

# Progress Report

**Name of the country:** Uzbekistan  
**Project number (Atlas):** 00083372  
**Project name:** Social Innovation and Volunteerism in Uzbekistan

**DGTFE edition (year):** 2012  
**Implementation period:** 07/2012 – 12/2014

## PROJECT PERFORMANCE

Activity	Results	Impact	Comments
1. Conducted launch of the project with the national song concert on television	Development of the young generation. Award ceremony for the winners took place on television in Uzbekistan. TV on 20.12.2012	11-12-2012	
2. American signed with the Venice University of Business and Economics. The course "Social Entrepreneurship" has been added as the first course in social entrepreneurship in Europe and has been owned by the university since 1 November	Teaching Award. The output of the first project with UNDP/UN Women Innovation and Volunteerism project and Venice University engagement of 4 graduate students for the development and organizing of a social innovation technology targeted at youth in Uzbekistan. This will be followed by the working with local youth on social innovation in Feb 2013	11-12-2012	
3. As part of civic education in organized national debate tournament "Dialogue among the youth aged 15-25" together with Youth NGO Forum (Nov) Ministry of Rights and Social Education and Center for Political Studies	4 Facilitated and supported level of 4 young leaders to participate in the International Debate Academy in Slovenia	11-12-2012	
4. Facilitated and supported level of 4 young leaders to participate in the International Debate Academy in Slovenia	5. Facilitated fully funded 14 resource center for the youth in the National Library participated in the IREX week of the	11-12-2012	
5. Facilitated fully funded 14 resource center for the youth in the National Library participated in the IREX week of the	6. Facilitated fully funded 14 resource center for the youth in the National Library participated in the IREX week of the	11-12-2012	
6. Facilitated fully funded 14 resource center for the youth in the National Library participated in the IREX week of the	7. Facilitated fully funded 14 resource center for the youth in the National Library participated in the IREX week of the	11-12-2012	
7. Facilitated fully funded 14 resource center for the youth in the National Library participated in the IREX week of the	8. Facilitated fully funded 14 resource center for the youth in the National Library participated in the IREX week of the	11-12-2012	
8. Facilitated fully funded 14 resource center for the youth in the National Library participated in the IREX week of the	9. Facilitated fully funded 14 resource center for the youth in the National Library participated in the IREX week of the	11-12-2012	
9. Facilitated fully funded 14 resource center for the youth in the National Library participated in the IREX week of the	10. Facilitated fully funded 14 resource center for the youth in the National Library participated in the IREX week of the	11-12-2012	

Please state under which of the following nine outcome areas your project falls into:

1. Civil society including civil society organizations and voluntary associations, and the private sector contribute to the MDGs in support of national planning strategies and policies
2. National level processes and institutions strengthen national participation and professional electoral administration
3. Access to information policies support accountability and transparency
4. National, regional and local levels of governance expand their capacities to reduce conflict and manage the peaceful delivery of public services
5. Legislatures, regional elected bodies, and local assemblies have strengthened institutional capacity, ensuring their independent and constituent more effectively
6. Effective, responsive, accessible and fair justice systems promote the rule of law, including both formal and informal processes, with due consideration on the rights of the poor, women and vulnerable groups
7. Strengthened capacities of national human rights institutions
8. Strengthened national, regional and local level capacity to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment in government policies and institutions
8. Strengthened national, regional and local level capacity to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment in government policies and institutions

