



# MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS ANALYSIS (MESA)

**Uzbekistan**

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# Acknowledgements



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## Disclaimer

Please note that the opinions expressed in this report reflect those of the Global Evaluation Initiative and CLEAR Pakistan & Central Asia. The findings have been presented and officially validated by the relevant stakeholders, paving the way for our engagement at the policy level and the development of a capacity strengthening plan.

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# Acronyms

<b>ASK</b>	Agriculture Support and Knowledge
<b>ASR</b>	Agency for Strategic Reforms
<b>CERP</b>	Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan
<b>CERR</b>	Center for Economic Research and Reforms
<b>CLEAR PCA</b>	Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results, Pakistan and Central Asia
<b>CoM</b>	Cabinet of Ministers
<b>CPD</b>	Country Programme Document
<b>CPF</b>	Country Partnership Framework
<b>CPRO</b>	Center for Policy Research & Outreach
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>DAC</b>	Development Assistance Committee
<b>DSC</b>	Development Strategy Center
<b>DSNU</b>	Development Strategy for a New Uzbekistan
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GEI</b>	Global Evaluation Initiative
<b>GIZ</b>	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
<b>GONGO</b>	Government-Organised Non-Governmental Organisations
<b>GSP</b>	Generalised Scheme of Preferences
<b>IFAD</b>	International Fund for Agriculture Development
<b>IMRS</b>	Institute of Macroeconomic and Regional Studies
<b>ISCAD</b>	International Strategic Center for Agri-Food Development
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>MoEF</b>	Ministry of Economy and Finance
<b>MESA</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation Systems Analysis
<b>MoA</b>	Ministry of Agriculture
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organisation
<b>OECD</b>	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PBM&amp;E</b>	Project Based Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>PFM</b>	Public Finance Management
<b>PGR</b>	Public Governance Review
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction

Since 2016, under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Uzbekistan has embarked on a journey of economic transformation, international engagement and market-oriented reforms. Government has recognised that it lacks strong frameworks for strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and that there is a need to develop robust mechanisms to monitor progress against the Development Strategy for a New Uzbekistan (DSNU) 2022-2026 targets, to track outcomes and impacts of policies and programmes, to facilitate decision-making and achieving results.

The Agency for Strategic Reforms (ASR) under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) and the International Strategic Center for Agri-Food Development (ISCAD) requested

support on M&E from the Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI) and its implementing partner, the Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results, Pakistan and Central Asia (CLEAR PCA). It was agreed to carry out a rapid [Monitoring and Evaluation Systems Analysis \(MESA\)](#) to examine Uzbekistan's existing systems and capacities for planning, budgeting, M&E, and how these systems could be strengthened to enhance the use of evidence in policy making. A GEI/CLEAR/ISCAD MESA team adapted the MESA for Uzbekistan and undertook a mission in Uzbekistan from 19-27 June 2023, interviewing national stakeholders in Tashkent and regional stakeholders in Samarkand.

## Background to the Country and its Interest in M&E

Uzbekistan's economy is built on cotton, minerals (natural gas, gold, and uranium) and manufacturing

with steady GDP growth over recent years, of 7.4% in 2021 and 5.7% in 2022.<sup>1</sup> As a landlocked nation with a predominantly arid and semi-arid climate, Uzbekistan is very vulnerable to climate change,<sup>2</sup> experiencing increasing temperatures, water scarcity, and the intensification of natural disasters, including droughts and floods.

Uzbekistan is a presidential constitutional republic where the President is the head of state, appoints the Prime Minister, Ministers and deputy ministers (subject to approval by a Legislative Chamber of *Oliy Majlis*) and has the authority to issue binding decrees and repeal legislation passed by local administrative bodies. He has the authority to establish developmental priorities and organisational mechanisms.<sup>3</sup> The country has a bicameral legislature (the *Oliy Majlis*, or Parliament) with a Legislative Chamber and a Senate. Executive authority in the region, districts and cities is in the hands of "*khokims*" at the regional level and City of Tashkent, appointed by the President, and at the district/city level appointed by the *khokim* of the region.

There have been frequent changes in ministries, ministers, and structures, creating an unstable organisational culture.<sup>4</sup> This is compounded by the adoption of many by-laws, acts, and decrees, which sometimes leads to lack of clarity around who is responsible for what role or task, and makes it difficult to build strong institutions. Another cultural issue is the centralised approach to policy making in Ministries and agencies, with siloed working, considerable overlap and duplication of functions, and lack of management coordination with subordinate bodies.<sup>5</sup> The centralised approach also implies a culture of upward reporting against

roadmaps/strategies with directives downwards from the Presidential Administration/Minister. This means work to strengthen monitoring, and especially evaluation systems must be led from the Presidential Administration. In practice there is strong interest from the Presidential Administration in reforming public administration, including strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems.

## Overview of Planning, Budgeting and M&E Systems

Uzbekistan's budgetary processes are provided for in the Constitution and laws,<sup>6</sup> but this is not the case with national planning processes. Although strategy documents generally include legal requirements for monitoring of the strategy, there is little to no mention of evaluation.

Key actors in the system include the Presidential Administration, Cabinet of Ministers, ASR, Ministry of Justice,<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Economy and Finance (MoEF), sector ministries,<sup>8</sup> Parliament (*Oliy Majlis*) and the Chamber of Accounts which is accountable to the President and the *Oliy Majlis*.<sup>9</sup>

The space for civil society is limited. NGOs in Uzbekistan are predominantly government-organised non-governmental organisations (so-called GONGOs). Two such GONGOs include the Development Strategy Center (DSC) and "*Yuksalish*". DSC was formed to facilitate expert and public discussions related to the development strategy and state programmes and to make recommendations. "*Yuksalish*" was created to establish an open dialogue with the citizens and

1 [Uzbekistan | Data \(worldbank.org\)](#), accessed 24 August 2023

2 World Bank Climate Change Portal, n.d.

3 Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Public Civil Service, Article 1, 2022

4 USAID report on administrative reforms; a Local Governance Assessment; and a Functional Review of the Ministry of Agriculture

5 EU ASK Functional Review of the Ministry of Agriculture, 2022, CLEAR PCA Meeting Notes ISCAD, August 2023.

6 [Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the State Budget](#) No. ZRU-813, dated December 30, 2022

7 Role includes analysis and monitoring of the effectiveness of the public administration system

8 Ministries have Strategic Planning and Methodology Units and develop their own strategies, plans and other strategic documents. However, these Units are under-capacitated and lack technical skills and experience in strategic planning. They have agencies supporting them, such as ISCAD.

9 Presidential Decree on [State Audit](#) on August 21, 2021



the business community and to form a system of public oversight.<sup>10</sup> The web platforms [www.daryo.uz](http://www.daryo.uz) and [www.kun.uz](http://www.kun.uz) (in Uzbek language) and [www.gazeta.uz](http://www.gazeta.uz) (in Russian) are important platforms for voicing concerns and generating debate. In general the government has been very effective in using digitalisation.

Development partners play a key role in Uzbekistan's M&E landscape, particularly since the opening in 2017. Major partners include World Bank, UNDP, EU, IFAD, UNICEF, GIZ, and USAID.

National strategic planning including the DSNU is initiated by the Presidential Administration. The strategy includes 100 goals of which at least seven goals have elements relevant to an effective public administration, and the potential role of planning/M&E. To implement the DSNU, a cross-sectoral annual State Program is developed, initiated by the Presidential Administration, including a set of targets. The State Program for 2023 includes 293 measures/tasks/activities across all 100 goals of the DSNU.<sup>11</sup>

It is also important to note that the "Uzbekistan – 2030" Strategy, which defines the main directions of the country's development in the next seven years, and the draft measures for its implementation in 2023, were posted for public discussion on the [www.regulation.gov.uz](http://www.regulation.gov.uz) and [www.2030.strategy.uz](http://www.2030.strategy.uz) portals in late July 2023. Like in the case of the DSNU, "Uzbekistan – 2030" Strategy also includes 100 goals, but covers five priority areas for a seven-year term. The Draft President's Decree on the "Uzbekistan – 2030" Strategy indicates that the Strategy was developed on the basis of the experience gained during the implementation of the DSNU and the results of public discussion. It also points out that all relevant goals and tasks of the DSNU, which have

not lost their importance shall continue being implemented.<sup>12</sup>

Line ministries develop their own sectoral strategies and related action plans or roadmaps, but often the link between the DSNU and sector strategic documents is weak. Current policies, strategies and programmes often lack explicit theories of change, M&E frameworks and baselines to demonstrate what needs to change and how to achieve desired outcomes.<sup>13</sup> The Functional Review of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) suggests that "Planning and objective setting presents considerable weaknesses. Many MoA departments cannot distinguish between sector and MoA priorities and between MoA and department priorities, usually describing the same priorities for all levels. This indicates limited capacity for objective setting and break down from the strategic to the operational level".<sup>14</sup> There is an assignment underway to develop a new strategic planning framework, which would be key for a future M&E system.

The main evidence used in the budget process is performance against macroeconomic indicators, which include previous macroeconomic performance, expected revenues and debts. There is currently no use of evaluation in the budgeting process but Ministry of Economy and Finance (MoEF) indicated possible interest in evaluations exploring problematic areas, such as health, education, and agriculture.

A report by UNDP found that all the nine Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets related to gender have been incorporated in national plans. Goals 79/80 of the DSNU focus on the environment, although no goals focus specifically on climate, a major omission for a crisis which is already affecting Uzbekistan.<sup>15</sup>

10 USAID report on Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan, 2021

11 Presidential Decree "On the state program for the implementation of the New Uzbekistan development strategy for the years 2022-2026 in the year of people-based and quality education" No. PF-27, dated February 28, 2023.

12 [The Draft President's Decree on the "Uzbekistan - 2030" Strategy](#)

13 A theory of change is a method that explains how a given intervention, or set of interventions, is expected to lead to specific development change, drawing on a causal analysis based on available evidence (UNDAF)

14 Ministry of Agriculture Functional Review Findings & Recommendations, 2022

15 UNDP indicates there is a Concept note on environmental protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030 and a Strategy on

## Monitoring and Reporting Systems

Both monitoring and evaluation depend on the availability of data. There is a Statistics Agency, but a census has not been conducted since 1989, a huge gap in the availability of accurate and representative data. A census is planned for 2023-24.<sup>16</sup> Ministries such as Agriculture produce operational data, such as on the progress of agricultural activities, agricultural research and development of the research institutions under the Ministry.<sup>17</sup> An agricultural census has not taken place since independence and one is scheduled to take place after the national census and to use the national census as a blueprint.<sup>18</sup> Insufficient data quality also makes it difficult to fully assess the achievement of key targets based on these indicators. This is also due to inefficient methods of collection, analysis, quality control, and validation of statistical data.

In terms of cross-sectoral systems for government monitoring and reporting at national level, typically, ministries and agencies report on the progress of implementation and achievement of KPIs to the Ministry of Justice and the Chamber of Accounts, and additional reporting may be called for by the Presidential Administration of other state bodies. An electronic system [www.ijro.gov.uz](http://www.ijro.gov.uz) has been in place since 2021 to track implementation of tasks defined in normative legal documents and assignments. An Executive Discipline Unit of the Executive Apparatus of every Ministry or Agency prepares the overseeing plan/programme of measures (*nazorat rejas*) for the execution of adopted normative legal documents and assignments. There are other monitoring processes happening including a Republican Commission for New Uzbekistan Development Strategy and Annual State Program, chaired by the Prime Minister, monitoring by Cabinet of Ministers,

monitoring and reporting by NGOs/GONGOs. The Parliament (*Oliy Majlis*) has a role in scrutinising overall progress against the State Program and budget and both the Senate and Legislature have committees that oversee the work of government. Quarterly meetings are held for budget oversight. Civil society GONGOs including *Yuksalish* and DSC undertake systematic monitoring and public hearings across the country, where citizens can contribute to public dialogue about the effectiveness of government programmes and their impact on communities they are intended to serve.

Overall monitoring is predominantly centred on achieving specified targets in roadmaps, of which there are hundreds just in the DSNU and thousands when one adds sector strategies etc. A strength is that there are digital platforms for tracking these roadmaps. In the absence of explicit theories of change for policies/strategies/programmes, the tracking focuses on inputs (the allocation and distribution of funds), activities and outputs (e.g. the initiation and completion dates of activities), rather than higher level outcome/impact targets. This overloads monitoring but makes it difficult to track meaningful progress, and whether higher level outcomes are likely to be reached.

## Evaluation Systems

Uzbekistan does not have an established evaluation framework or system and the understanding of evaluation within the government and how it differs from monitoring is weak. Government-led evaluations are rare to non-existent, and most evaluations are led by development partners. The one case that was identified of an evaluation/review was the Ministry of Justice, which has carried out an “analytical assessment” of how “effectively and efficiently” subsidy schemes are working. At present no structure has a clear mandate and capacity to manage and coordinate

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maintaining a biological diversity in the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2019 — 2028, although these were not reviewed by the team.

16 Presidential Decree “On approval of the concept of the population census in the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2022” No. UP-5655, 2019.

17 State Committee of The Republic of Uzbekistan on Statistics, [Agriculture, forestry and fisheries of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2019](#)

18 The date for the agricultural census was laid out according to the Resolutions of the President No. 3165 and No. 4273. According to the National Strategy for the Development of Agriculture, the agricultural census should be executed by 2021. However, the Agency plans to conduct the census after the national census.

an evaluation system.

Development partners are undertaking evaluations, with 10-20 per year being identified since 2016, particularly in agriculture and governance, environment and water.

Overall, given the lack of an evaluation culture in the country, there is limited capacity to conduct evaluations, with some capacity in the Center for Economic Research and Reforms (CERR) and the Institute of Macroeconomic and Regional Studies (IMRS), as well as universities like Westminster International University in Tashkent.

## Overall Findings and Recommendations

There are a number of systemic problems and weaknesses that hamper effective monitoring and evaluation of plans and reforms, in particular:

- The lack of an effective *strategic planning system* which effectively links impacts, outcomes, outputs and nests the work of ministries with the DSNU (being addressed by a separate assignment), and the guidance needed to implement this.
- *No single body responsible for monitoring or evaluating the effectiveness of the implementation of ministry/sector plans and reforms to ensure accountability and transparency*, although there is some reporting to the Presidential Administration on documents approved by Presidential decree.
- In general there are no *Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) units* within ministries, although there are units which carry out some M&E roles.
- No approved unified *methodology* for monitoring DSNU/sector strategies/ministries (apart from the State Program for the DSNU) and a plethora of activity/output targets being monitored (see Section 4.5).
- A lack of *guidance and quality support* on target monitoring, methodology, data quality assurance, result verification and reporting.
- Some *institutional weaknesses* with multiple overlapping decrees, rapid changes in structures and ministers, leading to some levels of confusion of roles and instability.
- A rather centralised approach with reporting upwards and decisions made at top levels. This means the *areas of control* of ministries and agencies and their interdependence are not clearly defined.
- *Little understanding of evaluation* as a systematic and rigorous research process understanding what is working and why, for whom, and why, with no coherent *mechanism for evaluating* results achieved.
- Lack of *comprehensive and reliable baseline and summary information* on programme activities and the achievement of change objectives.

The country still operates in a centrally driven but fragmented manner, with ministries often working independently and not sharing information effectively. There is no strong *central planning role*, and the role of ASR (or other agency) needs to be strengthened in this regard.

The *absence of explicit theories of change* for interventions means that the causal links between activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts cannot be seen. This results in focusing on *indicators primarily at activity and output level*, and a lack of outcome and impact indicators for systematic monitoring and for evaluation to explore why changes are or aren't happening, for whom, and how policies or programmes can be strengthened.

What emerges suggests that there are strong systems in place to monitor "what is being done" (and when), but not "are the right things being done" and "are actions leading to the desired change" and "why", which emerge from evaluations. These existing mechanisms provide a basis for the introduction of more results-oriented monitoring and evaluation.

## Recommendations:

Conditions for effective reform are suggested, and how the government might address these conditions, with short-term and medium-term recommendations. It is important not to come with pre-packaged solutions but build systems based on the local context, prototyping and testing them before 'freezing' these in systems through decrees:

### Short-term recommendations (1 year) focusing on building an interest in effective M&E

- *Establish initial champions and coalition to support M&E* including empowering an initial champion to lead M&E reforms, as well as champions in ministries.
- *Establish a Planning/M&E Working Group* as a coalition across government agencies to support the rollout of evaluation for improving government performance and development results, rather than in a punitive role.
- Integrate into the current *strategic planning initiatives*, notably the GIZ's technical support to ASR to develop strategic planning framework and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) public governance review. This is needed for M&E to be integrated in the planning reforms, and ensure M&E is closely linked to broader strategic planning and objective setting. The planning system needs to include nested systems which link ministry plans to the DSNU, backed by solid theories of change, and a hierarchy of indicators at impact, outcomes and output levels. This needs to guide the monitoring system. A support system is needed with guidance, training etc. to operationalise this.
- *Run awareness training in evidence-based policy-making* for deputy ministers/top public servants on the relevance of evidence-based policy making, linking with policy institutions like EU Agriculture Support and Knowledge (ASK), International Agriculture University, Westminster International University in Tashkent, and the Academy of Public Administration.

- *Evidence agenda*: identify areas of particular policy interest where evidence of what is working or not and how to strengthen would be welcomed, where evidence synthesis of existing evaluations or new evaluations could contribute.
- Create a live, consolidated *repository of existing evaluations*, synthesising their findings in areas of particular interest. This will demonstrate the relevance of evaluative evidence.
- *Rapid evaluations*: partner with key ministries to conduct rapid evaluations in collaboration with existing organisations like CERR, ISCAD and IMRS or universities. Develop and implement knowledge brokering models to foster buy-in by senior managers and politicians.

