

The State of the “Third Sector” in Uzbekistan: Realities and Development Prospects

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Abstract. The article examines the strategic directions of civil society development in the medium and long term. At the same time, the purpose of this study is to develop proposals for improving the organizational, legal, and economic foundations of NGO activities. Special attention should also be paid to the issues of improving the effectiveness of implementation of social partnership and public control, creating favorable conditions for the expansion of NGO participation in public administration, further strengthening of their organizational capacity, organization of training and professional development of specialists. In order to study the real state of the "third sector" in Uzbekistan, to assess the interaction of NGOs with the state authorities, a comprehensive analysis of the interaction of NGOs with the state authorities in addressing the current socio-economic, socio-political, cultural and humanitarian tasks of the region, the attitude of citizens to the socially useful activities of NGOs, its impact on the social development of regions of the country, participation in government programs, implementation of grant projects and provision of services to the population was carried out. Based on the analysis of the state of the "third sector" the reasons that hinder the effective functioning of NGOs in these areas were identified and proposals and recommendations for further strengthening the activities of the role and importance of NGOs in the socio-economic development of the regions were developed. Taking into account the importance and necessity of the NGO sector in implementing the tasks of socio-economic, socio-political and cultural-humanitarian development of the country, there is a need to improve the legal framework of NGOs, to strengthen the organizational and financial sustainability of NGOs, to enhance the positive image of NGOs, to strengthen international relations. At the same time, it is necessary to develop and publish methodological manuals and guidelines for employees of government agencies, NGOs and other civil society institutions on the interaction with foreign and international organizations, as well as to take the necessary measures to consolidate the intellectual, material, technical and other resources of all self-initiated NGOs.

Key words: civil society, social partnership, NGOs, standard-setting activities, training.

INTRODUCTION

In Uzbekistan, enormous efforts are being made to democratize and liberalize the activities of various civil society institutions and to develop a variety of dynamic NGOs as an essential component and one of the prerequisites for the democratic renewal and modernization of the country and for building a strong civil society.

The necessary comprehensive organizational and legal framework has been created in Uzbekistan.

The necessary comprehensive organizational, legal, material, technical and institutional framework for organizing the activities of non-governmental non-profit organizations (hereinafter referred to as NGOs) has been created in the country. By this period more than 250 legislative acts (over 20 laws, 60 presidential decrees and resolutions, 180 decisions of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan) aimed at strengthening the role and importance of civil society institutions were adopted.

A rare example of constitutional construction is the fact that a separate chapter 13 of the Basic Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan is devoted to public associations. It forms the basis, the foundation of legislative ensuring the rights and freedoms of citizens to establish NGOs and guarantees the freedom of their activities.

As a result of the gradual reforms carried out, the legal framework of NGOs has been significantly liberalized. Thus, in recent years, the state duty charged for the state registration of NGOs has been reduced fivefold, and the period for consideration of applications for state registration has been halved (from two months to one month). Also, the fees for state registration of

for state registration of separate divisions of NGOs have been abolished.

According to the Ministry of Justice, as of 1 January 2021 there were 9,205 non-profit NGOs operating throughout the country. The largest number are registered in Ferghana oblast, the smallest in Navoi oblast.

NGOs mainly operate in the areas of entrepreneurship and farming (21.2%), sports development (13.7%), strengthening democratic institutions (9%), etc.

It is difficult to give a strict breakdown of NGOs by area of activity, since many NGOs are engaged in the implementation of complex tasks that include several spheres. For example, more than 65% of women's NGOs work on educational programs that include the following areas: women's rights, reproductive health, gender education, vocational training and retraining of women, small business and private entrepreneurship, environmental protection, etc.

The total number of NGOs includes all units of political parties, movements, trade unions, and other regional branches of national NGOs.

Thus, the number of system-forming NGOs with their regional branches is more than 6 thousand units, of which almost half are created by separate decisions of the government. The number of so called "self-initiative" NGOs that do not have territorial subdivisions and operate at the local level is about 3 thousand units.

