

STRENGTHENING RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION IN
UZBEKISTAN (UNDP-UZB-00122342)

FINAL
INDEPENDENT PROJECT EVALUATION

OF
STRENGTHENING RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS PROTECTION IN UZBEKISTAN
(UNDP-UZB-00122342)

OCTOBER 2025

This independent evaluation report was prepared by an independent evaluator Bunafsha Gulakova. The UNDP Uzbekistan provided normative tools, and guidelines used in the evaluation process.

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The views expressed in this independent evaluation report are those of the evaluator. They do not represent those of UNDP Uzbekistan or of any of the national institutions of the State/s referred to in the report. All errors and omissions remain the responsibility of the evaluator.

All findings and recommendations as well as the management response pertain solely to the UNDP project being evaluated and is not in any way targeted to Member States, implementing partners or other entities that took part in this project/programme.

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PROJECT/OUTCOME INFORMATION	
Project/ outcome title	Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan (UNDP-UZB-00122342)
Project ID	00128319
Corporate outcome and output	Output 1.1 Institutions equipped with effective anti-corruption tools, enabled to expand access to justice and enhance social cohesion (CPD 2021- 2025)
Project dates (Start & Planned end)	19/09/2022–31/12/2025
Project budget	EUR 1,500,000
Funding source	Government of Finland
Implementing party	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Evaluation information		
Evaluation type (project/ outcome/thematic/country programme, etc.)	Project evaluation	
Final/midterm review/ other	Final	
Period under evaluation	Start	End
	June 2025	November 2025
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	June 2025	November 2025

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviation or Acronym	Full name/word	Abbreviation or Acronym	Full name/word
CO	Country Office	UN	United Nations
CPD	Country Programme Document	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
FLA	Free Legal Aid	OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
GANHRI	Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions	USD	United States Dollar
GBV	Gender-Based Violence		
GE	Gender Equality		
GEF	Gender Equality Facility		
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach		
ICPE	Independent Country Programme Evaluation		
KII	Key Informant Interview		
LVG	Low-Value Grants		
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development		
MoJ	Ministry of Justice		
NHRI	National Human Rights Institution		
NIM	National Implementation Modality		
PD	Project Document		
PwD	Persons with Disabilities		
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal		
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound		
TOR	Terms of Reference		
ToC	Theory of Change		

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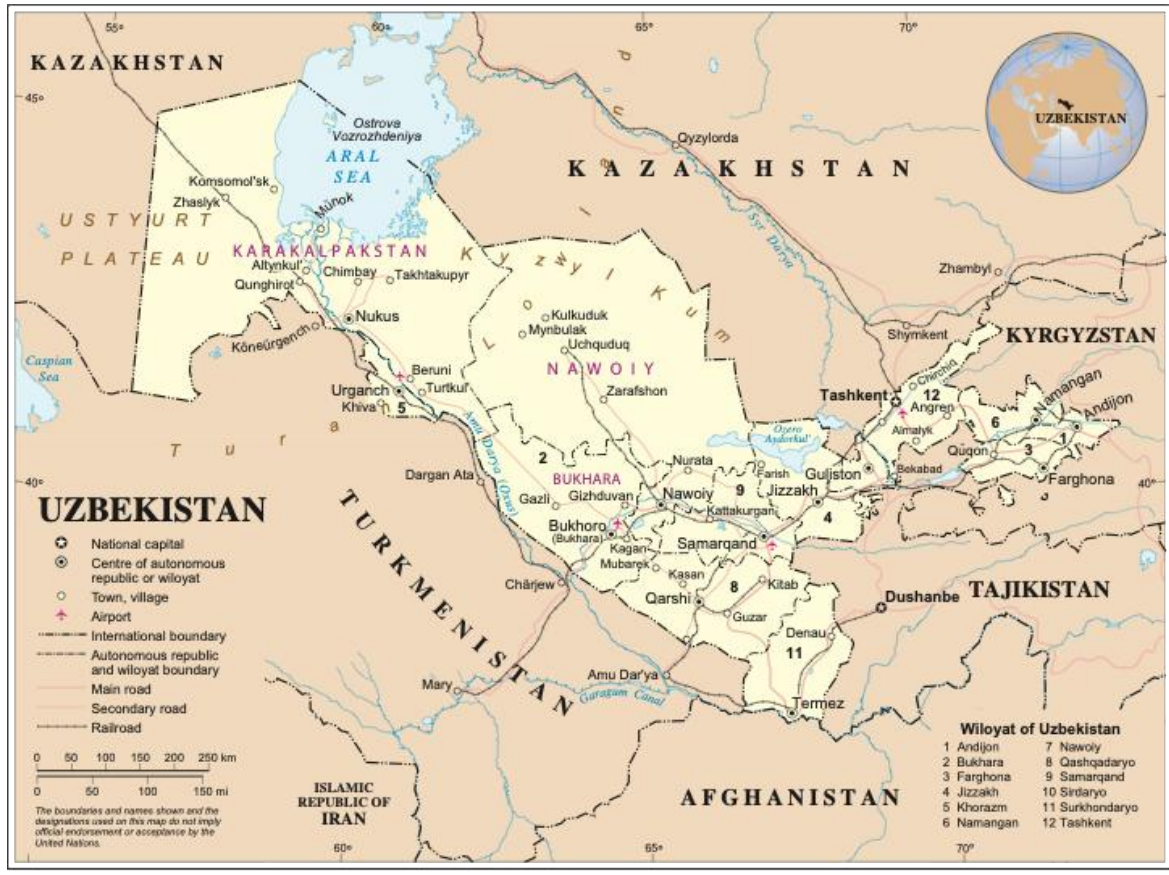


Figure 1. Map of Uzbekistan (source: <https://www.un.org/geospatial/content/uzbekistan>)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The evaluated intervention is the project “Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan,” implemented by UNDP Uzbekistan with financial support from the Government of Finland. The project is part of UNDP’s broader efforts to advance human rights and justice sector reform in Uzbekistan and is aligned with the UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD 2021–2025) and the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF). The project contributes directly to the national Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan (2022–2026), the National Human Rights Strategy, and international commitments under SDG 16 and SDG 5. It supports inclusive access to justice through legal aid reform, capacity development of the Ombudsperson’s Office, and civil society engagement. Specific focus areas include enhancing services for women and persons with disabilities, piloting community-based legal aid delivery, and promoting institutional accountability through rights-based approaches.

PURPOSE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY OF EVALUATION

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the project “Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan,” implemented by UNDP with support from the Government of Finland. The evaluation aims to generate evidence on project performance and results achieved between 2021 and 2025, to inform strategic decision-making for potential continuation or scale-up.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are to (i) assess the extent to which the project’s design, implementation, and results are aligned with national priorities and human rights standards, (ii) examine how the intervention contributed to improved access to justice for vulnerable populations, including women and persons with disabilities, (iii) identify factors enabling or hindering results, and (iv) provide actionable recommendations to enhance sustainability, institutionalisation, and inter-agency coordination.

The primary audience for the evaluation includes UNDP Uzbekistan, the Government of Finland, and national stakeholders such as the Ministry of Justice, Ombudsperson’s Office, and civil society partners. The evaluation is also intended for UNDP’s global and regional teams, development partners, and actors involved in human rights and rule of law programming. Its findings are expected to support decision-making on future programming, donor engagement, and policy dialogue.

The evaluation applied a theory-based, mixed-methods approach aligned with the OECD-DAC criteria and UNDP evaluation standards. It combined desk review, key informant interviews, stakeholder consultations, and field observations to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of the project. Primary data was gathered through over 35 interviews with national institutions, civil society organisations, development partners, and beneficiaries, with attention to gender and regional balance. Secondary data included project reports, monitoring data, and national policy frameworks. Triangulation was used to validate findings across sources. Particular emphasis was placed on inclusion, with specific questions examining gender equality, disability rights, and the engagement of vulnerable groups. The evaluation also considered geographic reach and service equity, and captured qualitative insights through structured interview tools and thematic coding. Limitations such as access constraints and the timing of some outputs were mitigated by stakeholder validation and evidence triangulation.

Evaluation Ratings Table

Monitoring and Evaluation(M&E)	Rating ¹
M&E design at entry	5
M&E plan and implementation	5
Overall Quality of M&E	5
Implementation & Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	6
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	6
Overall Quality of Implementation/Execution	6
Assessment of Outcomes	
Relevance	6
Effectiveness	5
Efficiency	5
Overall project Outcome rating	5
Sustainability	
Financial resources	3
Socio-political/economic	3
Institutional framework and governance	3
Environmental	3
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	3

MAIN FINDINGS PER EVALUATION CRITERIA

Relevance, the project *Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan* is highly relevant to Uzbekistan’s justice sector reform agenda and to the needs of women, persons with disabilities (PwDs), youth, and rural populations. It aligns with national strategies such as the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan (2022–2026), the National Human Rights Strategy, and the Gender Equality Strategy 2021–2030, as well as UNDP’s CPD (2021–2025), the UNSDCF, and SDGs 5 and 16. Grounded in a legal needs assessment with 999 respondents from all 14 regions, the project targeted institutional gaps and access barriers, particularly for marginalised groups.

Effectiveness was demonstrated across all three outcomes. The Low-Value Grant (LVG) scheme reached 28,091 beneficiaries (43% women, 5% PwDs), offering over 370 legal consultations and 84 court representations through 16 CSO-led initiatives. Notable results included support for GBV survivors, employment reinstatements, and access to identity documents and social entitlements. The Ombudsperson’s Office received targeted capacity support through a new Competency Framework, training, and study visits. CSOs delivered court monitoring reports, feeding recommendations into high-level legal reform dialogues. However, limitations included a shortage of sign language interpreters, low digital access among rural women and PwDs, and weak structured engagement with women-led and disability-focused CSOs. Some digital services were not fully accessible, and legal awareness gaps persisted.

Efficiency was strong in financial execution. By June 2025, 75.4% of the USD 1.12 million budget had been disbursed, with an average cost of USD 5.95 per beneficiary. The LVG modality demonstrated high value-for-money. Adaptive management allowed reallocation of funds from delayed infrastructure works to more impactful outreach and legal education. M&E tools effectively tracked outputs, but did not capture outcome-level changes such as legal empowerment or trust in justice institutions.

¹ Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight & Execution, Relevance are rated on a 6-point scale: 6=Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5=Satisfactory (S), 4=Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3=Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), 2=Unsatisfactory (U), 1=Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability is rated on a 4-point scale: 4=Likely (L), 3=Moderately Likely (ML), 2=Moderately Unlikely (MU), 1=Unlikely (U)

Impact was visible in increased recognition of structural exclusion of PwDs and the role of CSOs in delivering legal aid. The project advanced disability-inclusive justice through targeted service delivery, legal literacy materials, and training, though institutionalisation is still limited. Community interest in informal dispute resolution models was high, particularly for family and land matters, and several CSOs strengthened ties with local authorities. Gender-sensitive programming reached over 12,000 women through LVGs and trained 28 FLA staff on GBV case handling, but underreporting due to fear and stigma remains a concern.

Sustainability prospects are mixed. The Ministry of Justice demonstrated ownership and co-located the project team. National legal aid systems and digital platforms are under development, and additional funding was secured for 2026. However, CSOs remain donor-dependent and lack long-term funding, core staffing, or formal integration into state systems. The absence of government plans to scale up CSO services or sustain informal justice mechanisms raises concerns about institutional anchoring. Coordination with OHCHR and other donors in the human rights space was limited, posing coherence risks, such as duplication of capacity building efforts in form of developing training modules and conducting the trainings, study tours, printing the materials.

Cross-Cutting Issues were well-integrated. The project promoted gender equality through women-led CSOs, legal aid for GBV survivors, gender-disaggregated M&E, and a shelter for survivors in Fergana. Disability inclusion was prioritised through accessible formats, legal aid for 1,258 PwDs, and podcasts in collaboration with SHAROI PLUS. Nonetheless, systemic gaps persist. Only 29% of PwDs surveyed had contacted a legal provider, and 72% lacked digital access. Sustained institutional reforms are needed to ensure equitable justice outcomes.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

The project has **made substantial contributions to inclusive access to justice in Uzbekistan**. Its bottom-up, evidence-informed and rights-based approach has proven effective in **reaching underserved populations and piloting innovative legal aid delivery mechanisms**. These achievements are commendable, especially given the operational constraints and limited funding for inclusive justice reforms. At the same time, the project's transformative potential remains contingent on deeper institutional reforms, stronger inter-agency coherence, and expanded multi-donor collaboration. In the final implementation period, strategic focus should be placed on consolidating results, scaling effective models, and embedding inclusive legal aid into national systems to ensure continuity, quality, and rights realisation for all.

In terms of coherence, the project was **grounded in national legal frameworks and reflected international human rights standards**, including CEDAW and CRPD. However, inter-agency collaboration within the UN system was uneven. While coordination with UN Women and UNICEF was evident, engagement with OHCHR was limited, particularly in the context of NHRI reform and treaty body follow-up. Greater internal UN coherence and joint planning could have enhanced the strategic impact of the intervention.

Effectiveness was visible in the **expansion of access to legal aid services**, with over **28,000 individuals reached**, including **more than 12,000 women and 1,258 PwDs**. The LVGs **enabled CSOs to provide outreach and legal support to underserved communities, raise awareness, and build local trust**. Legal clinics contributed to both service delivery and the development of future human resource capacity in inclusive legal aid. Court monitoring, regional consultations, and participatory tools helped tailor interventions. **Progress was also made in institutional reform efforts**, particularly through support to **the Ombudsperson's Office**. However, structural limitations such as the shortage of trained GBV professionals, inadequate disability-accessible infrastructure, and weak trauma-informed service models **constrained the sustainability and scalability of results**.

The **project was managed efficiently**, with a 75% budget absorption rate by mid-2025 and **strong value-for-money through the LVG modality**, averaging under USD 6 per beneficiary. **Adaptive reallocation of funds** enabled **responsiveness to delays and shifting priorities**. Oversight under the National Implementation Modality contributing to national ownership. However, the **monitoring framework focused** primarily on

outputs and lacked outcome-level indicators, making it **difficult to assess changes in institutional trust, service quality, progress towards the impact.**

Impact was most **evident at the community level**. The project **helped elevate the role of civil society in legal empowerment**, increased **rights awareness**, and supported the **inclusion of marginalised groups in justice processes**. It drew **national attention to the structural barriers facing PwDs, including physical inaccessibility, communication limitations, and low digital inclusion**. **CSO engagement with local authorities** and mahallas also **opened pathways** for informal and community-based dispute resolution mechanisms, particularly relevant in rural contexts. However, **impact at the institutional level remains limited**, with most innovations still at pilot stage and not yet integrated into national systems.

Sustainability of results is mixed. While **policy dialogue and government co-location arrangements reflect strong state buy-in**, many **CSOs lack** formal recognition, accreditation, or **access to continued funding**. The **short-term nature of LVGs and the absence of sustainability planning** by most grantees put legal aid service continuity at risk. **Institutionalisation** of CSO contributions and inclusive legal aid models will **require dedicated government funding**, stronger **regulatory frameworks**, and **support from local governance actors and private sector**.

Cross-cutting issues were integrated throughout the project. **Gender equality was effectively mainstreamed**, including through **targeted GBV support, legal aid, and economic reintegration services**. Women accounted for nearly **half of all legal aid beneficiaries**, and **women-led CSOs delivered the majority of grants**. **Disability inclusion was addressed** through legal consultations, accessible materials, mobile services, and awareness campaigns. However, the persistence of **accessibility barriers and lack of systemic inclusion of CRPD standards** point to the **need for long-term investment**.

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Pilot an Inclusive Mobile Legal Aid Model for Persons with Disabilities**
UNDP Uzbekistan should design and launch a disability-inclusive, mobile legal aid initiative (drawing inspiration from international models like the “Bus of Solidarity”) by late 2026. The pilot should prioritise remote regions, provide interpretation and accessible materials, and serve as a basis for future institutionalisation.
2. **Strengthen Sustainability of CSO-Led Legal Aid via Exit Strategies**
Future Low Value Grant (LVG) cycles should include longer funding durations and require applicants to submit practical sustainability and exit strategies. This includes leveraging local government co-financing and public-private partnerships to maintain services beyond the project lifecycle.
3. **Scale Up Community-Based Dispute Resolution Mechanisms**
Develop and test a human rights-compliant national framework for hybrid and community-level dispute resolution by end of 2026. This should target underserved areas and build capacity among mahalla leaders and CSOs, with attention to gender sensitivity and cultural appropriateness.
4. **Enhance Strategic Coherence Through UN Inter-Agency Coordination**
Establish a standing inter-agency working group on human rights and rule of law programming, led by UNDP and OHCHR, to align efforts on NHRI support, treaty follow-up, and human rights reforms. The platform should be operational by mid-2026, with biannual coordination meetings.

MAIN LESSONS LEARNED

- **Expanding legal aid delivery methods increases outreach but needs to be adapted to users.** Offering different ways of providing legal aid, such as mobile clinics, hotlines, and online platforms—helped reach more people, especially those in remote areas. However, these methods only worked well when designed with the specific needs of the users in mind. For example, persons with disabilities or those unfamiliar with digital tools often could not access services unless special adjustments were made.

- **Legal needs assessments help focus services where they are most needed.**
In areas where legal needs were identified early, services were better matched to local problems. In contrast, interventions that skipped this step struggled to find the right beneficiaries or offer relevant support. Assessments at the start of a project are essential for designing services that meet real needs, especially for the people with disability.
- **Legal information must be adapted to different audiences.**
General legal brochures or websites did not always work for people with disabilities or those with limited literacy. The project showed that simplified texts, audio recordings, and materials in sign language or Braille helped more people understand and use the information provided.
- **Lack of staff and funding limited how much organisations could do.**
Many local civil society groups had too few staff or not enough money to continue outreach, organise awareness sessions, or expand their services to new areas. This limited the reach, long-term impact and time to sustain the result of their work.
- **Online services did not reach everyone equally.**
Although websites and Telegram bots were created, many women and persons with disabilities could not use them due to lack of internet, digital skills, or devices. This digital gap is a major reason why online legal tools alone cannot ensure equal access to justice.
- **Shortage of specialised resources restricted inclusion.**
Legal aid providers lacked trained sign language interpreters, Braille materials, and assistive devices. Without these, they could not fully serve people with sensory disabilities. These resources need to be included in budgets and planning from the start.

GOOD PRACTICES

- **Online tools and simplified legal content improved access for persons with disabilities.**
Websites such as *huquq.plus* and legal materials written in “easy-to-read” Uzbek (Oson matn) helped people with intellectual or learning disabilities understand their rights and how to access legal support.
- **Mobile legal aid services reached isolated communities.**
Mobile legal clinics provided legal consultations in rural and remote areas where people usually do not have access to lawyers or legal advice. These services were especially useful for women, young people, and persons with disabilities.
- **Cooperation with local authorities improved service delivery.**
Some organisations, such as *Shijoat*, worked with local social services and mahalla committees. Training local officials on how to respond to legal problems helped link legal aid with existing community support structures. This made the services more sustainable and better accepted by the community.

I. INTRODUCTION

This evaluation is intended to serve multiple purposes: it will promote accountability by assessing how effectively project resources have been utilized; support organizational learning by identifying lessons and best practices; and inform future programming by providing evidence-based recommendations for ongoing and forthcoming initiatives. The evaluation will systematically review the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability, and impact of the interventions implemented throughout the Project. Additionally, it aimed to highlight key lessons that can be applied to the design and implementation of future programs or projects in similar contexts.

The evaluation report is structured to provide a clear and comprehensive account of the assessment process and its results. It opens with an executive summary, followed by an introduction covering the project background, methodology, stakeholder analysis, and limitations.

The main body presents 18 key findings structured around the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, and cross-cutting issues including gender equality and disability inclusion. The conclusions synthesise these findings and lead to four main recommendations, designed to support future programming and sustainability.

The report also includes a dedicated section on lessons learned and good practices, followed by annexes containing the Terms of Reference, evaluation matrix, data collection tools, desk review sources, and a list of stakeholders consulted

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Uzbekistan has undertaken substantial judicial and legal reforms in recent years, aimed at aligning its justice system with international human rights standards. Since 2016, the Government has prioritized strengthening the rule of law, improving access to justice, and expanding human rights protections. Key reforms include the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the adoption of a landmark Law on Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men (2019), the modernization of criminal and administrative legislation, and the establishment of a state-funded free legal aid system. The national Human Rights Institution (Ombudsperson's Office) was accredited for the first time by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) in 2020²

These reforms are grounded in Uzbekistan's **Development Strategy for New Uzbekistan (2022–2026)**, which identifies justice and the rule of law as key pillars for national development strategy is complemented by the **National Human Rights Strategy (2020)** and the **National Gender Equality Strategy (2021–2030)**³, both of which outline concrete policy and legal actions to improve human rights safeguards and address gender-based inequalities⁴. These frameworks have laid the institutional foundations for rights-based governance.

Despite these advances, challenges remain. Vulnerable groups, including women, rural youth, and persons with disabilities, continue to face barriers in accessing affordable and quality legal aid. Many are unaware of their rights or are unable to navigate legal procedures. Public demand for justice services exceeds availability, particularly in rural and remote areas⁵. According to the World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index 2021, Uzbekistan ranked 85th out of 139 countries⁶, while the World Bank's **Women, Business and the Law 2020** report placed it at 134th of 190, signaling persistent gaps in legal empowerment for women⁷. Between 2021 and 2025, Uzbekistan's position in the World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index has shown gradual

2 UNDP Uzbekistan, Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan, Project Overview, <https://www.undp.org/uzbekistan/projects/strengthening-rule-law-and-human-rights-protection-uzbekistan>, accessed 15 July 2025

3 Government of Uzbekistan, Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan 2022–2026, p. 7–10,

4 World Bank, Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment 2024, pp. 5–6; and Women, Business and the Law 2020 – Uzbekistan Snapshot, p. 1, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/uzbekistan/publication/country-gender-assessment-2024>, accessed 15 July 2025

5 UNDP Uzbekistan, Legal Needs Assessment Report, pp. 3–4, <https://www.undp.org/uzbekistan/publications/legal-needs-assessment-report>, accessed 15 July 2025.

6 World Justice Project, Rule of Law Index 2021, Country Profile: Uzbekistan, p. 2, <https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index>, accessed 9 July 2025.

7 World Bank, Women, Business and the Law 2020 – Uzbekistan Snapshot, p. 1, <https://wbi.worldbank.org/content/dam/documents/wbi/2022/snapshots/Uzbekistan.pdf>, accessed 15 July 2025.

improvement. In **2021**, Uzbekistan ranked **85th out of 139 countries**, with an overall score of **0.47**. By **2024**, its rank improved slightly to **83rd out of 142 countries**, and its score rose to **0.49⁸**.