### Medium-term recommendations (1–2 years' time)

Possible areas that can be taken forward in the medium term include:

- *Learning from Successful Models*: learning from experiences of M&E systems in countries like Mexico, Colombia, and South Africa can inform Uzbek evaluation practices, e.g. through well-facilitated study tours.
- *Rigorous Evaluations*: planning for longer and more rigorous evaluations over the next 2-3 years in areas that require in-depth analysis and comprehensive assessments to inform significant policy decisions.
- *Strengthening demand for evidence from Parliament*: considering how to strengthen research service support to parliamentary committees, so that they are able to request and utilise evaluation findings to inform legislative decision-making.
- *Enhancing Monitoring Usefulness*: building on the strategic planning work being undertaken by GIZ through an international strategic planning expert and OECD to identify ways to make monitoring more useful for policy and decision-making. Based on this pilot and then develop models for M&E Units, a monitoring

policy (or monitoring and evaluation policy), guidelines, standards, courses etc.

- *Evidence-Based Policy Making Courses:* to promote the culture of evidence-based policy making, continue running further courses for ministers, deputy ministers, and senior managers.
- *Identify and support incentives<sup>19</sup>* for undertaking and using M&E evidence in planning, budgeting and decision-making.
- *Phasing of Evaluation Systems:* based on the response to rapid evaluations, and potential full evaluations, developing a phased approach to implementing comprehensive evaluation systems across the government, including an evaluation policy, guidelines, standards, courses etc. This approach will ensure a smooth and efficient rollout of evaluations.

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<sup>19</sup> Incentives can include mechanisms such as promotions, visibility and recognition of work, improved departmental budgets based on performance, linkages of M&E work to KPIs, etc. Incentives can be organisational level as well as individual level.



# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background to the Assignment

Uzbekistan has, since 2016, under the leadership of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, embarked on a journey of economic transformation, with a focus on international engagement and market-oriented reforms. Shortly after his appointment, President Mirziyoyev introduced the 2017-21 National Development Strategy, a comprehensive plan aimed at fundamentally transforming Uzbekistan's economy, society, and public institutions, marking an end to 26 years of a closed, centralist model.<sup>20</sup> This has been followed by the Development Strategy for a New Uzbekistan (DSNU) 2022-2026, which now serves as Uzbekistan's primary framework for policy making, aiming to achieve various goals, such as economic growth, poverty reduction, improved education and

healthcare outcomes, and promoting sustainable development.<sup>21</sup>

With these changes, it has been increasingly recognised by the government that Uzbekistan lacks strong frameworks for strategic planning, monitoring, and evaluation and that there is a need to develop robust mechanisms to monitor progress against DSNU targets, to track outcomes, and to assess the impacts of policies and programmes, to facilitate decision-making, adjusting programmes and policies, and achieving results.

Thus, the Agency for Strategic Reforms (ASR) under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan in partnership with the International Strategic Center for Agri-Food Development (ISCAD) requested support from the Global Evaluation Initiative (GEI). It was agreed that a first step would be to carry out a rapid [Monitoring and Evaluation](#)

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<sup>20</sup> [Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026](#)

<sup>21</sup> Uzbekistan - Country Partnership Framework for the Period FY2022-FY2026: World Bank Group.



Systems Analysis (MESA) study to examine Uzbekistan's existing systems and capacities for planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation, with a view to informing national strategies to strengthen these systems and contribute to the enhanced use of evidence in policy making.

## 1.2 The MESA – Origins and Demand

The MESA is a diagnostic tool that guides country stakeholders (e.g., government entities, evaluation professionals, civil society) in gathering, structuring and analysing information on the current capacity of their country's monitoring and evaluation ecosystem and how it can be strengthened. OECD definitions of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are in Box 1. Evaluation is thus considered to be different from audit, analysis, assessment, appraisal or review. There is an acknowledgement at the highest levels in Uzbekistan that M&E is at a nascent stage.

However, the nuances in one language may not be the same in other languages. For example, different words in English may be translated by the same word in Uzbek or in Russian (See Table 1).

Table 1: Comparison of key words in English, Uzbek and Russian

ENGLISH	UZBEK	RUSSIAN
Evaluation	Baholash	Оценка
Analysis	Tahlil	Анализ
Assessment	Baholash	Оценка/ Экспертиза

The ASR is an agency under the President, and is, among others, responsible for overseeing long term development planning in the country. It is currently working to develop a national strategic planning framework, which will necessarily include mechanisms for monitoring and for evaluation.

### BOX 1:

#### Defining Monitoring and Evaluation

The OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Network on Development Evaluation provides the following definitions of monitoring and evaluation:<sup>22</sup>

##### Monitoring

"A continuing process that involves the systematic collection or collation of data (on specified indicators or other types of information). Provides the management and other stakeholders of an intervention with indications of the extent of implementation progress, achievement and occurrence of unintended results, use of allocated funds and other important intervention and context-related information."

##### Evaluation

"The systematic and objective assessment of a planned, ongoing or completed intervention, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Evaluation also refers to the process of determining the worth or significance of an intervention. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into decision-making processes."

In the agri-food sector, International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) conducted an evaluation in 2021-2022 of its country strategy and programme. The evaluation noted weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation systems in the agriculture sector. The evaluation recommended that IFAD's new country strategy should devote time and resources to develop robust country programme level M&E systems, and proposed follow-up actions including the collaboration with the GEI, under the newly established ISCAD.

<sup>22</sup> [https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC/EV\(2022\)2/en/pdf](https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC/EV(2022)2/en/pdf)

ASR and ISCAD requested support from the GEI and its implementing partner, the Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results, Pakistan and Central Asia (CLEAR PCA). GEI/CLEAR PCA, ASR and ISCAD, in collaboration with IFAD and the European Union ASK Facility,<sup>23</sup> prepared an action plan to initiate the strengthening of monitoring, evaluation and learning systems in Uzbekistan on the national level and in the agri-food sector. One of the first steps in the action plan called for a MESA to explore national M&E systems, with an analysis of M&E systems in the agriculture sector. The MESA team included members from the GEI global team, CLEAR PCA, an external senior expert in M&E systems and two experts affiliated with ISCAD and the ASR, working under the guidance of the ASR.

## 1.3 Process

In consultation with the ASR, the MESA team adapted the MESA tool to the Uzbekistan context, identifying key assessment areas and formulating pertinent questions. Following desk review and initial online interviews, the MESA team undertook a mission to Uzbekistan from 19-27 June, 2023. During the mission, ~20 in-person and ~5 online interviews were carried out with a diverse group of stakeholders, including representatives from central and line ministries and government agencies, provincial government, think tanks, NGOs, and development partners, all of whom actively participated and provided valuable input throughout the MESA project (see Annex 2 for a list of organisations consulted). Following the mission, additional document review and interviews were undertaken, and an initial draft of the present report was prepared.

## 1.4 Overview of the Report Sections

The MESA report comprises six sections, as follows:

**Section 1** covers the introduction to M&E in Uzbekistan and the rationale for conducting MESA, including the methodology used to formulate the report.

**Section 2** provides a brief country profile, the structure and organisational culture of the government with regards to M&E, and the government's interest in M&E at the beginning of the MESA.

**Section 3** gives an overview of the planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation systems within Uzbekistan, including the legal basis and the role of key actors and stakeholders in the ecosystem.

**Section 4** discusses the monitoring and reporting systems present in Uzbekistan at the national and subnational level.

**Section 5** covers the evaluation systems in Uzbekistan, in government, development partners and the potential for introducing evaluations in government.

**Section 6** presents an overview of key findings, areas of strength and those that require further attention. It includes recommendations for triggering a system-wide change, in the short-term (one year) and medium-term (two-three years).

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<sup>23</sup> A technical assistance project supporting the implementing of the Agri-Food Development Strategy of Uzbekistan



## 2. BACKGROUND TO THE COUNTRY AND ITS INTEREST IN M&E

### 2.1 Country Profile

Uzbekistan is a landlocked country bordered by five countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan), making it a pivotal player in the Central Asian region. Uzbekistan has historically been a hub for trade and cultural exchange with a rich history that dates back to ancient times. Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the country gained independence on 1 September, 1991. Since then, Uzbekistan has undergone significant changes and reforms to shape itself as a sovereign nation and to move away from a centrally planned economy. Significant reforms happened from 2017.

The country's geographic landscape encompasses vast plains, fertile valleys, deserts, and mountain ranges, including the Pamir-Alay and Tian Shan mountains. The economy is diverse, with sectors



such as agriculture (notably large cotton farms), mineral resources, and manufacturing playing pivotal roles. The country has significant reserves of natural gas, gold, and uranium.<sup>24</sup> In recent years,

<sup>24</sup> Central Asia Atlas of Natural Resources, 2009

the government has taken initiatives to diversify industries, attract foreign investment, and reduce its reliance on cotton monoculture.<sup>25</sup> The country is also strategically engaged in various infrastructure projects to enhance regional connectivity and trade, including the Uzbekistan-China Economic Corridor, connecting it to China's Belt and Road Initiative.<sup>26</sup> In 2021, Uzbekistan joined the European Union special agreement Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+), and besides that the country became the first beneficiary of the UK Enhanced GSP Scheme. Since then Uzbekistan's trade exchanges with the EU countries and UK have been rising rapidly.

Uzbekistan faces considerable vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.<sup>27</sup> As a landlocked nation with a predominantly arid and semi-arid climate, it experiences increasing temperatures, water scarcity, and the intensification of natural disasters, including droughts and floods. These climate-related challenges put immense pressure on the country's agriculture, water resources, and human livelihoods. In response, Uzbekistan has sought international support and engaged in climate change adaptation programmes to mitigate these risks and develop sustainable solutions. Notably, the Aral Sea, once one of the world's largest inland bodies of water, has shrunk by 90% due to unsustainable water management practices, resulting in severe ecological and environmental consequences.<sup>28</sup>

With a population of 35.6 million, Uzbekistan is a diverse country, with ethnic Uzbeks forming the majority, followed by significant communities of Russians, Tajiks, Kazakhs, and Karakalpaks.<sup>29</sup> Islam is the predominant religion, and the official language is Uzbek, although Russian remains widely

spoken, especially in urban areas and government institutions. The country's demographics reflect a relatively young population, with a significant portion being under the age of 30.<sup>30</sup>

Uzbekistan has had steady growth rates over recent years (except for a drop in 2020), with a 2021 rate of 7.4% and a 2022 rate of 5.7%,<sup>31</sup> led by strong remittances, consumption, and exports. Continued growth and expanded social protection programmes are expected to sustain poverty reduction, and the national poverty rate is projected to fall to 12% in 2023.<sup>32</sup> Despite its economic progress, Uzbekistan faces some challenges regarding poverty and inequality. Poverty is a mostly rural phenomenon in Uzbekistan, with about 79% of the poor living in rural areas (2018).<sup>33</sup> Among the nearly 20 million people in the labour market, approximately two million, primarily from rural areas, are external labour migrants due to the scarcity of well-paid jobs in their home regions. Another significant component of the labour market is informal employment. Currently, the high prevalence of informal sector jobs, along with other distortions in the labour market, has resulted in a sluggish growth of formal sector employment, economic progress, and the economy's modernisation. As of 2021, 54% of the working population was engaged in informal sector activities.<sup>34</sup>

25 "Uzbekistan's Cotton Value Chain," Swarthmore College, May 2015

26 F A Bonesh, "Uzbekistan's Opportunities and Challenges from China's Belt & Road Initiative," Silk Road Briefing, March 20, 2023

27 World Bank Climate Change Portal, n.d.

28 A Anchita et al., "Health Impact of Drying Aral Sea: One Health and Socio-Economical Approach," Lund University, January 12, 2022

29 TVET Policy Review: Uzbekistan, 2019

30 Generation 2030 Uzbekistan, 2018

31 Uzbekistan | Data (worldbank.org), accessed 24 August 2023

32 Uzbekistan Overview: Development news, research, data | World Bank, accessed 24 August 2023

33 World Bank Second Systematic Country Diagnostic for Uzbekistan, 2022

34 Transition from Informal to Formal Employment Project Uzbekistan, 2021

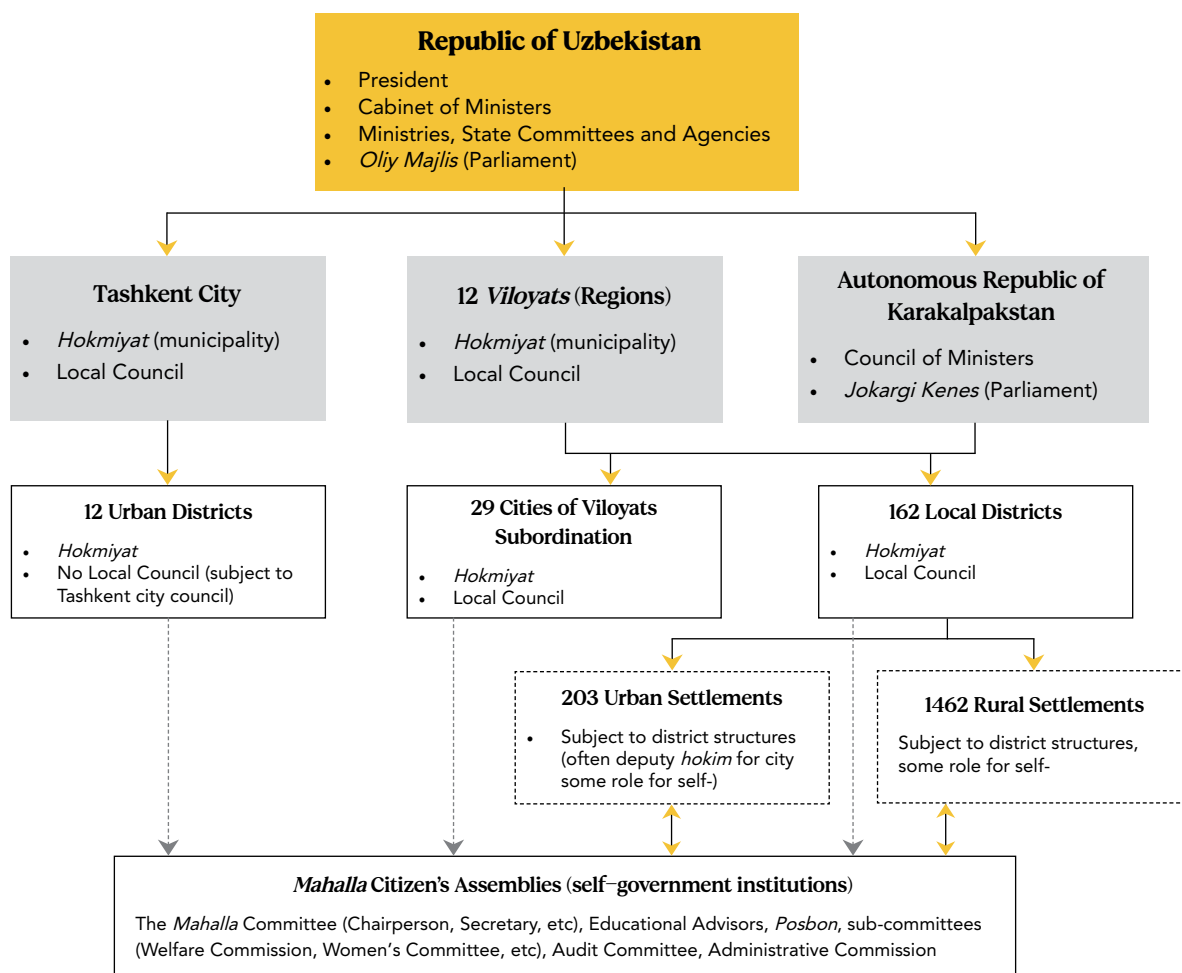
## 2.2 Structure of Government

Uzbekistan is a presidential constitutional republic, whereby the President of Uzbekistan is the head of the state and ensures agreed functioning and interaction of the state authorities. According to the Constitution, the President is elected by citizens of the country on the basis of the universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot for a term of seven years.<sup>35</sup> The President appoints the Prime Minister and cabinet, subject to parliamentary approval, and has the authority to issue binding decrees and repeal legislation passed by local administrative bodies. Ministers and deputy ministers are directly appointed by the President

and he has the authority to establish developmental priorities and organisational mechanisms, to issue decrees, and to appoint personnel within the civil service.<sup>36</sup>

Since 2005, the country has had a bicameral legislature (the *Oliy Majlis*, or Parliament) with a Legislative Chamber and a Senate. Legislative Chamber members are elected for five-year terms. The Senate comprises 84 representatives from the regions and 16 members appointed by the President. The Legislative Chamber has 150 elected representatives. The legislature has the authority to amend the constitution, enact laws, and approve national level budgets, and also confirm presidential appointees.

Figure 1: Structure of Government in Uzbekistan<sup>37</sup>



<sup>35</sup> [Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan](#)

<sup>36</sup> Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Public Civil Service, Article 1, 2022

<sup>37</sup> [Structure of governing bodies in Uzbekistan](#)

Over the last few decades, the number of ministries and departments in Uzbekistan have increased drastically. Currently, the Cabinet of Ministers consists of 21 Ministries (see Annex 3). Apart from ministries, there are 12 Committees, 25 agencies and 11 inspections.<sup>38</sup> In addition to these state bodies, the system of state power includes judicial bodies (courts, Supreme Council of Judges), the Central Election Commission, and the Central Bank.

Executive authorities of the country are divided into the following structures:<sup>39</sup>

- A ministry which develops and implements a unified state policy in relevant sectors;
- Substructures which operate under the aegis of a ministry:
  - A committee which coordinates and leads activities on a collegial basis;
  - An agency provides public services in relevant fields;
  - An inspection carries out state control and inspection in the relevant fields.<sup>40</sup>

Internal structure (organogram) of a line ministry consists of a Minister, First and other Deputy Ministers, Advisors to the Minister, Executive Apparatus (*Ijro Apparati*), thematic Departments (*Departamentlar*), Units (*Boshqarmalar*), and Divisions (*Bo'limlar*). In the majority of line ministries, Executive Apparatus; HR; IT; Legal; Accounting, Finance and Budgeting; Special/First Unit; PR and media; Internal Audit; Anti-corruption Units/Divisions directly report to a Minister. Deputy Ministers are responsible for certain thematic areas and manage relevant Departments, Units or Divisions of a ministry.

A minister has full authority to amend an internal structure of a ministry. However, since Deputy

Ministers are appointed by the President, the number of Deputy Ministers in each line ministry is subject to the Presidential Administration's decision. Line ministries often have Divisions in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, City of Tashkent, regions and sometimes even in districts.

