



PROSPECTS AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL WORK IN UZBEKISTAN.

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Annotation: *This paper examines the current state and prospects of social work in Uzbekistan, exploring the challenges and opportunities for its development. It analyzes the historical context, existing policies, and initiatives aimed at strengthening the social work profession. The paper discusses key areas for improvement, including professionalization, resource allocation, and integration with other social sectors. It concludes with recommendations for promoting a robust and effective social work system in Uzbekistan, ultimately contributing to improved social well-being for individuals and families.*

Keywords: *Social work, Uzbekistan, Development, Prospects, Challenges, Opportunities, Integration, Social well-being, Policy, Initiatives, Family, Individual, Social sector.*

Social Work Profession and Education Globally “Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility, and respect for diversity are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities, and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance well-being. The above definition may be amplified at national and/or regional levels”[1].

The history of social work in Uzbekistan depends on the middle centuries. Namely by the middle century which funded “Vaqf” related Islamic religion this fund to help people groups, children, alone women, and older people. That was funded by rich people to assist needy people. This fund is available in the meantime and helps people. Charity as a way of offering targeted help was a traditional rule of behavior for common citizens.

In the long run, the term “social work” came to be in use in Uzbekistan – as in other states from the former Soviet Union – relatively recently, in the late 80’s and early 90’s. Adoption of this Western term into local social systems happened in the context of the end of the former geopolitical realities, and also with the recognition of the necessity for professional protection and support of various social groups. Strategically there was a need for new definitions of the forms of social organization devoted to social assistance. Ongoing development of contemporary sociological thinking, to place any set of social problems in its multicultural aspect, has also been an important factor[2].

However, we should say in the meantime in Uzbekistan social work developing and increasing constitution in Uzbekistan mentioned ” Uzbekistan is a sovereign democratic, legal, social and secular state with a republican form of government.

Both names of the state — the Republic of Uzbekistan and Uzbekistan — shall be equivalent”[3].

Afterwards, president Mirziyoyev founded the “INSON” social center namely the decree mentions the principles of the welfare state as per the renewed Constitution. It also highlights that it is aimed at “indisputable protection of the interests and rights of citizens to social protection, fundamental improvement in the quality of social services provided to the population, as well as the introduction of an entirely new management system in this area, based on advanced international standards.”

Agency of Social Protection has been established under the President of Uzbekistan. It aims to ensure citizens with rights to social protection and improve the quality of social services. Several divisions from ministries will go to the agency.

The first of its kind, the Agency becomes a body that will oversee the development and implementation of a single state policy in the area of social protection. It is expected to be independent from other state institutions and officials. Its establishment has been declared by the presidential decree from 2023, June 1. A new institution will have a Tashkent regional department, a department in Karakalpakstan and regions of Uzbekistan, and “Inson” , centers of social services, in regions and cities.

The decree introduces a professional social protection system, providing the socialization of those in need of support, an individual approach, and more. “Inson” Social Services Group. There will be regional and city centers of “Inson” social services groups. They will be working at the mahalla level in the following duties: Analysis of the situation at each house and apartment, identifying the real family situation and their needs for social services; and Creation of family social passports based on analysis of their socio-economic condition and needs.

Establishment of effective work with those in need, including the use of case management method, receiving applications for social services and assistance from them, and, if necessary, sending requests to responsible ministries and agencies;

Monitoring of families in difficult situations, and families at high risk of falling into challenging life situations, establishing social help and services for them. Several divisions will be formed under the agency. They include the Social Inspectorate with divisions in Karakalpakstan, Tashkent city, and other regions of the country. Center for Professional Development of employees of the social protection system; the Institute for the Development of Social Welfare, and more.

According to the report, UNISEF 2021 Tackling social vulnerability issues and providing social support to families and children are the priorities of governmental policies and are reflected in the statutory legislation and structures of agencies, their missions, and their functions. The structure, numbers, titles, and professional requirements of the overall stakeholders have been expanded over the last two years. This specifically concerns specialists working with women and families, specialists on child social protection, inspectors for prevention, and specialists working with youth. Strong governmental



commitment to strengthen the unique Mahalla as a preventative community support system is impressive. With further investment in the community staff's professional competence, Mahalla may become the key provider of preventive community-based services for families and children that would offer a continuum of response options to include friendly support and paraprofessional and professional services depending on needs. The interviewed social service providers consistently expressed readiness to learn and advance skills to more readily utilize professional and evidence-based approaches while demonstrating a proud acknowledgment of their structures and readiness to serve their community[4].

The prospects and development of social work in Uzbekistan are showing promising signs of progress, particularly with the recent establishment of the "INSON" agency by the government. This initiative reflects a growing recognition of the importance of social welfare and the need for dedicated institutions to address societal challenges. Looking ahead, several areas of potential development could further strengthen the field of social work in Uzbekistan. One key aspect is the expansion of training programs and educational opportunities for aspiring social workers. By investing in the professional development of individuals in this field, Uzbekistan can ensure a skilled workforce equipped to address the diverse needs of its population.

Moreover, enhancing government support and investment in social welfare services is crucial for the country's sustainable growth of social work. This includes adequate funding for programs and initiatives and the implementation of policies that promote social inclusion and equity.

However, it's essential to acknowledge the challenges that social workers may face in Uzbekistan, such as cultural perspectives and concerns regarding salaries and working conditions. Addressing these challenges will require a comprehensive approach that involves collaboration between government agencies and other stakeholders.

In my point of view, while there are undoubtedly obstacles to overcome, the prospects for social work in Uzbekistan are promising. With continued dedication and investment, the field has the potential to play a significant role in improving the well-being of individuals and communities across the country.

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