Outcome areas under UNDP strategic plan 2008-2011 <sup>1</sup>	Purpose and expected output	Activities undertaken	RESULTS ACHIEVED	Reasons if progress below target
<p><i>Civil society, including civil society organizations and voluntary associations, and the private sector contribute to the MDGs in support of national planning strategies and policies</i></p>	<p><i>The main goal of the project is to raise profile of the youth through empowerment of youth and promotion of community based volunteerism as the platform to forge collaboration, spotting talents, introducing social innovation tools for youth engagement.</i> <i>Output: Citizens, with particular focus on youth, are better informed about development challenges, volunteerism, policy</i></p>	<p>1. Combined launch of the project with the nation-wide song contest on Millennium Development Goals for young non-professionals. Award ceremony for the winners took place around celebration of International Youth Day 2012 <a href="http://europeandcis.undp.org/blog/2012/08/13/new-stars-songs-and-the-future-happy-international-youth-day/">http://europeandcis.undp.org/blog/2012/08/13/new-stars-songs-and-the-future-happy-international-youth-day/</a></p> <p>2. Agreement signed with the Vienna University of Business and Economics. The course "Social Entrepreneurship" has been offered as the first course on social entrepreneurship in Austria, and has been awarded by the university twice ("Innovative Teaching Award" and "excellence in Teaching Award"). The purpose of the joint project with UNDP/UNV "Social Innovation and Volunteerism" project and Vienna University is engagement of 4 graduate students for the development and prototyping of a social innovation methodology targeted at youth in Uzbekistan. This will be followed by the workshop with local youth on social innovation in Feb, 2013.</p> <p>3. As part of civic education co-organized national debates tournament "Dilemma" among the youth aged 18-25, together with Youth NGO Kelajak Ovozi, Ministry of Higher and Specialized Education and Center for Political Studies.</p> <p>4. Facilitated and supported travel of 4 young debaters to participate in the Tenth International Debates Academy in Slovenia.</p> <p>5. Established fully fledged UN resource center for the youth in the National Library, participated in the INFOLIB week of the</p>	<p>✓ Concept of Social Innovation Lab formulated jointly with the Vienna University for Business and Economics</p> <p>✓ Profile of the youth is raised through showcasing volunteerism as safe entry point</p> <p>✓ Civic engagement of youth increased through the contest on parliamentary development</p> <p>✓ Young people are engaged in the planning stage, implementation, monitoring (as part of user led innovation approach)</p> <p>✓ Critical thinking and informal and civic education skills of youth enhanced through debate tournament</p> <p>✓ Crucial partnerships launched with largest youth NGO "Kelajak Ovozi", National Library of Uzbekistan, Trade Union Federation and 2 significant partnerships (memorandums) forged</p> <p>✓ Understanding of volunteerism and MDGs among youth improved through the nation-wide song contest</p> <p>✓ Demand for volunteer services increased</p> <p>✓ Database of young volunteers is being</p>	<p>Staffing complications obstructed the Project from achieving better results.</p>

**<sup>1</sup> Please state under which of the following nine outcome areas your project falls into:**

1. Civil society, including civil society organizations and voluntary associations, and the private sector contribute to the MDGs in support of national planning strategies and policies
2. Electoral laws, processes and institutions strengthen inclusive participation and professional electoral administration
3. Access to information policies support accountability and transparency
4. National, regional and local levels of governance expand their capacities to reduce conflict and manage the equitable delivery of public services
5. Legislatures, regional elected bodies, and local assemblies have strengthened institutional capacity, enabling them to represent their constituents more effectively
6. Effective, responsive, accessible and fair justice systems promote the rule of law, including both formal and informal processes, with due consideration on the rights of the poor, women and vulnerable groups.
7. Strengthened capacities of national human rights institutions
8. Strengthened national, regional and local level capacity to mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment in government policies and institutions
9. Strengthened national, regional and local level capacity to implement anti-corruption initiatives

<p><i>making and empowered to better participate in decision-making</i></p>	<p>new National Library with the week of trainings, discussion clubs on different aspects of governance and sustainable development. In addition to lending traditional media materials, libraries are becoming community centers for creativity and innovation</p> <p>6. Organized celebration of International Day of People with Disabilities and International Volunteers Day by mixing groups of 50 volunteers and around 40 people with disabilities. Project focused on PwD (primarily in wheelchairs) who experience difficulties in attending social gatherings due to constraints of physical accessibility in the city and provided free transportation with ramps, organized whole-day interactive sessions, concert etc (blog link)</p> <p>7. Co-organized with the Legislative Chamber of Uzbekistan Parliament (Oliy Majlis) 6-month online contest among the youth titled as "Parliamentarism Connoisseur"</p> <p>8. Created a local database of volunteers based on their expertise and interests (platform to be used for creation of time bank in 2013).</p> <p>9. Based on song contest (item 1) selected youth champions/ambassadors that advocated in media on MDGs and role young people can play in achieving them.</p> <p>10. Tourism was used as safe entry point for promotion of otherwise controversial social media tools among the youth. Launch of the contest on regional tourism promotion ("Promote your town, district or village!") in social media for youth and by youth. 20 winners will receive free laptop and camera and participate in the series of trainings to enable them do storytelling, post blogs, real time reporting, share pictures online.</p> <p>11. Trainings and presentations on MDGs, social innovation, volunteerism, role of young people in development processes in Tashkent, Samarkand, Nukus.</p>	<p>populated continuously and lays the platform for "time bank" to be created in 2013</p> <p>✓ Exposure to the youth networks from Global North and South.</p>	
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**CUMULATIVE RESOURCES UTILIZED**

DGTTF resources: **\$42000**

Other resources (as applicable; please state sources of funding and amount): UNV - **\$8000**, TRAC - **\$70900**

**PROJECT PERFORMANCE—MAIN CHALLENGES**

Internal factors:

1. Understaffing of the project was the main challenge, though by December the problem was solved and full project team was on board.

