (Enabel).

The general objective of the Facility is to expand and improve access to better employment opportunities and inclusive social protection systems in partner countries. Its specific objective is to enhance the capacities of partner countries to better design, manage and monitor inclusive, effective, and sustainable employment strategies and social protection systems through short-term, peer-to-peer technical assistance and knowledge development.

SOCIEUX+ recognises the impact of social protection and employment in reducing poverty and vulnerability. It supports the efforts of partner governments in promoting inclusive and sustainable social protection and employment systems. SOCIEUX+ also complements the efforts made through other European Union initiatives.

The Facility is an expansion of SOCIEUX Social Protection EU Expertise in Development Cooperation, established in 2013.



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