In response, the UNDP-led project **Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan**, launched in 2022 with financial support from the Government of Finland, seeks to reinforce institutional capacities, enhance access to legal aid, and promote inclusive justice delivery. It targets structural challenges in the legal aid system, supports the work of the Ombudsperson's Office, and strengthens civil society's role in promoting human rights and access to justice, with a particular focus on women and marginalized communities⁹

The project aligns with Outcome 1 of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for Uzbekistan (2021–2025), which prioritizes effective, accountable, and inclusive governance and justice for all¹⁰ It also contributes to SDG 5 (Achieve gender equality) and SDG 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies, ensure access to justice, and build effective, accountable institutions), directly supporting national progress toward the 2030 Agenda¹¹. The strategic intent is to transform legal reforms into real improvements in the daily lives of those who are most at risk of rights violations.

Through a combination of legal reform support, capacity development, and multistakeholder engagement, the project provides a practical framework to ensure that Uzbekistan's human rights and rule of law commitments are realized equitably and sustainably.

This evaluation report is structured to respond directly to the objectives outlined in the Terms of Reference and to address the information needs of its intended users, primarily UNDP Uzbekistan, the Government of Finland, and other development partners engaged in the rule of law and human rights sectors. The report opens with an Executive Summary, providing a concise synthesis of the intervention, methodology, key findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

Chapter 1 introduces the evaluated project and outlines the purpose, scope, and users of the evaluation. Chapter 2 details the evaluation approach and methodology, including the evaluation criteria, data collection tools, ethical safeguards, and limitations. Chapter 3 presents an overview of the intervention logic and context, including the legal aid and human rights landscape in Uzbekistan. Chapters 4 to 9 provide an in-depth analysis of project performance across the six OECD-DAC evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability, as well as cross-cutting themes such as gender equality, disability inclusion, and civil society engagement. Each chapter is structured to include a summary of findings, evidence, and illustrative examples.

Chapter 10 presents actionable conclusions and targeted recommendations, clearly linked to findings and designed to inform decision-making on programme design, resource allocation, and sustainability planning. Lessons learned and good practices are consolidated in Chapter 11 for broader institutional learning. Annexes include the evaluation matrix, list of interviewees, mission itinerary, tools, and detailed data tables that support transparency and replicability.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION

The Project **Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan**, launched in 2022 with financial support from the Government of Finland and the budget of EUR 1,500,000, seeks to reinforce institutional capacities, enhance access to legal aid, and promote inclusive justice delivery. In 2025, the project was extended to one more year and additional budget of EUR 500,000.

The Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan project was initiated in 2022, with financial backing from the Government of Finland. The initial project budget was set at EUR 1,500,000.

⁸ World Justice Project. Rule of Law Index 2024: Uzbekistan Country Profile. Washington, D.C.: World Justice Project, 2024. Available at: <https://worldjusticeproject.org/rule-of-law-index/country/2024/Uzbekistan>, accessed 16 July 2025.

⁹ UNDP Uzbekistan, Launch of the Human Rights and Rule of Law Project, <https://www.undp.org/uzbekistan/news/launch-human-rights-protection-project>, accessed 9 July 2025

¹⁰ United Nations, UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2021–2025, Uzbekistan Country Document, p. 14–16, <https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/Uzbekistan-UNSDCF-2021-2025.pdf>, accessed 15 July 2025

¹¹ United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals – Uzbekistan, SDG Country Profile, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/memberstates/uzbekistan>, accessed 15 July 2025.

The central aim of the project is to reinforce the capacities of key institutions, improve access to legal aid, and foster the delivery of inclusive justice services throughout the country.

As the project progressed, its significance and scope warranted further investment. In 2025, the project was extended for an additional year, accompanied by a supplementary budget allocation of EUR 500,000. This extension underscores the ongoing commitment to enhancing institutional effectiveness, expanding the reach of free legal aid, and ensuring that justice services are accessible and inclusive for all segments of the population, especially for vulnerable and marginalized groups.

The project is grounded in the theory that enhancing legal and institutional frameworks, improving access to justice, and promoting human rights will contribute to greater social cohesion, citizen trust, and reduced inequalities. The intervention logic builds on a recognition of persistent structural barriers limiting access to justice for vulnerable populations, particularly women, persons with disabilities, and youth in rural areas. The project aims to address these structural and institutional deficits by focusing on three interlinked activity areas:

1. Establishing a robust legal and institutional framework for free legal aid provision in compliance with international human rights standards.
2. Enhancing the capacity and outreach of the Ombudsperson's Office to better serve and protect the rights of vulnerable groups.
3. Strengthening civil society's role in promoting inclusive access to justice and human rights advocacy.

These activities are intended to generate intermediate outcomes, such as increased availability and quality of legal aid services, improved responsiveness of national human rights institutions, and greater civic engagement in rights protection. These, in turn, are expected to lead to the project's overarching outcome: improved access to justice resulting in enhanced trust in rule of law institutions, contributing to poverty reduction and reduced inequalities. The intervention logic is closely aligned with:

- The "Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan," particularly its emphasis on rule of law and justice as foundational state principles
- The National Human Rights Strategy and its action plans focused on institutional capacity and state-civil society cooperation
- The National Gender Strategy, particularly its objectives around preventing violence and ensuring equal rights
- The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2021–2025, particularly Outcome 1 on accountable, inclusive governance
- UNDP Uzbekistan's CPD (2021–2025), especially Output 1.1 on institutional access to justice and anti-corruption measures
- SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality)

The project's approach is further underpinned by principles of participation, inclusion, and a human rights-based approach. It relies on partnerships with the Ministry of Justice, Ombudsperson's Office, and civil society organisations to ensure institutional anchoring, long-term sustainability, and scalability of reforms. The use of a capacity-building modality, combined with legal reform and community-level outreach, seeks to bridge the gap between legal guarantees and real-life access to justice for marginalized communities.

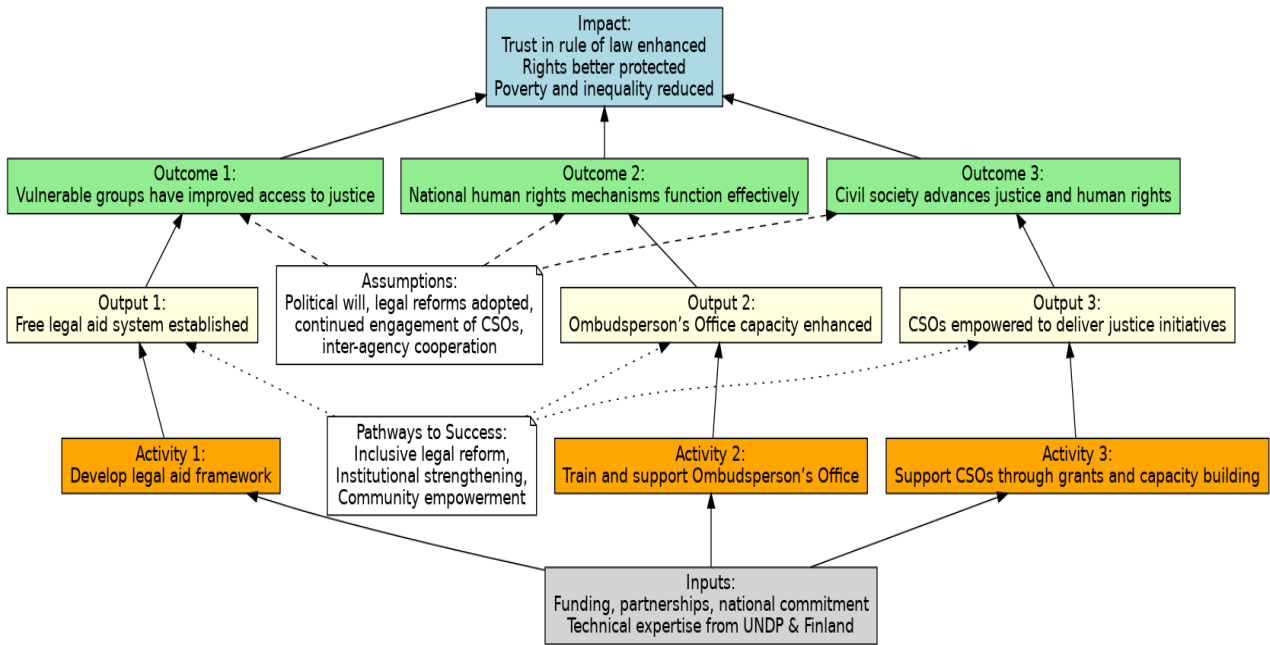


Figure 2. ToC for the Project

The logical framework embeds performance indicators and assumptions that reflect this results chain. It assumes political will and budgetary support from national counterparts and anticipates strengthened collaboration across sectors and levels of government, as well as between the state and non-state actors.

RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND INDICATORS ASSESSMENT

The evaluability assessment confirms that the project “*Strengthening the Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan*” possesses a structured results framework comprising three substantive outputs and at least 14 output-level indicators. This framework enables systematic tracking of activities and service delivery, though with limitations at the outcome level.

Output 1.1 focuses on establishing a state-guaranteed Free Legal Aid (FLA) system. It includes five indicators covering legal reform (adoption of at least three laws and by-laws), service provision (number of recipients of primary and secondary legal aid), and infrastructure (development of an interactive online map and digital case management system). The 2023 results demonstrated significant overachievement: 40,381 individuals received secondary legal aid compared to an initial target of 100, and 2,536 people received primary legal consultations. This reflects high demand and implementation efficiency, though it also reveals that targets may have been initially underestimated or based on outdated baselines.

Output 1.2 addresses the capacity-building needs of legal aid providers through four indicators: number of legal aid centres equipped, and number of primary and secondary FLA providers trained. While equipment delivery was timely, training outputs fell short of targets. For example, only two capacity-building events were held for 55 participants in total, against a target of 100 trained legal professionals. This suggests a need for more robust planning or resource allocation for training activities.

Output 2.1 aims to enhance the institutional capacity of the Ombudsperson’s Office in line with the Paris Principles. Indicators under this output include the number of partnerships with CSOs, the number of joint human rights initiatives, and staff capacity-building. The 2023 data confirm that three strategic partnerships were formalized, over 650 court decisions were reviewed in cooperation with NGOs, and 34 staff were trained across regional offices. These actions are significant, as they contribute to the institutionalisation of the Ombudsperson’s mandate and improved civic oversight.

Output 3.1 and **Output 3.2** introduce a rights-holder-focused dimension to the project. Output 3.1 strengthens the role of civil society and vulnerable groups in promoting and protecting human rights. Indicators include the number of outreach campaigns, training sessions, and CSO partnerships. In 2024, more than 28,000 people were reached through legal aid activities, with robust disaggregation: 43 percent women, 10,659 youth, and 1,258 persons with disabilities. Output 3.2 focuses on establishing dialogue platforms between justice sector actors and civil society, measured by the number of consultations, roundtables, and joint strategies adopted. These activities create a participatory policy environment and contribute to building trust in justice institutions.

From a SMART criteria perspective, the indicators are mostly Specific and Measurable. They are grounded in quantitative service metrics (e.g., number of recipients, consultations, legal documents). Achievability is mixed, while many targets have been exceeded, others (e.g., on capacity-building) need to be evaluated. Relevance is clear for all outputs, though most indicators remain at the operational level. Time-boundness is partially observed through annual work plans, but not all indicators specify precise deadlines or baselines.

Data availability was strong at the output level. Monitoring data are consistently collected and reported with disaggregation by gender, age, and disability. Reports from CSO grantees confirm adherence to this standard. However, the current results framework lacks outcome-level indicators capable of measuring behavioural change, increased access to justice, or enhanced accountability. The evaluation, therefore, used qualitative data collected from the interviews to assess effectiveness and sustainability.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The final evaluation adopted a theory based and utilization focused approach and was structured around the six OECD DAC evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. A rights based and gender responsive lens was applied throughout. The evaluation also examined crosscutting issues, including human rights, gender equality, and the inclusion of persons with disabilities, as required by the ToR and in line with UNDP and donor standards. This methodology ensured accountability and learning and generated findings to inform future programming by UNDP and the Government of Finland.

MIXED METHODS AND TRIANGULATION

The evaluation used a convergent mixed methods design that combined qualitative and quantitative data from multiple sources. This allowed for triangulation and validation of findings.

- *Qualitative methods included semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, outcome harvesting, and field observation.*
- *Quantitative methods included a desk review of performance indicators and monitoring data.*

The evaluation matrix guided data collection and analysis and linked the evaluation questions to criteria, indicators, sources, and methods.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KIIs)

A total of approximately 25 to 30 semi-structured interviews were conducted. Interviewees were drawn from UNDP staff, the Ministry of Justice, the Ombudsperson's Office, the Chamber of Advocates, NGOs, legal aid providers, the donor, the Resident Coordinator's Office, development partners, and regional stakeholders met during the Fergana field visit. Stakeholder-specific interview protocols were used.

FIELD VISIT

The field mission for the evaluation of the project “*Strengthening the Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan*” was conducted from 6 to 10 October 2025, covering Tashkent, Fergana, and several remote locations through online consultations. A total of 16 meetings were held with 28 informants (11 men and 17 women), including government representatives, civil society organisations, donor and UN entities. The mission began with a briefing at the UNDP Country Office in Tashkent and concluded with a debriefing attended by the Resident Representative and senior UNDP staff. Key stakeholders consulted included the

Ministry of Justice, the Office of the Ombudsperson, UNDP Uzbekistan, OHCHR, and 11 civil society organisations, such as SHAROIT+, Nihol, Sharq Ayoli, Qalb Nuri, and Rahmdillik. The field visit to Fergana on 8 October allowed for in-person engagement with local actors, including NGO Mehrjon, and helped assess accessibility and relevance of legal aid services in a subnational context. No focus group discussions were held due to logistical and sensitivity considerations. The mission provided insights into disability inclusion, civil society engagement, and the need for community-based dispute resolution models. Recommendations emerging from the mission were refined during the debriefing and will inform the final evaluation report.

SAMPLING AND INCLUSION STRATEGY

Sampling ensured geographic diversity between Tashkent and Fergana and reflected gender, age, and disability status. At least 40 percent of direct respondents were women, and persons with disabilities were included in interviews and surveys where relevant.

DATA ANALYSIS AND SYNTHESIS

Qualitative data were coded using thematic analysis aligned with the evaluation matrix. Quantitative data were examined using descriptive statistics. Findings were triangulated across methods, stakeholder groups, and locations. Each of the six OECD DAC criteria received a rating using the UNDP Evaluation Ratings Table.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The evaluation was guided by a practical Theory of Change. The evaluator studied the intervention logic and constructed a Theory of Change that set out goals, outcomes, outputs, and inputs. This informed the analysis and helped map the roles of legal professionals and civil society organisations. The evaluation consisted of five phases: **preparatory work and inception, desk analysis, interviews and field data collection, analysis and report writing, and dissemination.** Each phase built on the previous one.

APPLYING HRBA AND GENDER EQUALITY IN THE EVALUATION

The evaluation examined women's participation in rule of law, justice, and security and assessed whether this contributed to addressing gender-related concerns. The evaluation used the UNDP Gender Equality Marker Checklist and the Checklist for Evaluating Gender Responsiveness of the Project.

Key documents reviewed included the LVG Final and Interim Reports, the Monitoring Report for the Fergana Valley mission, and Combined Delivery Reports from 2023, 2024, and Q2 2025. These documents were analysed to understand outreach, participation, and resource allocation. Evidence from interviews and field visits was used to assess whether gender-sensitive, trauma-informed, and "do no harm" approaches were applied.

Data collection tools contained gender-specific questions, and all data were collected in a sex-disaggregated format. Qualitative tools ensured the inclusion of diverse groups, including survivors of domestic violence, persons with disabilities, and minors. Historical context was drawn from the SDG 5 report, Country Gender Profile, and gender audits. All CSO grantees were required to disaggregate their beneficiary data, and this was verified in their reports.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The evaluation followed UNEG ethical guidelines and adhered to principles of integrity, accountability, respect, and beneficence. The evaluator ensured informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity and took account of cultural sensitivity and fair selection of participants, including women and socially excluded groups. Measures were taken to ensure that participation in the evaluation did not cause harm.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

The ROL HRP project has pursued partnerships with various key stakeholders to ensure effective implementation and resource mobilization. The **Ministry of Justice** of the Republic of Uzbekistan is a crucial implementing partner, with UNDP supporting the ministry in developing free legal aid mechanisms, monitoring aid providers, and enhancing their technical capacities. The project also collaborates with the **Authorized Person of the Oliy Majlis for Human Rights (Ombudsperson's office)** to strengthen their capacity in promoting human rights, cooperating with civil society organizations, and analyzing judicial

practice. The **Chamber of Advocates** receives support in assessing the quality of secondary free legal aid and promoting it among lawyers, while the **Cabinet of Ministers** is engaged in discussions on enhancing the FLA system and improving legislation related to access to justice and human rights.

Partnerships with the **Ministry of Economics and Finance** will involve designing methodologies for covering costs related to establishing the FLA system. Cooperation with the **Supreme Court** focuses on supporting civil society organizations in analyzing judicial and law enforcement practice and developing policy and legislative proposals. The **Gender Commission of the Senate** collaborates on gender equality, discrimination, and gender-based violence issues. **NGOs** such as **MADAD** receive support in strengthening their capacities to provide primary free legal aid and knowledge in human rights. **Legal clinics** are also engaged to improve their staff's knowledge and skills in primary legal aid provision and human rights, with efforts made to establish clinics in rural areas. **Civil society organizations** (CSOs) are supported in contributing to policy and legal proposals on the rule of law and human rights through participation in analyzing judicial and legal practice.

Additionally, the project aims to cooperate with **UN agencies** present in Uzbekistan and partner organizations in Finland to develop tools and instruments on free legal aid provision, justice-centered approaches, and human rights-based approaches. The collaboration with the Legal Clinic of the Rule of Law Centre at the University of Helsinki involves reviewing foreign experiences, providing consultations, and reviewing methodological tools developed by local staff and consultants. The expenses related to this cooperation will be covered by the project budget. Through these partnerships, the ROL HRP project maximizes its impact, leverages expertise, and mobilizes resources to advance the goals of free legal aid, human rights, and access to justice in Uzbekistan.

LIMITATIONS TO THE EVALUATION

Limitations to the evaluation	Mitigation measures
<p>The field mission was limited to one region beyond Tashkent, namely Fergana, due to time and resource constraints. This limited the geographic representativeness of primary data and may have excluded region-specific challenges or innovations, particularly in western and southern parts of the country.</p>	<p>To address the limited regional coverage, interviews were held with CSO representatives implementing Low Value Grants (LVGs) in Karakalpakstan, Navoi, Samarkand, and Bukhara through remote consultations. Additionally, document reviews of monitoring reports and quarterly CSO submissions were used to triangulate findings from non-visited regions.</p>
<p>No focus group discussions were conducted due to logistical and ethical considerations, especially in relation to vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities and GBV survivors. This limited the opportunity to collect collective beneficiary perspectives in a moderated setting.</p>	<p>Where focus group discussions were not feasible, in-depth key informant interviews with legal aid recipients and service providers were conducted to capture experiential insights. Interviews were disaggregated by gender and included persons with disabilities to ensure inclusive representation.</p>
<p>The evaluation coincided with competing national events and partner obligations, which resulted in limited availability of some institutional stakeholders.</p>	<p>Scheduling was adapted to accommodate stakeholders' availability, including weekend consultations and extended hours.</p>
<p>Direct observation of service delivery was constrained by scheduling challenges and the non-operational status of some legal aid centres during the mission period.</p>	<p>The project data from 2023 to 2025, including photos, outreach statistics, and internal assessments, were used to supplement gaps in field observation. These mitigations strengthened the validity and inclusiveness of the data, though some geographic and thematic gaps remain.</p>

RELEVANCE

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

EQ 1: To what extent was the project aligned with national development priorities, the UNDP Country Programme, the SDGs, and the needs of vulnerable groups?

Sub-question:

To what extent were stakeholder perspectives and relevant lessons from past initiatives

1. *Finding. The evaluation finds that the project Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan is highly relevant to the country's national development priorities, UNDP strategic frameworks, international commitments under the SDGs, and the expressed needs of vulnerable groups. Its design reflects clear responsiveness to institutional gaps and public demand, while incorporating stakeholder perspectives and lessons from previous reforms and programming experience.*

Since 2016, Uzbekistan has implemented a broad judicial and legal reform agenda aimed at aligning national institutions and legislation with international human rights standards. Key milestones include the adoption of the *Law on Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men* (2019) and the *Law on the Protection of Women from Harassment and Violence* (2019)¹², the ratification of the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (2021)¹³, and the modernisation of criminal and administrative codes. **These reforms are part of a wider policy effort under the *Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan 2022–2026*, which defines justice and the rule of law as foundational principles for democratic governance and public trust.** Complementary frameworks include the *National Human Rights Strategy (2020)* and the *National Gender Equality Strategy 2021–2030*, both of which set out legal and policy reforms for human rights protection and gender equality.

The project is fully aligned with these national strategies and builds on their commitments by seeking to institutionalise a functioning state-funded free legal aid (FLA) system, strengthen the Ombudsperson's Office, and increase access to justice for women, youth, and persons with disabilities. It targets persistent bottlenecks in the justice system, including gaps in the coverage and quality of legal aid, low levels of legal awareness among citizens, and the limited operational capacities of state and non-state actors in the human rights field. The project also reflects strong coherence with UNDP's Country Programme Document (CPD 2021–2025), particularly under Output 1.1, which supports institutions to expand access to justice and enhance social cohesion.

Furthermore, it is directly aligned with Outcome 1 of the *UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2021–2025*, which aims for “effective, accountable, inclusive and gender-responsive governance systems and rule of law institutions.” In terms of global commitments, the project supports the implementation of SDG 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls) and SDG 16 (promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable institutions). The project is also responsive to data and evidence reflecting the lived experience of legal exclusion. According to the *World Justice Project Rule of Law Index*, Uzbekistan ranked 85th out of 139 countries in 2021 with an overall score of 0.47¹⁴. While the rank improved slightly to 83rd by 2024, with a score of 0.49, access to civil justice remains a persistent challenge, especially for women and the rural poor. The country's

12 Zakon Respubliki Uzbekistan ‘O garantiyakh ravnykh prav i vozmozhnostey dlya zhenshchin i muzhchin’ [Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men] ZRU–562 (2 September 2019)

<https://lex.uz/ru/docs/4494873> accessed 11 November 2025

13 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (adopted 13 December 2006, entered into force 3 May 2008) 2515 UNTS 3, ratified by Uzbekistan 2021

14 World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2021–2024, <https://worldjusticeproject.org/>

performance in the *World Bank's Women, Business and the Law 2020* report, ranking 134th out of 190 countries, further highlights structural barriers to women's legal empowerment¹⁵

The needs of vulnerable groups were a central focus in the project design. In terms of responsiveness to needs, the project was grounded in a **legal needs assessment that gathered data from 999 respondents across all regions of Uzbekistan, including urban and rural areas**. This allowed the project to tailor its support to actual gaps, particularly those affecting women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

Barriers identified include lack of awareness of rights, procedural and linguistic obstacles, and limited legal literacy, particularly among women in rural areas and people with disabilities. Project directly supported the implementation of **Presidential Decree No. PD-175 (2024)**, which calls for the establishment of shelters for women victims of violence and for providing them with legal and social services. The project explicitly targets these groups through capacity development, legal awareness campaigns, and support to CSOs that work with affected communities.