At the same time, the critical analysis of the quantitative indicators of NGOs shows a number of problems that require taking effective measures to resolve the current situation.

Firstly, the critical analysis of NGOs operating in the regions of the country shows that not all organizations registered with the justice authorities are fully functional. In each region there are on average 10-20 NGOs that have not been functioning for several years. The issue of liquidation or resumption of activities of non-functioning NGOs still remains open.

Secondly, there is a need to improve mechanisms of legal support for initiative groups in preparation and execution of statutes of new NGOs. Insufficient level of legal knowledge also

does not give an opportunity to prepare charters in accordance with the requirements of the legislation.

Thirdly, according to the State Statistics Committee the number of registered NGOs throughout the country in accordance with the form 1-NNT is more than 20 thousand, while according to the Ministry of Justice their number is 9 205. Unfinished mechanism of interaction between the two state bodies in the formation of a unified register of NGOs leads to discrepancies in the figures.

Fourth, an analysis of employment in the "third sector" reveals the prevalence of a hidden employment model in NGOs, combined with employment in state and commercial organizations. According to the NIMFEGO survey, work in NGOs is the main source of income for only 99 (28.6%) of NGOs. The real number of employees of NGOs, for whom work in their organization is the main source of income, can be even less, taking into account that questionnaires were mostly answered by representatives of NGO management.

Sixth, the issue of political parties requires separate consideration. Today, there are 839 political parties throughout the country. These civil society institutions are also registered by the judicial authorities as NGOs. However, there are several differences in the nature of political parties and NGOs.

Unlike NGOs, political parties pursue purely political goals, i.e., through their representatives, they participate in elections of the President, the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis, and local councils of people's deputies, while NGOs have no such rights.

An important difference between NGOs and political parties is that NGOs protect the rights and legitimate interests of citizens, including foreign citizens. Political parties have no such rights.

DISCUSSION

The country has established a legislative framework that meets generally recognized standards, creating the necessary conditions for effective interaction between NGOs and government agencies in addressing current issues of socio-economic development.

An act on social partnership has been adopted, which defines the interaction between State bodies and NGOs and other civil society institutions in the elaboration and implementation of programmes for the socio-economic development of the country, including sectoral and territorial programmes, as well as regulations and other decisions affecting the rights and legitimate interests of citizens.

Pursuant to the Decision of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 3 January 2011 on additional measures to improve the local structure of the executive authorities, posts of deputy chair of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, deputy regional khokims for liaison with voluntary and religious organizations and heads of their secretariat were established.

Social partnership commissions have been set up under the Jokargy Kenes of Karakalpakstan and the regional and Tashkent City councils of peoples' deputies to help develop social partnerships between NGOs and state bodies, in monitoring and evaluating the state of social partnership in addressing issues of social, social and economic development in the relevant territory.

In 2017, optimization was carried out in the Office of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The Service for interaction with the Oliy Majlis, political and public organizations was abolished and the new structure of the Service for interaction with Public and religious organizations was abolished.

Interaction between the state and civil society is ensured at all levels: republic, oblast, district, city, mahalla, as well as at all levels of public administration.

The state authorities are very open to cooperation with NGOs by concluding agreements, developing and implementing joint projects and plans. Only in the framework of the National Forum of NGOs, annually held by the National Association of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations of Uzbekistan (NANGOUz), more than 600 memorandums and agreements on cooperation between NGOs and governmental bodies were signed.

At the same time, systematic monitoring, expert opinions and the results of sociological research on the interaction of NGOs with state authorities and local government show a number of problems in the sphere.

State bodies do not have the practice of active work with NGOs through the implementation of the state social order.

In accordance with article 21 of the Law "On social partnership", state agencies determine within the limits of the social partnership areas provided for by this law the priority areas of their activities requiring the support of NGOs, and send applications for state social orders for the next fiscal year to the Public Foundation under the Oliy Majlis. However, in practice, the situation is the opposite, and the Public Fund under the Parliament of the country has to send requests to state agencies to submit their applications for state social orders.