2. Recently introduced methods of payment to Individual Contract holders (payment in national currency, in official rate, with 100% of payment transferred into plastic cards the use of which (they are the online type of cards), in addition to all, is very limited (i.e. very few vendors accept online plastic cards).

External factors:

1. In the aftermath of Arab Spring youth became rather sensitive area in Uzbekistan and proposal to negotiate the project on youth empowerment put Ministry for Foreign Affairs on alert. Therefore, well calculated risk was taken to implement DGTTF funded initiative through direct implementation (DIM). Topic of "Social innovation and volunteerism" was used as an entry points to engage with partners, such as National Library of Uzbekistan and Youth NGO "Kelajak Ovozi". In the absence of National Partner (due to the DIM modality of the Project) initial months of project implementation required some dodging and engagement with a wide array of government structures (which as a default require all the communication and correspondence to be made through Ministry of Foreign Affairs).
2. Lack of formal cooperation agreements with key project partners prevented from wider outreach and communication about the project and only limited number of media outlets and online communication tools were used to promote the project activities. Yet, around 50 media appearances on project activities took place in 2012. Overall issue of "space" to crafted for the youth was tackled through signing formal MoU between UNDP and national partners and from now on will provide endless opportunities for visibility.

### PROJECTS PERFORMANCE—MAIN OPPORTUNITIES

Please list the main opportunities which have been the key enabling factors to support the implementation of the project.

Firstly, social innovation is by nature experimental, cross cutting, collaborative and dispersed. Social innovators are comfortable working with uncertainty, without blueprints, roadmaps or clear-cut business plans. Most of the activities planned by the Project carry an innovative character and are perceived by most stakeholders – partner organizations, UNVs, community based volunteers – with a great enthusiasm and willingness to partner. It will then be the Project's job to maintain this on the adequate level in order to achieve its objectives successfully. Agreement has been reached with two major organizations to sign Memorandum of Understanding: "Kelajak Ovozi" Youth Initiatives Center, and National Library of Uzbekistan. Cooperation with Federation of Trade Unions of Uzbekistan on separate project initiatives as well as partnership with largest supermarket chain in Uzbekistan "Korzinka.uz" were also established that increased project's success.

Secondly, project is truly cross practice. Joining hands with other UNDP practices, projects in NIM modality and national partners, as well as UNFPA, UNICEF proved strategically efficient and safe approach.

Thirdly, the fact that UNDP is working on the first ever UNDP Global Youth Strategy (!) put more emphasis and bring pioneer spirit to the youth-centered project that is otherwise constantly overlooked as target audience.

### RATING ON PROGRESS on PARTNERSHIPS

Please describe the level to which the DGTTF project has contributed to strengthening partnership with different stakeholders and tick the boxes as appropriate:

	Unchanged	Strengthened Somewhat	Strengthened
1. Government		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
2. Donors		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
3. Civil society:			
a) Academia		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
b) Unions		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
c) Religious organizations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
d) NGO/CBOs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
4. Private sector		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
5. UN system			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. Other Int. organizations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

(like IMF, ADB, etc)			
7. Other (please specify)	Youth initiative groups	x	
Comments:			

## WAYS IN WHICH DGTTF FUNDED ACTIVITIES WERE CATALYTIC AND INNOVATIVE

Please indicate how DGTTF funds helped the CO advanced its agenda in Democratic Governance. How did DGTTF funds allow the CO to explore innovative approaches? Did other donors or the government provide additional funding as a result? Did the DGTTF funds allow UNDP to advance the dialogue or garner a leadership position?

In Uzbekistan, young people ("youth bulge") under 30s counts for 64% of the population. Earlier interventions in the area of youth engagement in Uzbekistan were scattered for the most part and lacked long-term vision and conceptual clarity to address youth related issues and empower young people in an effective and efficient manner. In the absence of youth ministry, few organizations dealing with youth issues have insufficient institutional and technical capacity for service delivery and addressing the interests of youth. One of the umbrella GO-NGO in Uzbekistan "Kamolot" with nationwide coverage was actively involved in drafting an exciting project document with UNDP and UNV. However, the Government of Uzbekistan has informed UNDP regarding the lack of interest in implementing the project.

In this regard, UNDP and UNV re-designed the project proposal with the main focus on social innovation and volunteerism, and engagement with a broader pool of NGOs. UNDP's experience in Uzbekistan has shown that national ownership is essential, but that an incremental approach to execution by national counterparts needs to be applied so that national counterparts are not overburdened and that capacity is built gradually. In fact, one of the project goals is to foster an enabling environment for youth initiative groups and capacity building for youth NGOs.

In the situation of the lack of foreign and international donors working on youth issues in the country, the project remains at the forefront of UN efforts in Uzbekistan in this field (contributing directly to UNDAF and CPAP). In addition, an extensive partnership strategy with UNFPA and UNICEF is envisaged.