2. Finding. Stakeholder engagement was a core feature in the project design process. Consultations with the Ministry of Justice, Ombudsperson's Office, and civil society organisations revealed common concerns about the fragmentation of the legal aid system, its dependency on ad hoc donor support, and the absence of effective coordination mechanisms.

The project design addressed these issues by incorporating activities to establish a **national network of Free Legal Aid Centres, develop a legal aid registry, and formalise cooperation protocols between state and non-state actors. Lessons from prior UNDP interventions, including the E-SUD civil case e-justice system, informed the project's focus on accessibility and service delivery efficiency.** The project's strategy to develop interactive maps, mobile applications, and legal information systems reflects these earlier experiences.

The project's **alignment with international human rights guidance was also reinforced by recommendations from UN treaty bodies and GANHRI¹⁶**, particularly with regard to strengthening the Ombudsperson's role, improving access to justice for people with disabilities, and enhancing civil society engagement. The Ombudsperson's accreditation with GANHRI's "B status" in 2020, while a positive milestone, also underscored capacity limitations and the need for a clearer human rights education mandate and stronger engagement with independent CSOs. **These concerns were integrated into the project's second outcome area on institutional capacity-building and stakeholder dialogue.**

EFFECTIVENESS

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

EQ 2: To what extent were the project's outputs achieved, and how did they contribute to the intended outcomes related to improved access to justice and human rights protection?

Sub-question:

What internal and external factors enabled or hindered the achievement of project results?

EQ 3: To what extent did the project engage stakeholders effectively and adopt participatory implementation approaches?

¹⁵ World Bank, *Women, Business and the Law 2020* (World Bank 2020) <https://wbl.worldbank.org/> accessed 11 November 2025.

¹⁶ GANHRI Sub-Committee on Accreditation, *SCA Report December 2020* (OHCHR 2020). <https://ganhri.org/accreditation/sca-reports>, accessed 1 of October 2025.

Under Outcome 1, a nationwide legal needs assessment covering 999 respondents across all 14 regions identified gaps in legal awareness and service accessibility, particularly for women, rural youth, and persons with disabilities. These findings informed the design of community-based legal aid interventions and capacity development initiatives for service providers¹⁷. The Low-Value Grant (LVG) scheme **reached 28,091 individuals through legal awareness and primary aid services across six regions**. Of these, **43 percent were women, and five percent were persons with disabilities**.¹⁸ This output directly supported the expansion

of free legal aid and addressed local barriers, including geographic and economic access. The development and endorsement of minimum service standards for legal aid providers and the adoption of gender-sensitive guidelines for cases of gender-based violence (GBV) further institutionalised quality and accountability mechanisms.¹⁹ The project adopted participatory and consultative methods across its implementation. National institutions and local NGOs were engaged through workshops, legal monitoring, and LVG activities. The LVG scheme received 37 applications, with 9 NGOs selected based on regional relevance, experience, and proposed outreach.

These NGOs delivered over 280 awareness sessions and consultations, 50 percent of which were held in rural areas.²⁰ The judicial practice monitoring conducted by three NGOs examined 650 court cases and fed recommendations into high-level dialogues with the Senate and Supreme Court.²¹ University students and legal clinic participants were engaged through a nationwide summer school on access to justice, and training on gender-sensitive and disability-inclusive communication was conducted with national NGOs and Ombudsperson representatives.²²

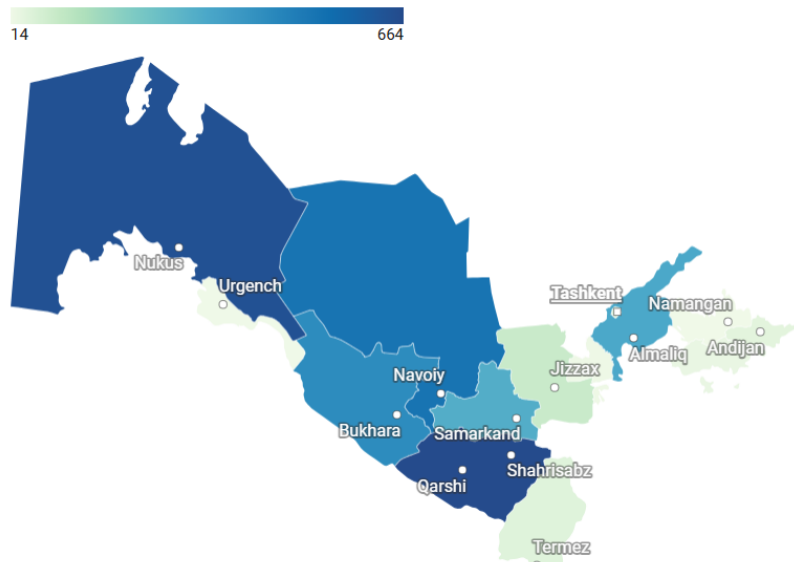
However, there was limited structured consultation with women-led organisations and organisations of persons with disabilities in project design. Aspects of the digital legal aid platform (e.g. accessibility features, mobile use) could have benefited from more participatory co-creation with these constituencies.²³

4. Finding. The project, through the LVG mechanism, facilitated direct access to justice and legal support for over 300 individuals, primarily targeting women survivors of domestic violence, persons with disabilities, and low-income populations in remote areas.

Across 15 CSO-implemented LVG initiatives, comprising nine from the previous project cycle and six from the current one, a total of 370 legal consultations and 84 court representations were provided. Tangible outcomes include:

- *Successful resolution of 22 employment-related cases, including reinstatements and compensation, such as by Madad in Khorezm and Sabr in Kashkadarya.*
- *42 women survivors of domestic violence were supported in court procedures by Huquq Plus, including divorce, custody, and protection orders.*
- *Mehrjon documented compensation claims awarded to three GBV survivors.*

Figure 1. Coverage with consultations by regions of Uzbekistan



17 UNDP Uzbekistan, Annual Progress Report: Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan (2023) 4.

18 UNDP Uzbekistan and Project Partners, Final Report on Low-Value Grant Recipients (2024) 3.

19 UNDP Uzbekistan, PPR 2024 (December Submission) 5.

20 Final Report on LVG Recipients (n 2) 2.

21 ibid 5.

22 PPR 2024.

23 Ibid.

- *Legal Clinic under Fergana Law Institute assisted 17 clients with disability access claims and social benefit enrolment.*
- *Istiqbolli Avlod supported vulnerable youth and survivors of trafficking to obtain personal documents, enabling access to education and employment.*
- *Legal Clinic of Bukhara reported follow-up engagement by women who had never before used legal services, indicating behaviour change and greater trust in legal aid.*

5. *Finding. Limited human and financial resources among legal aid providers, qualified sign language interpreters, availability of digital exclusion of vulnerable groups (e.g. poor internet access and digital literacy among women), and persistent gaps in legal awareness created challenge for the project implementation.*

Limited human and financial resources among legal aid providers, combined with the digital exclusion of vulnerable groups and persistent gaps in legal awareness, posed significant challenges to the implementation of the project. While the project strengthened the institutional framework for legal aid delivery, many of the implementing partners, including public legal aid centres and local NGOs, operated with constrained budgets and limited staff capacity, often relying on part-time or volunteer paralegals. This affected their ability to respond effectively to the volume and complexity of legal needs, particularly in underserved rural areas.²⁴ The introduction of digital legal aid services, including the planned **Yuridik Yordam** platform²⁵, was hindered by low digital literacy, poor internet connectivity, and limited smartphone access among the target population, especially women and persons with disabilities in remote regions.²⁶

In addition, access to legal aid for persons with hearing impairments remained a critical gap. Several Low-Value Grant (LVG) recipients reported serious limitations due to the lack of qualified sign language interpreters, as well as the near-total absence of legal literature in sign language.¹⁶ These professionals typically charge high hourly rates for their services which for some of the LVG projects were unaffordable, therefore, some opted for the services of the family members to provide legal aid for the disabled person. According to a grantee, only about 20 young professionals will graduate from the State Pedagogical Institute of Uzbekistan in 2025, a number significantly lower than the country's disabled population needs. This constrained the participation of deaf individuals in legal consultations and awareness sessions, even where physical outreach was conducted. The limited availability of qualified sign language interpreters significantly constrained the participation of deaf individuals in legal consultations and awareness sessions. This barrier persisted even in cases where physical outreach efforts were made to reach remote and vulnerable populations. As a result, deaf individuals were unable to fully benefit from the legal services and information provided under the project.

While addressing the shortage of sign language interpreters and related accessibility gaps falls outside the direct control of the project, raising awareness of this bottleneck within both the formal and informal justice systems represents an important opportunity. UNDP, leveraging its comparative advantage and convening power, could play a key role in highlighting these challenges and advocating for more inclusive approaches across the justice sector. By bringing attention to these issues at various levels, UNDP can encourage stakeholders to prioritize accessibility and support the development of solutions that facilitate greater participation of deaf individuals in legal processes.

Furthermore, the 2023 legal needs assessment confirmed widespread lack of awareness of legal entitlements, including state-funded aid and available remedies for gender-based violence and property-related grievances.²⁷ Despite extensive outreach efforts, legal literacy remained low, and demand for services continued to exceed provider capacity.¹⁷ These factors collectively constrained the project's ability to expand or institutionalise inclusive legal aid practices at scale and highlight the need for complementary investments in digital inclusion, legal awareness, and sustained human resource development

²⁴ UNDP Uzbekistan, PPR 2024 (December Submission) 6–7.

²⁵ <https://advice.uz/ru/page/about>

²⁶ UNDP Uzbekistan and Project Partners, Final Report on Low-Value Grant Recipients (2024) 4–5.

²⁷ UNDP Uzbekistan, Annual Progress Report: Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan (2023) 4.

Although the legal needs assessment was a valuable diagnostic tool, follow-up service delivery to address the gaps it identified remained uneven in some regions.²⁸

6. Finding. The project laid solid groundwork to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Ombudsperson's Office, with further steps required to operationalise and embed reforms

Progress was also made in **Outcome 2** through capacity-building of the Ombudsperson's Office, including the development of a competency framework, training plan, and a study tours to two European states.²⁹ These efforts aimed to address recommendations from GANHRI and promote more inclusive engagement with civil society and vulnerable groups.

The development of a **Competency Framework**, accompanied by an **Assessment Methodology** and tailored **Instructions for institutional use**, represents an important step towards strengthening the internal systems of the Ombudsperson's Office. The framework responds directly to capacity gaps highlighted in the **GANHRI Sub-Committee on Accreditation Report (December 2020)**, especially around strategic planning, staff development, and outreach. Although implementation is at an early stage, the technical foundations are in place to support more structured human resource management and internal accountability processes.

The study visit to Austria further contributed to institutional learning by exposing senior representatives of the Ombudsperson to European standards and practices in human rights monitoring, particularly in relation to closed institutions, oversight of law enforcement, and collaboration with civil society. This exchange strengthened the comparative knowledge base of the institution and may help inform future adjustments to mandates or procedures. As part of the project's broader capacity-building efforts, a study visit to Denmark was organized to facilitate knowledge exchange and strengthen institutional cooperation. During this visit, project representatives engaged directly with the Danish Parliamentary Ombudsman, gaining valuable insights into international best practices in ombudsman operations and governance. The study visit culminated in the formalization of this cooperation through the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Ombudsman of Uzbekistan and the Danish Parliamentary Ombudsman. This agreement established a framework for ongoing collaboration, fostering the exchange of expertise and supporting the continued development of effective ombudsman practices.

While the inputs are timely and relevant, **deeper engagement with technical partners such as OHCHR** could enhance alignment with international standards and contribute to future GANHRI accreditation processes. As the Competency Framework and other tools are rolled out, there is potential for the institution to consolidate gains and ensure their systematic use across its regional offices.

7. Finding. The project improved the visibility and outreach capacity of the Ombudsperson's Office, with initial steps taken towards more inclusive communication and stakeholder engagement.

The project effectively supported the Ombudsperson's public engagement efforts, most notably by convening a well-attended international conference marking the institution's 30th anniversary (PA 20). The event brought together regional and international actors, including representatives from national human rights institutions, UN agencies, bilateral donors, and civil society organisations. These exchanges helped position the Ombudsperson more prominently in the national and regional human rights landscape.

The training on **Disability-Inclusive and Gender-Sensitive Communication** (PA 21), delivered to over 20 participants from regional offices and NGOs, introduced practical tools to strengthen the accessibility and responsiveness of the Ombudsperson's external communication. While institutionalisation of such practices will require time, the intervention has sensitised focal points and laid a basis for more inclusive messaging and engagement strategies going forward.

The project also supported the Ombudsperson's **admission to the Asia-Pacific Forum of NHRIs** in 2024, marking an important milestone in its regional visibility. As the planned GANHRI reaccreditation process has

²⁸ *ibid.*

²⁹ *ibid* at page 6.

been postponed to the following year, the remaining project period offers an opportunity to further align internal systems with the Paris Principles and to enhance cooperation with expert bodies such as OHCHR.

8. *Finding. Support to civil society contributed to national dialogue on rights-based justice, but institutionalisation and service access remain partial.*

Outcome 3 focused on enhancing civil society contributions to justice reform. Activities included the dissemination of over 10,000 awareness products, 50 success stories, and more than 200 community events.³⁰ Three civil society organisations analysed over 650 court cases and presented findings to the Supreme Court and Senate Committee, resulting in concrete legal recommendations on housing justice and women’s property rights.³¹ **Enabling factors included strong institutional partnerships** (Ministry of Justice, Chamber of Advocates, Ombudsperson), data-driven planning based on the legal needs survey, and implementation flexibility. For example, when delays occurred in procuring construction services for the women’s shelter, the project partnered with the National Agency for Social Protection.³²

The project’s support to civil society actors contributed to a more visible role of CSOs in national discourse on justice and human rights, especially through platforms such as the IV Samarkand Forum and roundtables on cooperation with state institutions. The Forum gathered over 180 participants and led to the **adoption of the Samarkand Declaration, reinforcing commitments to human rights and environmental justice**³³. The roundtable on 5 June 2024 facilitated multi-stakeholder engagement and **built on the analysis of over 650 court cases by NGOs on family disputes and defamation. These efforts expanded evidence-informed advocacy and fostered openings for policy dialogue.**

CSO-led research highlighted critical legal gaps, such as lack of prosecutorial presence in housing cases, underrepresentation of women in legal processes, and inconsistencies in medical assessments in domestic violence proceedings. This was complemented by the development of a report on Articles 59-2 and 216-1, which presented systemic analysis of judicial practices on domestic violence. Findings were **aligned with CEDAW recommendations** and pointed to gaps in legal representation, compensation mechanisms, and classification protocols.

EFFICIENCY

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

EQ 4: To what extent did the project use financial, human, and time resources efficiently to deliver results?
EQ 5: To what extent did project management, implementation arrangements, and M&E systems contribute to operational efficiency?

9. *Finding. The project demonstrated effective and adaptive use of its financial and human resources across core output areas, although certain activities suffered from underutilisation of funds, gaps in specialist staffing, and delays due to external dependencies.*

The total project budget was **USD 1,116,100**, of which **USD 950,000** was contributed by the Government of Finland and **USD 166,100** was provided in-kind by UNDP and national partners.³⁴ As of **June 2025**, the project had disbursed over **USD 841,670**, representing a **75.4 percent implementation rate**.³⁵ Expenditure was concentrated in three priority areas: (i) capacity-building of the Free Legal Aid (FLA) system and legal service providers, (ii) support to the Ombudsperson’s Office and regional representatives, and (iii) local delivery of legal aid through civil society grants.

30 Annual Progress Report (n 1) 8.

31 Final Report on LVG Recipients.

32 PPR 2024.

33 <http://nhrc.uz/en/news/m13388>

34 UNDP, Project Document: Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan (2022) 22.

35 UNDP Uzbekistan, CDR Report by Activity. (June 2025) 3.

The Low-Value Grant (LVG) modality proved to be a cost-efficient mechanism for expanding access to justice. Through just **nine LVG agreements** totalling **USD 89,100** the project supported outreach and legal assistance in **Andijan, Fergana, Namangan, Tashkent, Bukhara and Samarkand**.³⁶ These activities benefited a total of over 28,000 individuals from all regions of Uzbekistan, including the Karakalpakstan Republic, Tashkent, Bukhara, Djizakh, Samarkand, Navoi, and others, of which 21,240 received assistance online and 6,753 offline. Among the beneficiaries, 12,259 (43%) were women, 1,258 (5%) were people with disabilities, and 10,659 (38%) were youth³⁷. The average cost per beneficiary was estimated at **USD 5.95**, indicating a strong value-for-money ratio, particularly in underserved rural areas.³⁸

Training programmes and technical consultations were organised on disability-inclusive legal aid, the Istanbul Protocol, and juvenile justice. For example, **140 legal aid providers** and **21 regional representatives of the Ombudsperson's Office** were trained across several modules in 2023–2024.³⁹ However, the availability of specialised professionals remained limited. The LVG reports highlighted a **shortage of certified sign language interpreters**, legal literature in accessible formats, and paralegals trained in working with survivors of GBV or with disabilities.⁴⁰ These capacity gaps limited the project's ability to fully reach or accommodate the most marginalised.

Some delays occurred in infrastructure-related activities, such as improvements to legal aid facilities and the coordination of shelter services for GBV survivors. Implementation was delayed by procurement and partner coordination issues. For example, funding for rehabilitation works under Output 3 remained largely unspent by Q2 2025.⁴¹ In response, the project team reprogrammed resources and shifted implementation roles to the National Agency for Social Protection, maintaining progress while avoiding financial waste.⁴²

10. Finding. Project management and governance structures supported adaptive implementation and ensured resource efficiency, while the M&E system was adequate for tracking activities and expenditures but did not fully enable assessment of higher-level results.

The project was implemented under the National Implementation Modality (NIM) with the Ministry of Justice as the national lead, supported by UNDP. Strategic oversight was provided through a **multi-stakeholder Project Board**, which met at least once annually and included representatives from UNDP, the Finnish Embassy, the Ministry of Justice, and the Ombudsperson's Office. The 2023 Board meeting, attended by the Ambassador of Finland, reiterated the project's commitment to international human rights obligations and prioritisation of vulnerable groups.⁴³

Project management demonstrated flexibility in adapting to delays or institutional constraints. For instance, in 2024 the project reallocated responsibilities for delayed shelter and infrastructure activities to other governmental actors, which allowed workplans to advance without major financial inefficiencies.⁴⁴ Similarly, underperforming budget lines were revised based on quarterly delivery data, as shown in the **CDR Report for Q2 2025**, which reflects a shift from capital investments to service delivery and outreach.⁴⁵ For example, recognising the risk of underutilisation, the project team, in consultation with the Project Board, redirected funds toward more responsive and high-performing expenditure areas. This included **scaling up community outreach**, awareness-raising events, and legal education campaigns, especially targeting women and persons with disabilities.

Expenditure data from the same CDR report show a marked **increase in allocations to civil society grants**, LVG sub-awards, and training activities during the second half of 2024 and early 2025.⁴⁶ These adaptive

36 UNDP Uzbekistan, Final Report on LVG Recipients (2024) 1–2.

37 UNDP PPR 2024

38 Ibid.

39 UNDP Uzbekistan, Annual Progress Report_ROL HRP_2023 (January 2024) 6–7.

40 ibid 9; see also Final LVG Reports (n 3) 5.

41 UNDP, CDR Report by Activity.2024.pdf page 4.

42 Annual Progress Report (n 5) p.8.

43 Project Board Meeting Summary, para. 2–3. February 2024.

44 Annual Progress Report (n 5) 7.

45 UNDP, CDR Report Q2 2025 (n 2) 2–4.

46 UNDP Uzbekistan, CDR Report by Activity_00122342_Q2_2025 (June 2025) 3–4.

reallocations not only improved the overall budget absorption rate but also helped the project remain aligned with its core objective of improving access to justice for vulnerable groups, thereby enhancing operational efficiency through flexible financial management.

The M&E system functioned primarily through UNDP's standard planning and reporting tools, including **Annual Progress Reports, Combined Delivery Reports (CDRs)**, and detailed LVG partner reports. **While output-level results were well tracked (e.g. number of beneficiaries, training events, publications produced), the system lacked robust outcome indicators that would measure how the systemic problems of the access to justice and human rights were changing. There was no consistent collection of data on legal empowerment outcomes (e.g. resolution rates, increased trust in institutions, or recurrence of rights violations, compensation amount), limiting the project's ability to assess longer-term change.**⁴⁷

The result chain below outlines the expected results and indicators that should be systematically monitored and reported as the project approaches its completion. It reflects a structured progression from resource mobilisation to sustained systemic change.