Similarly, other government agencies at the oblast, city and district levels do not fully engage the resources of NGOs, there is virtually no skill in interacting with them.

Partnership is carried out by the same NGOs, primarily republican ones. Makhalla", "Nuroni" foundations, Women's Committee of Uzbekistan, Youth Union and other republican NGOs are most involved in cooperation. At the same time, the so-called "self-initiative" NGOs are left aside.

At the same time, it is necessary to note a rather low level of professional knowledge and skills in preparation of project applications. The situation is aggravated when analyzing the whole region of the republic. This situation is determined by several factors:

- first, these districts are relatively backward in socio-economic terms compared to other districts; accordingly, there is a low level of activity of NGOs themselves in these districts;
- secondly, most of NGOs in these districts remain uninformed about the Public Foundation grant contests, limited access to the Internet does not allow them to get information in time;
- Thirdly, lack of interest in interconnections with more experienced NGOs of the region, regional branches of NANGOUz does not allow them to receive timely information about the competitions.

In general, the lack of mechanisms for self-financing of the organization has led to the fact that the majority of NGOs in the country today are on the verge of survival, working solely on enthusiasm.

The vast majority of NGOs see their activities mainly in terms of fulfilling their social mission.

The state urges NGOs to be involved in the systematic study and solution of the population's problems. However, without financial, organizational and other resources, it is impossible to become an equal partner of state bodies in effective solution of the population's problems.

In this connection, the government needs to develop a new model of NGO financing, allowing to look at itself as an organization that has income and expenses, evaluating each of its steps in terms of economic efficiency and possible funding base.

It is important for the government to know how many jobs will be created in the NGO sector, what contribution they will make to GDP and solution of social problems of the country, what social services can be transferred to the sector, how many particular children can be cured with the help of such organizations, how to mobilize volunteers for important state projects, and, finally, how to reduce budget expenses in this way.

Today, branches and representative offices of foreign and international organizations accredited in the country make a significant contribution to the development of the country, the achievement of social, cultural and educational goals, the satisfaction of spiritual and other non-material needs, and the implementation of charitable activities.

The most active contributors are Rossotrudnichestvo, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Goethe Institute in Tashkent, the Representative Office of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the European Union Delegation, the UNDP Office, UNICEF, the Project HOPE, the OSCE Representative Office in Uzbekistan and others.

The main areas of activity of foreign and international organizations are conducting charity operations for children from poor families, capacity building of medical workers to provide quality family planning services, introducing farmers and other stakeholders to the promotion of innovative technologies in the agricultural sector, expanding legal and economic opportunities for women entrepreneurship, combating child labor, human trafficking, environmental protection, increasing professional

The current favorable atmosphere in the country, contributes to a change in thinking and outlook among representatives of NGOs. The mood of the "third sector" is changing. The questions of the necessity to simplify the procedure of interaction with international organizations, to receive foreign grants, to provide transparency of the Bank Commission's activity are being raised more and more often.

At this stage of the country's development, cooperation with foreign and international organizations is necessary in terms of learning new experiences and attracting financial resources to the country.

At the same time, state bodies and public organizations should take concrete measures to ensure that the agenda of cooperation, the main goals, objectives and priority areas of such cooperation are determined not by a foreign party in the interests of other countries, but precisely by state bodies and civil society institutions, taking into account the national interests of Uzbekistan.

It should be noted that there are many conceptual and theoretical models of formation and development of civil society in the world (Khoros 1998:312). And not all of them are acceptable for Uzbekistan (Syryamkina and Stupnikova 2015: 189-193).

It seems appropriate to base this issue on those theoretical findings that view civil society and the state as two interrelated forms of a single society, having common goals and acting as

partners in achieving these goals through the interaction of relevant state and public institutions (Zhuravleva 2015: 546-551; Nemtoi 2015: 356-360).

