

**PREVENTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND REDUCTION OF POVERTY IN UZBEKISTAN,
COMPREHENSIVE SUPPORT FOR AFFECTED INDIVIDUALS, INSPECTION MEASURES
ACROSS ALL REGIONS, AND EMERGING PROBLEMS.**

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Abstract: In today's developing Uzbekistan—as well as in many other countries—unemployment remains a widespread issue, with a significant number of citizens lacking jobs. Additionally, there is a considerable number of low-income families. This situation is especially noticeable in remote mountainous regions. Therefore, special attention must be paid to these issues. In this study, we examine these problems using the example of Surkhandarya region.

The purpose of writing this article is to examine ways to prevent unemployment and reduce poverty in Uzbekistan by providing comprehensive support to the population, increasing the number of manufacturing enterprises, and creating favorable conditions for entrepreneurs by supporting their business plans. Unfortunately, the number of unemployed and low-income citizens in Uzbekistan has been increasing. For example, the situation in the districts of Surkhandarya region can be analyzed. Surkhandarya is the hottest region in the country, and due to water shortages, agricultural yields have significantly declined. As a result, unemployment and poverty are growing.

To address this issue, it is essential to establish more production enterprises in Surkhandarya and employ unemployed and low-income individuals by creating new job opportunities. It is also necessary to create free vocational training opportunities for all women living in mountainous areas. Compared to other regions, the development level in Surkhandarya is quite low, primarily because of the lack of production facilities. Moreover, in the summer, water scarcity, high salt content in the soil, and saline drinking water negatively impact crop yields.

If these problems are solved and favorable conditions are created for farmers, people will have employment, and the products they grow can be exported, benefiting both their families and Uzbekistan. Surkhandarya's geographic location in the south, bordering Afghanistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, contributes to its lower development level, as large areas of land along the borders have been left unused. These lands could be put to productive use by establishing factories, significantly reducing unemployment.

In contrast, regions like Samarkand, Andijan, Namangan, and Khorezm have better development levels due to the expansion of tourism and the presence of many production enterprises, resulting in

lower unemployment rates. If similar production enterprises and factories are established in Surkhandarya and the problems of each household are studied, skilled youth and women can be supported and involved in productive work. By allocating land to farmers and introducing benefits for them, not only Surkhandarya but other regions could also develop in agriculture, livestock farming, fish farming, and viticulture. The resulting fruits and vegetables could be exported, leading to greater national development. Farmers would become more dedicated to their labor and actively pursue innovation and growth.

It has been reported that the highest unemployment rate—9.8%—is observed in Samarkand and Surkhandarya. In Jizzakh, Kashkadarya, Syrdarya, and Fergana, the figure is 9.7%, while the lowest rate—7.8%—is in Tashkent city. The number of unemployed individuals needing jobs is 1,399,700.

The President emphasized the importance of ensuring employment and increasing income in Surkhandarya, noting that there are officially 102,000 unemployed individuals in the region. “The highest unemployment is in Sariosiyo (8,200 people), Sho‘rchi (8,000), Oltinsoy (7,200), and Muzrabot (5,300). In Sariosiyo, 8 neighborhoods; in Jarqo‘rg‘on and Qumqo‘rg‘on, 7 each; in Denov, 6; and in Oltinsoy and Sho‘rchi, 4 each (a total of 43 neighborhoods) have weak entrepreneurial activity,” said President Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

Additionally, Boysun, Muzrabot, Uzun, Sherobod, and Sho‘rchi are classified as category 4 regions, while Bandixon, Qiziriq, and Oltinsoy fall into category 5. These areas have been provided with sufficient opportunities and privileges to improve employment and living standards.

The President issued a number of directives on this issue. An additional 200 billion soums will be allocated to the 1.1 trillion soums previously provided for family entrepreneurship programs by July 1. Mono-centers with a capacity of 1,000 students each will be established in unused buildings of the Business and Light Industry College in Jarqo‘rg‘on and the Agricultural College in Uzun.

Within a week, micro-centers will be created in the 43 neighborhoods with weak entrepreneurship, and 80 billion soums of preferential loans will be allocated to projects in these areas. By July 1, home-based employment projects will begin in 118 underdeveloped neighborhoods, providing jobs for 10,000 people.