Under the constitution, executive authority in the region, districts and cities is in the hands of "*khokims*" at the regional level and City of Tashkent, appointed by the President, and at the district/city level appointed by the *khokim* of the region. According to a USAID report, "The Republic of Uzbekistan consists of 12 regions (*viloyatlar*), each with 8-15 districts (*tumanlar*), each of which in turn has five to six cities (*shaharlar*), towns (*shaharchalar*), and villages (*qishloqlar*). Two territorial units, the Republic of Karakalpakstan and the city of Tashkent, have the same structure and status as *viloyat*."<sup>41</sup> "*Kenghashes* of people's deputies (parliamentarians)" are the representative bodies of authority in regions, districts, cities and towns.<sup>42</sup> The new constitution provides for clear separation of powers between the *kenghashes* and the *khokims*.<sup>43</sup>

An additional entity is the *Mahalla*, described by USAID as "a cultural mainstay of local governance" which "lie[s] currently somewhere between the government and civil society", frequently characterised as formal institutions composed of the local population with elected leaders who serve residents of a certain location."<sup>44</sup> The entire territory of Uzbekistan is divided into at least 12,000 *mahalla*.

38 [Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan](#), PF-14-son dated 25.01.2023

39 Presidential decree "On measures to implement the administrative reforms of New Uzbekistan" No. PF-269 dated December 21, 2022

40 Presidential Decree on Measures for Implementation of New Uzbekistan Administrative Reforms No. PF-269-son, December 24, 2022

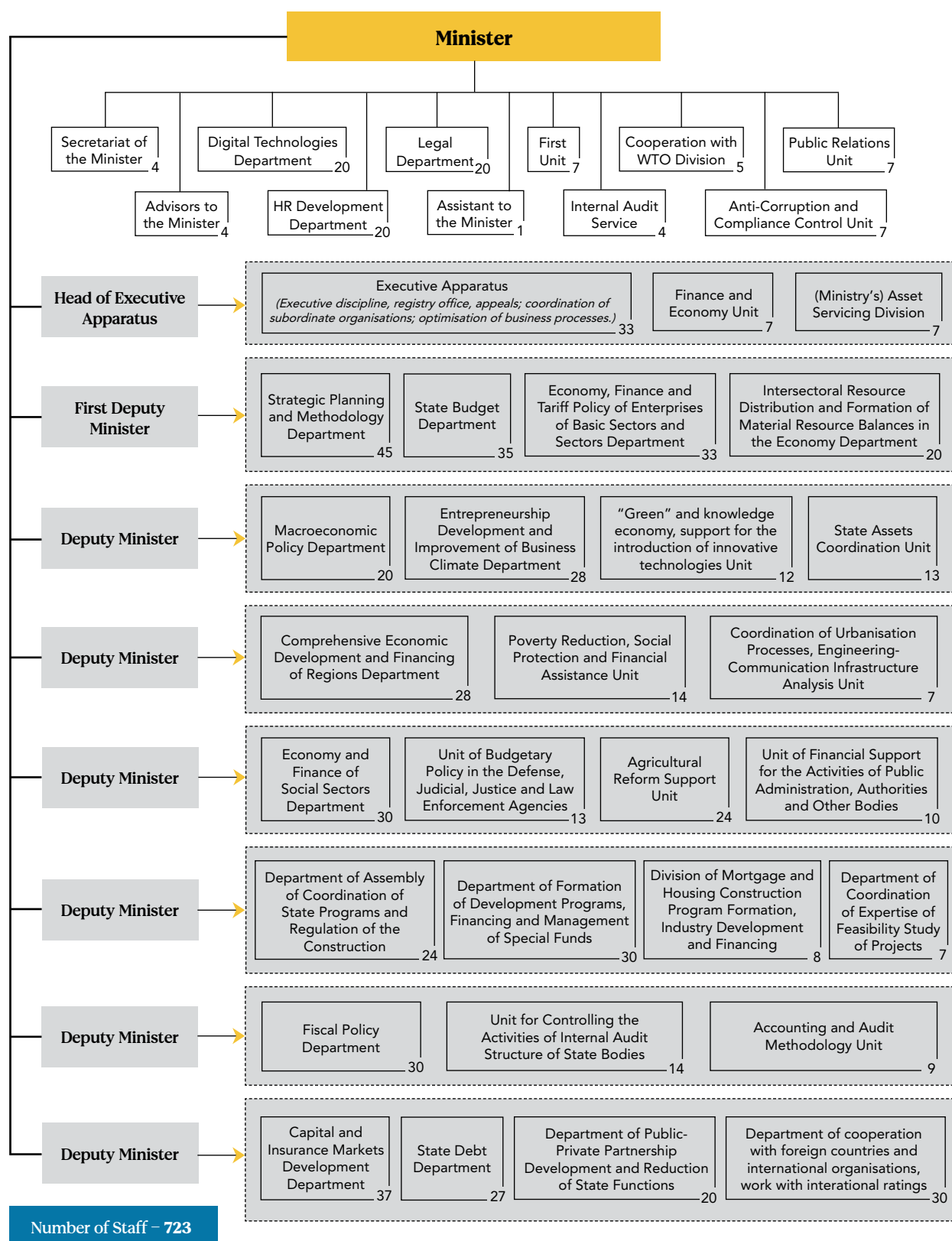
41 USAID Report on "Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan", 2021 42 USAID Report on "Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan", 2021

42 USAID Report on "Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan", 2021

43 [A Constitution for "the New Uzbekistan", 2023](#)

44 USAID Report on "Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan", 2021

Figure 2: Internal Organogram of the Ministry of Economic and Finance<sup>45</sup>



45 [Official website of the Ministry of Economy and Finance](#)

## 2.3 Organisational Culture of Government and Implications for M&E

A number of recent reports, including a USAID report on administrative reforms,<sup>46</sup> a Local Governance Assessment,<sup>47</sup> and a Functional Review of the Ministry of Agriculture<sup>48</sup> have described different aspects of the organisational culture of government in Uzbekistan. Despite the important role of ministries and ministers, there have been frequent changes with different ministries merged together and/or new ministries created, as well as changes in ministers. Moreover, the structure/organogram of ministries and agencies tend to change often, thus creating an unstable organisational culture. This instability is compounded by the government's frequent practice of adopting by-laws, acts, and decrees, instead of laws, which poses several challenges to governance in Uzbekistan. New directives can replace decrees, and since much of the nation's legal structure has been established through decrees, it is somewhat unstable, particularly concerning local governance.<sup>49</sup> This absence of organisational stability leads to lack of clarity around who is responsible for what task, or whose capacity should be built to achieve better outcomes, and makes it difficult to build strong institutions.<sup>50</sup>

The number of decrees governing a specific area ranges from 10 to over 50 documents. For example, in the agri-food sector, between 2020 and 2022, 14 laws were adopted, 15 Presidential decrees, 79 Presidential Resolutions and 118 Cabinet Decrees, not including documents adopted at regional levels. This results in disparities among them, allowing room for misunderstanding, corruption, and a lack of coherence in

implementation.<sup>51</sup>

Most ministries and agencies have a centralised approach to policy making, with siloed working, considerable overlap and duplication of functions, lack of management coordination and cooperation with subordinate bodies.<sup>52</sup> In addition, this process whereby regulations are centrally imposed, results in a culture of upward reporting and downward approvals.<sup>53</sup>

In Uzbekistan's current context, where policy and decision-making remains highly centralised, work to strengthen monitoring and especially evaluation systems should begin at the centre, under the President. It will ultimately be important to build capacities at local government levels as well, but this should probably follow later, once appropriate systems have been developed.

## 2.4 Interest in M&E at the Outset of the MESA

At the time the MESA was initiated, there was strong interest from the Presidential Administration in reforming public administration, including strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems, an interest also reflected by the ASR and at ISCAD. It was reported that at high levels of many ministries, there is also an interest in evidence-informed policy and programme design, as well as M&E. However, the emphasis of most existing monitoring systems is on compliance, disbursement, and achievement of outputs, with little attention to outcomes or development results and very little emphasis on evaluation, and limited understanding of results monitoring or of evaluation. Interest at ministry level is weak, and key champions at ministry level will need to be identified.

46 USAID Report on "Concept of Administrative Reforms in the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2017

47 USAID Report on "Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan", 2021

48 EU ASK Functional Review of the Ministry of Agriculture, 2022, CLEAR PCA Meeting Notes ISCAD (Aug 2023)

49 USAID Report on "Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan", 2021

50 USAID Report on "Concept of Administrative Reforms in the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2017

51 Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan, 2021

52 EU ASK Functional Review of the Ministry of Agriculture, 2022, CLEAR PCA Meeting Notes ISCAD (Aug 2023)

53 Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan, 2021



# 3. OVERVIEW OF PLANNING, BUDGETING AND M&E SYSTEMS

## 3.1 Legal and Policy Basis of Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

In many countries, there is a legal basis for planning and budgeting, but often not for monitoring and evaluation. In Uzbekistan budgetary processes are provided for in the Constitution, supplemented by law,<sup>54</sup> but not national planning processes. According to a concept note for strengthened legislation in the field of strategic planning, current legislation includes more than 60 disconnected strategic documents, approved in various forms between 2005 and 2022.<sup>55</sup> This concept note

indicates that guidance on the elaboration of goal-oriented documents is not always followed or does not result in good quality documents, existing goal-oriented documents often express objectives in qualitative terms, and often duplicate or contradict each other.<sup>56</sup> A new draft law to regulate the process and requirements of state planning was rejected by the Legislative Chamber of the *Oliy Majlis* in 2020.<sup>57</sup> New work is currently underway with support from GIZ to develop a strategic planning framework.

Although strategy documents generally include legal requirements for monitoring of the strategy itself, there is little to no mention of evaluations in legal documents. This points to the need to develop a legal framework for a national evaluation system.

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<sup>54</sup> [Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the State Budget](#)

<sup>55</sup> Concept of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "on Strategic Planning", 2022

<sup>56</sup> Concept of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "on Strategic Planning", 2022

<sup>57</sup> Resolution of the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the rejection of the draft Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. П3-596 "On strategic planning". <https://lex.uz/docs/5204119>



## 3.2 Roles of Key Actors in the PBM&E Systems

This section provides a brief overview of the roles of key actors in planning, budgeting, monitoring (and evaluation) systems. More details on each are provided in later sections on planning and monitoring processes.

***The Administration of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan (Presidential Administration):*** The President provides the overall direction for the country's development and provides final approval of all development strategies, including the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026, approved on 28 January, 2022. The Presidential Administration provides information, analysis of socio-economic and socio-political trends and organisational-oversight support for the activities of the President. It also organises open and direct dialogue with the population including civil society institutions, implements an integrated human resources policy and ensures public administration of civil service affairs."<sup>58</sup>

A newly adopted structure of the Presidential Administration from August 2023 has 423 staff in total with 11 Advisors to the President on different issues, two Assistants to the President, President's Press Service and different departments and units.<sup>59</sup> These advisors are very powerful and in practice senior to ministers.

The ***Agency for Development of Public Service***, under the President, is also tasked to introduce measurable indicators to evaluate the performance of civil servants and analysing their results, in conjunction with public opinion, to establish a transparent ranking of government organisations.<sup>60</sup>

Another entity is the ***Department of Legal Expertise and Comprehensive Analysis*** of the Presidential Administration, which is responsible for systematic monitoring and supervision of the implementation of presidential decisions on reforming the system of State administration and the socio-economic and legal and judicial spheres.<sup>61</sup> In fact, all draft strategies, state programmes, action plans and roadmaps are subjected to a revision by this Department, once draft documents reach the Presidential Administration.

The ***Agency for Strategic Reforms (ASR)***, under the President, was created in September 2022 to organise implementation of the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026, including introduction of consistent approaches to the implementation of reforms. Tasks related to monitoring and evaluation include "assessment of the effectiveness of reforms with a critical analysis of their implementation in areas and sectors, identifying systemic problems that create conditions for bureaucracy, red tape, and corruption, and taking measures to eliminate them"<sup>62</sup> and "monitoring the implementation of the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan and state programs."<sup>63</sup>

The ASR submits annual action plans to its Council (chaired by the President), and reports quarterly on the effectiveness of reform implementation, including results achieved, shortcomings, and problems, and proposes remedial actions. The Council meets each quarter to discuss these reports.

The ASR has the authority to request and obtain "necessary statistical, analytical, and other data from state entities and organisations" as well as "access electronic information systems of state

58 [Administration of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan](#)

59 [Presidential Resolution](#), No. PF-141, dated August 17, 2023

60 Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Public Civil Service, Article 8, 2022

61 Tashmatov and Fayzieva. Analysis Of The System For Monitoring The Effectiveness Of Reforms In The Republic Of Uzbekistan, 2022

62 [Agency for Strategic Reforms](#)

63 [Agency for Strategic Reforms](#)



entities and organisation... as well as integrate these systems with the electronic systems of the agency.”<sup>64</sup>

ASR also coordinates the Country Platform of Uzbekistan, which brings together donors and development partners committed to achieving the objectives outlined in the New Uzbekistan Development Strategy for 2022-2026.<sup>65</sup>

**Cabinet of Ministers**<sup>66</sup> is led by the Prime Minister, includes four Deputy Prime Ministers, Chairman of the Council of the Ministers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, and the 21 ministries.<sup>67</sup> According to the Constitution, the Cabinet of Ministers is, among others, responsible for the conduct of effective economic, social, financial, money and credit policies as well as the development and realisation of programmes in different sectors.<sup>68</sup> Deputy Prime Ministers monitor the progress of implementation by ministries, state committees and other government bodies of the laws.

The **Apparatus of the Cabinet of Ministers** provides legal, organisational, technical, informational, analytical and protocol support for the activities of the Government, preparation of meetings of the Cabinet of Ministers and its Presidium, draft laws, acts of the President and Cabinet of Ministers, development of road maps, schedules, action programmes, practical measures aimed at the implementation of the priority tasks of the country's socio-economic development. Recent reforms reduced the power of the Cabinet of Ministers, and respectively empowered the Presidential Administration even more. The position of Deputy Prime Minister was reduced from eight to four, and the staff of the Cabinet of Ministers reduced from 269 to 120. Restructuration also included the establishment of the Secretariat of the Prime Minister, which provides legal,

organisational-technical, information-analytical and protocol support for the activities of the head of government. All draft policies (in the form of a President's or Cabinet of Ministers' Decree or Resolution) undergo review by the Secretariat of the Prime Minister.<sup>69</sup>

The **Ministry of Justice** has a more prominent role in the policy cycle than in many other countries. The main tasks of the Ministry of Justice include “pursuing a unified state legal policy, coordinating and implementing the efficiency of law-making activities” as well as the “analysis and monitoring of the effectiveness of the public administration system based on advanced foreign experience and modern development trends.”<sup>70</sup> The latter is led by the Department of Analysis of Effectiveness of the Public Administration System.

The **Ministry of Economy and Finance** was created in 2023, merging two ministries and consolidating their work under one Minister. Anything regarding finance is within their remit as well as promotion of economic growth, and so the Ministry is critical to planning, budgeting and monitoring processes. It collaborates with ASR (which oversees strategic planning across sectors) as well as with line ministries. Their specific focus under the Development Strategy for New Uzbekistan (DSNU) 2022-2026 is the third “direction”, (accelerated development of the national economy and ensure high rates of growth). The Ministry develops specific strategies and related action plans, such as the Strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Transition to “Green” Economy for 2019-2030 and the Strategy for Improvement of the Public Finance Management System for 2020–2024.

64 Presidential Decree on Agency of Strategic Reforms No. DP-216 on September 8, 2022

65 For example, at the 4 May 2023 meeting, co-chaired with the World Bank, representatives of 14-line ministries and agencies of the Republic of Uzbekistan met with 20 Donors and Development partners

66 This section is based on document review only; we have not yet been able to meet with the Office of the Cabinet of Ministers.

67 Government of Uzbekistan, [Cabinet of Ministers](#)

68 Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Article 115

69 Presidential Decree “[On Measures for Implementation of New Uzbekistan Administrative Reforms](#)” No. PF-269-son, December 24, 2022

70 Presidential Decree “[On Organisational Measures To Further Improve The Activities Of The Ministry Of Justice Of The Republic Of Uzbekistan](#)” No. PR-3666, April 13, 2018

The **Ministry of Agriculture and other Line Ministries** develop their own strategies, plans and other strategic documents. For example, the Ministry of Agriculture elaborated an Agri-food Development Strategy for 2020-2030, which includes several strategic priorities, including ensuring food security, creating a favourable agri-business environment, developing modern public administration systems and the development of research and education, as well as a transparent industry statistics system.

A recent Presidential Resolution of January 2023 made it mandatory to establish Strategic Planning and Methodology units within each executive authority (ministry/agency/committee/inspection).<sup>71</sup> Annual Action Plans or Roadmaps for sector strategies are developed by these Strategic Planning and Methodology Units. However, these Units are under-capacitated and lack technical skills and experience in strategic planning.

**International Strategic Center for Agri-food Development (ISCAD)** is a government think tank under the Ministry of Agriculture, established by Presidential Decree<sup>72</sup> building on technical assistance from the EU.<sup>73</sup> The Center was established with the aim of strengthening governance and strategic oversight functions within the agri-food sector. Its mission is to build, link and streamline main functions of the policy cycle, enhance evidence-based policy making and ensure sustainability of reform process in the sector. Functions assigned to ISCAD, according to a functional review of the MoA, are:

- Strategic planning and programming;
- Project management and implementation;
- Policy analysis;
- Monitoring and evaluation;

- Institutional development and better regulation.

The **Oliy Majlis** (Parliament) plays an important role in approval of the state budget as well as in monitoring and oversight. There are committees in both the Senate and Legislative Chamber which oversee government, and the Prime Minister reports to these on an annual basis.

The **Chamber of Accounts** is Uzbekistan's supreme audit institution, the highest body of state external audit and financial control.<sup>74</sup> It plays a role in examining the draft law on the state budget, monitors the state budget process, and conducts audits. The Chamber of Accounts reports directly to the President, and is accountable to the President and the *Oliy Majlis*.<sup>75</sup> In January 2022, the Chamber of Accounts launched an e-platform for "State Audit" under the Decree of the President of Uzbekistan, which allows it to track and monitor the use of public funds.