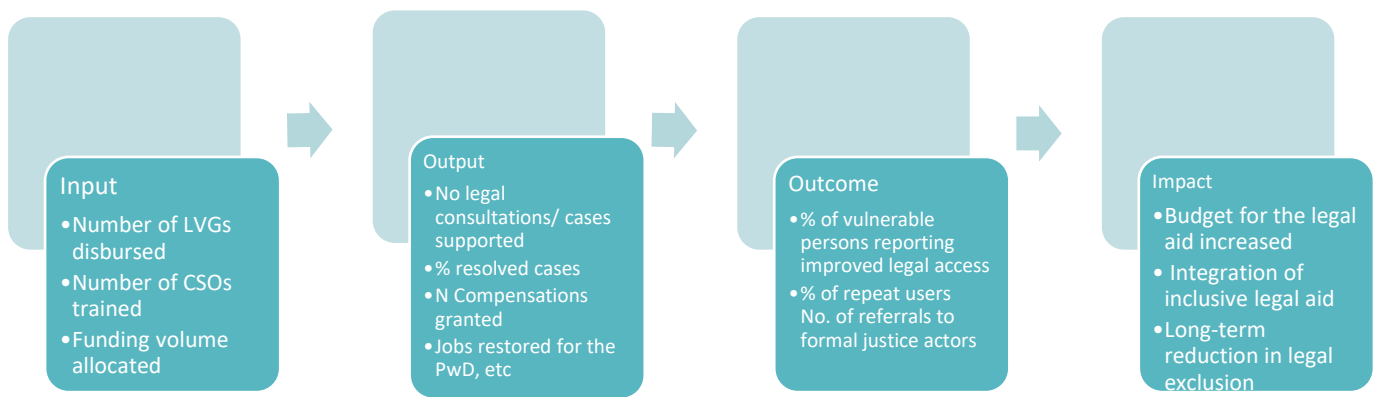


Figure 4. Final Evaluation Expected result chain

Despite the limitations of the overall M&E framework in capturing longer-term changes in legal empowerment, the project proactively introduced several diagnostic tools and inclusive monitoring practices to enhance its evidence base and responsiveness to vulnerable groups. In particular, a **legal needs assessment survey** was conducted among NGOs specialising in free legal aid, **which served both as a baseline and as a diagnostic tool to inform the development of a national methodology for legal aid needs identification.**⁴⁸ The findings of this assessment directly informed the conceptual design for strengthening the Free Legal Aid system in Uzbekistan.⁴⁹

Moreover, all **Low-Value Grant (LVG) recipient organisations** were required to collect and report data disaggregated by **sex, age, and disability status** in their quarterly monitoring reports.⁵⁰ This was systematically enforced through UNDP's reporting templates and capacity support during implementation. Disaggregation enabled more granular analysis of outreach and uptake, particularly in rural and marginalised communities. For instance, among the **13,065 direct beneficiaries** reached by LVG-supported activities, **61 percent were women, and 1,525 individuals were persons with disabilities,**⁵¹ allowing the project to track equity in service delivery and inform course corrections.

The application of **inclusive M&E principles**, aligned with the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy and the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy, was also reflected in the formulation of LVG logframes, which incorporated outcome-level indicators on rights awareness, referrals, and legal resolution rates among disadvantaged

47 Annual Progress Report (n 5) 9–10.2024

48 UNDP Uzbekistan, Annual Progress Report_ROL HRP_2023 (January 2024) 4.

49 Ibid p.5.

50 UNDP Uzbekistan, Final Report on LVG Recipients (2024) p 2.

51 Ibid. p.3

groups. However, **while disaggregated data were collected at the output level, there was no evidence of an integrated outcome monitoring system or beneficiary satisfaction tracking that could triangulate qualitative and quantitative dimensions of impact.**

IMPACT

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

EQ 6: What tangible changes did the project bring to the lives of the beneficiaries, especially vulnerable and underrepresented groups?

EQ 7: To what extent has the project contributed to gender equality and the empowerment of women?

11. Finding. Advancing Disability Rights and Accessibility in Justice Services

The project brought attention to **systemic accessibility barriers** faced by persons with disabilities (PwD) in Uzbekistan's justice and administrative systems. Stakeholders such as *SHAROIT+* and *Qalb Nuri* emphasised that PwD remain **structurally excluded** from full legal participation due to physical inaccessibility of courts, lack of reasonable accommodations (e.g. sign language interpreters, Braille legal materials), and limited awareness among legal professionals on inclusive procedures.

While the project supported individual cases of legal aid for PwD, the broader impact lies in the **institutional recognition** of disability-related justice gaps. These insights have contributed to advocacy efforts aimed at integrating accessibility standards into national legal aid frameworks and service delivery models. However, stakeholders underlined that sustained policy attention and long-term investment are required to convert these early steps into systemic change.

12. Finding Strengthening Civil Society's Role in Legal Empowerment

The Low-Value Grant (LVG) modality had a **catalytic effect** in empowering local CSOs to deliver legal aid, particularly for women, PwD, and marginalised groups. Organizations such as *Nihol*, *Madad*, *Sharq Ayoli*, and *Rahmdillik* confirmed that the LVGs enabled outreach to new communities, strengthened rights awareness at the grassroots level, and improved CSO credibility in working with state institutions.

However, the short funding cycle and lack of scale-up mechanisms **limited the durability** of these gains. Without additional institutional or financial support, many CSOs may be unable to maintain legal aid services or build on the progress achieved. This highlights the need for a more structured approach to **CSO sustainability and integration** into the national legal aid architecture.

13. Finding Potential of Community-Based Dispute Resolution Models

Grassroots organisations reported strong community interest in informal and hybrid dispute resolution models, especially for resolving family, land, and neighbour-related conflicts. These mechanisms, while informal, offer culturally relevant and accessible alternatives to formal courts. Organisations working at community level observed that such mechanisms could reduce barriers to justice for rural and marginalised populations, especially where trust in formal systems remains low.

Although currently fragmented and operating without formal oversight, stakeholders expressed interest in developing community-linked models that uphold human rights standards and legal safeguards. The project's support to CSOs in engaging with local leaders and mahalla committees laid a foundation for such models. With structured follow-up and legal alignment, these initiatives could complement formal justice sector reforms and expand access to justice in under-served areas.

Barriers remain, particularly for deaf persons, as reported by Mehrjon and Zarafshan Women's Center, who cited a critical shortage of sign language interpreters, and lack of printed legal materials in accessible formats (e.g. Braille). Digital exclusion further affected older women and rural youth who could not access online case updates or legal information.

Gender equality was embedded throughout the project. Out of the 16 LVGs awarded, 11 CSOs focused primarily on women and girls, many of them being women-led organizations such as Huquq Plus, Mehrjon, Zarafshan Women's Center, Women's League of Lawyers, and Madad. These organizations provided tailored legal support to women in vulnerable situations and worked closely with local authorities and mahallas to shift social norms.

Still, **reporting GBV remains a challenge** due to stigma and fear of retaliation. *Sabr* noted that women often hesitated to formalise complaints, even after initial consultations, unless accompanied by strong psychosocial and legal support. The project helped build these bridges but highlighted the continued need for **trauma-informed and multi-sectoral services**.

SUSTAINABILITY

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

EQ 8: To what extent are the project's results likely to be sustained beyond its duration?
EQ 9: To what extent is there ownership and commitment among stakeholders to sustain and scale up the project's benefits?

14. Finding. The project made a valuable contribution to strengthening the ecosystem for inclusive access to justice in Uzbekistan, however, the prospects for sustainability remain mixed.

UNDP strategically advanced the law on free legal aid by supporting the development of guiding regulations and facilitating a comprehensive legal aid framework. A critical mass of the acting lawyers and members of the Chamber of Advocates of the Republic of Uzbekistan who are authorised by the law on State-Funded Legal Aid to provide free legal aid on Gender-Sensitive Legal Aid Services. A roadmap was drafted to build a comprehensive legal aid ecosystem and strengthen legal aid capacities. According to data collected during the field visit, UNDP supported NGOs currently providing legal aid services, with one organisation alone assisting 2,000 individuals.⁵²

Project supported ongoing judicial and legal reforms by reinforcing institutional roles (notably the Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs), promoting rights-based service standards, and contributing to the localisation of the National Human Rights Strategy and Gender Equality Strategy. These are important foundations for sustainability at the system level.

The project has been well received by national counterparts, particularly the Ministry of Justice, which demonstrated strong formal ownership through participation in project activities and policy dialogues. This is a promising sign for sustainability. The donor also highlighted the importance of national ownership as a central criterion in assessing the project's success and noted that engagement with the Ministry of Justice appeared robust.

The physical location of the project team within the premises of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) served as a clear indication of the main national partner's willingness to collaborate closely on project activities. This arrangement fostered direct communication and regular interaction between the project team and MoJ staff, thereby enhancing coordination and supporting the effective implementation of project initiatives. The co-location also facilitated joint problem-solving and alignment of efforts, further reinforcing the commitment of the Ministry to advancing shared goals in the area of inclusive access to justice. MoJ undertook a review of international models by studying the legal aid provision experiences of Finland and Georgia. This comparative analysis provided valuable insights into different approaches to organizing and delivering state-funded legal

⁵² NGO Madad was established in 2019 in accordance with the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan 'On measures to further improve the system of legal assistance and communicate legal information to the population' dated September 6, 2019, No. 741. Madad is currently remaining the only NGO established by State and financed by the Ministry of Justice.

aid services. By examining these countries' frameworks, the MoJ aimed to identify effective practices that could inform the development and enhancement of Uzbekistan's own legal aid system.

Collaborating with the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the project is developing a case management system for free legal aid (FLA) providers, linked to an interactive FLA providers map. This system aims to enhance FLA efficiency through paperless exchanges. The project is **developing a Legal aid information system that will serve as a single portal for all types of legal aid provision to simplify the interaction between legal aid providers and beneficiaries, enhance transparency of the legal aid provision as per the UNDP digital standards and in the process of procurement of services.** However, to fully realize the benefits of this platform, comprehensive integration with the entire justice system will be required. **Without full integration, certain advantages and efficiencies may remain inaccessible, limiting the platform's potential impact on enhancing access to justice and supporting institutional sustainability.**

15. Finding: Strategic coordination with OHCHR may provide opportunities for coherence, institutional influence, and sustainability.

While the project operated in thematic areas closely aligned with OHCHR's mandate, strategic collaboration between UNDP and OHCHR in Uzbekistan could have been enhanced. OHCHR was not consistently engaged in the design, implementation, or review of activities related to the National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) or civil society engagement, despite being a core actor in these areas. Coordination through direct institutional channels would have enhanced the internal UN coherence. While several coordination platforms exist, such as those focused on UN governance, human rights and inclusion, and peace initiatives—they currently lack the robustness, effective coordination, and strength required to drive substantial impact. Although these platforms are not entirely absent, their limited capacity hinders the effective alignment of efforts among stakeholders.

Furthermore, the absence of a coordinated donor platform specifically dedicated to human rights programming further contributes to the fragmentation of initiatives. This lack of a unified approach impedes strategic prioritization across international partners, resulting in efforts that are less cohesive and potentially less effective in achieving shared human rights objectives.

Concerns have been raised regarding UNDP's extensive engagement within the human rights sector in Uzbekistan. In the absence of robust coordination with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), there is a risk that efforts may be duplicated in the future. For example, the overlap could lead to the dispersion of already scarce technical and financial resources, potentially affecting the overall effectiveness and sustainability of human rights initiatives in the country.

16. Finding. The sustainability of concrete results, particularly those generated under the Low Value Grant (LVG) modality, is not assured without further investment or institutional anchoring.

While CSOs successfully delivered essential legal aid services to vulnerable groups, including survivors of domestic and gender-based violence, persons with disabilities, and women in rural areas, the short implementation timeframe (typically 4–6 months) and minimal budget allocations limited their ability to establish durable or scalable service models. Most interventions were designed to address immediate legal needs and could not accommodate long-term representation, systemic advocacy, or sustainable institutional partnerships.

Moreover, the project budget did not include a specific allocation for institutional support to CSOs (e.g. core funding, staff development, staff counseling digital infrastructure, or quality assurance systems). As a result, even highly committed organisations have indicated that they cannot continue legal aid delivery without renewed external support. **Thus, the extension phase should consider addressing these issues.**

In addition, structural barriers remain unresolved. These include the shortage of certified sign language interpreters, lack of legal materials in accessible formats, and low public awareness of available services, especially among women with disabilities, rural youth, and survivors of GBV. Without addressing these constraints through integrated policies and financing, the institutionalisation of inclusive legal aid is unlikely.

The extension of the project until the end of next year, with an additional EUR 500,000 in funding, is a positive step. However, without a clear institutionalisation pathway and stronger coordination with MOJ, the risk remains that the progress made, particularly by smaller CSOs, will not translate into enduring impact.

At the same time, stakeholder ownership has not yet been matched by institutional commitments to scale up or mainstream the project's innovations. The legal aid services supported under the project remain donor-dependent. There is no concrete plan or budget allocation from the government to absorb or continue funding CSO-provided legal aid, nor a clear framework to integrate informal dispute resolution initiatives piloted by CSOs into the national justice system.

The CSOs involved displayed strong commitment, often going beyond the terms of their grants to provide holistic support to victims of violence, persons with disabilities, and marginalised communities. However, their capacity to sustain this work is limited by precarious funding and lack of institutional support. Some organisations expressed interest in expanding shelters or developing new services but lacked the legal and financial infrastructure to do so securely and sustainably.

Donor representatives also noted that the future of Finnish support to Uzbekistan remains uncertain due to the country's broader budget cuts and shifting development priorities. While the extension period is meant to strengthen the exit strategy, there is recognition that without sustained governmental investment or alternative donor engagement, the long-term institutionalisation of the project's achievements is at risk.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES: HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY, DISABILITY INCLUSION AND LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

EQ 10: To what extent did the project adopt a human rights-based approach and improve access to justice for disadvantaged and marginalised groups?

EQ 11: To what extent did the project address gender equality and women's empowerment in its design, implementation, and outcomes?

EQ 12: To what extent did the project meaningfully consult and benefit persons with disabilities in its implementation?

17. Finding. The project operationalised a human rights-based approach by targeting communities with limited access to formal legal services and by supporting CSOs to deliver primary legal aid to disadvantaged groups. While these efforts expanded outreach and addressed immediate legal needs, the institutionalisation of inclusive legal aid provision remains limited. Structural mechanisms to ensure sustained, rights-based service delivery, such as clear quality assurance standards, dedicated funding for CSOs, and integration into state systems, are not yet fully in place.

Over 6,500 individuals received legal consultations across various regions, including remote and underserved districts. Implementing partners focused on groups at heightened risk of exclusion, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, and rural populations. The support was delivered in a way that promoted rights awareness and empowered individuals to seek redress for grievances. The legal needs assessment conducted across all 14 regions, covering urban and rural populations and prioritising women, youth, and persons with disabilities, reflects an inclusive design informed by disaggregated evidence⁵³.

According to one of the interviewed subgrantee, the project ***Strengthening the Social and Legal Protection of Women by Supporting Agribusiness in the Fergana Region*** demonstrated strong adherence to a human rights-based approach, particularly by promoting non-discrimination, participation, and accountability in the

⁵³ Project Progress Report, 'Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan', December 2024, Section 1.1 Legal Needs Assessment, p. 1

context of gender-based violence and access to justice in the Fergana region. Its core intervention, the construction and operationalisation of a shelter for survivors of violence was explicitly designed to uphold the dignity, safety, and rights of women and children subjected to abuse. The shelter that is the only one operating in Fergana, **will provide access free legal aid, psychological counselling, medical services, and now is fit to provide the temporary accommodation, enabling survivors to seek redress**⁵⁴.

The project consistently addressed gender equality across its components. Gender was mainstreamed through targeted interventions including capacity-building for legal professionals on GBV, trauma-informed legal aid practices, and the development of gender-sensitive legal aid standards. Guidelines on legal aid for GBV survivors were produced and disseminated, integrating international human rights frameworks and domestic legal instruments.

Of the 28,000 individuals assisted through LVGs, **over 12,000 were women**⁵⁵. **Women also accounted for the majority of legal awareness participants.** Judicial analysis funded by the **project highlighted gendered injustices in housing disputes, where female applicants were not property owners and lacked legal representation in 94% of analysed cases**⁵⁶. These findings directly informed legislative advocacy and dialogue between CSOs and justice institutions.

According to the project documentation, the legal clinics established under the project played a significant role in both capacity-building and service provision, with a particular emphasis on fostering gender equality. These clinics offered specialised training to students, concentrating on labour law and essential skills development. Notably, women made up 50% of all trainees, reflecting a deliberate strategy to promote gender parity within the next generation of legal professionals.

In addition to their educational mandate, the **clinics delivered 2,558 legal consultations in 2023, with women accounting for nearly half (49.3%, or 1,262) of the beneficiaries.** This balanced distribution of services highlights the clinics' commitment to ensuring equitable access to legal aid for both women and men. The approach adopted by these clinics demonstrates a sustained effort to advance gender equality, not only in legal education but also in the delivery of legal services. Training on gender-based violence was provided to 28 staff members of FLA providers.

The project's commitment to non-discrimination was reflected in its outreach to rural and economically vulnerable women, often excluded from formal justice mechanisms. **Over 657 women benefitted from reintegration services and vocational training** designed to enhance their autonomy and reduce dependency. Moreover, services were provided regardless of marital or socioeconomic status, and referrals were made through local authorities and mahallas, ensuring accessibility.

The project also engaged over 496 perpetrators (mainly husbands) through targeted behaviour-change interventions, thus incorporating elements of accountability and prevention⁵⁷. While no formal legal proceedings or justice outcomes are detailed in the records reviewed, according to the interviewed stakeholders, the provision of legal counselling and structured psycho-legal interventions contributed to improved access to justice pathways, especially for those unable to navigate formal court systems.

The combination of legal articles, sign language materials, and easy-to-read texts demonstrates a commitment to *accessibility* in both language and format. Consultations were personalised based on disability status, collected through the Telegram bot, and legal support was made available via mobile services and in-person clinics⁵⁸. The use of survey data and user feedback loops, along with direct services (467 formal legal consultations, 800+ online inquiries handled), supports the conclusion that the project improved *access to justice* for disadvantaged populations.

⁵⁴ <https://www.undp.org/uzbekistan/press-releases/new-shelter-survivors-gender-based-violence-opens-fergana>

⁵⁵ Disaggregated Legal Aid Recipients, p. 2. Project Progress Report, 'Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan', December 2024

⁵⁶ Judicial Practice Analysis.

⁵⁷ Source: KII with CSOs.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

The project made initial efforts to include persons with disabilities, both in service delivery and outreach. The national legal needs assessment included PwDs as a target group. Of those reached with legal aid services, 1,258 were PwDs, and an additional 874 PwDs participated in legal awareness events⁵⁹. Disability-inclusive programming was supported through a podcast on the legal rights of PwDs and a training workshop on inclusive and gender-sensitive communication for representatives of the Ombudsperson’s office and NGOs⁶⁰. The podcast was organized in Tashkent by the NGO “SHAROIT PLUS”, in collaboration with legal experts from HuquqPlus.uz, a specialized legal information portal for persons with disabilities. The podcast focused on enhancing legal literacy and discussed measures to protect women from discrimination and violence.

18. Finding. The Legal Needs of Persons with Disabilities Are Broad and Widespread, Exceeding the Reach of Current Project Support.

The Legal Needs Assessment, based on a representative sample of **999 respondents** from all **14 regions of Uzbekistan**, systematically captured the legal needs of persons with disabilities through both regional and demographic disaggregation. Among the total sample, **58 respondents (6%) self-identified as persons with disabilities**⁶¹. The study examined not only the types of legal problems they encountered, but also the barriers they faced in seeking legal assistance.

Notably, **only 29% of respondents with disabilities reported having ever contacted a lawyer or legal service provider**, compared to 43% among respondents without disabilities, indicating a substantial access gap. In terms of legal issues, the most frequently cited problems by persons with disabilities were related to **social protection (62%), access to health services (49%), and employment discrimination (27%)**. Additionally, **35% of PwDs reported difficulties understanding legal procedures**, and **61% indicated they had no knowledge of organisations providing free legal aid**⁶².

Digital barriers were especially pronounced. Among persons with disabilities, **72% lacked the digital literacy or tools** (smartphone, internet connection, or accessible platforms) to access legal information or services online⁶³. The majority of them (59%) relied on in-person sources such as family members or acquaintances for legal information, and only **6%** reported having used official legal aid websites or hotlines⁶⁴. These findings underscore the heightened vulnerability and exclusion of persons with disabilities from the formal legal system, and they illustrate the need for institutionalised, accessible, and disability-inclusive legal aid provision.

As a result of this approach, several barriers to legal aid access for individuals with disabilities were identified, including the availability of sign language experts and issues related to the digital divide. Respondents indicated **that a lack of assistive technologies, including sign language interpretation, braille materials, and digital accessibility features, impeded effective participation and service uptake**. These gaps were particularly pronounced in rural areas and among women with disabilities

59 Project Progress Report, ‘Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan’, December 2024

60 SHAROIT PLUS Podcast

61 UNDP Uzbekistan, Legal Needs Assessment of the Population of Uzbekistan (2024) p. 32

62 Ibid at p.33- 39

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.

III. CONCLUSIONS

- **The evaluation concludes** that the project "Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan" remains **highly relevant and responsive to national reform** priorities, institutional gaps, and the needs of vulnerable groups. It aligns with Uzbekistan's Development Strategy (2022–2026), the National Human Rights Strategy, and the National Gender Equality Strategy, and contributes directly to UNDP's CPD (2021–2025), the UNSDCF, and SDGs 5 and 16. The project's core focus on improving access to justice, strengthening institutional accountability, and enhancing civic engagement in rights-based governance reflects a well-grounded theory of change that remains valid. The project responded to clearly identified needs, drawing on robust diagnostic inputs such as the 2023 Legal Needs Assessment covering all 14 regions. *However, while the project's strategic focus remains well-placed, its geographical and institutional coverage, particularly through the LVG mechanism and pilot initiatives, has not yet matched the scale of legal exclusion across the country.*
- **In terms of coherence**, the project operated in alignment with national frameworks and UNDP programming, while also reflecting relevant international human rights standards. Interventions on GBV, disability inclusion, and access to justice were informed by recommendations from GANHRI, CEDAW, and CRPD bodies. However, internal UN coherence could be strengthened. While cooperation with UN Women and UNICEF was visible, coordination with OHCHR remained limited. The absence of regular dialogue and joint planning with OHCHR in particular meant that potential synergies, especially in NHRI strengthening and treaty body follow-up, were not fully realised. *Greater inter-agency collaboration could have further enhanced the quality, reach, and strategic positioning of the project's outputs, particularly in the lead-up to GANHRI reaccreditation and in support of civil society participation in normative processes.*
- **On effectiveness**, the project has achieved notable results in expanding access to justice and increasing the reach of legal aid services. Over 28,000 individuals received legal assistance through CSO-led Low-Value Grants, including more than 12,000 women and 1,258 persons with disabilities. Legal awareness campaigns, mobile outreach, and the development of user-friendly materials (sign language, easy-to-read texts, Telegram bots) demonstrated strong commitment to inclusion. Legal clinics provided over 2,500 consultations and trained a gender-balanced cohort of legal interns, helping build future human resource capacity in inclusive legal services. The project also made effective use of participatory tools such as court monitoring, legal needs assessments, and regional consultations to tailor services to community priorities. It contributed to improved institutional frameworks through the development of gender-sensitive legal aid guidelines and minimum standards for FLA providers. Under Outcome 2, progress was made in laying the foundations for the institutional reform of the Ombudsperson's Office, including the development of a Competency Framework and exposure to international good practices through the Austria study visit. *Nonetheless, structural constraints, such as limited human resources in CSOs, lack of trauma-informed GBV service models, and shortage of sign language interpreters, hampered the scalability and consistency of service delivery. The project piloted promising models, but institutional uptake and mainstreaming of these innovations remain at early stages.*
- **In terms of efficiency**, the project demonstrated prudent financial management, with a 75% budget absorption rate as of mid-2025. The LVG modality proved to be a cost-efficient tool, delivering services at approximately USD 5.95 per beneficiary while maintaining wide regional coverage. Flexible fund reallocation and adaptive management mechanisms enabled the project to address delays (e.g., shelter construction) and shift resources to underfunded priorities (e.g., legal awareness, training). Project oversight under the National Implementation Modality ensured national ownership and stakeholder participation. However, efficiency was hindered by persistent capacity shortages in specialised services, including disability-inclusive infrastructure and qualified GBV counsellors. The M&E framework focused heavily on outputs, with limited tracking of outcome-level change, such, institutional trust, grievance resolution rates, or other outcome of the supported reforms.
- **The project contributed to expanding inclusive access to justice in Uzbekistan**, with visible results in raising awareness of exclusion, piloting new service models, and strengthening civil society's role in legal empowerment. **Its most tangible impact** was at the community level, particularly among women, persons with disabilities (PwDs), and rural populations. The project brought sustained

attention to the barriers faced by PwDs, including physical inaccessibility, lack of sign language interpretation, and limited awareness among legal professionals. Over 1,250 PwDs received legal aid, and disability rights were elevated in legal reform discourse for the first time. However, these early achievements require institutional follow-up and dedicated state financing to be sustained. Through 16 Low-Value Grants, the project enabled CSOs, including 11 women-led organisations to reach over 28,000 people with legal aid, over 12,000 of whom were women.