In 2023, out of 50,000 young people entering the labor market from Surkhandarya, 14,000 will receive loans totaling 350 billion soums, 16,000 will be given land for farming, and 10,000 will be placed in existing job openings.

More than 18,000 women in need of support will be provided with vocational training, and 15 billion soums will be allocated for work tools. Through the provision of subsidies, employment will be ensured for 3,000 women. Furthermore, 200 billion soums in loans will be provided to 10,000 women who aspire to become entrepreneurs, and 5,000 women will be engaged in home-based work (kasanachilik).

In addition, it is planned to involve 31,000 residents in economic activity by promoting family entrepreneurship in local communities in 2023. In 212 neighborhoods with potential for home-based work, the issue of providing work tools and dedicated spaces will be resolved through a new system, benefiting 31,000 people. Furthermore, employment will be provided to 4,000 individuals by establishing new business entities, and 20,000 citizens will be trained in new professions to ensure self-employment.

Moreover, our President emphasized that, in addition to the 1.5 trillion soums already allocated to address social issues in Surkhandarya region, an additional 465 billion soums will be provided this year as part of state programs. Additionally, 328 million dollars in foreign investment will be attracted for projects in agriculture, drinking water supply, and entrepreneurship.

This was stated during an extraordinary session of the Surkhandarya Regional Council of People's Deputies held on March 13 in the city of Termez with the participation of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev.

During the session, ensuring employment and increasing incomes of the population were identified as the main priorities. Through the development of family entrepreneurship and home-based work, more than 60,000 people are expected to be employed. Additionally, the creation of new business entities is expected to provide jobs for 4,000 individuals, while training unemployed people in modern professions will lead to the employment of 20,000 more people.

The climate of Surkhandarya is very favorable for agriculture, and crops mature earlier than in other regions. As a result, over the past five years, the area under fruit and vegetable cultivation has increased by 2.5 times. This year, an additional 8,500 hectares will be allocated to the population. By improving conditions for farmers and water supply, it is planned to double the volume of food production and increase exports to 250 million dollars.

Through these reforms, 325,000 people are expected to be provided with income-generating employment, and Surkhandarya is to be transformed into a region free of poverty and unemployment. Clear instructions were given to regional governors and sector leaders in this regard.

A special video conference was also held under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to elevate poverty reduction efforts to a new level.

Main Part:

Following the President's directive, responsible authorities delved deeper into the issue, visiting the poorest households in disadvantaged neighborhoods to identify the most pressing needs. Comprehensive discussions were held with entrepreneurs from various sectors, including trade, services, textiles, healthcare, food, construction, home-based work, electrical engineering, and transportation.

Findings show that poverty cannot be solved by simply distributing money. Currently, there are 250,000 job vacancies in enterprises offering monthly salaries ranging from 3 to 5 million soums. However, 35% of employable members in poor families lack adequate knowledge and skills. Additionally, 43% of women who want to work cannot do so because they are engaged in childcare.

About 83% of poor households own large household plots (tomorqa), but 62% of these have issues with water supply, 48% with electricity, and 50% face difficulties accessing central markets.

The Head of State emphasized that since the causes of poverty vary, solutions must also be tailored to each individual case. It was announced that a large-scale program titled **"From Poverty to Prosperity"** is being prepared for the coming years. This program will outline Uzbekistan's new approaches based on the principle of **seven opportunities and responsibilities**.

From now on, poverty reduction will become a **nationwide movement**.

Relevant officials have been tasked with conducting a complete census of every neighborhood and creating a “**poverty profile**” for each family. An individual program will be developed for each low-income household, clearly defining the responsibilities of each ministry.

Conclusion

In the future, it is essential to increase the number of manufacturing plants in Uzbekistan in order to reduce unemployment and engage low-income populations in productive labor. Additionally, improving the fertility of lands allocated for farming and creating favorable conditions for activities such as livestock breeding, handicrafts, viticulture, and poultry farming will help address key challenges. It is also important to consider the opinions of the local population and provide them with appropriate benefits and incentives.

Furthermore, special attention should be given to young specialists. If these measures are implemented effectively, the level of unemployment and the number of low-income families in Uzbekistan can be significantly reduced.

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