The State Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Statistics was transformed into the **Agency of Statistics** under the President in December 2022.<sup>76</sup> As of 2023, the agency has a central office and two regional offices. The central office has approximately 240 employees, with most of them trained in statistics, with 20 branches, each branch closely coordinating with the relevant line ministries. In the regional offices, there were approximately 100 employees, with 70% trained in statistics and 30% working as enumerators.

The core responsibilities of the Statistics Agency are the production, coordination and regulation of official statistics, coordination of the national statistics system and the implementation of a uniform statistical methodology in line with

71 Presidential Decree "On the priority organisational measures to effectively start the activities of the republican executive authorities" No. PF-14, January 25th, 2023

72 Presidential Decree "On measures to further improve the system for researching reforms, strategic planning and management in the field of food and agriculture" No. PD-58, of December 2021

73 Presidential Decree "[On Measures For Further Improvement Of Food And Agriculture Reforms, Strategic Planning And Management Systems](#)" No. PQ-58-son, December 22, 2021

74 It became a full member of the International Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) in November 2021

75 [Law on Chamber of Accounts](#)

76 Presidential Decree "[On measures to implement administrative reforms of the New Uzbekistan](#)" No. DP-269, December 21, 2022

international standards.<sup>77</sup> However, other line ministries and agencies also produce data and statistics, which are considered a part of the statistical infrastructure (see Annex 4).

**Local governments** comprising of *Khokims* and *Kengashes* have roles to play in formulation and adoption of local budgets and their execution, and in approving and implementing programmes for socio-economic development and social protection. However, coordination with ministries is weak. A review of local governance by USAID notes that “to meet new demands, subnational governments in Uzbekistan need to significantly improve their capacity. Capacity needs to be increased at the level of the organisation and system.”<sup>78</sup> However, it is important to note that at the local government level, more capacity building must be preceded and then coupled with measures of decentralisation that allow more decision-making power at the sub-national level.

**Civil Society** has been identified by the President “as a key partner of the state in developing dialogue with the people, ensuring reliable guarantees of observance of human rights and freedoms and solving the tasks of increasing the level of citizen involvement in public administration”.<sup>79</sup> With the passage of legislation and decrees, civil society in Uzbekistan is gradually being built and the number of registered NGOs increased from 60 in 2017 to 383 in 2020.<sup>80</sup> Despite this progress, space for civil society remains limited, and NGOs in Uzbekistan are predominantly government-organised non-governmental organisations (so-called GONGOs)<sup>81</sup> and there is little to differentiate new CSOs from the GONGOs.<sup>82</sup>

Two key organisations with respect to the planning and monitoring of the DSNU are the *Development Strategy Center* and *Yuksalish*. The Development Strategy Center is a non-governmental organisation formed to facilitate expert and public discussions related to the development strategy and state programmes. It collaborates with multiple organisations including government agencies and private organisations for open dialogue and public control. It also “offers recommendations on public activities and government programmes”.<sup>83</sup> “*Yuksalish*” was created for the implementation of the state programme in five priority areas of Uzbekistan’s development. Its objective is to establish an open dialogue with the citizens and the business community and to form a system of public control. *Yuksalish* enjoys the authority to participate in the discussion of reforms, including in the *Oliy Majlis*, and can submit analytical information and proposals to the Parliament, the Presidential Administration and the Cabinet of Ministers.<sup>84</sup>

The role of media in civil society is limited. The web platforms [www.daryo.uz](http://www.daryo.uz) and [www.kun.uz](http://www.kun.uz) (in Uzbek language) and [www.gazeta.uz](http://www.gazeta.uz) (in Russian) are important platforms for voicing concerns and generating debate. Investigative journalists, especially those trained in assessing policy issues, are few and far between. Coverage in media channels is generally perceived as critical, rather than constructive discussion. However, as USAID suggests, bloggers and journalists alike with strong social media presence play a key role in shaping the political views of the average citizen. In summary, the above sections illustrate the complexity of a national M&E ecosystem, and future legislation and institutional capacity development in Uzbekistan will need to address the roles and responsibilities of these different institutions.

77 Law on State Statistics, Article 5, 2002

78 USAID report on Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan, 2021

79 The Current State of Civil Society in Uzbekistan 2021, pg. 12

80 Presidential Decree “On measures to radically increase the role of civil society institutions in the process of democratic renewal of the country” on December 28, 2016

81 USAID. Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan, 2021

82 USAID. Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan, 2021

83 USAID. Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan, 2021

84 USAID. Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan, 2021

**Development Partners** play a key role in Uzbekistan's M&E landscape, particularly since the opening in 2017. The remainder of this section highlights some of these partners.

The *World Bank* supports Uzbekistan in its transition "toward an inclusive and sustainable market economy" through its Country Partnership Framework (CPF) 2022-2026.<sup>85</sup> While the World Bank does not have projects working specifically on strengthening strategic planning, monitoring or evaluation, its CPF does include support to operational capacity training for monitoring and evaluation.<sup>86</sup> The World Bank is also launching a programme to strengthen the statistical system of Uzbekistan and help modernise the national statistical system and build capacity for evidence-based policy implementation and assessment, including support for the first population census since 1989.

*UNDP* has been present in Uzbekistan since 1993, and its Country Programme Document (CPD) 2021-2025 includes programmes to "promote effective democratic governance, achieve inclusive and sustainable growth, take action for the climate and advocate for equality between men and women."<sup>87</sup> UNDP is also supporting the development of a National Adaptation Plan, with a view to integrating climate change adaptation into national and subnational planning and budgeting processes, and promoting "data and risk-informed development policies, plans, systems and financing".<sup>88</sup>

The *EU* is one of the key development partners of Uzbekistan in the agri-food sector. *EU ASK Facility* is a project funded by the European Union and implemented by DT Global International Development consultancy firm (Europe branch), which aims to contribute to the achievement of the Uzbekistan Agri-Food Development Strategy

2020-2030, with the objective of developing a competitive, market and export-oriented agri-food sector. The project carries out activities in four key areas: governance and policy; institutional reform; agriculture knowledge and innovation system; public finance management (PFM).<sup>89</sup>

*IFAD* is implementing its Country Strategic Opportunities Program 2023-2027 in Uzbekistan.<sup>90</sup> As part of its policy engagement work, IFAD and the Government will convene rural sector partners in a country platform that helps to coordinate development interventions, promote policy coherence, and will strengthen institutional capacity for monitoring and evaluation. Capacity-building activities are embedded in components of the investment programmes and include monitoring and evaluation (to be planned in cooperation with the GEI), results-based management of rural transformation (RESOLVE) and data use (50x2030 initiative).

*GIZ* has been working in Uzbekistan since 1992. Of particular interest is GIZ's Good Governance Program which is supporting in collaboration with the OECD, a Public Governance Review, which will include a chapter on "evidence-based policy making and look into the government's ability to achieve objectives through the use of evidence, data, regulations, laws, regulatory impact assessments, *ex post* evaluations and other instruments to deliver better economic and social outcomes and thus enhance the life of citizens and businesses."<sup>91</sup> In parallel GIZ is also working with the ASR and supporting the analysis of the current planning system and development of a strategic planning framework. These exercises are of critical importance to any plans to strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems as part of the policy cycle and to further evidence-informed decision-making.

*UNICEF*, in addition to its work on child protection,

85 World Bank Group, Country Partnership Framework for the Republic of Uzbekistan for the period FY2022-FY2026

86 World Bank Group, Country Partnership Framework for the Republic of Uzbekistan for the period FY2022-FY2026

87 UNDP Uzbekistan Country Program Document 2021-2025

88 UNDP. National Adaptation Plan, 2023

89 ToRs for the EU assistance for Uzbekistan Agri-Food Development Strategy 2020-2030 Agriculture Support and Knowledge (ASK) facility

90 IFAD. Republic of Uzbekistan Country Strategic Opportunities Programme 2023-2027

91 OECD Public Governance Review (PGR) of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2023

child health, education and social policy, supports national evaluation capacity development at the regional and country level. In March 2023, the two-week “Executive Course for Evaluation Leaders” (ExCEL) witnessed the participation of two government officials from the ASR and the Center for Economic Research and Reforms (CERR), along with UNICEF counterparts. Uzbekistan participants developed a three-year action plan, which includes raising awareness, an evaluation of the alternative early childhood education centres, an evaluability assessment of the national education development plan 2023-2026, and development of an overall strategy for the planning, monitoring and evaluation system. At the country level, UNICEF and the Government establish a country evaluation plan, under which at least three evaluations per programme cycle are conducted. UNICEF takes a capacity development approach to these evaluations, engaging government counterparts in evaluation reference groups and in the preparation of evaluation management responses.

*USAID*, also present in Uzbekistan since 1993, works among others to strengthen democracy, human rights and governance. It is expanding its support to increase public participation, improve access to public information and promote partnerships between civil society and government. USAID also works to support agricultural development and diversification.

Developing and strengthening an effective national M&E ecosystem is a complex, long-term effort, and it will be important to engage and coordinate with these and other development partners to promote synergies.

## 3.3 Planning and Budgeting Systems: Overview

This section provides an overview of planning and budgeting systems and processes as these are key entry points for the use of M&E and other evidence in decision-making.

### 3.3.1 Planning Processes

National strategic planning is not institutionalised by law. Generally, depending on the level of the document, representatives of the executive branch, local state authorities, as well as the legislature may be involved in planning processes. The standard planning process typically consists of the following steps:

- Initiating the preparation of a document, identifying stakeholders and involved parties, including from the public, and drawing up relevant working groups;
- Development of a draft document and a draft regulatory legal act approving this document;
- Sending prepared drafts to ministries and other executive authorities for comments and proposals for amendments and additions;
- Sending the agreed drafts to the Presidential Administration or the Cabinet of Ministers, depending on the level and type of draft documents for consideration.

Uzbekistan’s development planning framework has seen a dramatic transformation since 2016, with five-year development strategies becoming the dominant framework (starting with the 2017-2021 strategy, followed by the current 2022-2026 strategy).<sup>92</sup> National development strategies, including the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan (DSNU) for 2022-2026 are initiated by the Presidential Administration. Once the Presidential Administration prepares the first draft of a strategy, it is then published on the [www.project.gov.uz](http://www.project.gov.uz) platform, which is a single electronic system for the development and agreement of draft normative legal documents, launched by the Ministry of Justice in 2019. Through this platform, relevant line ministries and agencies have an opportunity to give their comments and inputs within the framework of the inter-ministerial consultation process. Next, the draft document is published in [www.regulation.gov.uz](http://www.regulation.gov.uz), which is an

<sup>92</sup> UNDP. Implementing Sustainable Development Goals: [Rapid Integrated Assessment of Key National Policy Development Planning Documents \(Uzbekistan\)](#), 2022



electronic system for submitting draft normative legal documents for public discussion by agencies, ministries and other state bodies, also managed by the Ministry of Justice. Then, the draft normative legal document, with its all annexes, including results of inter-ministerial and public consultations is submitted to the Ministry of Justice for review.

One of the main functions of the Ministry of Justice with respect to policy or strategy development is carrying out a legal review of draft documents to ensure they do not conflict with other regulations or laws (although this does not necessarily eliminate overlapping programmes). After review by the Ministry of Justice, the document is then sent to the Cabinet of Ministers. Once draft acts are submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers, depending on the area of the draft act, the responsible executor unit of the Cabinet of Ministers conducts an examination of the draft act from the standpoint of ensuring national and state interests, economic efficiency and coordination of the issues contained in it. If necessary, the responsible executor revises the draft act, and submits proposals to the relevant deputy or adviser to the Prime Minister for resolving disagreements on the draft. The executor unit may request additional materials and information or involve heads and specialists of state bodies and other organisations to prepare the necessary financial, economic and other calculations, other reference and analytical materials, including for assessing the possible consequences of the adoption of the draft. After approval by the Cabinet of Ministers, the document is sent to the Presidential Administration for final approval.

If a line ministry wishes to develop a policy (e.g. one that will take the form of a Presidential Decree or Resolution), it submits an "information note" (*axborot xati/dokladnaya zapiska*) to the Presidential Administration asking their permission to develop this policy. In the information note, the line ministry explains the reasons and need to develop the policy and provides some

analytical briefs to justify policy initiation. In this regard, policymakers in ministries demonstrate responsiveness to new ideas, recommendations and directives. However, they often lack the technical expertise and skills to use and analyse evidence to drive their decision-making processes.<sup>93</sup>

Once the policy development is initiated by a ministry, in principle, it is necessary to conduct an analysis of the problem(s) to be solved by the policy. However, the staff of line ministries' department responsible for certain policy development have limited knowledge and skills of policy analysis tools. A statistical and evidence-based approach is rarely undertaken in policy development. In the process of policy development, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis, problem tree analysis, cost-benefit analysis, ex-ante or risk assessment analysis and theory of change tools are not used in practice by the relevant departments of ministries. This has a direct impact on the quality and essence of the policy documents being developed by ministries.

One of the reasons why draft policies are developed without deep analysis and evidence is that the deadlines are too short. In most cases, the draft policy development deadline is three months or less, with deadlines set by the Presidential Administration. In the information note (*axborot xati/dokladnaya zapiska*), a ministry can ask permission for a tentative date until which draft policy can be developed and submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers. Otherwise, the Presidential Administration will put a deadline themselves.<sup>94</sup>

Similarly, draft normative legal acts are often of low quality, despite the requirement by the Ministry of Justice that ministries analyse different policy options (regulatory, non-regulatory, etc.). Currently, the rapid implementation of reforms is the reason for the adoption of many normative-legal documents. In addition, the lack of systematic

93 ISCAD. Analytical assessment of the system, processes and mechanisms of public policy development - Institutional Development and Better Regulation Unit

94 ISCAD. Analytical assessment of the system, processes and mechanisms of public policy development - Institutional Development and Better Regulation Unit

analysis of policy problems and their causes leads to an increase in the number of policy documents aimed at solving these problems.<sup>95</sup>

This lack of expertise is even more pronounced at local government level because even though there has been a trend to hire more modern-thinking, foreign educated professionals in key positions within central government, this has not been the case at the local level. Local government officials were not provided with such resources, limiting their opportunities and capacity to modernise systems as done at the centre.<sup>96,97</sup> Moreover, there appears to be a mechanistic approach in many parts of government to address development targets, without wanting to fully assess whether those targets are meaningful, or directly addressing the challenges to implementation. This again may be linked to a lack of decentralisation of decision-making, with most decision-making at a high level, in ministries, or in the Presidential Administration.<sup>98</sup>

Strategic planning and evaluation need to be closely linked. Development strategies are designed to address problems, and underlying any strategy is a theory of change, whether implicit or explicit, as to how that problem can be addressed. Evaluation provides an opportunity to validate – or review and adjust – those theories of change and implementation approaches. The current planning system demonstrates weaknesses, but the above also illustrates that there are mechanisms for analysis, consultation, review and revision, which offer entry points for strengthening planning processes, which, by extension will then make evaluation all the more useful.

### 3.3.2 National Development Strategy 2022–2026

Arguably, the New Uzbekistan Development Strategy for 2022-2026 is seen as the most

important document by public officials, highlighting the priorities of the Government for the next election cycle, and requiring nationwide mobilisation to achieve its goals.<sup>99</sup> The Strategy (2022-26) has the following main sections: <sup>100</sup>

- I. Building a humane state by improving the honour and dignity of humans and the further development of a free civil society;
- II. The principles of justice and the rule of law into a fundamental and necessary condition for the development of the country;
- III. Accelerated development of the national economy and ensure high rates of growth;
- IV. Implementing a fair social policy, developing human capital;
- V. Provision of spiritual development and raising this sphere to a new level;
- VI. Approach to global issues based on national interests;
- VII. Strengthening the country's security and defence potential, maintaining an open, pragmatic and active foreign policy.

The strategy includes 100 goals, ranging from Goal 1: Improving the efficiency of the *mahalla* institution, turning it into a basic link in public administration and control, to Goal 100: Improving the system of providing services to citizens of Uzbekistan abroad by diplomatic missions and consular offices of the Republic of Uzbekistan in foreign countries.

A number of these goals relate to M&E, of which an analysis is presented in Annex 5. Some goals relate to an effective public administration, and the potential role of planning/M&E in this, for example Goal 5 (see Table 2). At least seven goals have elements relevant to developing M&E and problem solving, such as Goal 12.

<sup>95</sup> Iskandarbek Genjaev, *Ministry of Justice*, 2022

<sup>96</sup> USAID Report on "Concept of Administrative Reforms in the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2017,

<sup>97</sup> USAID Report on Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan, 2021

<sup>98</sup> EU ASK Functional Review of the Ministry of Agriculture, 2022, CLEAR PCA Meeting Notes ISCAD (Aug 2023)

<sup>99</sup> UNDP. Implementing Sustainable Development Goals: [Rapid Integrated Assessment of Key National Policy Development Planning Documents \(Uzbekistan\)](#), 2022

<sup>100</sup> Government of Uzbekistan. [Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026](#)

Table 2: Goals in the DSNU relevant to M&amp;E

GOALS	RELEVANT ELEMENTS
<b>Goal 5.</b> Implement a compact, professional, fair, and high performance public administration system.	Creation of the necessary conditions for the heads of ministries and departments to independently resolve organisational and legal issues, ensuring the effective implementation of their decisions.
<b>Goal 12.</b> Improving the organisational and legal framework for the implementation of effective public control.	Wide involvement of subjects of public control in the process of performing certain state functions, conducting social surveys when studying the activities of state bodies, as well as establishing the practice of conducting an open discussion of identified shortcomings.

Based on the DSNU 2022–2026, a cross-sectoral annual State Program for the implementation of the national development strategy is developed, including a set of targets. The development of the annual State Program is initiated by the Presidential Administration. The draft document prepared by them is then sent to line ministries and agencies for inputs and suggestions. It finally gets approved by the relevant Presidential Resolution. The template for the State Program includes headings such as main directions, goals and tasks; implementation mechanisms; implementation form (development of normative-legal act/action plan/organisational activities/programme of measures/road-map etc. forms); deadline; implementation costs (funding sources); controllers (bodies that control the implementation Presidential Administration/ Cabinet of Ministers/Senate of *Oliy Majlis*/ASR etc.), responsible performers (line ministries and agencies). The State Program for 2023 includes 293 measures/tasks/activities across all 100 goals of the DSNU.<sup>101</sup>

### 3.3.3 Ministry Level Planning

As mentioned above, line ministries develop their own sectoral strategies and related action plans or roadmaps. One key weakness in the national planning system is a lack of linkages between the DSNU and sector strategic documents, where a cascading strategy approach is not implemented. Related issues include a lack of consistency or hierarchy between national goals in various sector strategies, programs, plans; strategic documents having different and diverse approaches, form, structure and content; and confusing use of terms (strategy, concept, state program etc.). Due to the presence of many overlapping and contradictory aspects in the regulatory framework for certain sectors, there is no hierarchy of strategic planning documents for the sector policy. This has implications for developing effective national level outcome monitoring systems.

However, unlike other policy documents developed by line ministries and agencies, sector strategies are usually developed over a longer period of time, are more evidence-based, and include targeted qualitative and quantitative indicators. The process of development of draft sector strategies generally includes wide consultation among stakeholders. It may include creation of an inter-ministerial working group and sometimes technical experts from international development partners are also engaged.

Currently, annual action plans or roadmaps for sector strategies include inputs from various departments and units of the developer-ministry, other relevant line ministries and agencies. In the process of preparation, Strategic Planning and Methodology Units of ministries are primarily responsible for general coordination and for receiving inputs from other stakeholders, including the developer-ministry's internal departments and other line ministries and agencies. However, due to lack of clear instructions, guidelines or manuals for these units on the development of strategic documents, action plans and roadmaps, these

<sup>101</sup> Presidential Decree “On the state program for the implementation of the New Uzbekistan development strategy for the years 2022–2026 in the year of people-based and quality education” No. PF-27, dated February 28, 2023



various documents are often not very relevant or targeted. The preparation process of these documents currently does not include a broader consultation among Minister and Deputy Ministers of a developer-ministry. In addition, the annual action plans or roadmaps do not define the main directions of the annual activity of a ministry and are not linked to the internal program of measures (work plan) of a ministry.<sup>102</sup>

Analysis of several sector strategies and their Action Plans reveal that there is no data to evaluate certain indicators of these strategies. Insufficient data quality makes it difficult to fully assess the achievement of key indicators. This is also due to inefficient methods of collection, analysis, quality control and validation of statistical data. Besides that, key indicators of sector strategies lack a clarity for the source or structure of data to measure a success in achieving the indicators. For example, it is not clear whether it is the Statistics Agency's data to verify the progress made, or it is a survey conducted by the Ministry.<sup>103</sup>

The appendix in this document contains some examples of the types of outcome, outputs and roadmap which the Ministry of Agriculture sets out:

- Annex 6 shows the outcome targets in the strategy;
- Annex 7 shows an example of some of the output targets related to M&E. As can be seen, these focus on data, rather than M&E;
- Annex 8 shows the road map for implementation of the Agricultural Strategy.

The Functional Review of the MoA suggests that "planning and objective setting presents

considerable weaknesses. Many MoA departments cannot distinguish between sector and MoA priorities and between MoA and department priorities, usually describing the same priorities for all levels. This indicates limited capacity for objective setting and break down from the strategic to the operational level".<sup>104</sup>

The strategy comments that there is "a lack of strategic planning for public spending in the sector. There is also no systematic linkage within the budget system between International finance and credit programs in support of the sector (more than \$3.5 billion) and large government investment programs or strategic planning processes."<sup>105</sup>

The Functional Review highlights an issue of ownership of the strategy and roadmap within the ministry, indicating that many staff are not familiar with them.<sup>106</sup>

The Ministry of Agriculture also has a project management office (PMO), established to regularise in-year changes of initiatives. The idea is this office collects ideas for strategic initiatives from different departments within the Ministry, which are then selected by the Strategic Management Committee chaired by the Minister, and so decides which strategic initiatives get funding and approval.

### 3.3.4 Other Strategic Plans

In addition to the DSNU 2022-2026 and sectoral strategies, Uzbekistan has a plethora of complementary (and often contradictory<sup>107</sup>) strategies and plans, as highlighted in a UNDP report on Implementing Sustainable Development Goals: A Rapid Integrated Assessment of Key National Policy Development Planning.<sup>108</sup> Some illustrative examples include the Strategy

102 ISCAD. Analytical assessment of the system, processes and mechanisms of public policy development. Institutional Development and Better Regulation Unit

103 ISCAD. Analytical assessment of the system, processes and mechanisms of public policy development. Institutional Development and Better Regulation Unit

104 Ministry of Agriculture Functional Review Findings & Recommendations, 2022

105 Ministry of Agriculture Functional Review Findings & Recommendations, 2022

106 Ministry of Agriculture Functional Review Findings & Recommendations, 2022

107 Draft "Concept of the law on the Republic of Uzbekistan on Strategic Planning"

108 UNDP. Implementing Sustainable Development Goals: [Rapid Integrated Assessment of Key National Policy Development Planning Documents \(Uzbekistan\)](#), 2022

for Achieving Gender Equality, the Strategy on Maintaining Biological Diversity, a Digital Uzbekistan 2030 Strategy, and the National Strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan on Human Rights. UNDP notes that not all of the plans analysed include a thorough list of responsible organisations for specific goals, tasks or activities, and many development programmes do not have clear institutional guidelines.

### 3.3.5 Strengthening Strategic Planning

Many stakeholders met during the MESA mission and various reports suggest that the overall system of strategic planning in the country needs to be improved.<sup>109</sup> The OECD with the support of GIZ's Good Governance in Uzbekistan Project will carry out a Public Governance Review (PGR) of the Republic of Uzbekistan to provide a comprehensive review of the governance system. This review will examine the ways in which governance arrangements and instruments, including the roles of executive authorities (ministries and agencies), can be strengthened to better assess, coordinate and implement reform priorities, including enhancing strategic planning, policy coordination, performance management and gender-sensitive decision-making. This in turn will help to further modernise the civil service, improve public integrity and enhance regulatory quality and evidence-informed policies. The assessment will be paired with actionable recommendations. The initial phase of PGR has commenced, with the official start envisaged for September 2024.<sup>110</sup>

Another activity carried out by the Good Governance in Uzbekistan Project of GIZ mentioned earlier is to support the development and adoption of a strategic planning framework for Uzbekistan. The main objective of this activity is to provide support to the Agency for Strategic

Reforms under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan in developing structures, processes, and capacities necessary for the establishment of a strategic planning system in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The scope of work include preparing a broad analysis on the state of play in strategic planning of policies in Uzbekistan, developing a legal framework, defining competencies, interrelations and principles of functioning of all the stakeholders in the system of strategic planning, methodological guidelines and developing a Capacity Building Program to guarantee sustainability of the reforms in policy coordination and strategic planning.<sup>111</sup> This element is critical in understanding how the monitoring and evaluation systems can support this planning. Key will be enabling the cross-sectoral coordination which will be needed for effective strategic planning.

As mentioned above, strategic planning and evaluation need to be closely linked, and development of an evaluation system in Uzbekistan should be done in parallel with or closely following the development of the strategic planning system.

### 3.3.6 Budgeting System

The financial year is the same as the calendar year, i.e. January to December. The budget process was extensively revised from 2021<sup>112</sup> and the following describes the 2022 process. The budget process started in April with an analysis of the fiscal situation. On 1 June, a paper on the fiscal situation and the budget ceilings for line ministries was submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers and once approved, to the ministries. In August, the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MoEF) received the submissions from ministries; the draft budget was submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers (CoM) on 15 September, and from the CoM to the Chamber of Accounts for checking the calculations. In mid-November, the budget law was submitted to Parliament, initially to the Legislature for

109 UNDP. Implementing Sustainable Development Goals: [Rapid Integrated Assessment of Key National Policy Development Planning Documents \(Uzbekistan\)](#), 2022

110 OECD Public Governance Review (PGR) of Uzbekistan Project Description, July 2023

111 ToRs for Providing support to the Agency for Strategic Reforms under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan in developing structures, processes, and capacities necessary for the establishment of a strategic planning system in the Republic of Uzbekistan

112 [Participatory Budgeting: From Piloting to Developing New Practices, 2022](#)

approval and then on to the Senate. Finally, in mid-December, the Law was submitted to the President for signature.

The budget includes the State Budget including the salary budget; State Trust Funds (funds for priority programmes such as Each Family Entrepreneur, managed line ministries), Extrabudgetary Expenditure (e.g. where ministries retain own revenue generated, reported only in aggregate); and Reconstruction and Development Programme, used for a diversity of purposes including large projects such as dams, and occasionally filling budgetary gaps. The latter is funded from income sources such as the difference between the budget for the price of gold and actual revenue, interest from loans to commercial banks.

The Ministry of Economy and Finance is initiating programme-based budgeting, piloting with the development budget with Agriculture and Health. Seminars have been organised to help raise understanding in ministries. There is a World Bank supported Financial Management Support Programme which includes supporting intersectoral resource allocation.<sup>113</sup>

Overall, the effectiveness of public spending in Uzbekistan faces significant risks. These risks include but are not limited to poor coordination among ministries during budget planning and execution, a lack of strategic planning, and issues in implementing investments from development partners.<sup>114</sup> The main evidence used in the budget process is performance against macroeconomic indicators, which include previous macroeconomic performance, expected revenues and debts, and direction of budget policy by respective industries. These indicators are an important input for the Law on the State Budget and the Budget Message which is passed to the Cabinet of Ministers. Where they find problems, they have discussions with the

sector departments within MoEF.

There is currently no use of evaluation in the budgeting process, however there is recognition of the potential of evaluation and the Ministry indicated possible interest in evaluations exploring problematic areas, such as health, education and agriculture.

### 3.3.7 Alignment to the SDGs

Uzbekistan is a signatory to the 2015 UN General Assembly Resolution on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In 2018, the Cabinet of Ministers passed a resolution “on measures to implement National goals and tasks for sustainable development until 2030”, which included the identification of national SDGs and a whole-of-government approach to achieve them. These goals and targets were further revised in a February 2022 resolution by the Cabinet of Ministers.<sup>115</sup>

An analysis by UNDP found that alignment between national development documents and the global as well as national SDGs is strongest for goals 1 (poverty), 2 (hunger), 3 (health) and 5 (gender), but weakest for goals 10 (inequality), 13 (climate change), 14 (oceans) and 17 (partnerships). The UNDP analysis notes that in the process of nationalising the SDGs, several national targets or indicators have been developed with only a limited association to the core idea of the goal.<sup>116</sup>

### 3.3.8 Equity and Gender Considerations in the Planning/Budget System

Poor equity and gender outcomes contribute to poor development outcomes, and these elements are also important Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5 on gender equality and SDG 10 on reduced inequalities). Effective planning, monitoring and evaluation systems need to be gender and equity

113 [Public Finance Management Reform Project](#)

114 [Uzbekistan: Second Agricultural Public Expenditure Review, 2021](#). World Bank

115 UNDP. Implementing Sustainable Development Goals: [Rapid Integrated Assessment of Key National Policy Development Planning Documents \(Uzbekistan\)](#), 2022

116 UNDP. Implementing Sustainable Development Goals: [Rapid Integrated Assessment of Key National Policy Development Planning Documents \(Uzbekistan\)](#), 2022

informed, and thus this section looks briefly at these considerations in the current systems.

In the Gender Inequality Index of 2016, Uzbekistan was rated 57th out of 188 countries, mainly because of women's high education levels and labour force participation rates. Gender balance in student enrolment varies by level of education but is most prominent and stark in primary and secondary general education. In professional colleges, even though the sex ratio of students has had near gender parity since 2009 – the gender disparities are still significant. In the labour market, women in Uzbekistan compose 49.6% of the population, but their share in formal employment (45.7%) is lower than that of their male counterparts (54.3%).<sup>117</sup> Similarly, the public service is not diverse, with participation low among women, people with disabilities, and other historically marginalised groups.<sup>118</sup> The Statistics Agency maintains a website with gender statistics.<sup>119</sup>

UNDP found that all the nine SDG targets related to gender have been incorporated in national plans.<sup>120</sup> However, if the national SDG plan is excluded, this drops to four targets. Only one Goal (69) of the DSNU focuses on improving gender equality (see Table 3 below). The DSNU focuses on a few SDGs and is silent on several of them.

Table 3: Goal 69 on Gender Equality

GOALS	RELEVANT ELEMENTS
<b>Goal 69.</b> Support women and further increase their activity in society.	Continuation of the policy of ensuring gender equality, increasing the socio-political activity of women, continuing the implementation of reforms to support them.

In the agricultural sector strategy there is only one gender-related target (8.3), which focuses on increasing women-led enterprises in rural areas by 20% by 2025. There does appear to be disaggregated gender data available but overall, there does not appear to be a significant focus on gender.

Apart from the Strategy for achieving gender equality until 2030, there is also the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On guarantees with respect to equal rights and opportunities for women and men" which laid a legal basis for defining key gender-based concepts, such as: gender; gender statistics; gender-based legal review; direct and indirect discrimination on the basis of gender; temporary special measures to ensure the implementation of gender policy.<sup>121</sup> There is a Cabinet of Ministers' Resolution on the procedure of conducting gender-based review of draft and adopted policies.<sup>122</sup>

### 3.3.9 Climate and Environmental Sustainability Considerations in Planning/ Budget Systems

Climate change is affecting all countries and is a key element of the SDGs, including: SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), 13 (Climate Action), 14 (Life below Water), and 15 (Life on Land). Unfortunately, in the status quo climate change impact and the larger disruption of the ecosystem is not being given its due attention as part of Uzbekistan's national planning and budgeting strategies. However, the perceived importance of these issues is on the rise as global public discourse around this climate change is getting more traction by governments around the world.

UNDP (2022) suggests that 0.2% of the state

117 Uzbekistan's Country Gender Assessment, 2018

118 Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan, 2021

119 [State Gender Statistics](#)

120 UNDP. Implementing Sustainable Development Goals: [Rapid Integrated Assessment of Key National Policy Development Planning Documents \(Uzbekistan\)](#), 2022

121 Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Guarantees With Respect To Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men"

122 [Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers on approval of the regulation on the procedure for gender-based legal review of normative-legal acts and their drafts](#)

budget is allocated to SDG Goal 13: “take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts” and similar amounts to SDG Goal 14: “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”.<sup>123</sup>

Goals 79 and 80 of the DSNU focus on the environment, although no goals focus specifically on climate (DSNU, and see Table 4). This is a major omission for a crisis which will devastate the liveability of the planet for humans and where urgent action is needed by 2030 in order to limit its impact.<sup>124</sup>

Table 4: Goals Focusing on the Environment

GOALS	RELEVANT ELEMENTS
<b>Goal 79.</b> Prevent existing environmental problems that harm the health and gene pool of the population.	Promotion of initiatives in the field of the environment in the international arena, including the development of the World Environmental Charter.
<b>Goal 80.</b> Protection of the ecology and the environment, improvement of the ecological state of cities and regions, implementation of the nationwide project “Green Land”.	Improving the mechanisms for assessing the level of environmental pollution, monitoring the environment, predicting the level of its pollution, constantly providing information to state environmental control, monitoring the state of polluting sources and their impact on the environment.
	Carrying out the state environmental expertise to determine the compliance of economic and other activities carried out on the territory of the republic with environmental requirements.

The Ministry of Economy and Finance is initiating a budget tagging process both for climate and for the environment (green tagging). This is a very useful development which will facilitate monitoring and evaluation around climate and environment. In the Ministry of Agriculture a study related to climate change has been conducted by EU ASK and policy suggestions developed.<sup>125</sup> The Ministry has recently established a Climate Change Unit, although it is not clear that the fundamental rethinking of agricultural production in the light of climate and environmental breakdown is happening.

There is no cross-cutting structure apart from the Presidential Administration to oversee action on climate change or the environment, which are inherently cross-sectoral. The new Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection and Climate Change can only make comments on draft plans from relevant ministries such as Agriculture. In the future, some cross-sectoral structure, such as the Presidential Climate Commission in South Africa which brings together government, labour, civil society to drive a socially just transition may be appropriate to facilitate cross-sectoral planning, monitoring and evaluation on these critical areas for a sustainable future.

123 UNDP. (2022). *Implementing Sustainable Development Goals: Rapid Integrated Assessment of Key National Policy Development Planning Documents (Uzbekistan)*.

124 UNDP indicates there is a Concept note on environmental protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030 and a Strategy on maintaining a biological diversity in the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2019 — 2028, although these were not reviewed by the team.

125 EU ASK Facility. [Building Resilience to Climate Change in Uzbekistan's Agricultural Systems: Analysis of Adaptation Options, 2022](#)



# 4. MONITORING AND REPORTING SYSTEMS

This section explores monitoring and reporting systems in some detail, beginning with a discussion of statistical and administrative data, and then looking at cross-sectoral monitoring systems.

## 4.1 Statistical and Administrative Data

Both monitoring and evaluation depend on the availability of data. This section explores the availability and quality of data available from the national statistics agency and other departments.

### 4.1.1 National

The Statistics Agency under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan is responsible for the development and implementation of a unified state policy in the field of official statistics, complying

with international standards. The Statistics Agency has adopted a National Strategy for Development of Statistics of the Republic of Uzbekistan 2020-25, prepared with technical support from the World Bank.<sup>126</sup> The strategy lays out activities for the improvement of the institutional and organisational framework of statistics. It emphasises the need to improve human capacity and adopting international statistical standards.

Census data usually provides a basis for strategic planning and monitoring progress towards the SDGs and national development goals. In Uzbekistan a census has not been conducted since 1989 and this lag creates a huge gap in the availability of accurate and representative data. This problem is well acknowledged by the National Strategy for Development of Statistics and the Statistics Agency. The agency has done the preparations for the census and they plan

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126 [National Strategy for Development of Statistics of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020-2025](#), 2019



to conduct it within 2023-24.<sup>127</sup> Since this is the first time that Uzbekistan will be conducting the census since independence, there is no institutional memory for conducting such an activity. According to the National Strategy for Development of Statistics, the agency “lacks the managerial and technical capacity to fully lead and coordinate the preparation and undertaking of the census”.<sup>128</sup> Thus, assistance and help from international agencies has been sought for the technical expertise that is required for this massive activity.

The commitments laid out in the National Strategy are a step in the right direction. However, an evaluation by the World Bank in April 2022 finds that Uzbekistan “still performs only moderately well on benchmarks of international standards, with a statistical capacity indicators score of 64.4 and a statistical performance indicator score of 54.9 in 2019”.<sup>129</sup> The successful completion of the first census since independence will play an important role in the quality of statistical data available and developing a culture of data driven decision-making.

#### 4.1.2 Ministerial Level: The Example of Agriculture

The Ministry of Agriculture produces operational data sources on the progress of agricultural activities (ploughing, preparation for sowing, sowing crops, agricultural activities, harvesting, washing salts, etc.), data on agricultural research and development of the research institutions under the Ministry and education data of higher educational institutions on agriculture under the Ministry.<sup>130</sup> The Statistics Agency and Ministry of Agriculture have established an inter-ministerial working group to improve data sharing and reporting, and synchronise the two statistical data sources.

Developing reliable and accurate data on agriculture has been identified as a priority area by the Agri-food Development Strategy of Uzbekistan for 2020-2030.<sup>131</sup> The strategy emphasises that current practices of data collection are outdated and not in line with international standards. Thus, the strategy emphasises the publication of agricultural statistics based on new collection systems.

Similar to the national census, an agricultural census has not taken place since independence of Uzbekistan. It is recognised as an area of high priority and it is scheduled to take place after the national census and to use the national census as a blueprint for preparing the agricultural census.<sup>132</sup> It is expected to be a joint activity of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Statistics Agency.

More generally, strengthening data exchange between government agencies and other entities is one of the priorities of the DSNU (Goal 9, see Table 5 below).

Table 5: Goal 9 Related to e-Government

GOALS	RELEVANT ELEMENTS
<b>Goal 9.</b> Development of the “Electronic Government” system, bringing the share of electronic government services to 100% and eliminating bureaucracy.	Reducing bureaucratic processes by establishing data exchange between government agencies and private commercial organisations through the interdepartmental integration platform of the Electronic Government system.

Goal 9 described above focuses on creating transparent network statistics and data collection systems. This section notes that “the systems for

127 Presidential Decree “On approval of the concept of the population census in the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2022” No. UP-5655, 2019

128 [National Strategy for Development of Statistics of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020-2025](#), 2019

129 [World Bank Toward a Prosperous and Inclusive Future: The Second Systematic Country Diagnostic for Uzbekistan](#), 2022

130 State Committee of The Republic of Uzbekistan on Statistics, [Agriculture, forestry and fisheries of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2019](#)

131 [Presidential Decree for the Adoption of the Agri-Food Development Strategy of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020–2030](#) No. UP-5853, 2019

132 The date for the agricultural census was laid out according to the Resolutions of the President No. 3165 and No. 4273. According to the National Strategy for the Development of Agriculture, the agricultural census should be executed by 2021. However, the Agency plans to conduct the census after the national census. 132 Ministry of Agriculture, 2019

collecting data and information in the agri-food sector are based on outdated mechanisms and practices developed as part of a centrally planned economy. Estimates of production, yield and performance misrepresent the actual situation in the field. The lack of accurate and reliable data constrains the design of new legislative acts and also does not allow for an objective assessment of their impact on the sector.”<sup>133</sup>

Analysis of several sector strategies and their action plans reveal that there is no data to track certain indicators. Insufficient data quality makes it difficult to fully assess the achievement of key targets based on these indicators. This is also due to inefficient methods of collection, analysis, quality control and validation of statistical data. In addition, key indicators for sector strategies often lack clarity as to the source or structure of data to measure progress towards targets. For example, it is not clear whether data from the Statistics Agency or data from a survey by the Ministry is to be used to track progress.

While evaluation is distinct from monitoring, evaluations rely on data from monitoring systems, and development of an effective national evaluation system in Uzbekistan will benefit from parallel efforts to strengthen development appropriate indicators, data collection, and analysis.

## 4.2 Cross–Sectoral Systems for Government Monitoring and Reporting at the National Level

This section explores the different systems and mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on progress against national development goals and priorities.

### 4.2.1 Monitoring the National Development Strategy and Implementation of Reforms

Strategic documents adopted in recent years, and notably the DSNU 2022-2026, include requirements for public oversight and monitoring mechanisms, reporting and reporting lines. The interest in developing stronger monitoring and evidence-based systems is reflected in Goal 10 of the Development Strategy for New Uzbekistan, “creation of a civil service system based on modern standards”, which includes “implementation of the National Rating system according to the assessment system based on key performance indicators (KPI) of the activities of civil servants and government bodies.”

Typically, ministries and agencies report on the progress of implementation and achievement of KPIs to the Ministry of Justice and the Chamber of Accounts, and additional reporting may be called for by the Presidential Administration of other state bodies. In some cases, the implementing ministry/agency may be required to organise public reporting to civil society. An electronic system [www.ijro.gov.uz](http://www.ijro.gov.uz) has been in place since 2021 to track implementation of tasks defined in normative legal documents and assignments. The Executive Discipline Unit of the Executive Apparatus of the Minister (every line ministry and other government agencies has such a Unit) prepares the overseeing plan/program of measures (*nazorat rejas*) for the execution of adopted normative legal documents and assignments, approves it to the management and directs it to execution.<sup>134</sup> This oversight plan template includes the name of the activities (the content of the tasks), the implementation mechanism, the execution period and the responsible executors. However, the template does not provide for determining the effectiveness, achievement of the goals of the policy established by the normative-legal document, as well as the positive and negative consequences arising from its

<sup>133</sup> Ministry of Agriculture, 2019

<sup>134</sup> Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On additional measures aimed at ensuring the efficient operation of the single electronic system of executive discipline “[ijro.gov.uz](http://ijro.gov.uz)” №PQ-5132, May 31, 2021



application. Moreover, this oversight plan/program of measures (*nazorat rejasl*) is based on a due date deadline tracking system, and the lack of milestone or indicative timeline approach to monitoring the execution of policies is also affecting the quality of policy implementation.<sup>135</sup>

In 2022, several additional entities were established and/or mandated to monitor and evaluate implementation of the DSNU 2022–2026 and annual state programs. These include the following:

- A Republican Commission for the implementation of the New Uzbekistan Development Strategy and Annual State Program, chaired by the Prime Minister, including the Chair of the Senate, Speaker of the Legislative Chamber of *Oliy Majlis*, senior officials of the Presidential Administration, including Advisors to the President and others. The Republican Commission is responsible for monthly discussion of the implementation of this Decree, coordination and control of the activities of the organisations responsible for its implementation. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan needs to be informed about the implemented measures on a quarterly basis.<sup>136</sup>
- Independent monitoring and reporting by non-governmental organisations discussed in Section 4.4.
- Cabinet of Ministers is responsible for regularly organising timely and high-quality implementation of the measures specified in the Development Strategy, the State Program and the socio-economic development programs of the regions; to comprehensively discuss the status of the implementation of the Development Strategy, State Program and regional socio-economic development programs on a quarterly basis, consider measures to eliminate identified problems and shortcomings, and to hold the officials
- responsible for them to account. The Cabinet also ensures the timely preparation of draft annual state programs for the implementation of the development strategy in the following years.
- The Ministry of Justice together with the Chamber of Accounts, the Development Strategy Center and the nationwide movement *Yuksalish* is responsible for systematic monitoring of the progress of the implementation of the development strategy and the State Program, development of recommendations for taking additional measures for its quality and timely implementation; provide practical support for high-quality and timely development, agreement, and public discussion of drafts of normative legal documents provided for in the Development Strategy and State Program; prepare information and analytical comments on the results of the implementation of the development strategy and the State program, publish them in foreign languages and ensure their wide distribution; submit information on monitoring results to the Republican Commission every month.
- The Information and Mass Communications Agency, the National Television and Radio Company of Uzbekistan and the National Information Agency of Uzbekistan together with the mass media are to ensure that goals and objectives of the Development Strategy and the State Program are widely discussed in the mass media, including the internet and social networks, and its content is explained to the public; ensure that unbiased and complete information on the progress and results of the measures implemented within the framework of the development strategy and the State program is quickly delivered to the population.

As a recent UNDP report notes, mechanisms and monitoring and reporting requirements

<sup>135</sup> Analytical assessment of the system, processes and mechanisms of public policy development - Institutional Development and Better Regulation Unit, ISCAD

<sup>136</sup> Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "[On the New Uzbekistan Development Strategy for 2022–2026](#)" No. PF-60, dated January 28th, 2022

included in these strategic documents seek not only to ensure transparency and accountability of governmental bodies over the implementation of the program, but also to provide civil society with tools to make an impact. However, the same report questions the extent to which this public oversight can be implemented and notes that the overall system of monitoring and evaluation needs to be strengthened.<sup>137</sup>

For example, surveys and on-site monitoring of policy implementation to assess effectiveness and impact are sometimes carried out, but not systematically. Often, the number of adopted normative legal documents is shown as an indicator, that is, more normative legal acts equal more progress. This approach to monitoring does not help determine the extent to which policies and decisions are contributing to meaningful outcomes of national, sectoral strategies and programmes.

The above discussion suggests that there are strong systems in place to monitor “what is being done” (and when), but not “are the right things are being done” and “are actions leading to the desired change”. These existing mechanisms provide a basis for the introduction of more results-oriented monitoring and evaluation.

#### 4.2.2 Other Monitoring Mechanisms

As mentioned above, at the time the MESA was being undertaken, there were multiple tracking systems in place to measure the timely progress and completion of activities, projects and draft and adopted acts with some undergoing revisions in response to the recent structural changes. These are discussed as follows:

**Agency for Strategic Reforms:** As has been mentioned, the Government of Uzbekistan has been undergoing significant reforms in recent

years, including the creation of the ASR in September 2022. The ASR’s responsibilities include assessment of the effectiveness of reforms with a critical analysis of their implementation. The ASR also includes a new **“Delivery Unit”**, a project which aims to change “the formats of interaction between government structures, providing prompt solutions to issues, and strengthening citizens’ trust in the government with a focus on modernising the country’s social development sectors.” The Unit supports the design of strategies to meet specific targets in education, health and drinking water, monitoring, civic engagement and communication of progress towards these targets.<sup>138</sup>

This new unit is evidence of the interest in strengthening planning and monitoring systems to focus on development results, and lessons from this pilot should inform broader efforts to strengthen national M&E systems.

**Ministry of Justice:** The Ministry of Justice also plays an important role in the national monitoring system. In addition to the roles mentioned above, the Ministry of Justice submits to the ASR on a quarterly basis “a summary analytical report on the implementation of the DSNU and state programs.”<sup>139</sup> As described in Tashmatov and Fayzieva (2022), “the tasks of the Ministry of Justice include analysing and monitoring the effectiveness of the public administration system, conducting targeted and thematic analyses and monitoring the situation on the ground by sector, region and agency to ensure the timely, complete and high-quality implementation of legislation and instructions, including in cooperation with the Court of Audit, and directing and coordinating the activities of government bodies and organisations in implementing.”<sup>140</sup>

Of particular interest is the role of the Ministry in coordinating regulatory impact assessments

137 UNDP. Implementing Sustainable Development Goals: [Rapid Integrated Assessment of Key National Policy Development Planning Documents \(Uzbekistan\)](#), 2022

138 “Delivery Unit”: a project focused on social reforms – Agency for Strategic Reforms under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

139 UP-216 on ASR establishment, para 5

140 Tashmatov and Fayzieva. Analysis Of The System For Monitoring The Effectiveness Of Reforms In The Republic Of Uzbekistan, 2022

(RIAs). A 2021 presidential decree requires RIAs for all draft laws, and from 2023, a ministry needs to include a RIA with submission of any draft law related to the economic, climate, or basic rights<sup>141</sup>. There are two types of regulatory impact assessment, *ex ante* and *ex post*.<sup>142</sup>

- *Ex ante* RIAs include many tasks that are typically part of a strategic planning cycle, such as analysing the problem to be regulated, determining the need (reasons) for state intervention, setting goals to be achieved through regulation; studying alternative methods of problem solving to determine their advantages and disadvantages, and to justify the feasibility of using the chosen alternative method; assessing the impact of the draft legal act on stakeholders using a benefit-cost analysis; determining the expected results of the draft legal act adoption; and determining the necessary measures to achieve regulatory goals. In practice most RIAs are *ex ante*. In 2022, 18 regulatory legal documents underwent *ex post* assessments.
- *Ex post* RIAs are expected to, among others, determine “the effectiveness of the regulatory instrument established by the regulatory legal document, the achievement of its goals, and the positive and negative consequences of its use.”<sup>143</sup> Paragraph 34 of the Order defining the RIA states that, “In the assessment of regulatory legal documents through the “*ex-post*” method, the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of regulation are analysed.”<sup>144</sup> The *ex-post* assessment includes public consultation.

In terms of process, selection criteria for instruments to be assessed include policies designed to regulate, or risk limiting, rights, or

have been subject to criticism. The Ministry of Justice proposes a list of policy documents for assessment to the Cabinet of Ministers, which approves the list. The Ministry of Justice then summarises the conclusions with respect to the assessment. Examples of *ex ante* assessments were shared with the MESA team, however *ex post* assessments were considered confidential.

**Ministry of Economy and Finance:** As mentioned above, the MoEF collaborates with ASR as well as with line ministries, as anything regarding finance is within their remit.

The **Strategic Development Unit** of the MoEF leads and *monitors priority reform initiatives* (of which there are approximately 90, in 11 different priority areas). Their target for the end of 2023 is implementation of 60% of the reforms. They have templates (Excel) that they use to monitor implementation of the reforms. They consolidate the information and have regular (weekly) meetings with their management to report on progress, with a focus on upcoming deadlines. As the DSNU is in an early phase of implementation, they have not conducted any outcome evaluations, but there is interest in doing so in later stages.

The **Department of Finance** leads the budget process, and *monitors budget execution*, with attention to both fiscal (revenue and expenditure) and performance targets. In terms of reporting, the MoEF provides quarterly and annual reports on execution of the state budget to the Cabinet of Ministers.

**Chamber of Accounts:** According to the law approved in June 2019 on the functioning of the Chamber of Accounts, primary responsibilities include the monitoring of the formation and implementation of the State budget (as well as budgets of regions and other entities) and other

141 Presidential Decree “[Measures For Further Improvement Of The System Of Assessment Of Regulatory Impact](#)” No. PP-5025, March 15, 2021

142 Order# 3292 on “Approval of the Methodology and Forms of the Report for the Assessment of the Regulatory Impact of Draft Normative Legal Acts and the Adopted Normative Legal Acts”

143 Order# 3292 on “Approval of the Methodology and Forms of the Report for the Assessment of the Regulatory Impact of Draft Normative Legal Acts and the Adopted Normative Legal Acts”

144 Order# 3292 on “Approval of the Methodology and Forms of the Report for the Assessment of the Regulatory Impact of Draft Normative Legal Acts and the Adopted Normative Legal Acts”

financial regulations (e.g. relating to taxes and anti-corruption). It appears that most responsibilities are financial or compliance audits, rather than performance audits that would include an assessment of whether programs or functions are achieving their intended goals. It conducts an audit of projects implemented and completed with state borrowings, and at the end of each quarter sends reports to the *Oliy Majlis*, the Presidential Administration, and the Cabinet of Ministers (Article 25). The Chamber of Accounts also maintains databases of instructions of the decisions and instructions of the President and monitors their “full and timely execution” and submits reports to the Presidential Administration (Article 28). *(The MESA team was not able to meet the Chamber of Accounts and this section may require updating.)*

### 4.2.3 Monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals

A Parliamentary Commission for Monitoring the Implementation of the National Sustainable Development Goals and Targets of the Republic of Uzbekistan, was created in 2020 and is mandated to carry out systematic monitoring of the implementation of legislation and regulations aimed at ensuring compliance with the sustainable development goals and objectives of the Republic of Uzbekistan.<sup>145</sup> Even though the government of Uzbekistan allocated almost 70% of total state expenses to implementing these National SDGs (one of the highest rates of budgetary allocation across the globe), the monitoring for these SDGs has been quite fragmented due to either lack of monitoring altogether or inadequate monitoring of SDG related outcomes.<sup>146</sup>

Monitoring of the SDGs (and/or national SDGs) and existing mechanisms to do so are of interest, as the focus is on outcomes. In addition, there is international motivation and support, not only

through mechanisms such as the Voluntary National Reviews, but also in light of UN General Assembly resolutions relating to evaluation and the SDGs.<sup>147</sup>

## 4.3 Monitoring of Government by Parliament

This section explores how the legislative arm of the government carries out oversight of the executive. Parliaments can play an important role in strengthening evidence-informed decision-making, and in some countries, such as Uganda, Parliaments have an M&E unit.

Exclusive powers of the *Senate* of the *Oliy Majlis* of interest to national development planning, monitoring and evaluation include that of “adopting resolutions on certain issues in the field of political, social and economic life”.<sup>148</sup> At plenary sessions, among others, the Cabinet of Ministers reports to the Senate on the implementation of the annual State Program, and based on the report, the Senate adopts resolutions.

According to the Constitution (article 94), exclusive powers of the *Legislative Chamber* related to planning, monitoring and evaluation include:

- Monitoring the execution of the State budget;
- Hearing the report of the Chamber of Accounts;
- Hearing the reports of the Prime Minister on social and economic development issues as well as the members of the Cabinet of Ministers on issues arising from their activities;
- Hearing the annual report of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the most crucial issues of social and economic life of the country;
- Adoption of resolutions on certain issues in the

<sup>145</sup> Analysis of the System for Monitoring the Effectiveness of Reforms in the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2022

<sup>146</sup> UNDP. Implementing Sustainable Development Goals: [Rapid Integrated Assessment of Key National Policy Development Planning Documents \(Uzbekistan\)](#), 2022

<sup>147</sup> United Nations General Assembly Resolution 69/237 on Building capacity for the evaluation of development activities at the country level (2014) and Resolution 77/283 on Strengthening Voluntary National Reviews through Country-led Evaluations (2023)

<sup>148</sup> Constitution of The Republic of Uzbekistan, Article 93

field of political, social and economic life.