- This enhanced legal literacy, expanded outreach, and strengthened the credibility of CSOs in engaging with local authorities. Yet, the short-term nature of the grants and lack of integration into national frameworks limits the durability of these results. Community-level interest in informal and hybrid dispute resolution models was high, especially in rural areas.
- The project's engagement with mahallas and local leaders created entry points for culturally appropriate, rights-compliant alternatives to formal justice. These approaches remain nascent but have strong potential if aligned with legal safeguards. Digital exclusion also constrained the reach of interventions, particularly among rural women, older persons, and PwDs, over 70% of whom lacked access to online legal tools.
- While the project piloted alternative outreach methods, systemic investments are needed to close this gap. The project helped shift discourse, increase inclusion, and pilot new models of legal service delivery. Its impact is clearest in expanded access and improved awareness, but full institutional uptake will require longer-term investment, policy alignment, and stronger state-CSO partnerships. ***Drawing on international good practice, a more structured, mobile, and disability-inclusive access-to-justice service delivery model could help bridge this gap and expand reach to excluded populations.***
- **On sustainability**, the project achieved partial progress toward institutionalisation. The co-location of the project team within the Ministry of Justice and active involvement in legal aid policy reform reflect strong national ownership. Draft laws, regulatory inputs, and capacity-building activities contributed to the enabling environment for long-term reform. However, the integration of CSOs into national legal aid structures remains incomplete. Most LVG-supported organisations operated under short-term contracts without access to follow-up funding or formal accreditation pathways. Without structured inclusion in state service delivery frameworks or predictable financing, the sustainability of their contributions is at risk. Additionally, services for persons with disabilities and GBV survivors remain under-resourced and depend heavily on external funding. Efforts to engage local governments and national institutions in long-term planning for such services should be intensified in the remaining year of implementation. ***Despite strong commitment by CSOs, most organisations lacked a formal exit or sustainability strategy and relied on continued donor support to maintain services. Future support mechanisms would benefit from requiring clear sustainability planning, including mobilisation of local authorities, private actors, and community-based partners to maintain and scale legal aid provision beyond the project lifecycle.***
- **With respect to cross-cutting issues**, the project adopted an inclusive and participatory approach. Gender equality was consistently mainstreamed across activities, including in service design, delivery, and institutional partnerships. Women constituted nearly half of all legal aid beneficiaries, and dedicated interventions focused on addressing GBV, economic reintegration, and empowerment. Disability inclusion featured prominently in design and outreach efforts, with accessible materials and tailored services delivered in several locations. ***However, the persistence of physical, digital, and attitudinal barriers limits full realisation of rights for persons with disabilities. Institutional anchoring of CRPD principles, expansion of accessibility standards, and integration of inclusive practices into government systems will be essential moving forward.***

RECOMMENDATION 1: PILOT AN INCLUSIVE MOBILE LEGAL AID MODEL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Category: Disability Inclusion and Access to Justice

Finding Reference: Conclusions on Impact and Cross-cutting Issues

Responsible Entity: UNDP Uzbekistan, in partnership with the National Agency for Social Protection, Disabled Persons' Associations, and MoJ Legal Aid Department

Recommendation:

Explore the design and implementation of a modest, disability-inclusive legal aid outreach pilot, inspired by global practices such as the UNDP's "Bus of Solidarity,"⁶⁵ tailored to the Uzbek context, that provides mobile, disability-inclusive legal aid services. While full procurement of mobile units may exceed the current project budget, the initiative could be piloted through reallocation of select event-based activities or through in-kind contributions by the Ministry of Justice.

The pilot should focus on reaching persons with disabilities in remote areas, delivering legal aid in accessible formats (e.g., sign language, Braille, audio, simplified text), and encouraging participation of legal aid providers. Such an initiative would enhance public awareness, promote inclusive service branding, and could be institutionalised over time, as demonstrated by the Ministry of Justice in the Kyrgyzstan, which now fully maintains and deploys mobile legal aid services following initial donor support.

A results-oriented pilot could also serve as a model for nationwide scale-up under the legal aid system.

Timeline: Concept design by Q2 2026, pilot launched by Q4 2026 in at least two regions with high PwD populations

RECOMMENDATION 2: STRENGTHEN THE SUSTAINABILITY OF LVG-SUPPORTED INITIATIVES THROUGH MANDATORY EXIT STRATEGIES

Category: Civil Society Strengthening and Sustainability

Finding Reference: Conclusions on Sustainability and Partnerships

Responsible Entity: UNDP Uzbekistan and future LVG grantees

Recommendation:

Increase the budget and the time-frame of the future LVG. Require future LVG applicants to include a clear and feasible exit and sustainability strategy in their proposals. These should outline how the initiative will continue beyond project funding, including potential co-financing from local governments, public-private partnerships (e.g. law firms, business associations), and integration with local service providers (e.g. mahalla committees, women's shelters, social workers). Provide technical guidance during the grant application process to help CSOs design realistic sustainability models.

Timeline: To be applied in the next LVG cycle starting in 2026

RECOMMENDATION 3 – SCALE UP COMMUNITY-BASED DISPUTE RESOLUTION AND LEGAL EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES

Category: Access to Justice and Legal Empowerment

Finding Reference: Conclusions on Impact, Sustainability and Relevance

Responsible Entity: UNDP Uzbekistan, Ministry of Justice, Civil Society Resource Centres

Recommendation:

Develop and pilot a national framework for hybrid and community-based dispute resolution, incorporating

⁶⁵ See for reference: <https://www.undp.org/kyrgyzstan/press-releases/ministry-justice-and-undp-expand-access-justice-through-bus-solidarity>.

human rights safeguards and capacity development for local actors (mahallas, CSOs). Ensure gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate approaches to family, land, and civil disputes in underserved areas. The aim is not limited to capacity building alone but envisions a broader systemic intervention. The expected result is to establish a nationally anchored hybrid dispute resolution framework that complements formal legal aid with community-level mediation, supported by trained actors and embedded in national policy.

Key elements of this approach could include:

- Development of a national policy framework to define standards for hybrid and community-based dispute resolution mechanisms, ensuring coherence with the formal justice system, human rights standards, and legal aid policies.
- Piloting of community dispute resolution mechanisms in at least three regions, with clear entry points through mahallas, Civil Society Resource Centres, and local justice actors.
- Capacity building of local mediators and leaders (e.g., mahalla chairpersons, women's groups, and legal aid providers) on basic mediation, referral pathways, and gender-sensitive handling of disputes.
- Integration with legal aid systems, ensuring that cases beyond the competence of community mediators are referred to qualified legal aid providers.
- Design and roll-out of community awareness and empowerment initiatives to inform citizens, especially women and vulnerable groups, of their rights and available redress mechanisms.
- Monitoring and documentation of dispute types, resolution rates, and satisfaction of parties, with the aim of assessing potential scale-up and institutionalisation by the Ministry of Justice.
- Training of Trainers (ToT) for selected CSO representatives to build local pools of certified ADR trainers capable of conducting regular community-based mediation training sessions.
- Exploring sustainability options by integrating certified community-level ADR practitioners into the local governance system (e.g., attaching them to mahalla committees), with recognition and oversight by the Ministry of Justice or other national authorities.

The long-term impact is to improve early dispute resolution, reduce the burden on courts, strengthen legal empowerment at the grassroots level, and provide culturally responsive access to justice options, especially where formal legal aid remains limited.

Timeline: Framework piloted in 3 regions by end 2026

RECOMMENDATION 4 – IMPROVE STRATEGIC COHERENCE AND INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION ON HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAMMING FOR SUSTAINABLE RESULTS

Category: UN Coordination and Coherence

Finding Reference: Conclusions on Effectiveness and Sustainability

Responsible Entity: UNDP Uzbekistan, in coordination with OHCHR and other UN actors

Recommendation:

Convene a regular inter-agency working group on human rights and rule of law programming, aligned with GANHRI recommendations and national reform priorities. Ensure structured collaboration with OHCHR on NHRI capacity-building, Ombudsperson reform, and follow-up to UPR and treaty body recommendations.

Timeline: Group launched by mid-2026, with biannual coordination meetings

V. LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

LESSONS LEARNED

Multiple delivery channels enhance access but require tailored design. Experiences from legal aid interventions indicate that expanding delivery modalities—including mobile clinics, hotlines, and digital platforms—can improve access for underserved groups. However, effectiveness depends on how well these channels are adapted to the capacities and contexts of the intended users, particularly those with disabilities or limited digital literacy.

Legal needs assessments are essential for context-sensitive service provision. Interventions that lacked a prior legal needs assessment faced challenges in targeting the right beneficiaries or tailoring their content. Systematic assessments at the design stage would allow legal aid services to respond more effectively to local needs and reduce gaps in coverage.

Adaptation of legal content to diverse user groups is critical for uptake. General legal materials often fail to meet the needs of persons with disabilities or marginalized communities. The project showed that user-centered formats, such as easy-to-read text, audio-visual materials, and content in sign language or Braille, are necessary to ensure comprehension and use.

Human and financial resource constraints undermine outreach and service quality. A recurring constraint across CSO implementers was insufficient staffing and limited funds, which reduced their ability to sustain outreach, conduct awareness campaigns, or expand geographically. This lesson highlights the importance of realistic resource planning during project design.

Digital divide disproportionately excludes women and persons with disabilities. Despite the use of online platforms, uptake among women and persons with disabilities remained low. Digital inequality caused by lack of internet access, IT devices, or digital skills remains a structural barrier to inclusive legal aid. Without addressing this divide, digital expansion alone cannot guarantee equity in access. Integrating this platform into the broader justice system demands far more complex implementation, both technically and financially.

Limited availability of specialist resources restricts inclusivity. The absence of trained sign language interpreters, Braille materials, and hearing aids within legal aid delivery both online and in-person limited the project’s ability to reach persons with sensory impairments. The availability of such resources needs to be systematically integrated in design and budgeting.

GOOD PRACTICES

Use of online legal platforms and easy-to-read formats to reach persons with disabilities

The development of platforms such as *huquq.plus* and the production of materials in “Oson matn” (easy-to-read text) have proven effective in increasing the accessibility of legal information for people with intellectual and cognitive disabilities. These tools have the potential to provide scalable frameworks for inclusive communication.

Deployment of mobile legal clinics to reach remote communities

Mobile legal aid services successfully reached rural and hard-to-access areas, allowing beneficiaries, especially women, youth, and people with disabilities to receive consultations in locations where legal support is typically unavailable. This approach addresses geographic exclusion effectively and could be replicated in other regions.

Linking Legal Aid to Local Governance Structures

Some organisations, such as Shijoat, engaged with local social protection agencies and mahalla representatives. Training local specialists on gender-sensitive legal aid improved responsiveness and helped

anchor legal support in existing local governance structures. This alignment with local institutions facilitates continuity beyond the project period.

ANNEX I. OUTPUT PROGRESS 2022–2025 (AUGUST)

Output	Indicator	Target 2022	Target 2023	Target 2024	Target 2025	Progress
1.1. Legal Aid Framework	Legal aid standards adopted	Concept note drafted	Standards drafted & piloted	Standards adopted by MADAD, Chamber of Advocates	FLA Law adopted, tools institutionalised	Standards adopted by key institutions. Legal Needs Survey completed in all regions. Comparative studies published. National FLA Law not yet passed.
1.2. CSO-led Legal Aid Services	Legal consultations delivered via LVG	CSOs mapped, LVG design prepared	5 NGOs supported with LVG	30,000 consultations	50,000 consultations; outreach to 40% women and 10% PwD	28,000 consultations in 2024; 223 outreach events; 10,000+ materials disseminated; 43% women, 5% PwD, 38% youth reached. 9 LVG provided to NGOs.
1.3. FLA Information System	Digital FLA platform operational	Not applicable	Functional requirements approved	Tender launched, vendor selected	System launched and piloted by July	Platform under development. Launch expected mid-2025. Designed to improve accessibility and referrals.
1.4. Gender-Sensitive Legal Aid	Training and tools on GBV-sensitive aid	Curriculum outlined	Training materials developed	Trainings conducted	Gender-responsive guidelines applied in FLA	GBV training delivered in partnership with Latvian NGO MARTA. Curriculum in use in legal clinic activities.
1.5. Legal Clinics and Youth Outreach	Summer school and student engagement	Preparatory work	Partnerships with universities established	1 summer school held	Legal clinics deliver FLA with student support	2024 Summer School conducted with 26 students (42% women) from 5 institutions.
2.1. Ombudsperson Institutional Capacity	Frameworks and partnerships with CSOs	Baseline assessment	Competency framework, training tools developed	Tools institutionalised	Used for monitoring, GANHRI accreditation	Institutional framework aligned with GANHRI guidance. Used in training regional staff. Asia Pacific Forum membership secured.
2.2. Public Communications and HR Monitoring	HR complaints processed and outreach	No tool in place	Strategy developed, pilot in place	900+ complaints received	Increased accessibility and citizen uptake	Online HR complaint tool operational. 900+ complaints processed in 2024. Public awareness raised through events and publications.

Output	Indicator	Target 2022	Target 2023	Target 2024	Target 2025	Progress
3.1. CSO Capacity Development	CSOs trained and supported	CSOs identified	50 trained	100 trained	150 trained; 5 policy products	52 CSO staff trained in 2024; sub-grants enabled outreach to women and PwD. Podcasts, publications and outreach materials produced.
3.2. CSO-Government Dialogue Platforms	Policy consultations and co-drafted laws	Initial dialogue initiated	2 consultative events held	2 policy documents drafted	Draft NPM law adopted; CSOs engage regularly	Draft NPM law co-drafted with CSOs in 2024; consultations held in Tashkent and regions. Policy influence documented.



UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME TERMS OF REFERENCE / INDIVIDUAL CONTRACT

PROJECT/OUTCOME INFORMATION	
Project/ outcome title	Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan (UNDP-UZB-00122342)
Project ID	00128319
Corporate outcome and output	Output 1.1 Institutions equipped with effective anti-corruption tools, enabled to expand access to justice and enhance social cohesion (CPD 2021- 2025)
Duty Station	Tashkent , Uzbekistan
Project dates (Start & Planned end)	19/09/2022–31/12/2025
Project budget	EUR 1,500,000
Office or Home based	Home based with mission to Uzbekistan of minimum 5 working days
Funding source	Government of Finland
Implementing party	Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan
Contract Type and duration	IC , 30 working days during July – October 2025
Languages required	English, Russian (required) and Uzbek (preferred)

Introduction

In accordance with UNDP policies and procedures, all nationally implemented projects are required to undergo a Final Evaluation (FE) at the end of the project by an independent evaluator selected by the Implementing Entity. This Terms of Reference (ToR) sets out the expectations for the FE of the project titled “Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan”. The project started in October 2022 and is in its last year of implementation. The FE process must follow the guidance outlined in the document ‘Evaluation Implementation, June 2021’ (<http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/section-4.shtml>).

I. Background and context

Over the past several years, the Government of Uzbekistan has embarked on an ambitious agenda to strengthen the rule of law and uphold human rights. Key measures include ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopting new gender equality legislation, revising criminal procedural laws, and introducing mechanisms to improve access to justice. These efforts have yielded positive results, as evidenced by Uzbekistan’s ranking of 85th out of 139 countries in the 2021 Rule of Law Index and 134th out of 190 in the World Bank’s 2020 Women, Business and the Law report.

Despite this progress, challenges remained—particularly for vulnerable groups such as women, youth in rural areas, and persons with disabilities—who often have limited knowledge of their rights and face substantial barriers in accessing affordable legal assistance.

To address these gaps, and with support from the Government of Finland, the “Strengthening Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan” Project was launched in 2022. The Project aimed to reinforce legal and institutional frameworks, enhance the provision of free legal aid and justice services, and build the capacities of the Ombudsperson’s Office and other justice sector stakeholders.

The Project has the following output – access to justice in Uzbekistan is adequately observed and promoted, resulting in enhanced trust in the rule of law with a positive impact on poverty reduction and the reduction of inequalities.

The Project has the following activities:

- Activity 1. Legal and institutional foundations for the provision of primary and secondary free legal aid are established in line with human rights standards.
- Activity 2. The capacity of the Ombudsperson’s Office in Uzbekistan is strengthened to promote and protect the human rights of vulnerable groups.

- Activity 3. Civil society’s capacity is enhanced to promote inclusive access to justice and human rights for all, especially for women, youth, and people with disabilities.

The Project’s Strategy is aligned with the national development priorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as reflected in the “Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan,” announced by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The second pillar of this Strategy underscores that ensuring justice and the rule of law are fundamental and necessary conditions for building a people’s state and respecting a person’s honor and dignity.

The Project is also aligned with the National Strategy on human rights, which aims to ensure the rule of law and increase the efficiency of national justice sector actors to effectively protect and promote human rights. The same Strategy and its Action Plan on improving the activities of the Authorized Person of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan for Human Rights highlight the need for increased practical cooperation between state bodies and civil society organizations. Furthermore, the Project’s crosscutting gender activities are aligned with the priority areas of the National Gender Strategy, including priority area #5, “Ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the prevention of harassment and violence”.

The Project strategizes on strengthening the capacities of key government institutions and NGOs responsible for establishing the free legal aid system and the Ombudsperson’s Office, as well as supporting justice sector actors. These efforts contribute to Outcome 1 (“Institutions are able to respond to the needs and rights of citizens”) and Outcome 2 (“Empowered people who are better able to claim and defend their rights”) of Priority Area 1 of the Programme for Development Cooperation of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2021–2024.

The Project’s Strategy is also aligned with Strategic Priority A (“Effective governance and justice for all”) of Outcome 1 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for 2021–2025. This priority envisions that “by 2025, all people and groups in Uzbekistan, especially the most vulnerable, demand and benefit from enhanced accountable, transparent, inclusive, and gender-responsive governance systems and rule of law institutions for a life free from discrimination and violence.”

Project activities also correspond to Output 1.1 of the UNDP Country Programme Document for Uzbekistan (CPD 2021–2025), “Institutions equipped with effective anti-corruption tools, enabled to expand access to justice and enhance social cohesion.” The proposed Project will leverage UNDP’s mandate and current engagement in the rule of law, governance, and justice sector of the Republic of Uzbekistan, capitalizing on progress, best practices, and lessons learned under the “Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development” outcome of the UNDP Strategic Plan for Uzbekistan for 2018–2021.

Project implementation strategy and related activities are aligned with the overall SDGs and contribute specifically to SDG Target 5, “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls,” and Target 16, “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.”

The underlying idea of the Project is to strengthen the rule of law and improve access to justice for vulnerable groups of the population—especially in rural and remote areas—by enhancing the capacities of free legal aid providers, the Ombudsperson’s Office, and justice sector actors. This includes improving their cooperation with civil society and non-governmental organizations to effectively protect and promote human rights.

The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan serves as the principal partner for the Project, working in collaboration with the National Human Rights Institution (Ombudsperson’s Office), the Chamber of Advocates, and free legal aid providers, among others. Through these partnerships, the Project supports ongoing national reforms to ensure that legal remedies and justice services effectively reach all citizens, including those most at risk of rights violations.

II. FE Evaluation purpose, scope and objectives

Purpose

The main purpose of this Final Evaluation (FE) is to assess the overall achievements of the Project’s outputs and outcomes and to determine the extent to which the Project has attained its stated objectives. It will evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability, and impact of the interventions, as well as identify lessons learned to inform future programming or projects.

The consultant is expected to analyze both strengths and weaknesses of the Project’s design and implementation, and provide final recommendations regarding the Project’s overall orientation and potential follow-up initiatives. This includes evaluating the adequacy, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Project’s implementation approaches, as well as assessing whether the outputs and outcomes were achieved. The evaluation will also draw conclusions about the Project’s successes or shortcomings and document lessons learned and best practices. The results and recommendations of this evaluation will guide the UNDP Project team and other stakeholders in designing and implementing future interventions with enhanced impact and sustainability.

FE Scope

The scope of this FE covers all activities carried out during the full duration of the Project. Specifically, it will review:

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the planned Project outcomes and outputs have been achieved since the beginning of the Project in September 2022.

The FE will look into the Project's processes and activities, strategic partnerships and linkages in the specific country's context that proved critical in producing the intended outputs and the factors that facilitated and/or hindered the progress in achieving the outputs, both in terms of the external environment and risks, as well as internal, including weaknesses in programme design, management and implementation, human resource skills, and resources, challenges encountered during implementation, along with necessary adjustments and lessons learned. The evaluation will also assess the cross-cutting aspects of the Project, such as gender equality and human rights and innovativeness in result areas.

Objectives of the Evaluation

- Determine whether the Project's design was clear, logical, and aligned with the time and resources available.
- Assess the extent to which the overall objectives of the Project were met.
- Measure the Project's performance in relation to the indicators, assumptions, and risks outlined in the logical framework matrix and Project document.
- Examine the Project's implementation strategy, institutional arrangements, management and operational systems, and overall value for money.
- Analyze the likelihood that the Project's outcomes will be sustained and/or replicated beyond its conclusion.
- Assess how effectively the Project's design, implementation, and results have incorporated a gender equality perspective and a human rights-based approach.
- Document notable innovations, best practices, and lessons emerging from the Project for knowledge sharing and potential replication.
- Provide clear, concise, and actionable recommendations to inform future programming and guide similar initiatives.

III. Evaluation criteria and key guiding questions

The consultant will be responsible to carry out the evaluation. Evaluation's scope and guiding questions:

Evaluation questions define the information that the evaluation will generate. This section proposes the questions that, when answered, will give intended users of the evaluation the information they seek in order to make decisions, take actions or increase knowledge.

Questions should be grouped according to the four or five OECD-DAC evaluation criteria: (a) impact (b) relevance; (c) coherence; (d) effectiveness; (e) efficiency; and (f) sustainability (and any other criteria used).

Impact:

- To what extent were the objectives of the project achieved?
- To what extent and degree were the lives of vulnerable, underrepresented, rural women, women/men with disabilities, youth were improved?
- What indicators demonstrate that?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?
- To what extent were the project's approach and implementation mechanisms to promote sustainable livelihood and improved resilience of communities impactful? What is the evidence?
- What has happened as a result of the project?
- What real difference has the project made to the beneficiaries?
- What were the most significant changes that this project has helped to generate?
- Include perception and behavior of communities who generate income from inputs of the project activities
- How many people have been affected? What types/kinds/groups of people have been affected and may be impacted after the project?
- To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Did any unintended effects emerge for women, men or vulnerable groups?

Relevance:

- To what extent was the project in line with the national development priorities, the country programme's outputs and outcomes, **the Gender Equality Strategy of UNDP**, the UNDP Strategic Plan and the SDGs?

- To what extent does the project contribute to the theory of change for the relevant country programme outcome?
- To what extent were lessons learned from other relevant projects considered in the project's design?
- **Has the project been screened for gender equality and the gender marker assigned to this project representative of reality?**
- To what extent were perspectives of those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the attainment of stated results, taken into account during the project design processes?
- **To what extent does the project contribute to gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights-based approach?**
- To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to political, legal, economic, institutional, etc., changes in the country?
- To what extent has the project contributed to covid-19 response?

Effectiveness

- To what extent were the project outputs achieved?
- What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving intended country programme outputs and outcomes?
- To what extent has the UNDP partnership strategy been appropriate and effective?
- What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?
- In which areas does the project have the greatest achievements? Why and what have been the supporting factors? How can the project build on or expand these achievements?
- In which areas does the project have the fewest achievements? What have been the constraining factors and why? How can or could they be overcome?
- What, if any, alternative strategies would have been more effective in achieving the project's objectives?
- Are the projects objectives and outputs clear, practical and feasible within its frame?
- To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?
- To what extent have stakeholders been involved in project implementation?
- To what extent are project management and implementation participatory and is this participation contributing towards achievement of the project objectives?
- To what extent has the project been appropriately responsive to the needs of the national constituents, female and male beneficiaries and changing partner priorities?
- How effective was the project's strategy to involve women, marginalized, disadvantaged and poor in the realization of its activities?

Efficiency

- To what extent was the project management structure as outlined in the project document efficient in generating the expected results?
- To what extent have the UNDP project implementation strategy and execution been efficient and cost-effective? To what extent was the UNDP project implementation structure gender balanced?
- To what extent has there been an economical use of financial and human resources? Have resources (funds, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve outcomes?
- To what extent have resources been used efficiently? Have activities supporting the strategy been cost-effective?
- To what extent have project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner?
- To what extent have the M&E systems utilized ensure effective and efficient project management?

Sustainability

- Are/ have there {been} any financial risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outputs?
- To what extent will/ have financial and economic resources be {been} available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?
- Are/ have there any {been} social or political risks that may/ could jeopardize sustainability of project outputs and the project's contributions to country programme outputs and outcomes?
- Did the legal frameworks, policies and governance structures and processes within which the project operated pose risks that could jeopardize sustainability of project benefits?
- To what extent did UNDP actions pose an environmental threat to the sustainability of project outputs?
- To what extent did UNDP actions pose a social (including human rights, women's rights) threat to the sustainability of project outputs?
- To what extent has the stakeholders' ownership been sufficient to allow for the project benefits to be sustained?

- To what extent have the mechanisms, procedures and policies been in place to allow primary stakeholders to carry forward the results attained on gender equality, empowerment of women, human rights and human development?
- To what extent do stakeholders support the project's long-term objectives?
- To what extent are lessons learned being documented by the project team (on a continual basis) and shared with appropriate parties who could learn from the project?
- To what extent do project interventions have well-designed and well-planned exit strategies?
- What could be done to strengthen exit strategies and sustainability?

Cross cutting issues:

Human Rights :

- To what extent have poor, indigenous and physically challenged, women, men and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefited from the work of UNDP in the country?

Gender Equality :

- To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project?
- Is the gender marker assigned to this project representative of reality?
- To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Did any unintended effects emerge for women, men or vulnerable groups?

Disability:

- Were persons with disabilities consulted and meaningfully involved in programme planning and implementation?
- What proportion of the beneficiaries of a programme were persons with disabilities?
- What barriers did persons with disabilities face?
- Was a twin-track approach adopted?

IV. Methodology

The TOR defines the overarching approach and methodology for conducting the evaluation, ensuring that data collection and analysis generate credible, reliable, and actionable insights within the available resources. However, the final evaluation design, methods, and tools will be refined through consultations with the UNDP Country Office (CO), Consultant (for evaluation), and key stakeholders, ensuring alignment with the evaluation's objectives while considering budget, time, and data constraints. The evaluation should use a combined methods approach, drawing on both primary and secondary, quantitative and qualitative data to come up with an overall assessment backed by clear evidence. Data will be collected through surveys of all relevant stakeholders (national and local Government institutions, UNDP COs, development partners, beneficiaries, etc.) and other selected mechanisms (e.g. key informant interviews, focus group discussions). Further data on the project indicators will be used by the evaluation to assess the project progress and achievements.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, possible field visits and data to be used in the evaluation should be clearly outlined in the inception report and be fully discussed and agreed between UNDP, stakeholders and the Consultant (for evaluation).

The evaluation methodology will include the following:

- **Desk Review** of programme document, monitoring reports (such as minutes of the Board meeting, theory of change and results framework, programme and project quality assurance reports, annual workplans, activity designs, consolidated quarterly and annual report, results-oriented monitoring report, highlights of project board meetings, technical/financial monitoring reports, publications (e.g. blogs, media et cetera) and other materials);
- **Interviews and Meetings** with key stakeholders such as key government counterparts, donor community members, representatives of key civil society organizations, relevant CO management / staff and implementing partners (*semi-structured interviews*, based on questions designed for different stakeholders based on evaluation questions around relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability; *key informant and focus group discussions* with men and women, beneficiaries and stakeholders. All interviews with men and women should be undertaken in full confidence and anonymity, while the final evaluation report should not assign specific comments to individuals).
- **Surveys and Questionnaires** to target direct beneficiaries including male and female participants in development programmes, and/ or questionnaires to other stakeholders at strategic and programmatic levels.

Digital data collection tools are used in UNDP Uzbekistan, namely KOBO Toolbox. All results from field surveys are captured as part of lessons learned and used in dashboards and to generate baseline data for future projects and interventions.

- **Field visits** and **On-site** validation of key tangible outputs and interventions.
- Other methods such as outcome mapping, observational visits, group discussions, etc.

The Consultant (for evaluation) is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach that ensures close engagement with the UNDP, project manager, implementing partners and direct beneficiaries. All evaluation products need to address gender, disability, and human right issues.

The final report must describe the full evaluation approach used and the rationale for the approach, making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the evaluation.

The quality of the evaluation report will be assessed based an Evaluation Ratings Table, as shown below:

ToR Table 2: Evaluation Ratings Table

1. Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Rating⁶⁶
M&E design at entry	
M&E Plan Implementation	
Overall Quality of M&E	
2. Implementation & Execution	Rating
Quality of UNDP Implementation/Oversight	
Quality of Implementing Partner Execution	
Overall quality of Implementation/Execution	
3. Assessment of Outcomes	Rating
Relevance	
Effectiveness	
Efficiency	
Overall Project Outcome Rating	
4. Sustainability	Rating
Financial resources	
Socio-political/economic	
Institutional framework and governance	
Environmental	
Overall Likelihood of Sustainability	

V. Timeframe

- a) To review and adhere to the tentative FE timeframe as follows (the total duration of the FE will be approximately 30 working days over a time period of 12 weeks starting):

Timeframe	Activity
<i>June 8, 2025</i>	Application closes
<i>June 20, 2025</i>	Selection of Consultant
<i>July 15, 2025</i>	Preparation period for Consultant (handover of documentation)
	Document review and preparation of FE Inception Report
	Finalization and Validation of FE Inception Report
<i>July 25, 2025</i>	Stakeholder meetings, interviews, etc.
<i>August 8, 2025</i>	Presentation of initial findings
<i>August 15, 2025</i>	Preparation of draft FE report
<i>August 25, 2025</i>	Circulation of draft FE report for comments
<i>September 5, 2025</i>	Incorporation of comments on draft FE report into Audit Trail & finalization of FE report
<i>TBC</i>	Concluding Stakeholder Workshop
<i>September 15, 2025</i>	Expected date of full FE completion

⁶⁶ Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight & Execution, Relevance are rated on a 6-point scale: 6=Highly Satisfactory (HS), 5=Satisfactory (S), 4=Moderately Satisfactory (MS), 3=Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU), 2=Unsatisfactory (U), 1=Highly Unsatisfactory (HU). Sustainability is rated on a 4-point scale: 4=Likely (L), 3=Moderately Likely (ML), 2=Moderately Unlikely (MU), 1=Unlikely (U)

Options for stakeholder online meetings, interviews, etc. should be provided in the FE Inception Report.

VI. FE Deliverables			
#	Deliverable	Description	Timing
1	Deliverable 1: Inception Report (10 -15 pages)	<p>Inception Report, containing the evaluation framework, detailed evaluation methodology, work plan and logistical arrangements.</p> <p>The outline of the inception report should be as follow:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Background, Purpose and Objectives 2. Evaluation Design and Approach <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Methodology and Methods 2.2. Evaluation Matrix 2.3. Data Collection instrument 2.4. Data Analysis 2.5 Limitations Risks and Mitigation Measures 3. Quality Assurance and Ethical Consideration 4. Workplan 5. Annexes 	July 25, 2025.
2	Deliverable 2: Evaluation debriefing	<p>Data collection from beneficiaries, implementers and key stakeholders and reporting and debriefing on preliminary findings.</p> <p>(Estimated at 10 working days, including travels to Uzbekistan: up to 5 working days)</p>	August 8 , 2025
2	Deliverable 3: Draft Evaluation report (40-60 pages including Executive Summary)	<p>Draft Evaluation Report including annexes for review and comments.</p> <p>The outline for the Evaluation Report will be as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Executive summary 2. Introduction 3. Background and Context Analysis 4. Evaluation Design and Approach <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4.1. Methodological Approach 4.2. Data Collection and Analysis Tools 4.3. Limitations, Risks and Mitigations Measures 5. Findings 6. Conclusions 7. Recommendations 8. Annexes <p>All collected data need to be sex-disaggregated, to the extent possible. (Estimated at 10 working days)</p>	August 25, 2025
3	Deliverable 4 : Presentation	<p>A presentation of preliminary findings and recommendations of the evaluation.</p> <p>(Estimated 1 day)</p>	August 25, 2025
4	Deliverable 5: Final Report	<p>Final Evaluation Report:</p> <p>The final FE report includes all requirements outlined in the FE TOR and is in accordance with the FE guidance.</p>	September 15, 2025.

	<p>The final FE report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other FE reports).</p> <p>The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.</p> <p>(Estimated at 3 working days)</p>	
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*All final FE reports will be quality assessed by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO). Details of the IEO’s quality assessment of decentralized evaluations can be found in Section 6 of the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines.⁶⁷

VII. FE Arrangements

The principal responsibility for managing the FE resides with the Commissioning Unit. The Commissioning Unit for this project’s FE is the UNDP Country Office.

The Commissioning Unit will contract the Consultant An updated stakeholder list with contact details (phone and email) will be provided by the Commissioning Unit to the FE team. The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the Consultant to provide all relevant documents, set up online stakeholder interviews.

VIII. FE Team Composition

One consultant (national or international) will be responsible for the overall design and writing of the FE report, etc. The Project Team will arrange stakeholder online meetings, interviews. The Consultant will be responsible for collecting stakeholders’ feedback, surveys, fieldtrips etc.

UNDP will sign the contract with the Consultant in accordance with the approved UNDP procurement procedures for an individual contract. Payment for services will be made from the Project funds with satisfactory discharge of duties and achievement of results. The results of the work shall be approved by the UNDP DRR through SPIU Associate/CO M&E focal point.

- The Consultant will work under the direct supervision of the UNDP DRR, with support from SPIU Associate/CO Evaluation focal point
- The Consultant is responsible for the quality and timely submission of the deliverables;
- The Consultant ensures timely and rational planning, implementation of activities and achievement of results in accordance with the Terms of Reference;
- The Consultant provides the results of work in accordance with Deliverables;
- The Consultant shall provide reports in electronic form in MS Word format in English.

Prior to approval of the final report, UNDP Programme Manager, in close coordination with SPIU Associate/CO M&E focal point and UNDP DRR will circulate the draft for comments to government counterparts: Project Board key members.. UNDP and the stakeholders will submit comments and suggestions within 10 working days after receiving the draft. The finalized Evaluation Report, addressing all comments received shall be submitted by September 15, 2025.

If any discrepancies have emerged between the findings of the evaluation team and the aforementioned parties, these should be explained in an annex attached to the final report.

The Consultant cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation and/or implementation (including the writing of the project document), and should not have a conflict of interest with the project’s related activities.

The selection of the national evaluator will be aimed at maximizing the overall qualities in the following areas:

Education

- Advanced university degree (Master’s Degree or equivalent) in law, sociology, development studies, political science or any related field.

Experience

- At least 5 years of demonstrated relevant work experience with designing and conducting evaluations of development projects. Project evaluation/review experience within United Nations system will be considered as an asset.

⁶⁷ Access at: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/section-6.shtml>

- Good knowledge of and experience with rule of law, access to justice and human rights issues, gender equality, women empowerment is required.
- Familiarity with the country/region and previous work experience in/with similar geopolitical settings is an asset.

Competences:

- Adequate understanding of gender equality and inclusivity concepts;
- Excellent command of different data collection methods including FGD, KIIs including digital toolboxes, etc.;
- Strong analytical and report writing skills;

Language

- Fluency in written and spoken English. Knowledge of Uzbek and Russian will be considered as an asset.

The Consultant should submit a resume with the list references to substantiate claims of relevant knowledge, skills, and experience.

IX. Evaluator Ethics

This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’. The consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

X. Payment Schedule

- 20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final FE Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit.
 - 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the draft FE report to the Commissioning Unit.
 - 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final FE report and approval by the Commissioning Unit and DRR (via signatures on the FE Report Clearance Form) and delivery of completed FE Audit Trail.
- 18.
19. Criteria for issuing the final payment of 40%:
- The final FE report includes all requirements outlined in the FE TOR and is in accordance with the FE guidance.
 - The final FE report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e. text has not been cut & pasted from other FE reports).
 - The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

XI. Application Process⁶⁸

Recommended Presentation of Proposal:

- a) **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the [template](#)⁶⁹ provided by UNDP;
- b) **CV and a Personal History Form (P11 form)**⁷⁰;

⁶⁸ Engagement of evaluators should be done in line with guidelines for hiring consultants in the POPP

<https://popp.undp.org/SitePages/POPPRoot.aspx>

⁶⁹<https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/psa/Support%20documents%20on%20IC%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx>

⁷⁰ http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc

- c) Brief description of **approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)
- d) **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price, supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the **Letter of Confirmation of Interest template**. If an applicant is employed by an organization/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

Applicants are requested to apply online through the UNDP website at <http://www.undp.uz>. Application shall be submitted by indicated deadline. Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration. Application should contain a current and complete C.V. or PH form with indication of the e-mail and phone contact. Shortlisted candidates will be requested to submit a price offer indicating the total cost of the assignment (including daily fee, per diem and travel costs). Incomplete applications will be excluded from further consideration.

Criteria for Evaluation of Proposal: Only those applications which are responsive and compliant will be evaluated. Offers will be evaluated according to the Combined Scoring method – where the educational background and experience on similar assignments will be weighted at 70% and the price proposal will weigh as 30% of the total scoring. The applicant receiving the Highest Combined Score that has also accepted UNDP’s General Terms and Conditions will be awarded the contract.

Criteria	Weight	Max Point
1. Advanced university degree (Master’s Degree or equivalent) in law, sociology, development studies, political science or a related field.	70 %	10
2. At least 5 years of demonstrated relevant work experience with designing and conducting evaluations of development projects. Project evaluation/review experience within United Nations system will be considered as an asset.		20
3. Good knowledge of and experience with rule of law, access to justice and human rights issues, gender equality, women empowerment is required.		20
4. Familiarity with the country/region and previous work experience in/with similar geopolitical settings is an asset.		10
5. Adequate understanding of gender equality and inclusivity concepts;		
6. Excellent command of different data collection methods including FGD,		10

KIIs including digital toolboxes, etc.; 7. Language : English , Russian, or Uzb		15 10 15 (for each language 5)
Technical Criteria	70 %	100
Financial proposal	30%	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only bidder(s) who received minimum of 70 points of Technical Evaluation that the financial proposal will be opened. • To be computed as a ratio of the Proposal's offer to the lowest price among the proposals received by UNDP. 		

XII. TOR Annexes

- ToR Annex A: Project Logical/Results Framework
- ToR Annex B: Project Information Package to be reviewed by Consultant
- ToR Annex C: Content of the FE report
- ToR Annex D: Evaluation Criteria Matrix template
- ToR Annex E: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators
- ToR Annex F: FE Rating Scales
- ToR Annex G: FE Report Clearance Form
- ToR Annex H: FE Audit Trail

UNDP is an equal opportunity employer. Qualified female candidates, people with disabilities, and minorities are highly encouraged to apply. UNDP Gender Balance in Management Policy promotes achievement of gender balance among its staff at all levels.

Signatures - Post Description Certification

Incumbent <i>(if applicable)</i>		
Name	Signature	
Date		
Officer of Commissioning Unit		
Name / Title	Signature	Date
Mr. Anas Qarman		
Deputy Resident Representative		
UNDP Uzbekistan		

ToR Annex A: Project Logical/Results Framework

Results Framework from Project Document (latest approved)

<p>Intended Outcome as stated in the UNDAF/Country [or Global/Regional] Programme Results and Resource Framework: Strategic Priority A ('Effective governance and justice for all') of the Outcome 1 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for 2021-2025 that aims 'By 2025, all people and groups in Uzbekistan, especially the most vulnerable, demand and benefit from enhanced accountable, transparent, inclusive and gender-responsive governance systems and the rule of law institutions for a life free from discrimination and violence.'</p>
<p>Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme [or Global/Regional] Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets: Outcome 1 ('Institutions are able to respond to the needs and rights of citizens') and Outcome 2 ('Empowered people who are better able to claim and defend their rights') of the Priority Area 1 of the Programme for Development Cooperation of Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2021–2024. Output 1.1 of the UNDP Country program document for Uzbekistan (CPD 2021–2025) 'Institutions equipped with effective anti-corruption tools, enabled to expand access to justice and enhance social cohesion'</p>
<p>Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: 'Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development' outcome of the UNDP Strategic Plan for Uzbekistan for 2018-2021</p>
<p>Project title and Atlas Project Number: 'Strengthening the rule of law and human rights protection in Uzbekistan' Project ID: 00128319 Quantum ID: 00122342</p>

EXPECTED OUTCOMES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	DATA SOURCE	Baseline		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)				Data Collection Methods
			Value	Year 2022	Year 2023	Year 2024	Final	Indicators	
Outcome 1. Legal and institutional foundations for provision of primary and secondary free legal aid are set/established in line with human rights standards	Output 1.1. Free Legal Aid System is established and increasingly sustained by the Ministry of Justice	Concept of development of justice institutions during 2020-2021; Rule of Law index 2022; UPR 2018 Concluding Observations of CEDAW Committee 2020; Respective Laws and Presidents' Government's decisions in the area	1.1.1. Absence of legislative document/by-laws regulating free legal aid		1.1.1.a. 3 legislative document/by-laws regulating free legal aid prepared	1.1.1.a. 3 legislative document/by-laws regulating free legal aid prepared	1.1.1.a. 3 legislative document/by-laws regulating free legal aid prepared	1.1.1. # of legislative documents/by-laws regulating FLA	Annual Ministry of justice reports
			1.1.2. Low score of Uzbekistan in 'accessibility of civil justice' sub-factor in the region		1.1.2.a. 100 people receiving primary legal aid 1.1.2.b. 100 people receiving secondary legal aid 1.1.2.c. 150 of unique accesses to the interactive map of free legal aid providers	1.1.2.a. 100 people receiving primary legal aid 1.1.2.b. 100 people receiving secondary legal aid 1.1.2.c. 150 of unique accesses to the interactive map of free legal aid providers	1.1.2.a. 100 people receiving primary legal aid 1.1.2.b. 100 people receiving secondary legal aid 1.1.2.c. 150 of unique accesses to the interactive map of free legal aid providers	1.1.2.a. # of population receiving: a) Primary legal aid 1.1.2.b. # of population receiving: b) Secondary legal aid 1.1.2.c. # of unique accesses to the interactive map of free legal aid providers	Annual Ministry of justice reports
			1.1.3. NGO MADAD is the only financed GSO providing primary FLA		1.1.3. 5 of primary and secondary FLA providers financially supported via small grants programme	1.1.3. 5 of primary and secondary FLA providers financially supported via small grants programme	1.1.3. 5 of primary and secondary FLA providers financially supported via small grants programme	1.1.3. # of primary and secondary FLA providers financially supported via small grants programme	Annual Ministry of justice reports Monitoring visits to regional FLA providers
	Output 1.2. Free legal aid providers are better equipped to deliver		1.2.1. No FLA Centers are present.	1.2.1. 5 Free Legal Aid (FLA) centers set up and technically equipped to support FLA providers	1.2.1. 5 Free Legal Aid (FLA) centers set up and technically equipped to support FLA providers	1.2.1. 2 Free Legal Aid (FLA) centers set up and technically equipped to support FLA providers	1.2.1. # of Free Legal Aid (FLA) centers set up and technically equipped to	Annual Ministry of justice reports	