Project supported the DG agenda in advocating for more "space" and **raising profile of the youth**, empowering young volunteers to engage and play constructive role in community development processes, provided access to knowledge on local development challenges and MDGs, exposing to civic education opportunities and critical thinking skills, capacity development of youth initiative groups.

As reflected in the project name (Social Innovation and volunteerism), innovation for the social good partnered with volunteerism for MDGs was the backbone of all project activities. To ensure youth project happens, UNDP carefully focused on building partnerships and mobilizing several stakeholders-Youth NGO Kelajak ovozi, Federation of Trade Unions, National Library of Uzbekistan around "social innovation". By taking adaptive strategy and re-packaging project focus UNDP was able to keep 80% of initial project activities, while safely moving youth initiative from politically sensitive "grey zone" into domain that welcomes UNDP's engagement.

Separate project activities were focused around UN international observances, such as International Youth Day, International Volunteer Day, International Day of People with disabilities which supported the wider engagement of stakeholders and interest. Social media outreach was introduced from the very first day of project launch through opening project pages in Facebook, Twitter and Russian "odnoklassniki.ru".

Innovative ways of reaching out to disadvantaged, rural and urban youth was used by the project through announcement of contests - Best Rap/RNB/Freestyle song about MDGs (among young unprofessionals) created a very innovative environment for making young people learn more and articulate their views about poverty, HIV, gender inequality etc; Another example is contest on "Promote your city/town in social media!" for the youth mostly from the regions to promote their own small towns/cities using existing social media tools and attract tourists, thus contributing to spotting talents among young pro-active community leaders, development and income generation for remote communities;

On civic education project organized together the Parliament contest "Parliamentarism Connoisseur" with the aim to advance political culture among the youth and raise awareness on the role of Parliament in the country. Debate/discussion Forum "Dilemma" was a very good means of heightening the role of youth and making their voices heard that lead to partner's request for provision of support with methodology on debates. Attraction of volunteers and promotion of volunteerism jointly with UNV through initiating a database for volunteers filled in based on their interests/areas of expertise increased success and engagement of young people looking for advancing their life-skills and exposing themselves to practical application of their formal education. Social innovation as novel approach worldwide and

in the CIS region gave an opportunity to the project to test small ideas for addressing social needs with safe to fail chances.

On institutional level of capacity development, exciting base was laid on social innovation/entrepreneurship with Vienna University of Economics and Business with the end result to establish and institutionalize the Social Innovation Lab in Uzbekistan. Lab will extend opportunities for young people to come up with their own small solutions to social challenges with potential scale up in the future. The UNDP information hub with free access to public was arranged under the National Library of Uzbekistan and piloted the first discussion/conversation club on MDGs and volunteerism for youth that has gathered enthusiasts (youth initiative groups) to take lead in further meetings of the discussion clubs. The project reached out directly to over 700 young women and men and hundreds more indirectly. In 2013 Project will; launch Café Scientifique and register TedXtalks.

The ground has been laid for establishing agreement with Mayor of Muynak (the most remote town in environmentally devastated Karakalpakstan) on establishment of the Youth Council under local municipality where youth will take part in the decision-making process on a monthly basis starting in 2013.

### LESSONS LEARNED

Please elaborate on the three most important lessons learned during the project implementation.

Social innovation and volunteerism provided safe entry point for politically sensitive "youth" focus of the project in the country and created unexpected at the beginning strategic partnerships.

Given the DIM implementation modality of the project and sensitivities around the project focus, it is crucial to find relevant national partners for carrying out project activities jointly.

Realistic approach to budgeting is imperative. Internal regulations (related to timely preparation of TORs, clearance of contracts, etc.) of the UNDP should be followed strictly. Failure to do so brings to processual complications.

### SUPPORT FROM HQ/REGIONAL BUREAUS/REGIONAL SERVICE CENTRES

Please indicate the nature of support requested and received from HQ, Regional Bureaus, Regional Service Centers, DG-net during the course of project implementation.

UNDP Bratislava Regional Center has been instrumental in guiding, sharing experience from the region, advisory support on social innovation and one visit of Knowledge and Innovation Team Leader for a crash course on social innovation.

### GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Has your project contributed to gender mainstreaming? If so, please elaborate.

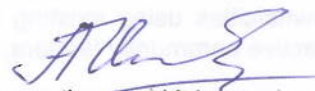
There were no activities directly aimed at the improving gender mainstreaming, but in all the activities of the Project care was taken to ensure adequate representation of both genders. The breakdown is as following: 470 males and 380 females.

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Date: 29 January



#### Endorsed by Resident Representative:

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Date:

