



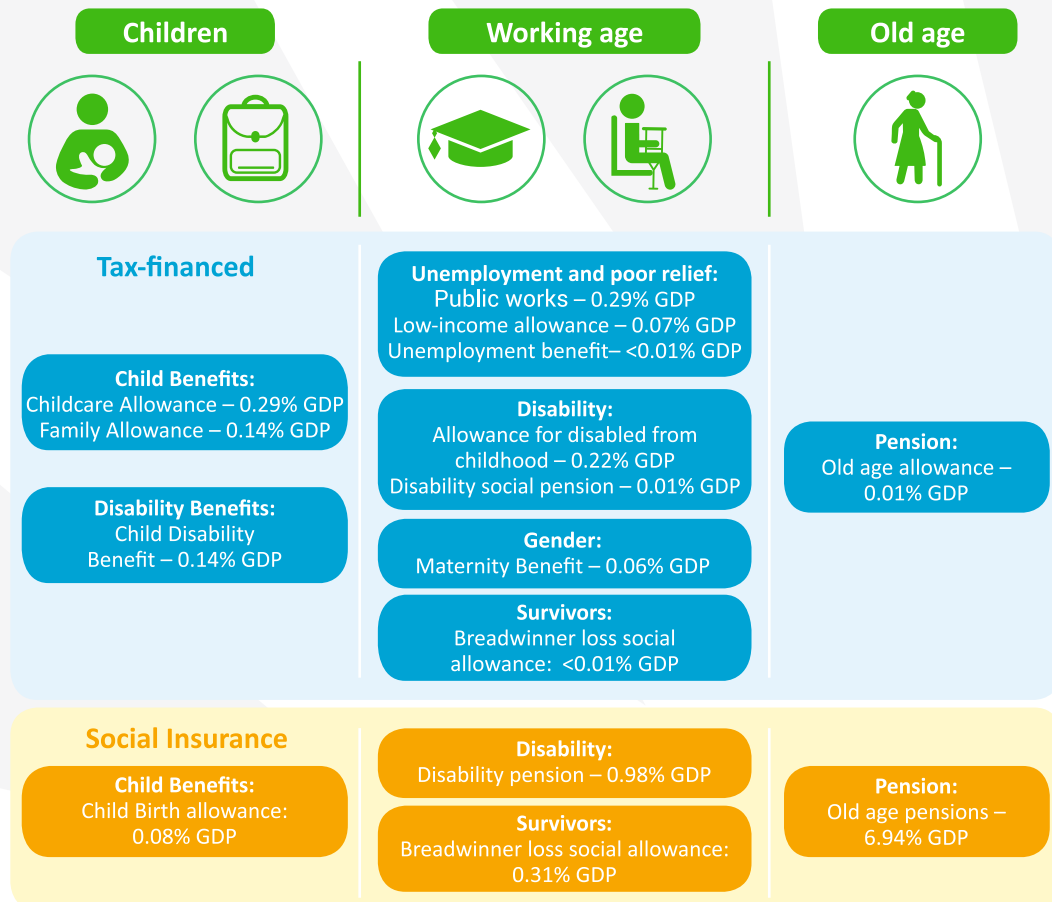
STRENGTHENING SOCIAL PROTECTION IN UZBEKISTAN

Joint Programme of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan, UNICEF, ILO and UNDP

1 Social protection in Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan has a relatively well-formed and comprehensive social protection system, consisting of social insurance, social assistance, labour market programmes and nascent social services.

Key programs in the social protection system of Uzbekistan (by stages of the human life cycle)



only **55%** of population are covered by the social protection system



40-60% of population work in informal sector and can not access other, non-contributory programmes.

2 Why is the Programme for Strengthening Social Protection relevant in Uzbekistan?

Data from the Listening to Citizens of Uzbekistan household survey (L2CU, 2018¹) show that the social protection system covers only 55% of the population. Social security remains inaccessible to most of the population: estimated 40 -60% of the population whose informal sector based earnings are insufficient to make social insurance contributions can not access other, non-contributory programmes since they don't meet strict poverty targeted criteria. At least 75% of families eligible for child allowance do not receive them. And only 46% of children and people of working age with severe disabilities receive a pension or disability allowance.

3 What should be effective social protection like?



Effective social protection policy as defined by UN Social Protection Floor Initiative ensures access to a set of nationally defined policies and programmes that provide equitable access to all people and protect them throughout their lives against poverty and risks to their livelihoods and well-being.