EXPECTED OUTCOMES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	DATA SOURCE	Baseline		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)			Data Collection Methods
			Value	Year 2022	Year 2023	Year 2024	Final	
	responsive and accountable justice services in line with fair trial standards and due process of law							support FLA providers Monitoring visits to regional FLA providers
			1.2.2. Lack of capacity of FLA providers to effectively provide FLA services	1.2.2.a. 2 of capacity building trainings organized 1.2.2.b. 50 of secondary FLA providers staff trained 1.2.2.c. 50 of primary FLA providers staff trained	1.2.2.a. 2 of capacity building trainings organized 1.2.2.b. 50 of secondary FLA providers staff trained 1.2.2.c. 50 of primary FLA providers staff trained	1.2.2.a. 2 of capacity building trainings organized 1.2.2.b. 50 of secondary FLA providers staff trained 1.2.2.c. 50 of primary FLA providers staff trained	1.2.2.a. # of capacity building trainings organized 1.2.2.b. # of secondary FLA providers staff trained 1.2.2.c. # of primary FLA providers staff trained	Annual Ministry of justice reports Monitoring visits to regional FLA providers
Outcome 2. Capacities of Ombudsperson's office in Uzbekistan strengthened to promote and protect human rights of vulnerable groups	Output 2.1. The institutional capacity of Ombudsperson's office is strengthened in line with Paris Principles	National Strategy on human rights	2.1.1. Lack of trustful partnership between Ombudsperson office and CSOs in human right reporting	2.1.1.a. 10 of established partnership of Ombudsperson with CSOs in promoting human rights 2.1.1.b. 3 of initiatives conducted by Ombudsperson's office and CSOs on human rights	2.1.1.a. 10 of established partnership of Ombudsperson with CSOs in promoting human rights 2.1.1.b. 3 of initiatives conducted by Ombudsperson's office and CSOs on human rights	2.1.1.a. 10 of established partnership of Ombudsperson with CSOs in promoting human rights 2.1.1.b. 3 of initiatives conducted by Ombudsperson's office and CSOs on human rights	2.1.1.a. # of established partnership of Ombudsperson with CSOs in promoting human rights 2.1.1.b. # of initiatives conducted by Ombudsperson's office and CSOs on human rights	Reports of the Ombudsperson's office
		Capacity assessment of the Ombudsman / commissioner for human rights of the Oliy Majlis	2.1.2. Limited technical capacities and skill of Ombudsperson staff (including its regional representatives)	2.1.2.a. 2 of capacity building material developed 2.1.2.b. 20 Ombudsperson's office staff trained/capacitated	2.1.2.a. 2 of capacity building material developed 2.1.2.b. 20 Ombudsperson's office staff trained/capacitated	2.1.2.a. 2 of capacity building material developed 2.1.2.b. 20 Ombudsperson's office staff trained/capacitated	2.1.2.a. # of capacity building material developed 2.1.2.b. # Ombudsperson's office staff trained/capacitated	Reports of the Ombudsperson's office
		Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on measures to improve the activities of the Authorized Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan for human rights (Ombudsman)	2.1.3. Lack of effective methodological tools on NPM aligned with Paris principles	2.1.3. 2 of methodologies and methodological tools on NPM developed in line with Paris Principles	2.1.3. 2 of methodologies and methodological tools on NPM developed in line with Paris Principles	2.1.3. 2 of methodologies and methodological tools on NPM developed in line with Paris Principles	2.1.3. # of methodologies and methodological tools on NPM developed in line with Paris Principles	Reports of the Ombudsperson's office

EXPECTED OUTCOMES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	DATA SOURCE	Baseline		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)				Data Collection Methods
			Value	Year 2022	Year 2023	Year 2024	Final	Indicators	
		Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan on additional measures to improve the system of detection and prevention of cases of torture	2.1.4. Legal framework regulating cooperation between Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs is absent		2.1.4.a. 1 legal document regulating cooperation between Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs is prepared. 2.1.4.b. 2 dialogues between Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs conducted. 2.1.4.c. 2 of proposal documents on improvement national HR legislation developed in cooperation between Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs	2.1.4.a. 1 legal document regulating cooperation between Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs is prepared. 2.1.4.b. 2 dialogues between Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs conducted. 2.1.4.c. 2 of proposal documents on improvement national HR legislation developed in cooperation between Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs	2.1.4.a. 1 legal document regulating cooperation between Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs is prepared. 2.1.4.b. 2 dialogues between Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs conducted. 2.1.4.c. 2 of proposal documents on improvement national HR legislation developed in cooperation between Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs	2.1.4.a. # of legal documents regulating cooperation between Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs 2.1.4.b. # of dialogues between Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs conducted. 2.1.4.c. # of proposal documents on improvement national HR legislation developed in cooperation between Ombudsperson's Office and CSOs	Reports of the Ombudsperson's office
	Output 2.2. Public outreach capacities of the Ombudsperson's Office are enhanced, and public visibility of improved	UPR 2018 Concluding Observations of CEDAW Committee 2020	2.2.1. Lack of communications and public outreach capacities of the Ombudsperson's Office and communications skills of Ombudsperson personnel.	2.2.1.a. 1 of communication plan/strategy developed 2.2.1.b. 15 of Ombudsperson personnel capacitated on communication and outreach skills	2.2.1.a. 1 of communication plan/strategy developed 2.2.1.b. 15 of Ombudsperson personnel capacitated on communication and outreach skills	2.2.1.a. 1 of communication plan/strategy developed 2.2.1.b. 15 of Ombudsperson personnel capacitated on communication and outreach skills	2.2.1.a. # of communication plan/strategy developed 2.2.1.b. # of Ombudsperson personnel capacitated on communication and outreach skills	Reports of the Ombudsperson's office	
2.2.2. Lack of Ombudsperson's HR reporting tools available that are in line with Paris principles			2.2.2.a. 3 of publicly available of HR report 2.2.2.b. 1000 of individual complaints considered by Ombudsperson's office and recorded in the user-friendly database	2.2.2.a. 3 of publicly available of HR report 2.2.2.b. 1000 of individual complaints considered by Ombudsperson's office and recorded in the user-friendly database	2.2.2.a. 3 of publicly available of HR report 2.2.2.b. 1000 of individual complaints considered by Ombudsperson's office and recorded in the user-friendly database	2.2.2.a. # of publicly available HR reports 2.2.2.b. # of individual complaints considered by Ombudsperson's office and recorded	Reports of the Ombudsperson's office		

EXPECTED OUTCOMES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	DATA SOURCE	Baseline		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)				Data Collection Methods
			Value	Year 2022	Year 2023	Year 2024	Final	Indicators	
								in the user-friendly database	
Outcome 3. Capacities of the civil society enhanced to promote inclusive access to justice and human rights for all (esp. women, youth and people with disabilities)	Output 3.1. Civil society organizations and representatives of vulnerable groups are empowered to promote and protect human rights, with the focus on the rights of women, youth and people with disabilities	Concept of development of civil society organization in 2021-2025	3.1.1. Civil society organizations lack capacities to promote inclusive access to justice and human rights for all (esp. women, youth and people with disabilities)	3.1.1.a. 2 of training materials for civil society organizations developed 3.1.1.b. 50 of civil society organizations staff trained	3.1.1.a. 2 of training materials for civil society organizations developed 3.1.1.b. 50 of civil society organizations staff trained	3.1.1.a. 2 of training materials for civil society organizations developed 3.1.1.b. 50 of civil society organizations staff trained	3.1.1.a. # of training materials for civil society organizations developed 3.1.1.b. # of civil society organizations staff trained	UNDP reports Government reports Media publications	
		Concept of development of justice institutions during 2020-2024	3.1.2. Lack of researches/studies conducted by CSOs on human rights, judicial and law enforcement practices	3.1.2. 2 of researches/studies conducted by CSOs on human rights, judicial and law enforcement practices	3.1.2. 2 of researches/studies conducted by CSOs on human rights, judicial and law enforcement practices	3.1.2. 2 of researches/studies conducted by CSOs on human rights, judicial and law enforcement practices	3.1.2. # of researches/studies conducted by CSOs on human rights, judicial and law enforcement practices	UNDP reports Government reports Media publications	
	UPR 2018 Concluding Observations of CEDAW Committee 2020	3.2.1. Lack of mechanisms for interaction between CSOs and government institutions/justice sector actors	3.2.1.a. 1 of legislative documents regulating interaction between CSOs and government institutions/justice sector actors 3.2.1.b. 10 of CSOs engaged in consultations with government institutions/justice sector actors on the issues of access to justice and human rights 3.2.1.c. 2 of draft policy and legislative documents developed in consultation with CSOs	3.2.1.a. 1 of legislative documents regulating interaction between CSOs and government institutions/justice sector actors 3.2.1.b. 10 of CSOs engaged in consultations with government institutions/justice sector actors on the issues of access to justice and human rights 3.2.1.c. 2 of draft policy and legislative documents developed in consultation with CSOs on the access to justice and human rights	3.2.1.a. 1 of legislative documents regulating interaction between CSOs and government institutions/justice sector actors 3.2.1.b. 10 of CSOs engaged in consultations with government institutions/justice sector actors on the issues of access to justice and human rights 3.2.1.c. 2 of draft policy and legislative documents developed	3.2.1.a. # of legislative documents regulating interaction between CSOs and government institutions/justice sector actors 3.2.1.b. # of CSOs engaged in consultations with government institutions/justice sector actors on the issues of access to justice and human rights	UNDP reports Government reports Media publications		

EXPECTED OUTCOMES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	DATA SOURCE	Baseline		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)				Data Collection Methods
			Value	Year 2022	Year 2023	Year 2024	Final	Indicators	
					on the access to justice and human rights			in consultation with CSOs on the access to justice and human rights	3.2.1.c. # of draft policy and legislative documents developed in consultation with CSOs on the access to justice and human rights

ToR Annex B: Project Information Package to be reviewed by Consultant

#	Item (electronic versions preferred if available)
0. 1	Final Project Document with all annexes
1. 2	UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP) and associated management plans (if any)
2. 3	All Project Progress Reports (PPRs)
3. 4	Oversight mission reports
4. 5	Minutes of Project Board Meetings and other meetings (i.e. Project Appraisal Committee meetings)
5. 6	Financial data, including actual expenditures by project outcome, including management costs, and including documentation of any significant budget revisions
6. 7	Co-financing data with expected and actual contributions broken down by type of co-financing, source, and whether the contribution is considered as investment mobilized or recurring expenditures
7. 8	Electronic copies of project outputs (booklets, manuals, technical reports, articles, etc.)
8. 9	Sample of project communications materials
9. 10	Summary list of formal meetings, workshops, etc. held, with date, location, topic, and number of participants
0. 11	Any relevant socio-economic monitoring data, such as average incomes / employment levels of stakeholders in the target area, change in revenue related to project activities
1. 12	List of contracts and procurement items over ~US\$5,000 (i.e. organizations or companies contracted for project outputs, etc., except in cases of confidential information)
2. 13	List of related projects/initiatives contributing to project objectives approved/started after project approval (i.e. any leveraged or “catalytic” results)
3. 14	Data on relevant project website activity – e.g. number of unique visitors per month, number of page views, etc. over relevant time period, if available
4. 15	UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD)
5. 16	List/map of project sites
6. 17	List and contact details for project staff, key project stakeholders, including Project Board members, RTA, Project Team members, and other partners to be consulted
7. 18	Project deliverables that provide documentary evidence of achievement towards project outcomes
8. 19	Additional documents, as required

ToR Annex C: Content of the FE report

- i. Title page
 - Title of UNDP
 - UNDP PIMS ID
 - FE timeframe and date of final FE report
 - Region and countries included in the project
 - GEF Focal Area/Strategic Program
 - Executing Agency, Implementing partner and other project partners
 - FE Team members
 - ii. Acknowledgements
 - iii. Table of Contents
 - iv. Acronyms and Abbreviations
 1. Executive Summary (3-4 pages)
 - Project Information Table
 - Project Description (brief)
 - Evaluation Ratings Table
 - Concise summary of findings, conclusions and lessons learned
 - Recommendations summary table
 2. Introduction (2-3 pages)
 - Purpose and objective of the FE
 - Scope
 - Methodology
 - Data Collection & Analysis
 - Ethics
 - Limitations to the evaluation
 - Structure of the FE report
 3. Project Description (3-5 pages)
 - Project start and duration, including milestones
 - Development context: environmental, socio-economic, institutional, and policy factors relevant to the project objective and scope
 - Problems that the project sought to address, threats and barriers targeted
 - Immediate and development objectives of the project
 - Expected results
 - Main stakeholders: summary list
 - Theory of Change
 4. Findings
39. (in addition to a descriptive assessment, all criteria marked with (*) must be given a rating⁷¹)
- 4.1 Project Design/Formulation
 - Analysis of Results Framework: project logic and strategy, indicators
 - Assumptions and Risks
 - Lessons from other relevant projects (e.g. same focal area) incorporated into project design
 - Planned stakeholder participation
 - Linkages between project and other interventions within the sector
 - 4.1 Project Implementation
 - Adaptive management (changes to the project design and project outputs during implementation)
 - Actual stakeholder participation and partnership arrangements
 - Project Finance and Co-finance

⁷¹ See ToR Annex F for rating scales.

- Monitoring & Evaluation: design at entry (*), implementation (*), and overall assessment of M&E (*)
- UNDP implementation/oversight (*) and Implementing Partner execution (*), overall project implementation/execution (*), coordination, and operational issues
- Risk Management, including Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

4.2 Project Results and Impacts

- Progress towards objective and expected outcomes (*)
- Relevance (*)
- Effectiveness (*)
- Efficiency (*)
- Overall Outcome (*)
- Sustainability: financial (*), socio-economic (*), institutional framework and governance (*), environmental (*), and overall likelihood (*)
- Country ownership
- Gender equality and women's empowerment
- Cross-cutting Issues
- GEF Additionality
- Catalytic/Replication Effect
- Progress to Impact

5. Main Findings, Conclusions, Recommendations & Lessons

- Main Findings
- Conclusions
- Recommendations
- Lessons Learned

6. Annexes

- FE ToR (excluding ToR annexes)
- FE Mission itinerary, including summary of field visits
- List of persons interviewed
- List of documents reviewed
- Evaluation Question Matrix (evaluation criteria with key questions, indicators, sources of data, and methodology)
- Questionnaire used and summary of results
- Co-financing tables (if not include in body of report)
- FE Rating scales
- Signed Evaluation Consultant Agreement form
- Signed UNEG Code of Conduct form
- Signed FE Report Clearance form
- *Annexed in a separate file:* FE Audit Trail

ToR Annex D: Evaluation Criteria Matrix template

Evaluative Criteria Questions	Indicators	Sources	Methodology
Relevance: How does the project relate to the environment and development priorities a the local, regional and national level?			
<i>(include evaluative questions)</i>	<i>(i.e. relationships established, level of coherence between project design and implementation approach, specific activities conducted, quality of risk mitigation strategies, etc.)</i>	<i>(i.e. project documentation, national policies or strategies, websites, project staff, project partners, data collected throughout the FE mission, etc.)</i>	<i>(i.e. document analysis, data analysis, interviews with project staff, interviews with stakeholders, etc.)</i>
Effectiveness: To what extent have the expected outcomes and objectives of the project been achieved?			
Efficiency: Was the project implemented efficiently, in line with international and national norms and standards?			
Sustainability: To what extent are there financial, institutional, socio-political, and/or environmental risks to sustaining long-term project results?			
Gender equality and women's empowerment: How did the project contribute to gender equality and women's empowerment?			
Impact: Are there indications that the project has contributed to, or enabled progress toward reduced environmental stress and/or improved ecological status?			
<i>(Expand the table to include questions for all criteria being assessed: Monitoring & Evaluation, UNDP oversight/implementation, Implementing Partner Execution, cross-cutting issues, etc.)</i>			

ToR Annex E: UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluators

Independence entails the ability to evaluate without undue influence or pressure by any party (including the hiring unit) and providing evaluators with free access to information on the evaluation subject. Independence provides legitimacy to and ensures an objective perspective on evaluations. An independent evaluation reduces the potential for conflicts of interest which might arise with self-reported ratings by those involved in the management of the project being evaluated. Independence is one of ten general principles for evaluations (together with internationally agreed principles, goals and targets: utility, credibility, impartiality, ethics, transparency, human rights and gender equality, national evaluation capacities, and professionalism).

Evaluators/Consultants:

1. Must present information that is complete and fair in its assessment of strengths and weaknesses so that decisions or actions taken are well founded.
2. Must disclose the full set of evaluation findings along with information on their limitations and have this accessible to all affected by the evaluation with expressed legal rights to receive results.
3. Should protect the anonymity and confidentiality of individual informants. They should provide maximum notice, minimize demands on time, and respect people’s right not to engage. Evaluators must respect people’s right to provide information in confidence, and must ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source. Evaluators are not expected to evaluate individuals, and must balance an evaluation of management functions with this general principle.
4. Sometimes uncover evidence of wrongdoing while conducting evaluations. Such cases must be reported discreetly to the appropriate investigative body. Evaluators should consult with other relevant oversight entities when there is any doubt about if and how issues should be reported.
5. Should be sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs and act with integrity and honesty in their relations with all stakeholders. In line with the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, evaluators must be sensitive to and address issues of discrimination and gender equality. They should avoid offending the dignity and self-respect of those persons with whom they come in contact in the course of the evaluation. Knowing that evaluation might negatively affect the interests of some stakeholders, evaluators should conduct the evaluation and communicate its purpose and results in a way that clearly respects the stakeholders’ dignity and self-worth.
6. Are responsible for their performance and their product(s). They are responsible for the clear, accurate and fair written and/or oral presentation of study imitations, findings and recommendations.
7. Should reflect sound accounting procedures and be prudent in using the resources of the evaluation.
8. Must ensure that independence of judgement is maintained, and that evaluation findings and recommendations are independently presented.
9. Must confirm that they have not been involved in designing, executing or advising on the project being evaluated and did not carry out the project’s Mid-Term Review.

Evaluation Consultant Agreement Form

Agreement to abide by the Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System:

Name of Evaluator: _____

Name of Consultancy Organization (where relevant): _____

I confirm that I have received and understood and will abide by the United Nations Code of Conduct for Evaluation.

Signed at _____ (Place) on _____ (Date)

Signature: _____

ToR Annex F: FE Rating Scales

Ratings for Outcomes, Effectiveness, Efficiency, M&E, Implementation/Oversight, Execution, Relevance	Sustainability ratings:
<p>6 = Highly Satisfactory (HS): exceeds expectations and/or no shortcomings</p> <p>5 = Satisfactory (S): meets expectations and/or no or minor shortcomings</p> <p>4 = Moderately Satisfactory (MS): more or less meets expectations and/or some shortcomings</p> <p>3 = Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU): somewhat below expectations and/or significant shortcomings</p> <p>2 = Unsatisfactory (U): substantially below expectations and/or major shortcomings</p> <p>1 = Highly Unsatisfactory (HU): severe shortcomings</p> <p>Unable to Assess (U/A): available information does not allow an assessment</p>	<p>4 = Likely (L): negligible risks to sustainability</p> <p>3 = Moderately Likely (ML): moderate risks to sustainability</p> <p>2 = Moderately Unlikely (MU): significant risks to sustainability</p> <p>1 = Unlikely (U): severe risks to sustainability</p> <p>Unable to Assess (U/A): Unable to assess the expected incidence and magnitude of risks to sustainability</p>

ToR Annex G: FE Report Clearance Form

Terminal Evaluation Report for (Project Title & UNDP PIMS ID) Reviewed and Cleared By:	
Commissioning Unit (UNDP DRR)	
Name: _____	Anas Fayyad Qarman
Signature: _____	Date: 09-Dec-2025
<small>DocuSigned by: Anas Fayyad Qarman 8C21B6E712D34C9...</small>	

ToR Annex H: FE Audit Trail

The following is a template for the FE Team to show how the received comments on the draft FE report have (or have not) been incorporated into the final FE report. This Audit Trail should be listed as an annex in the final FE report but not attached to the report file.

To the comments received on _____ from the Final Evaluation of “ Strengthening the Rule of Law and Human Rights protection in Uzbekistan” project

The following comments were provided to the draft FE report; they are referenced by institution/organization (do not include the commentator’s name) and track change comment number (“#” column):

Institution/ Organization	#	Para No./ comment location	Comment/Feedback on the draft FE report	FE team response and actions taken

ANNEX III. RESULT FRAMEWORK

Annex 2: Results and resources framework

<p>Intended Outcome as stated in the UNDAF/Country [or Global/Regional] Programme Results and Resource Framework: Strategic Priority A (Effective governance and justice for all) of the Outcome 1 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for 2021-2025 that aims 'By 2025, all people and groups in Uzbekistan, especially the most vulnerable, demand and benefit from enhanced accountable, transparent, inclusive and gender-responsive governance systems and the rule of law institutions for a life free from discrimination and violence.'</p> <p>Outcome indicators as stated in the Country Programme [or Global/Regional] Results and Resources Framework, including baseline and targets: Outcome 1 ('Institutions are able to respond to the needs and rights of citizens') and Outcome 2 ('Empowered people who are better able to claim and defend their rights') of the Priority Area 1 of the Programme for Development Cooperation of Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2021-2024 Output 1.1 of the UNDP Country program document for Uzbekistan (CPD 2021-2025) 'Institutions equipped with effective anti-corruption tools, enabled to expand access to justice and enhance social cohesion'</p> <p>Applicable Output(s) from the UNDP Strategic Plan: Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development; outcome of the UNDP Strategic Plan for Uzbekistan for 2018-2021 Project title and Atlas Project Number: 'Strengthening the rule of law and human rights protection in Uzbekistan' Project ID: Q0128319 Quantum ID: Q0122342</p>

EXPECTED OUTCOMES	EXPECTED OUTPUTS	DATA SOURCE	Baseline		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)			Data Collection Methods
			Value	Year 2022	Year 2023	Year 2024	Final	
Outcome 1. Legal and institutional foundations for provision of primary and secondary free legal aid are reestablished in line with human rights standards	Output 1.1. Free Legal Aid System is established and increasingly sustained by the Ministry of Justice	Concept of development of justice institutions during 2020-2021; Rule of Law Index 2022; UPR 2018 Concluding Observations of CEDAW Committee 2020; Respective Laws and Presidents' Government's decisions in the area	1.1.1 Absence of legislative document/by-laws regulating free legal aid	1.1.1 a. 3 legislative document/by-laws regulating free legal aid prepared	1.1.1 a. 3 legislative document/by-laws regulating free legal aid prepared	1.1.1 a. 3 legislative document/by-laws regulating free legal aid prepared	1.1.1. # of legislative documents/by-laws regulating FLA	Annual Ministry of justice reports
			1.1.2 Low score of Uzbekistan in 'accessibility of civil justice' sub-factor in the region	1.1.2 a. 100 people receiving primary legal aid 1.1.2 b. 100 people receiving secondary legal aid 1.1.2 c. 150 of unique accesses to the interactive map of free legal aid providers	1.1.2 a. 100 people receiving primary legal aid 1.1.2.b. 100 people receiving secondary legal aid 1.1.2.c. 150 of unique accesses to the interactive map of free legal aid providers	1.1.2 a. 100 people receiving primary legal aid 1.1.2.b. 100 people receiving secondary legal aid 1.1.2.c. 150 of unique accesses to the interactive map of free legal aid providers	1.1.2 a. # of population receiving: a) Primary legal aid 1.1.2.b. # of population receiving: b) Secondary legal aid 1.1.2.c. # of unique accesses to the interactive map of free legal aid providers	Annual Ministry of justice reports
			1.1.3 NGO MADAD is the only financed CSO providing primary FLA	1.1.3 5 of primary and secondary FLA providers financially supported via small grants programme	1.1.3 5 of primary and secondary FLA providers financially supported via small grants programme	1.1.3 5 of primary and secondary FLA providers financially supported via small grants programme	1.1.3 # of primary and secondary FLA providers financially supported via small grants programme	Annual Ministry of justice reports
	Output 1.2. Free legal aid providers are better equipped to deliver	1.2.1. No FLA Centers are present.	1.2.1. 5 Free Legal Aid (FLA) centers set up and technically equipped to support FLA providers	1.2.1. 5 Free Legal Aid (FLA) centers set up and technically equipped to support FLA providers	1.2.1. 5 Free Legal Aid (FLA) centers set up and technically equipped to support FLA providers	1.2.1. # of Free Legal Aid (FLA) centers set up and technically equipped to	Annual Ministry of justice reports	

ANNEX IV. EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation Question	Indicators or judgment criteria	Data collection method(s) and triangulation	Sources of information
Relevance			
<p>EQ1: To what extent was the project aligned with national development priorities, the UNDP Country Programme, the SDGs, and the needs of vulnerable groups?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of alignment with national strategies, policies, and legal frameworks. • Evidence of alignment with the specific rights, needs and priorities of different rights-holders including PwDs, survivors of domestic violence, gender-based violence. • Extent to which the project was aligned with national strategies, UNDP CPD, SDGs, and addressed the needs of vulnerable groups • Extent to which the project design was informed by stakeholder consultations and lessons learned from prior initiatives. • Extent to which does the project contribute to the theory of change for the relevant country programme outcome • Evidence of lessons learned from other relevant projects considered in the project's design • Relevance of design and gender equality and the gender marker assigned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents and literature review - Semi-structured Interviews (Individual and small group). - Consultation records, use of prior evaluations or project experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project documents, CPD, national policies, interviews, ROAR, Gender Equality Strategy of UNDP - Design documents, meeting notes
Effectiveness			
<p>EQ2: To what extent were the project's outputs achieved, and how did they contribute to the intended outcomes? What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which planned outputs were delivered and contributed to outcome-level change. • Output delivery rates, beneficiary uptake, policy influence. • Extent has the UNDP partnership strategy been appropriate and effective? • Extent to which the project been appropriately responsive to the needs of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online survey - Face-to-Face and remote interviews - Information collected from training evaluations, - Legal aid lawyers' interviews, - Project site observations, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Progress reports, monitoring data. - Pre, post, and follow-up training evaluations (based on pre-, post evaluations) and key informants' interviews to track whether capacity-building intervention and new approaches

Evaluation Question	Indicators or judgment criteria	Data collection method(s) and triangulation	Sources of information
	the national constituents, female and male beneficiaries and changing partner priorities.	- Key informant interviews, focus groups, case studies.	introduced enable providers to serve rights holders with those new capacities.
EQ3: To what extent did the project engage stakeholders effectively and adopt participatory implementation approaches?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which stakeholder participation was inclusive and contributed to implementation quality. • Engagement strategies, gender/disability participation stats. • Effectiveness of the project’s strategy to involve women, marginalized, disadvantaged and poor in the realisation of its activities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KIIs, FGDs - Face-to-Face and remote interviews - Information collected from training evaluations, - Legal aid lawyers’ interviews, - Project site observations, - Key informant interviews, focus groups, case studies 	- Progress reports, monitoring data.
Efficiency			
EQ4: To what extent did the project use financial, human, and time resources efficiently to deliver results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of project milestones achieved within the planned timeline. • Percentage of the budget utilized as planned. • Participant satisfaction rate with training programs. • Frequency and quality of coordination meetings among project partners. • Number of initiatives conducted jointly with partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project timeline records and reports. - Information collected from training evaluation reports, - Project site observations, key informant interviews, focus groups, case studies. - Face-to-Face and remote interviews - Focus group discussion. 	- Financial statements, HR data, Progress reports, monitoring data.
EQ5: To what extent did project management, implementation arrangements, and M&E systems contribute to operational efficiency?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which management structures and M&E systems enabled timely decision-making and adaptive management • Extent to which gender equality and the empowerment of women have been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online survey - Face-to-Face and remote interviews - Information collected from training evaluations, legal aid lawyers, project site observations, key informant 	- Meeting records, M&E products, management responses

Evaluation Question	Indicators or judgment criteria	Data collection method(s) and triangulation	Sources of information
		interviews, focus groups.	
Impact			
EQ6: What tangible changes did the project bring to the lives of the beneficiaries?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which project interventions led to perceived and measurable benefits among target groups (vulnerable, underrepresented, rural women, women/men with disabilities, youth) was improved. • Beneficiary perceptions, behaviour change, economic impact, sample of systemic problems solved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FGDs, survey, case studies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FGDs, KIIs, document review
EQ7: To what extent has the project contributed to gender equality and the empowerment of women?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the project promoted gender-responsive results and mitigated unintended effects on women and men. • Gender-disaggregated outcomes, stories of change, emerging risks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk analysis, funding prospects, policy alignment - KIIs, FGDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project risk registers, partner interviews. - Monitoring data, stakeholder interviews.
Sustainability			
EQ8: To what extent are the project's results likely to be sustained beyond its duration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which financial, political, and institutional conditions support sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online survey - Face-to-Face and remote interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - KIIs, document review
EQ9: To what extent is there ownership and commitment among stakeholders to sustain the benefits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which key stakeholders demonstrate ownership and integrate project results in their systems • Government or partner uptake, local resource allocation • Extent to which exit strategies and knowledge sharing mechanisms were developed and implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholder interviews, government reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exit plans, documentation of lessons, handover reports
Cross-cutting issues			
EQ10: To what extent did the project adopt a human rights-based approach?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which the HRBA principles of participation, accountability, non-discrimination, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Face-to-Face and remote interviews - Project progress report - CSOs reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project design and monitoring frameworks, Document review, KIIs

Evaluation Question	Indicators or judgment criteria	Data collection method(s) and triangulation	Sources of information
	transparency were integrated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of survivors benefited from the legal aid disaggregated by gender and vulnerabilities. Number of human rights and gender advocacy CSOs involved in project development and implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback surveys, interviews. 	
EQ11: To what extent did the project address gender equality and women’s empowerment in its design, implementation and outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extent to which gender was mainstreamed across the project cycle Use of gender marker, gender-disaggregated results, staffing parity Extent to which the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review, KIIs, FGDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project docs, HR records, M&E data
EQ12: To what extent did the project meaningfully consult and benefit persons with disabilities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of PWDs in consultations and activities, accessibility measures adopted Availability of results within these vulnerable groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review, KIIs, FGDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project docs, HR records, M&E data

ANNEX V. EVALUATION TOOLS: QUESTIONNAIRES AND INTERVIEW GUIDES

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDES BY STAKEHOLDER GROUP

Before each interview, the interviewer to select maximum of 7-8 priority questions for each individual interviewee, depending on an understanding of the latter's role and functional expertise.

The UNDP is in the process of conducting a Final Independent Project Evaluation of Strengthening Rule Of Law And Human Rights Protection In Uzbekistan project. The evaluation is undertaken in line with UNDP and UNEG norms and standards for evaluation.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the extent to which planned achievements of the Project were met in an inclusive way and to determine its overall added value to advancing human rights and access to justice in Uzbekistan, with a particular focus on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, as well as to draw lessons that can both improve the sustainability of benefits from this project and aid in the overall enhancement of UNDP programming.

The evaluation is carried out by a external independent evaluator Ms. Bunafsha Gulakova (Austria).

Confidentiality and informed consent: This interview is confidential, with all information received being aggregated and anonymised. No individual will be quoted nor will the organization they represent be identified. The data collected will only be used for evaluation purposes. Your participation in the interview is voluntary and you may withdraw from it at any moment.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PROJECT STAFF:

1. What have been the most significant result(s)/outcome(s) achieved, and what evidence can you cite that the achievement was due to projects intervention?
 2. What specific contributions made by the project in building policy and regulatory framework, and to what extent are these being implemented?
 3. How are gender markers used in planning, monitoring and reporting of programme outputs and outcomes? What are the challenges in application of the markers?
 4. How is theory of change used in project implementation and monitoring? Do the teams revisit the theory of change during implementation? If so when and how often?
 5. What type of disaggregated (gender/disability) data is produced in the projects? What are the challenges in this?
 6. Is there a system in place for generating lessons learnt and good practices? Are lessons learned and good practices generated in one part of the organisation disseminated to other functional teams? If so, can you give examples?
 7. How do you know if the project/programme you are delivering is efficiently delivered - at the right cost, right quality and right time?
 8. Has implementation across the project generally been on time and on budget? If there were challenges, how were those addressed?
 9. What specific interventions did project undertake to ensure that the implementing partner can sustain the activities at the end of project's funding?
 10. Which of the key activities/interventions/outcomes will be continued even when funding by project stops, and what factors made this possible?
-

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES (RECIPIENTS):

(Interviewer: at the start, provide brief introduction about the aim of the evaluation, ethics and how data will be used, outline confidentiality protocol, obtain permission to take notes, agree time needed for the interview – about 50-60 minutes; introducing each other. While introducing the evaluation, stress that this is an evaluation of UNDP project and partnership, not of the partner itself. Before each interview, the interviewer to select a maximum of 7-8 priority questions for each individual interview with some individuals, the evaluation team may need to negotiate more than one session, depending on an understanding of the latter's role and functional expertise.

1. What have been the most significant result(s)/outcome(s) achieved supported by project, and what evidence can you cite that the achievement was due to project's intervention?
2. What were the key issues around the institutional capacity of your organisation? What have/has changed since then, and what has been project's specific contributions in bringing about these changes?
3. How do you know if the project was efficiently delivered - at the right cost, right quality and right time?
4. Has implementation of the project(s) been on time and on budget? Were there any challenges? If so, how were those addressed?
5. What specific interventions UNDP support you with in order to ensure that you can sustain the activities at the end of project's funding?
6. Which of the key activities/interventions/outcomes will be continued even when funding by donor stops?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR DONORS:

(Interviewer: at the start, provide brief introduction about the aim of the evaluation, ethics and how data will be used, outline confidentiality protocol, obtain permission to take notes, agree time needed for the interview – about 50-60 minutes; introducing each other).

Before jumping to the questions, start with a getting an intro into the donor's priorities in the country, major initiatives it is involved in and its engagement, if any, with UNDP. Select 5-6 appropriate questions from the list of questions targeted at project staff and adapt these.

1. What is the status of donor coordination in the fields of the project?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR CSOS:

1. To what extent did the project address the specific rights and needs of children, especially girls and young women?
2. To what extent is the project achieved its intended objectives?
3. What do you perceive to be the most important results and why? Examples: Improved government strategies, policies, and mechanisms related to cTIP investigation nationally and cross-border.
4. What are the internal and external factors that have facilitated and/or impeded the achievement of the project's results?
5. To what extent are the project benefits likely to continue after the project completion? What could be the limiting factors for sustainability?
6. How satisfied are you with the project's efforts on human rights, especially children's rights, inclusion, and gender-related efforts?
7. What lessons and good practices can be learned from the project implementation to improve performance, results, and effectiveness in the future?
8. Did the project support CSOs capacity and collaboration with the justice systems? Please explain.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR DIRECT BENEFICIARIES:

1. How well did the project address your specific needs and rights?
2. Can you describe any particular services or support that were especially helpful to you?
3. How accessible were the support services provided by the project, including pro bono legal consultation and representation at the court?

4. Were there any barriers you faced in accessing these services? If so, please describe them.
5. In what ways did the project help you recover and rebuild your life?

ONLINE SURVEY/QUESTIONNAIRE (to be designed jointly with the project team)

FOCUS GROUP GUIDES AND ARRANGEMENTS

Stakeholder group	Number of participants	Facilitator	Note taker	Expected duration and modality
Pro bono lawyers	5-10	Evaluator		60 minutes
CSOs	5-9	Evaluator		60 minutes
Ombudsperson’s office	4	Evaluator		60 minutes

Guide for the Focus group discussions (including introduction, consent, questions and finalization note):
Text

Confidentiality and informed consent: Your participation in this focus group is confidential, with all information received being aggregated and anonymized. No individual will be quoted nor will the organization they represent be identified. The data collected will only be used for evaluation purposes. Your participation in the focus group is voluntary and you may withdraw from it at any moment.

CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING GENDER RESPONSIVENESS OF THE PROJECT ⁷²

Assessment, analysis and design	Involvement of someone with gender expertise in program design
	Situational analysis undertaken of key social, legal, economic, practical and normative barriers impacting on women and girls' access to justice
	Identification of targeted groups: Who is most at risk of being left behind amongst women and girls?
Preventing sexual exploitation and abuse	Assess if sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)/sexual harassment (SH)/GBV screening is factored into all recruitment and procurement processes, and that partners are also made aware of and are compliant with SEA prevention policies.
Mainstreaming GBV in non-GBV specific programs	Assess if GBV tools are mainstreamed into programs not directly addressing GBV , including by ensuring GBV context is well understood in planning phase , referral pathways are mapped and updated, include GBV indicators in M&E; engage people working in community to gauge approach to GBV including men and gatekeepers in the community; incorporate GBV information and other GBV prevention activities into other community awareness efforts, have protocols in place and trained staff if GBV cases arise and monitor incidents using a simple confidential tracking system to document events staff hear about and observe; include single-sex safe spaces for critical reflection/sharing.
Theory of change	Analysis and program response to the known physical, economic, knowledge/awareness, normative, access barriers for women and girls. How program expects to achieve transformational change, increase meaningful participation, representation, empowerment, knowledge, awareness, use of justice mechanism

⁷² Adapted from Evaluating the Gender Responsiveness of Access to Justice Programs: A Brief Guide. UNDP

Gendered data capture across programs	*Capacity to consistently and reliably capture disaggregated age/sex/other relevant gender diversities data across all programming activities
Gendered indicators	Indicators to meaningfully measure responsiveness to women/girls in Dedicated programming and mainstreaming responsiveness to women/girls, both. Quantitative (participation/representation of women and girls) Qualitative indicators of change sought, including measures of women and girls' influence or power within processes, not just their numbers.
Gendered budgeting	Evidence of budget targets for share of resources committed to programs targeting women & girls and most-at-risk groups and also *Share of expenditure used for female beneficiaries across all program activities (based on sex disaggregated data)
Program Implementation and Monitoring Phases	
Monitoring and adapting to achieve most effective approach	Program response to the known physical, economic, knowledge/awareness, normative, access barriers for women and girls
Do no harm risks monitored and adaptations made as needed	Has implementation of all activities taken into account 'do no harm' mitigation strategies for participation of women and girls? Such as steps to reduce personal security risks of women travelling to participate in program activities, ways to respect confidentiality, ways to reduce risk that participation, if becomes known, could trigger further violence, avoiding pressures into negative coping mechanisms, avoiding legal risks
Physical and practical barriers	Strategies used by program to address practical access barriers for women and girls to access relevant justice processes such as distance, cost, time, convenience, covering carer responsibilities Assess accessibility of services for women and girls with disabilities, both physical and mental impairments or disabilities.
Knowledge, awareness and informational barriers	Assess strategies to provide specialised outreach, engagement and legal information in formats/media/places most accessible to women and girls, with greatest inclusion and geographic coverage, including hard-to-reach, remote and vulnerable groups. Consider use of multiple channels (such as TV, radio, SM, internet if available) and formats accessible to women/girls with disabilities, such as text captioning or signed videos for hearing impaired, simple language documents. Consider use of female-only spaces and targeted materials (based on piloted testing of materials with targeted female populations) and coordinating with relevant actors like health services, midwives, women's rights NGOs to maximise coverage and coordination.
Normative barriers	Strategies to improve pathways/escalation options for women and girls navigating between state justice systems and customary/community justice systems , addressing gate keepers, family/community pressures, involving courts in messaging clear escalation pathways especially for cases involving family and sexual violence. Men's behavioural change programs Community awareness programs regarding harm of family violence, sexual violence
Lack of available/specialised legal assistance	Strategies to increase proportion of legal aid spent on women/girls legal needs, specialised services , female lawyers, paralegals, community legal advocates, duty lawyers, self help guides, linkages to women's organisations, specialised/female police.

<p>Lack of available/specialised policing and support services</p>	<p>Strategies to increase availability and quality of specialised support services for women and girls including those at risk of violence, homelessness, lacking social protection</p>
<p>Female representation and empowerment as decision makers, service providers, service users</p>	<p>Strategies to increase the participation and empowerment of women across state and community-based justice processes, as decision makers, advocates, law enforcement, service providers (social protection, housing, health, etc) and as service users. Looking not only at participation of women measured by their numbers but their meaningful participation, also measuring their power and influence within male-dominated settings.</p>

UNDP DOCUMENTS

Strengthening the Rule of Law and Human Rights Protection in Uzbekistan. Project document Annex A – Logic Model Template
Report by Activity for Project 00122342 (2023) (Combined Delivery Report, United Nations Development Programme)
Report by Activity for Project 00122342 (2024) (Combined Delivery Report, United Nations Development Programme)
Report by Activity for Project 00122342, Q2 (2025) (Combined Delivery Report, Quarter 2, United Nations Development Programme)
Final report on 2024 Low-Value Grant (LVG) recipients (2024)
Interim report on 2024 Low-Value Grant (LVG) recipients (2024)
Sherzodbek Sharipov, Monitoring report Fergana Valley, 3–4 June 2025 (2025)
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ANNEX VII: STAKEHOLDERS CONTACTED DURING

Type	Organization	Name	Designation	Location	Email/Phone
UN agency	UNDP	Mirfozil Khasanov	Project Manager (Acting)	Tashkent	mirfozil.khasanov@undp.org
UN agency	UNDP	Nozima Shamsieva	Project Analyst on Human Rights and Access to Justice	Tashkent	nozima.shamsieva@undp.org
UN agency	UNDP	Mokhichekhra Nurmuratova	Administrative Finance Associate	Tashkent	mokhichekhra.nurmuratova@undp.org
UN agency	UNDP	Sherzodbek Sharipov	Programme Analyst on Effective and Inclusive Institutions and Service Delivery for All	Tashkent	Sherzodbek.sharipov@undp.org
UN agency	UNDP	Azamat Salaev	Project Manager (former)	Tashkent	Azamat.salaev@undp.org
	OHCHR	Omer Fisher	Programme Officer	Tashkent	
Donor	MFA Finland	Maiju Palosaari	Unit for Russia and Central Asia Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland	Finland	Maiju.Palosaari@gov.fi
Key partner	Ministry of Justice	Fazliddin Zaripov	Ministry of Justice	Tashkent	fazliddinzaripov6500@gmail.com 998909816500
Key partner	Ombuds person	Jasur Islamov	Ombudsperson's office	Tashkent	jasurislamov84@umail.uz 998977102156
Key partner	CSO	Khurshida Ibragimova	NGO Mehrjon	Fergana	998943972236
Key partner	CSO	Jamshid Fayziev	NGO Madad	Tashkent	998977427781
Key partner	CSO	Bibisora Oripova	NGO Rahmdillik	Samarkand	998903702900, 998915390846
Key partner	CSO	Shirin Rashidova	NGO Nihol	Tashkent	998909256146
Key partner	CSO	Nodira Alimova	NGO Qalb Nuri	Jizzakh	998991661899
Key partner	CSO	Dilmurod Yusupov	NGO Sharoit Plyus	Tashkent	998901156567
Key partner	CSO	Malika Allashova,	Director , Public organization "Yuksak Salohiyat"	Karakalpakstan	
Key partner	CSO	Saodat Tursunbaeva,	Director , International Women's Public Fund "Sharq ayoli"		
Key partner	CSO	Salomat Erjanova,	Director, Khorezm branch of Civic Initiatives Support Center	Khorezm	
Stakeholder	CSO	Gulnoz Mamarasulova	Swedish Central Asian Association	Tashkent	

ANNEX VIII. PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION



ANNEX 1: PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION



By signing this pledge, I hereby commit to discussing and applying the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and to adopting the associated ethical behaviours.



INTEGRITY

I will actively adhere to the moral values and professional standards of evaluation practice as outlined in the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and following the values of the United Nations. Specifically, I will be:

- **Honest and truthful** in my communication and actions.
- **Professional**, engaging in credible and trustworthy behaviour, alongside competence, commitment and ongoing reflective practice.
- **Independent, impartial and incorruptible**.



ACCOUNTABILITY

I will be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken and responsible for honouring commitments, without qualification or exception; I will report potential or actual harms observed. Specifically, I will be:

- **Transparent regarding evaluation** purpose and actions taken, establishing trust and increasing accountability for performance to the public, particularly those populations affected by the evaluation.
- **Responsive** as questions or events arise, adapting plans as required and referring to appropriate channels where corruption, fraud, sexual exploitation or abuse or other misconduct or waste of resources is identified.
- **Responsible** for meeting the evaluation purpose and for actions taken and for ensuring redress and recognition as needed.



RESPECT

I will engage with all stakeholders of an evaluation in a way that honours their dignity, well-being, personal agency and characteristics. Specifically, I will ensure:

- **Access** to the evaluation process and products by all relevant stakeholders – whether powerless or powerful – with due attention to factors that could impede access such as sex, gender, race, language, country of origin, LGBTQ status, age, background, religion, ethnicity and ability.
- **Meaningful participation and equitable treatment** of all relevant stakeholders in the evaluation processes, from design to dissemination. This includes engaging various stakeholders, particularly affected people, so they can actively inform the evaluation approach and products rather than being solely a subject of data collection.
- **Fair representation** of different voices and perspectives in evaluation products (reports, webinars, etc.).



BENEFICENCE

I will strive to do good for people and planet while minimizing harm arising from evaluation as an intervention. Specifically, I will ensure:

- **Explicit and ongoing consideration** of risks and benefits from evaluation processes.
- **Maximum benefits** at systemic (including environmental), organizational and programmatic levels.
- **No harm**. I will not proceed where harm cannot be mitigated.
- **Evaluation makes an overall positive contribution** to human and natural systems and the mission of the United Nations.

I commit to playing my part in ensuring that evaluations are conducted according to the Charter of the United Nations and the ethical requirements laid down above and contained within the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. When this is not possible, I will report the situation to my supervisor, designated focal points or channels and will actively seek an appropriate response.

Bunafeka A. Gulakova

24.11.2024

(Signature and Date)