Both houses have committees that oversee the work of government. The Senate has 10 committees working on different issues and proposing legislation or amendments. For example, the Budget and Economic Reforms Committee comprises some 50 experts from different walks of life. These committee members do not just provide feedback but also critique policies and share recommendations. The inclusion of public opinion in matters of budget and economic reforms may offer an entry point for engagement of civil society in monitoring and evaluation of such policies and reforms.

Similarly, in the Legislature, committees cover topics such as budget, science and education, health and social issues, labour, agriculture, industry, trade and transportation. Each committee has an expert group to support it, e.g. when preparing laws, which among others studies international experience on the topic. These committees are also supported by an Information and Analysis Unit which gathers and shares reports and data on topics of interest. When new topics of interest arise, working groups may be created to study the issues and make proposals.

The Prime Minister reports annually on social and economic development. This is discussed in committee, then factions, then the general assembly in plenary. This can lead to questions for the ministries. For example, a recent general assembly raised questions for ministries who then had ten days to report back.

With respect to budget oversight, quarterly meetings are held. In addition, members of parliament conduct oversight visits around 10 days per month, where they can raise issues with constituents as well as state agencies. Individual members of parliament can also approach a ministry with issues.

Senators/Members of the Legislative Chamber met

during the MESA mission recognised “monitoring and evaluation as a very new topic in Uzbekistan”, but recognised the potential of strengthening their role in relation to both monitoring and evaluation.

## 4.4 Role of Civil Society in the Monitoring System

Presidential Decree PF-60 “On the New Uzbekistan Development Strategy for 2022-2026”, created an Independent Monitoring and Evaluation Group, in connection with the nationwide movement *Yuksalish*, tasked with preparing annual alternative reports. The Decree also called for the organisation of public Development Strategy Support groups consisting of representatives of non-governmental non-profit organisations, media representatives, experts and community activists in the regions and systematic holding of public hearings; and promoting public projects by summarising initiatives taken by citizens and involving civil society institutions. *Yuksalish* has already conducted public monitoring across the country on various government programs, identifying progress or lagging behind in the implementation of the planned reforms.<sup>149</sup>

These initiatives present opportunities for NGOs and citizens to contribute to public discourse and dialogue about the effectiveness of government programs and their impact on communities they are intended to serve. However, since many of the NGOs in Uzbekistan that enjoy a prominent position are funded by the government (including Development Strategy Center and “*Yuksalish*” national movement, both of which were formed under relevant Presidential Decrees) the credibility and independence of their insights is questionable.<sup>150</sup> However, it is unclear the extent to which government authorities listen to the opinions of GONGOs.

149 The Current State of Civil Society in Uzbekistan 2021, pg. 22

150 Dilmurad Yusupov, “[New procedure for NGOs to work with international grants: one step forward, two steps back](#)”, gazeta.uz, August 6 2023



## 4.5 Use of Monitoring Evidence

In the landscape of monitoring within Uzbekistan, the prevailing approach is predominantly centred on achieving specified targets, of which there are hundreds or thousands. This approach places emphasis on the initiation and completion dates of projects, as well as the allocation and distribution of funds, rather than a comprehensive tracking of ongoing progress. It does not distinguish between activity/output and outcome/impact targets. This means that the reporting is focused on whether or not activities were carried out or outputs achieved, and these are often process outputs (e.g. laws passed). There are digital platforms in place for tracking roadmaps and progress against set targets, the emphasis remains heavily fixated on achieving these numbers, the roadmaps primarily focus on meeting activity/output indicators, with less attention given to understanding the underlying reasons for success or failure and making necessary revisions to projects and programs accordingly. When officials were asked about dealing with problems in a project, the response was to shift targets by date rather than critically evaluating the effectiveness or appropriateness of the initiatives.

While the team did not directly assess the individual performance management system, the prevailing impression is that people's performance is evaluated based on achieving often low-level targets. This approach creates incentives to lower target expectations rather than encouraging an in-depth analysis of results and identifying obstacles to program performance. Consequently, this culture does not promote a learning environment.

Furthermore, there does not appear to be a systematic strategy for disseminating data and results, both internally within the government and externally with other stakeholders. Presently, the dissemination of knowledge occurs through social media groups on platforms like "Telegram" but this mode lacks the capacity for data retrieval, reuse, effective management, and data-driven analysis to generate valuable insights.

Overall, the current monitoring system in Uzbekistan lacks a comprehensive approach to progress tracking, evaluation, and learning, focusing more on achieving numerical targets rather than seeking deeper insights for facilitating improvements or making necessary course corrections.



# 5. EVALUATION SYSTEMS

## 5.1 Evaluation in Government

Uzbekistan does not have an established evaluation framework or system. Government-led evaluations are rare to non-existent, and most evaluations are led by development partners. On-site monitoring of policy implementation, impact and effectiveness and conducting surveys is sometimes done, but not systematically. Qualitative and quantitative assessments and evaluations practices are not carried out by ministries.

The one case that was identified by an evaluation/review was the Ministry of Justice, which has carried out an “analytical assessment” of how “effectively and efficiently” subsidy schemes are working. The review provides a general overview of subsidies, assesses the organisational and legal basis for the introduction of the subsidies, and then analyses the “effectiveness” and targeting of the subsidies, noting that monitoring of use of the subsidy funds is not being monitored

by the responsible agencies. The concepts of effectiveness and efficiency (two standard evaluation criteria) are used, but they are often merged and expressed, for example, as a percentage figure (e.g. “the effectiveness and efficiency of the subsidies is 39.6% on average”). The report does recognise the importance of monitoring outputs and outcomes, for example in the case of subsidies for the introduction of water-saving technologies, to determine “whether it is effective, whether water resource consumption or wastage is reduced, and as a result, resources are being saved,” illustrating the increasing awareness expressed by stakeholders during the MESA mission of the importance of monitoring more than inputs and expenditures. The Ministry of Justice did indicate a potential interest to collaborate on evaluations.

The Chamber of Accounts is also responsible for assessing the “appropriateness, feasibility and effectiveness of projects” implemented under the budget system, however it does not appear to conduct performance audits. The team was not



able to meet with the Chamber of Accounts and this remains a gap to be followed up on.

Overall the understanding of evaluation within government and how it differs from monitoring is weak. At ministry and regional level there appear to be incentives to keep targets low level and easy to achieve, and to not investigate reasons for inadequate performance and to resolve bottlenecks. There is thus not a culture of evaluation, where one seeks to know what is (not) working, for whom, where, and why. However, evaluative thinking is emerging at the highest level, including in the ASR, which has both a mandate to seek to improve performance and impact and a strong interest to do so.

There was an expression of interest in evaluations from the Legislative Chamber, with specific mention of interest in an evaluation of a school feeding scheme piloted in two regions.

To effectively introduce evaluation and ensure their use, a comprehensive approach is required. There is a need to sensitise top management about the benefits of evaluation and fostering a culture of evidence-based decision-making. This process will pave the way for the development of evaluation frameworks, manuals, and capacity building activities. Establishing a solid foundation of understanding and commitment within the government is crucial before embarking on the journey of implementing evaluations effectively.

There is a significant need for capacity building within the ministries, accompanied by guidance and support from development partners during the initial phases, to enable the government to conduct its own evaluations. Our assessment indicates that the current policy-making environment lacks a robust utilisation of evidence, raising concerns about the effective use of evaluation results if they are carried out.

Although there are numerous donor-driven evaluations available, there is little evidence of

their findings being utilised.

At present no structure has a clear mandate and capacity to manage and coordinate an evaluation system, and this would require:

- Clarifying a mandate, possibly in ASR, or at least in the Presidential administration;
- Recruiting staff who understand evaluation;
- Building systems and capacities to manage an evaluation system.

## 5.2 Evaluation by Development Partners

A number of evaluations have been undertaken by development partners. While some development partners actively seek to integrate capacity development into their evaluation processes it is not clear to what extent donor-led evaluations have been used to influence decision-making (other than within the scope of the development partner's programming).

Figure 3 below shows evaluations conducted by several development partners<sup>151</sup> between 2009 and 2022. While not a complete picture, this shows that there has been a notable increase in the number of evaluations since 2018, a positive trend. This also means a series of evaluations exists that can be drawn on for evidence for decision-making, as well as for advocacy purposes pointing to the relevance of evaluative evidence. Some synthesis evaluations could be undertaken when a sector already has a substantive set of evaluations to draw from. Figure 4 shows development partner evaluations from 2018 to 2022 by sector, which suggests potential sectors for evaluation syntheses including agriculture, governance and public management, environment/climate and water. Such syntheses would be a very useful initial activity as an evaluation capacity development strategy is elaborated.

<sup>151</sup> Including evaluations led by ADB, GEF, GiZ, IFAD, ILO, UN, UN Women, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNECA, UNEP, UNICEF, UNODC and USAID.

Figure 3: Development Partner Evaluations 2013–2023<sup>152</sup>

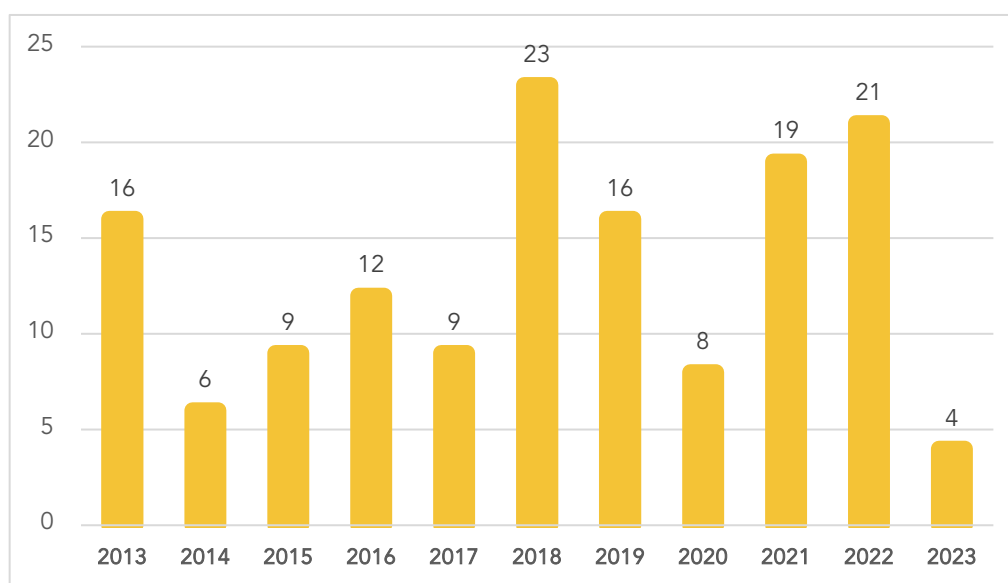
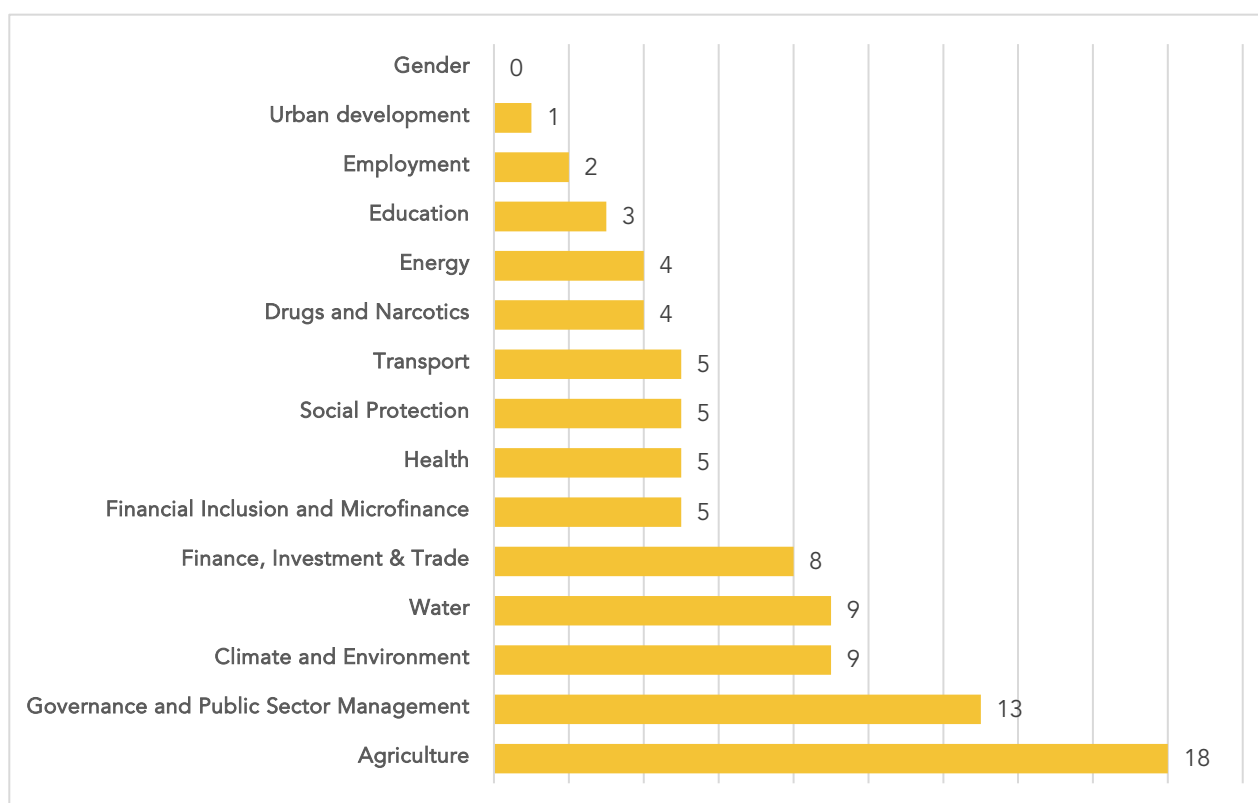


Figure 4: Development Partner Evaluations 2018–2022 by Sector



151 Including evaluations led by ADB, GEF, GiZ, IFAD, ILO, UN, UN Women, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNECA, UNEP, UNICEF, UNODC and USAID.

## 5.3 Capacity to Undertake Evaluations

Overall, given the lack of an evaluation culture in the country, there is not a lot of capacity to conduct evaluations. However, there are various institutions with research capacities and some with experience in evaluation. The Uzbekistan Government works with two research entities affiliated to the Presidential Administration and the Cabinet of Minister: the *Center for Economic Research and Reforms (CERR)* and the *Institute of Macroeconomic and Regional Studies (IMRS)*. Both organisations play crucial roles in providing analytical and applied research support to these high offices.

CERR employs a team of highly qualified professionals, many of whom have received education and training from reputable foreign universities, specialising in various research areas. Their diverse expertise allows them to engage in a broad spectrum of research topics, including conducting impact evaluations of different initiatives and reforms implemented in Uzbekistan. However, it is essential to note that CERR comes directly under the Presidential Administration which can sometimes lead to politicisation of its work. IMRS provides evidence and insights to inform policy making and reforms before their implementation. IMRS has not to date been actively engaged in baseline, mid-term, or endline evaluations. The extent to which this information is used remains uncertain. However, these are two trusted organisations which could potentially support pilot evaluations. Local universities such as the local arm of Westminster University have also undertaken evaluations for or with development partners, and are a source of additional local capacity.

## 5.4 Evaluation Capacity Development Providers

In addition to evaluation capacity development initiatives led by development partners, there are institutions who could potentially provide (monitoring and) evaluation capacity development training.

The ***Academy of Public Administration*** under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan provides online and offline training and retraining courses for managerial-level civil service officials of the national and local authorities. They also offer more intensive degrees at the Masters' level on Public Administration to train civil managers who wish to expand their knowledge of specialist subjects in the public sector. The Academy plays an important role in facilitating cross-sectoral conversations and meetings. Thus, the Academy provides a good infrastructure to potentially host courses in M&E for government officials.

The ***Agency for the Development of Public Service*** under the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, established in 2019, is responsible for the implementation of a unified state policy in the field of human resources development and personnel management in government bodies and organisations. According to a USAID assessment, one of their initiatives introduced a system for evaluating the heads of local government departments on the basis of KPIs.<sup>153</sup> These KPIs were reported quarterly based on pre-defined indicators and applied across the hierarchy of government personnel. The assessment commented that this created "healthy" competition between khokims to improve performance, had healthy participation and provided a good system to track progress.

The ***Center for Policy Research & Outreach (CPRO)*** was established in 2018 by ***Westminster International University in Tashkent (WIUT)*** in response to research and outreach demands among the Uzbek government and international

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153 USAID report on Local Governance Assessment in Uzbekistan, 2021

donor partners. CPRO already has the capacity to provide training on data, analysis, basic stats, and advanced econometrics. There is currently little infrastructure or courses that specifically focus on monitoring and evaluation to inform decision-making, although they may be well-positioned to support development of new courses.

Across these institutions there is a focus on policy analyses but not on the fundamentals of a robust M&E system and how it can be embedded within the policy making process. This highlights a key area of opportunity for capacity building within Uzbekistan. Service delivery and governance can be drastically improved. This improvement can be achieved not by merely hiring more foreign-qualified government officials, but by investing in systematic and structured training for existing staff. This training should focus on global best practices in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and how these practices can be adopted through effective systems, processes, and the generation and use of evidence within the key policy-making framework of the country.



# 6. OVERALL FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 6.1 Overview of the M&E Ecosystem and How It Functions

A national M&E ecosystem includes institutions and actors: the government (executive, legislative and judiciary), but also higher education and research institutions, civil society and media, development partners, as well as individuals within those institutions. It also includes processes, from policy planning and budgeting, to monitoring and reporting, and to evaluation. The MESA has highlighted that with respect to policy planning, Uzbekistan lacks a strategic planning framework, which results in weak outcome level monitoring. Nevertheless, there is a strong culture of reform, with many plans and strategies being developed, with widespread monitoring of their

implementation. There are multiple systems tracking hundreds of indicators at different levels. Evaluation is almost non-existent.