In the life of every individual and a family, situations may arise that affect their ability to participate in the socio-economic life in the equal basis with majority of population, their financial situation. These situations include pregnancy, the birth and upbringing of a child, loss of work, illness, disability, occupational injury, death of the breadwinner, old age. Adequate cash transfers, social care and health services for all who face such situations and need support, will reduce and prevent poverty; enable access to nutrition, prevent school drop-out and reduce child labour; promote inclusion and dignity of particularly disadvantaged groups such as persons with disabilities.

The social protection system should meet rights of every citizen, vulnerable groups of the population, and contribute to building an inclusive and equal society in the conditions of a dynamically developing Uzbekistan.

4 What solution is proposed by the Joint Program of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan, UNICEF, ILO and UNDP?

UNICEF, ILO and UNDP have come together to leverage the collective experience and potential of the UN system to support the Government of Uzbekistan in creating a comprehensive social protection system that is accessible to all people in Uzbekistan throughout their lives, thus contributing to more inclusive economic growth, poverty reduction and human capital development with accelerated achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals

MAIN DIRECTIONS OF THE JOINT PROGRAM:

DEVELOPMENT	CREATION	INTRODUCTION
of a national strategy for social protection of the population in Uzbekistan	of a mechanism for effective interagency interaction in providing social protection to the population	of innovative approaches in providing comprehensive social protection to persons with disabilities

Successful implementation of the Joint Program will contribute to the following:

- ◆ Formation of a strategic vision for the development of the social protection system with a viable and innovative National Social Protection Strategy developed;
- ◆ Identification of fiscal space for effective social protection system;
- ◆ Expanded capacity of national partners to implement national social protection strategy in line with international social security standards;
- ◆ Eliminating the fragmentation of the social protection system;
- ◆ Expanding the coverage of social allowances for low-income families;
- ◆ Increasing the effectiveness of social assistance through its appointment in accordance with the needs of a particular person or family;
- ◆ Development and implementation of clear criteria for determining the degree of disability based on international standards.

5 Why is it necessary to invest in social protection?

It is expected that by 2030 the share of the working-age population in Uzbekistan will reach a historical maximum and will provide the country with an unprecedented labor force - **a demographic dividend**. With the necessary knowledge and skills, these resources can become the basis for a leap in the country's socio-economic development. However, the likelihood of a demographic dividend tomorrow depends entirely on investment in human capital development today. At the same time, the presence of a strong social protection acquires a special role, since an effective combination of pensions, benefits and social services contributes to the development of human capital.

However, current investment in social protection in Uzbekistan is about 6% of GDP², which is well below the average level of investment in social protection in Europe and the CIS. That is why the Joint Program promotes the introduction of minimum levels of social protection - a nationally established system of basic guarantees that ensure a person throughout his/her life:

- ◆ access to necessary medical care, including the period of pregnancy and childbirth in women;
- ◆ basic income security for children, ensuring access to food, education, social assistance and other essential goods and services;
- ◆ basic income security for people who are unable to earn sufficient income, including people with disabilities, the elderly, and others who cannot receive a decent income due to illness, unemployment, motherhood, etc.



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Key facts about the Joint Program of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan, UNICEF, ILO and UNDP

LAUNCH: November 2019, after the signing of the program document by the Government of Uzbekistan and UN.

DURATION: 2 years (2020-2021)

BUDGET: \$ 2,000,000

DONOR: United Nations Joint SDG Fund

NATIONAL PARTNERS: Legislative Chamber and Senate of the Oliy Majlis, Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Ministry of Economic Development and Poverty Reduction, Ministry of Mahalla and Family Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations, Ministry of Health, General Prosecutor's Office, Ministry of Preschool Education, Ministry Education, Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education, Extra-budgetary Pension Fund, Federation of Trade Unions, Confederation of the Employers of Uzbekistan, Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Youth Union, National Center for Human Rights, Center for the Youth and Children with Disabilities "Mehrli qo'llar", Association of the organizations of disabled people, National Association of NGOs, Uzbek Society of Disabled People, National Association of Electronic Mass Media, Independent Institute for Monitoring the Formation of Civil Society.

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¹ For more information, please visit: <https://www.vsemirnyjbank.org/ru/country/uzbekistan/brief/12cu>

² Ministry of Finance and State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2019