Research on the development of civil society is conducted by scientists and specialists of the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, National Human Rights Center, National University of Uzbekistan, Tashkent State Pedagogical University, Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and a number of other central and regional higher education institutions. Sociological surveys and public opinion studies on the development of civil society are conducted regularly by the Public Opinion Center and the Independent Institute for Monitoring the Formation of Civil Society (Parmanov, Halbekov 2019: 46-51; Parmanov 2016: 120).

Within the framework of the State Programs of Basic and Applied Research in 2017 - 2020 a number of scientific works for the degrees of Doctor of Sciences and Doctor of Philosophy were submitted for defense. In the last period, a number of educational and methodological manuals for educational institutions on the currently taught subject "Foundations of Civil Society" and related academic disciplines have also been published (Jalilov, Mukhammadiev 2015: 264).

In general, the currently performed scientific works on this topic reveal the main features and peculiarities of the development of NGOs in Uzbekistan (Abdukhaliyev 2018; Gaffarova 2018; Sadykova 2016; Matibaev 2017).

However, it should be noted that the current research on the development of civil society, especially NGOs, is fragmented. They are carried out by various scientific and educational institutions in different branches of knowledge, and, as a rule, have insufficient applied value. Problems also exist in the organization of the activities of non-state media, which, in accordance with the classification generally accepted in the international community, also belong to civil society institutions (Banks 2014: 707-718; Kulsariyeva, Nassimova 2014: 921-926).

Special attention also needs to be paid to the issues of improving the effectiveness of social partnership and social control, creating favorable conditions for expanding the participation of NGOs in public administration (Arond et al. 2019: 665-674).

There is a need to expand the scope of objects of social partnership and social control. For example, the development of non-state spheres of social services, pension provision of the population, social support and rehabilitation of the disabled are unjustifiably excluded from this sphere. Meanwhile, international experience shows that social partnership in this sphere is widespread in the United States, France, Sweden, Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea and other countries of Europe, Asia and the Americas (Banks 2014: 707-718).

As the relevant foreign experience shows, the work in civil society institutions, especially in NGOs requires not only high civic activity, but also specific professional training (Vasilescu et al. 2010: 4179). However, there is practically no training of such specialists in higher educational institutions of the country.

Teaching the basics of civil society is also not accompanied by training in professions that are in demand in the "third sector. For example, specialists in social management, social psychology, economics and management in non-governmental non-profit organizations,

organization of dialogue with the population, specialists in other areas of public policy and social sciences (Vasilescu et al. 2010; Medvedeva 2015; Yarullin and Gabdrahmanova 2015). The conducted research allowed to identify the main development trends characteristic of the "third sector" today, as well as, taking into account the identified problems of development, to build scenarios for its further evolution in the following aspects:

Legislative aspect

- the legal and regulatory framework governing the activities of NGOs, their interaction with State bodies, and the development of mechanisms for State financial support and public oversight are gradually being improved;
- the Ministry of Justice is continuing to establish a legal system to monitor the activities of both domestic NGOs and branches and representative offices of foreign and international NGOs accredited in Uzbekistan.

During the last years two documents were adopted by the order of the Minister of Justice: the Order of the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On approval of the Regulation on the procedure for approval of NGO activities" №177-mx of 04.06.2015 and the Order of the Minister of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On approval of the Regulation on the procedure for approval of receipt by the registration body of NGOs from foreign countries, international and foreign organizations, foreign citizens or on their behalf from other persons funds and property" №177-mx of 15.06.2016;

Organizational aspect

- there is still a tendency of quantitative growth of NGOs. Over the last 5 years the number of NGOs has almost doubled. However, qualitative analysis shows a different picture: 66% of NGOs are systemic, almost half of which are created by the relevant decisions of the government and only 34% are self-organized.
- reduction of the authority of NANGOUz among other civil society institutions, designed to consolidate and coordinate the intellectual resources of domestic NGOs, to provide them with comprehensive information and methodological, advisory, financial, legal and other support, negatively affects the further development of the NGO sector.
- is characteristic when NGOs of the "traditional" type (the older generation) are unable to carry out their own transformation and die out. Thus, new methods of work of NGOs are mastered from scratch by new people;

The financial aspect

- the amount of funds allocated from the state budget to support the "third sector" is increasing annually. Thus, if in 2008 only 3 billion UZS were allocated to support socially useful activities of NGOs, media and other civil society institutions, in 2018 this figure exceeded 17 billion 750 million UZS.

At the same time, there is a downward trend in the funding of socially significant projects of NGOs among other civil society institutions. The analysis shows that the greatest number of NGO projects was funded in 2013 (193 projects). Since then there is a reverse trend (in 2017 179 NGO projects were financed), and the priority is given to the media and citizens' self-government bodies;

- a dependency mentality is gradually forming among NGOs. A certain part of the "third sector" thinks that the state must regularly support NGOs, take care of them, provide property, financial and other support;
- financial instability in the NGO sector gradually forces them into liquidation of the organization. This factor has the greatest impact on self-initiated NGOs. Analysis of applications for liquidation of NGOs submitted to the judicial authorities shows the level of willingness of representatives of NGOs to leave the "third sector";

The personnel aspect

- there is still a shortage of qualified personnel in the NGO sector. Lack of organizational framework in the issues of training and retraining of personnel for the non-profit sector does not allow to attract young qualified personnel to the "third sector";
- there is still a lack of professional skills and management in working with volunteers. Often the word "volunteer" is associated with young people. However, both young people and middle-aged and elderly people can become volunteers.

In this regard, if the Youth Union of Uzbekistan covers a certain portion of young people, and the Nuroni Foundation covers the elderly, then a huge number of middle-aged people (30-55 years old) remain outside the scope of a single NGO.

- the adoption of the Strategy of Action and the reforms being implemented.

The adoption of the Strategy for Action and the reforms carried out as part of its implementation have strengthened the role of state bodies in the system of social and state construction, and the position of private enterprise in the business sector. Such a set of circumstances provided an opportunity for young qualified personnel to change their employment activity and move to the state body or business sector;

Attitudes of the population

- there is still a lack of awareness of NGOs among the population, including representatives of government agencies;
- there is a decreasing trend in young people's interest in NGOs. A certain part of young people, more than anything else, is busy looking for ways to achieve their own economic well-being. Another part prefers to be involved in the activities of the Youth Union of Uzbekistan. This situation is related to reforming the structure of the Kamolot Youth Union and giving the Youth Union of Uzbekistan more opportunities to support their potential;

Cooperation with the media

- there is still a low level of interaction between NGOs and the media. Insufficient attention is paid to coverage of the entire NGO sector. Media coverage of the activities of the same NGOs (Women's Committee of Uzbekistan, Youth Union, Development Strategy Center, Makhalla Foundation, Soglom Avlod Uchun, etc.) can be observed.

The results of the research, as well as the identified problems and trends in the development of the NGO sector make it possible to formulate three main scenarios for the further development of the "third sector" in the next 5 years.

Scenario #1. Managed transformation. This scenario is the most favorable and assumes the manifestation of reformist activity on the part of the state.

In this regard, the most important task is to develop a new vision of the role and place of NGOs in the processes of economic and political modernization of the country. The state will

have to take measures to create an institutional framework for the training and retraining of personnel for the non-profit sector, creating mechanisms for self-financing of the "third sector", developing and implementing specific mechanisms of social partnership, attracting the business sector to this partnership, raising the status of NGOs in society, improving the professional skills of journalists about the specifics of the "third sector".

In this regard, it is necessary to develop a strategic document for the next 5 years, defining specific areas of interaction between government agencies and NGOs, improving the legal framework, gradually reducing government funding and developing self-financing mechanisms for civil society institutions, ensuring their financial sustainability, personnel stability, social protection of employees of the "third sector", a phased transition to electronic document flow (online registration of new NGOs, online approval of activities, etc.), raising public awareness of their activities, etc.

The most important step in the development of the "third sector" will be the development and implementation of specific mechanisms allowing NGOs to actually do business in accordance with the statutory tasks. Adoption by the state of effective measures to support and promote the idea of social entrepreneurship of NGOs will eventually contribute not only to the financial stability of NGOs, but also to the elimination of unemployment, solution of acute social problems in the field, provision of real material support to socially vulnerable categories of the population.

To further strengthen the role and importance of NGOs in society, including self-initiative NGOs, to represent their interests before governmental bodies, to consolidate and coordinate their efforts to really solve socially important tasks on the ground requires a fundamental revision of the NANGOUz activities, to give

It is necessary to radically revise the activities of NANGOUz to give it powers and prerogatives, allowing to increase the interest of NGOs in the Association's membership.

In order to establish a constructive dialogue of NGOs and other civil society institutions with the Head of State, to form and implement state policy in the field of civil society development, to organize effective cooperation of subjects of social partnership it seems advisable to establish under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan a permanent Advisory Council for the development of civil society. The world practice shows the effective activity of such councils in establishing close cooperation between the state and the "third sector".

At the same time, in order to prevent the influence of foreign socio-political centers through the domestic NGOs under their control on the internal policy of the state, to determine the priority areas of cooperation between government agencies, NGOs taking into account the tasks outlined in the Strategy of actions, it is expedient to review activities, functions and composition of the Interdepartmental Commission on relations with foreign non-governmental charities, educational institutions and foundations in the Republic of Uzbekistan, which was established in 2003 by the relevant Presidential Decree "On establishment of the Interdepartmental Commission on relations with foreign non-governmental charities, educational institutions and foundations in the Republic of Uzbekistan".

Taking into account the regular complaint of the UN Committees about the participation of representatives of civil institutions in the implementation of the tasks set out in conventions

and optional protocols of the UN treaty bodies on human rights, as well as in the preparation of periodic and interim reports on the implementation of the above documents, it is advisable to create under NANGOUz a resource center for the preparation of such reports with the most active NGOs, which would have a positive impact and would contribute to the improvement of the image of Uzbekistan.

Moreover, given the increasing activity of foreign socio-political centers, the possibility of having a negative impact on the transformation of modern civil society, it becomes necessary to establish under NASNOUz of the Expert Council consisting of representatives of foreign and international organizations accredited in the country, whose main task will be to discuss and develop proposals for further definition of the priorities of civil society development.

Scenario #2. Autonomous transformation. This scenario assumes further development of the NGO sector in the same direction and at the same pace and by the same means as at present.

The priorities will still be the further improvement of the legislation regulating the activities of NGOs, raising public awareness about their activities, conducting one-time and non-recent activities, continuing to provide them with state financial support. At the same time, regular provision of state financial support may contribute to strengthening of dependency attitude among them.

New NGOs and initiative groups will regularly face problems in the preparation of socially significant projects and reports, receiving quality legal, methodological and informational support, which will eventually lead to the self-liquidation of such organizations, reduction of trust and interest of the population to NGOs, because NANGOUz performing this role, by this point, will completely lose its potential and status among other institutions of civil society.

The non-profit sector and the business sector will develop in parallel, but there will be no synthesized effect of these two directions in the social sphere.

This scenario is still characterized by the former (i.e. current) interaction of state bodies with the same NGOs (Women's Committee of Uzbekistan, Youth Union, "Mahalla", "Nuroni", "Soglom Avlod Uchun" foundations, etc.).

Scenario #3. Stagnation. The third scenario, like the previous one, is based on the assumption of a conservative course of the state in the social sphere, but also takes into account the probability of economic difficulties affecting the capabilities of both the public sector and society as a whole. This scenario can be characterized as pessimistic.

The state continues to focus on the same NGOs as in scenario 2. There is a possibility of gradual reduction or preservation of funds, allocated annually from the state budget to support civil society institutions.

New NGOs, whose leaders do not have sufficient skills and professionalism in organization management, will face stagnation in their development due to the lack of resources, methodological and legal support.

Public awareness of the "third sector" will increasingly diminish. The development of certain NGOs will take place in a narrow circle, i.e. in the active part of society.

Bureaucratic procedure of coordination of activities, submission of annual reports to the registering bodies will promote the development of informal (unregistered) organizations,

which will prefer to work through social networks of the Internet. And this form of work, for today, is not legally regulated and their activities are not subject to control.

In general, this sector is characterized by the fact that the development of the sector will be frozen. There will be little motivation for new projects. There will be practically no interaction of the non-profit sector with the business sector. And during the economic downturn the business sector itself will be on the verge of survival.

Thus, the implementation of each scenario depends to a much greater extent on the decisions made by the state, rather than on objective circumstances, which may be mitigated or aggravated by these decisions.

The optimistic scenario would require serious efforts on the part of both the state and the "third sector.

The realistic scenario would require more effort on the part of the NGO sector.

The pessimistic scenario will work if the state does not pursue an equal policy in relation to NGOs, both with all categories of the "third sector" and state bodies.

The situation could worsen if economic fluctuations arise in the country. Ultimately, this may lead to the degradation of social policy and aggravate socio-political relations in the republic.

CONCLUSION

Given the importance and necessity of the NGO sector in implementing the tasks of socio-economic, socio-political and cultural-humanitarian development of the country, building a strong civil society, the state support of the sector is necessary at all stages of its development. In this connection, it is expedient to develop and adopt a medium-term Concept of further development of civil society, providing for the following main directions:

- improvement of the legal base of NGOs;
- strengthening the organizational and financial sustainability of NGOs;
- improving the positive image of NGOs;
- strengthening international relations;
- the Public Foundation for the support of NGOs and other civil society institutions under the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan should ensure in practice the existing mechanism of filling out and reviewing grant applications online;
- take measures to provide feedback to each participant of tenders, whose projects were not supported;
- give greater preference to projects aimed at creating a specific product and service that has an equivalent in the commercial sector;
- The National Association of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations of Uzbekistan should consider creating within the Association an Expert Council made up of representatives of foreign and international organizations to study and work out proposals on the further development of civil society;
- taking measures to create a Resource Centre at the Association

To prepare alternative NGO reports on the analysis of the implementation of specific recommendations of the UN committees;

- the National Association of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations of Uzbekistan should develop and implement a plan of educational seminars for employees of government

agencies and NGOs to improve their legal knowledge of interaction with foreign socio-political centers

- develop and publish manuals and guidelines for the staff of government bodies, NGOs and other civil society institutions on interaction with foreign and international organizations
- take necessary measures to consolidate intellectual, material, technical and other resources of all self-initiated NGOs.

The current legislation regulating the activities of NGOs requires a complete inventory. Legislation on NGOs contains a number of contradictory points and gaps, which have been mentioned above.

The issue of liquidation of inactive NGOs still remains unresolved, the specific procedure of which is also not stipulated by the legislation.

Professionalism of heads and specialists of NGOs often does not meet the modern requirements of work, respectively, the results of work are not "tangible" for the population.

The very definition "non-governmental non-profit organization" evokes negative associations in a certain part of the population (for example, non-governmental means anti-state).

This psychological nuance often contributes to a knowingly skeptical attitude toward NGOs and the social services they provide.

In the form of the Public Commissions for Social Partnership under the CND at the local level, institutional frameworks have been created to help strengthen such interaction. However, the lack of interest of individual members to work in its activities, lack of professional skills in working with NGOs, formal meetings and other activities contribute to the decline of its authority among the "third sector", and forms the distrust of NGOs in relation to local authorities.

Despite this, NGOs have managed to establish a dialogue with government agencies and influence decision-making, using various tools. The vast majority of NGOs influence the decisions of state bodies through their activities.

NGOs are actively involved in the activities of various advisory (expert, advisory, public and other) councils formed under the state bodies. In all, today NGOs take an active part in the work of more than 650 commissions, working groups and other councils formed throughout the Republic.

There is still no self-sustaining system of interaction between the state, business and NGOs. In the opinion of NGO leaders, the main problem of this state of affairs is the low level of awareness of representatives of governmental bodies and local business structures about the existence and possible forms of work with NGOs.

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