Tashmatov and Fayzieva<sup>154</sup> identify a number of systemic problems and weaknesses that hamper effective monitoring and evaluation of the reforms undertaken, in particular:

- The *areas of control* of different ministries and agencies, as well as their interdependence, are not clearly defined. Negotiations between ministries and agencies on performance indicators for the implementation of reform activities are formal.
- There is *no single body responsible for monitoring* the effectiveness of the implementation of reforms. The functions of the state bodies in this respect are overlapping

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<sup>154</sup> Tashmatov and Fayzieva. Analysis Of The System For Monitoring The Effectiveness Of Reforms In The Republic Of Uzbekistan, 2022

and are scattered and nominal.

- There is no coherent *mechanism for evaluating* the results achieved. While a number of tools have been introduced to analyse and monitor performance in some areas, the information is fragmented.
- There is no approved unified *methodology* for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of reforms.
- It is difficult to obtain *comprehensive and reliable baseline and summary information* on programme activities and the achievement of change objectives.

Despite the efforts being made to achieve the 100 priorities linked with the National Development Strategy (DSNU), Uzbekistan does not have a *centralised Planning Ministry* or well-established *Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) units* within the ministries. The country still operates in a centrally driven manner, but quite fragmented with ministries often working independently and not sharing information effectively.

A key problem which cascades into monitoring is the *absence of strong theories of change* for interventions, so that the causal links between activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts can be seen. This results in focusing on *indicators primarily at activity and output* levels, and a lack of outcome and impact indicators for systematic monitoring and for evaluation to explore why changes are or aren't happening and how policies or programmes can be strengthened.

The lack of a central *system for collecting and collating data* within ministries poses challenges for ministries to build on pre-existing information, knowledge, and solutions in a coordinated manner. The absence of such a system hinders the ability to leverage existing data to inform comprehensive and cohesive policies and development strategies. Furthermore, the precise quality of the data also remains uncertain, highlighting the need for further

investigation and assessment. Nevertheless, one strength to build on is progress with digitisation, enabling the tracking of indicators across sectors and levels, and facilitating various purposes such as public consultation.

There is a need for greater distinction between *strategic indicators* at higher levels and *operational indicators* at the lower implementation levels. Currently, monitoring primarily focuses on input (disbursement), activity and output levels, with little emphasis on outcome (results) level monitoring. The systems appear to lack flexibility, and there seems to be insufficient consideration given to the appropriateness of targets. When targets are not met, the assumption is often that they will be achieved slightly later, without critical reflection on whether the targets themselves are appropriate. The extent to which monitoring data is utilised for *reflection and learning* remains unclear, and there is potential for more strategic utilisation of this data. This calls for a shift in the organisational culture towards a more learning-oriented approach, which will also provide a foundation for evaluation.

## 6.2 Recommendations for Interventions that can Trigger Wider System Change and Development Outcomes

Goldman and Mathe propose the following elements in considering the institutionalisation of M&E systems (see Table 6).<sup>155</sup> In Table 6, we consider how these might be applied in Uzbekistan's context.

<sup>155</sup> Goldman, I. & Mathe, J. Institutionalisation philosophy and approach underlying the Government-Wide M&E System in South Africa. 2014



Table 6: Key Elements and Focus in Uzbekistan

KEY ELEMENT	POSSIBLE FOCUS IN UZBEKISTAN
<b>Enabling Conditions</b>	
Key role of a powerful and capable central 'champion' with sustained political will for the long haul and a coalition to support	Focus on ASR as initial champion. Establish a government M&E Working Group involving selected ministries to build a coalition to support
Utilisation seen as the measure of 'success'	An outcomes focused M&E framework to promote the use of evidence driven policy making
Substantive government demand	Start in areas where there is significant interest, e.g. for evaluations. This should be both at Presidential Administration and ministry levels, e.g. Ministry of Agriculture
The importance of establishing incentives (including the ability to use hard and soft authority effectively to enforce change)	Start with 'sermons' and 'carrots' rather than 'sticks' to build interest in taking forward the M&E system. This must come from the Presidential Administration, e.g. ASR
Performance management/M&E system which is dynamic	Demonstrate use of M&E evidence in a responsive manner. This could be in synthesising existing evaluations on topics that are of interest, undertaking rapid evaluations in areas of interest
<b>The Process</b>	
A clear diagnosis of the existing situation and an understanding of where delivery must improve	The MESA provides this
The reform strategy and plan defined before the structure, so a clear policy direction with a commitment to results	Do not focus on establishing lots of systems but piloting approaches which can later be 'frozen' with systems, templates and eventually decrees
The process should not rely on legislation and regulations to be implemented	In the case of Uzbekistan the first step has to be a Presidential decree to legitimise and instruct that the system has to be implemented
A clear and effective implementation strategy	Start with key elements – a political sponsor (Presidential Administration)
A talented team to drive the system and solve problems early and rigorously	CLEAR PCA to partner with a group established in ASR to drive the M&E process
The courage to rethink processes completely	As stated
Experimentation, piloting and scaling-up	As stated – start with piloting
A major investment in communication	Once a Presidential decree has been issued significant investment is needed in communicating with ministries and working with them on how this needs to be implemented
Care not to over-engineer the system	Start with piloting systems and build from what works
Establishing the culture and capacity to analyse, learn, and use M&E evidence	Use learning-by-doing approaches to build capacity. Supplement with strategic short courses, as well as investing in postgraduate courses in M&E/evaluation
Role of structural arrangements to ensure M&E objectivity and quality and reliable ministry data systems	Build in systems and processes to ensure objectivity and quality, e.g. for evaluations, steering committees, peer reviewers, and eventually standards

Based on this initial assessment of the state of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems in Uzbekistan, the following appear to be areas where, from a change management perspective, initial action can focus, building an interest in M&E, assuring a contribution to decision-making in the short term. We focus on short-term (within one year) and medium-term recommendations that aim to facilitate the contribution of M&E systems to evidence-based decision-making and policy improvement within the country.

### 6.2.1 Short–Term Recommendations (1 Year) Focusing on Building an Interest in Effective M&E

- **Establish Initial Champions and Coalition to Support M&E** including empowering an initial champion to lead M&E reforms, as well as champions in ministries.
- **Establish a Planning/M&E Working Group** as a coalition across government agencies to support the rollout of evaluation for improving government performance and development results, rather than in a punitive role. This group should be small – initially made up of initial champions and then enlarged. This collaborative effort will build common ownership and ensure coordinated and efficient implementation.
- **Strategic Planning Integration:** Integrate into the current strategic planning initiatives, notably the GIZ’s technical support to ASR to develop strategic planning framework and the OECD public governance review. This is needed for M&E to be integrated in the planning reforms, and ensure M&E is closely linked to broader strategic planning and objective setting. The planning system needs to include nested systems which link ministry plans to the DSNU, backed by solid theories of change, and a hierarchy of indicators at impact, outcomes and output levels. This needs to guide the monitoring system. A support system is needed with guidance, training etc. to operationalise this.
- **Run Awareness Training in Evidence-Based Policymaking** for deputy ministers/top public servants on the relevance of evidence-based policy making, linking with policy institutions like EU ASK, International Agriculture University, Westminster University, and the Academy of Public Administration. A key concept is theories of change and evidence needs at different levels of the theories of change. These courses, undertaken in collaboration with Uzbek partners, will enhance skills in utilising evidence for policy making.
- **Evidence Agenda:** Identify areas of particular policy interest where evidence of what is working or not and how to strengthen would be welcomed.
- **Consolidated Evaluation Repository:** Create a live, consolidated repository of existing evaluations and synthesising their findings in areas of particular interest. This comprehensive resource will serve as a valuable tool for informing policy decisions across government agencies. This will demonstrate the relevance of evaluative evidence.
- **Rapid Evaluations:** Partner with key ministries to conduct rapid evaluations in collaboration with existing organisations like CERR and IMRS or universities. These evaluations should focus on crucial sectors such as Justice, Finance, and Agriculture identified earlier, aiding evidence-based decision-making.

### 6.2.2 Medium–Term Recommendations (1–2 Years’ Time)

Possible areas that can be taken forward in the medium term depend on how interest evolves, but should also be tested in the validation workshop. These could include:

- **Learning from Successful Models:** To gain insights into best practices, we recommend considering study visits to middle-income countries (MICs) with strong M&E systems. Learning from experiences in countries like Mexico, Colombia and South Africa can inform Uzbek evaluation practices.

- ***Rigorous Evaluations:*** To inform significant policy decisions, planning for longer and more rigorous evaluations over the next 2-3 years. These evaluations should focus on areas that require in-depth analysis and comprehensive assessments.
- ***Strengthening Demand for Evidence from Parliament:*** To enable evidence-based policymaking at the parliamentary level, we propose designing and strengthening research service support. Empowering Parliaments to request and utilise evaluation findings will enhance the quality of legislative decision-making.
- ***Enhancing Monitoring Usefulness:*** To ensure monitoring efforts align with the needs of policymakers, we recommend building on the strategic planning framework being undertaken by GIZ/OECD. Identifying ways to make monitoring more useful for decision-making processes will lead to more effective policies.
- ***Evidence-Based Policy Making Courses:*** To promote the culture of evidence-based policy making, continue running further courses for ministers, deputy ministers, and senior managers.
- ***Phasing of Evaluation Systems:*** Based on the response to rapid evaluations, and potential full evaluations, developing a phased approach to implement comprehensive evaluation systems across the government. This approach will ensure a smooth and efficient rollout of evaluations.

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## Annex 2: List of Organisations Consulted

S. No.	Organisation Name
1.	Agency for Strategic Reforms under the President
2.	Ministry of Economy and Finance
3.	Ministry of Investments, Industry and Trade
4.	Ministry of Justice
5.	Ministry of Economy and Finance (Budget)
6.	Ministry of Agriculture
7.	World Bank
8.	Senate - <i>Oily Majlis</i>
9.	Parliament - <i>Oily Majlis</i>
10.	Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Climate Change
11.	Ministry of Education
12.	Agency for Statistics under the President
13.	Westminster International University of Tashkent – Center for Policy Research and Outreach & Center for Professional and Lifelong Education
14.	Center for Economic Research and Reform under the Administration of the President (CERR)
15.	Institute for Macroeconomic and Regional Studies (IMRS)
16.	<i>Yuksalish</i> Nationwide Movement & Development Strategy Center
17.	City <i>Khokim</i> – Samarkand
18.	Samarkand <i>Khokimiyat</i>
19.	Delivery Unit
20.	UNICEF
21.	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
22.	UNDP
23.	EU Ask Facility



## Annex 3: List of Line Ministries

S. No.	Line Ministries in the Republic of Uzbekistan
1.	Ministry of Economy and Finance
2.	Ministry of Ecology, Environmental Protection & Climate Change
3.	Ministry of Transport
4.	Ministry of Employment and Poverty
5.	Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation
6.	Ministry of Preschool and School Education
7.	Ministry of Construction and Housing and Communal Services
8.	Ministry of Health
9.	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
10.	Ministry of Internal Affairs
11.	Ministry of Defense
12.	Ministry of Emergency Situations
13.	Ministry of Investments, Industry and Trade
14.	Ministry of Digital Technologies
15.	Ministry of Justice
16.	Ministry of Water Resources
17.	Ministry of Agriculture
18.	Ministry of Mining Industry and Geology
19.	Ministry of Culture
20.	Ministry of Youth Policy and Sports
21.	Ministry of Energy

## Annex 4: Statistical Units within Line Ministries

Line Ministries and Agencies	Types of Statistics Provided	Statistical Unit within Organisation
Ministry of Finance	Government finance statistics	Government Finance Statistical Division
Central Bank of Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monetary statistics</li> <li>Banking system statistics</li> <li>Non-bank system statistics</li> <li>Financial soundness indicators</li> <li>Payment system statistics.</li> <li>International reserves statistics</li> <li>Balance of Payments, international investment position and external debt statistics</li> <li>Financing investment projects by commercial banks</li> </ul>	Statistics and Research Department
Tax Committee	Tax and other mandatory payments	Statistics and Analysis Department
State Customs committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foreign trade statistics</li> <li>Special customs statistics</li> <li>International freight transportation statistics</li> </ul>	Monitoring of Foreign Trade Operations and Customs Statistics Department
Ministry of Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan	Statistics on the use of water resources	
Ministry of Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Operational data on the progress of agricultural work (ploughing, preparation for sowing, sowing crops, agricultural activities, harvesting, washing salts, etc.)</li> <li>Data on agricultural research and development of the research institutions under the Ministry</li> <li>Education data of higher educational institutions on agriculture under the Ministry.</li> </ul>	
Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations of the Republic of Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Balance of labour force statistics</li> <li>Labour force survey</li> <li>Statistics on job vacancies</li> <li>Migration statistics based on the analysis of people travelling abroad for work</li> <li>Statistics on the employment of people with disabilities</li> </ul>	No single department
Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population Health statistics based on the data from medical institutions within the system of Ministry of Health</li> <li>Data on the activities of health facilities within the system of Ministry of Health</li> <li>primary and statistical data on the personnel working within the system of Ministry of Health</li> <li>Statistics on social security of vulnerable groups</li> <li>Health expenditure statistics</li> </ul>	Division of statistics and health accounts
Ministry of Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transport statistics</li> <li>Statistics on transport infrastructure</li> <li>Statistics on the exchange of transportation permits with foreign countries</li> </ul>	
Ministry of Public Education, Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education, Ministry of Preschool Education	Statistics on number of educational institutions and school-related facilities in the education system	

Line Ministries and Agencies	Types of Statistics Provided	Statistical Unit within Organisation
State Inspectorate for Supervision of Quality in Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data on the assessment of learning outcomes</li> <li>• Number of private educational institutions</li> <li>• Statistics on accredited educational institutions</li> </ul>	
Antimonopoly Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistics of enterprises having a dominant position (monopoly) in commodity and financial markets.</li> <li>• Natural monopolies register.</li> <li>• Statistics on mergers and acquisitions</li> </ul>	Department on Analysis of Commodity, Financial and Digital Markets
State Asset Management Agency	Statistics on privatisation and denationalisation, lease operations with state properties	No single department
Ministry of Culture	Statistics on the activities of cultural and art institutions and organisations	
Ministry of Physical Culture and Sports	Statistics on main indicators of the development of sports and on the activities of sports educational institutions	
Ministry of Internal Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime statistics</li> <li>• Statistics on auto accidents</li> </ul>	
Ministry of Justice	Register of establishments	
State Committee on Veterinary and Livestock Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veterinary and livestock development statistics</li> <li>• Education and research data of higher educational and research institutions under the State committee</li> </ul>	
State Committee on land resources, geodesy, cartography and state cadastre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistics on the use of land resources</li> <li>• Housing statistics</li> </ul>	
<i>Mahalla</i> Foundation	<i>Mahalla</i> (local) administrative statistics	

## Annex 5: Elements of the DSNU Relevant to Strengthening PBM&E

Goals	Relevant Elements	Relevance
<b>I. Building a humane state by improving the honour and dignity of humans and the further development of a free civil society</b>		
<b>Goal 2:</b> Turning the <i>Kengashes</i> (Councils) of people's deputies (representatives) into the main link in solving problems in the regions	Increasing the role of <i>Kengashes</i> of people's deputies in solving problems in <i>mahallas</i> .	Possible element in supporting locally based M&E and problem solving
<b>Goal 3:</b> Bringing the institutional framework for the activities of local government bodies in line with modern requirements	Further expansion of the financial capabilities of <i>khokimiyats</i> in solving problems on the ground, increasing accountability to the public for the execution of each assigned task, as well as the funds spent.	Possible element in supporting locally based M&E and problem solving
<b>Goal 4:</b> Transformation of the activities of public administration bodies based on the principle of "orientation to serve the citizens".	Orientation of all activities of ministries and departments to serve the citizens on the basis of the principle "The state is in the service of the people."	Possible element in supporting locally based M&E and problem solving
<b>Goal 5:</b> Implement a compact, professional, fair and high performance public administration system.	Creation of the necessary conditions for the heads of ministries and departments to independently resolve organisational and legal issues, ensuring the effective implementation of their decisions.	Important role for M&E to inform problem solving to ensure effective implementation
<b>Goal 6:</b> Reducing the administrative apparatus in the public administration system and optimising work processes.	Organisation of effective work of territorial subdivisions of government bodies of all levels in solving problems of regional development.	Supporting locally based M&E and problem solving
<b>Goal 7:</b> Further enhancing the role of the <i>Oliy Majlis</i> and political parties in the consistent continuation of reforms in the country.	Strengthening the Role of the <i>Oliy Majlis</i> and political parties in developing effective measures for solving existing problems in all areas, expanding the participation of the parliament in ensuring the unconditional and full implementation of adopted laws in practice. Setting by the parliament of specific strategic tasks for responsible organisations within the framework of approving the State budget and monitoring its implementation.	Effective parliamentary oversight of the executive and problem solving
<b>Goal 9:</b> Development of the "Electronic Government" system, bringing the share of electronic government services to 100% and eliminating bureaucracy.	Reducing bureaucratic processes by establishing data exchange between government agencies and private commercial organisations through the interdepartmental integration platform of the Electronic Government system.	An integrated monitoring system
<b>Goal 10:</b> Creation of a civil service system based on modern standards.	Implementation of the "National Rating" system according to the assessment system based on key performance indicators (KPI) of the activities of civil servants and government bodies.	Effective monitoring system

Goals	Relevant Elements	Relevance
<b>Goal 11:</b> Improving mechanisms for dialogue with the people.	Further improvement of the mechanisms of open dialogue with the people, expansion of the practice of making important decisions, taking into account the opinion of the public. Effective organisation of the activities of the Civic Chamber, establishing its cooperation with civil society institutions, active involvement in the process of determining ways to solve problems of concern to the population.	Supporting locally based M&E and problem solving
<b>Goal 12:</b> Improving the organisational and legal framework for the implementation of effective public control.	Wide involvement of subjects of public control in the process of performing certain state functions, conducting social surveys when studying the activities of state bodies, as well as establishing the practice of conducting an open discussion of identified shortcomings. A seven-fold increase in the amount of funds allocated to public funds to support non-governmental non-profit organisations and other civil society institutions under the <i>Kengashes</i> of people's deputies.	Supporting locally based M&E and problem solving
<b>II. Turning the principles of justice and the rule of law into a fundamental and necessary condition for the development of the country</b>		
<b>III. Accelerated development of the national economy and ensure high rates of growth</b>		
<b>Goal 30:</b> At least double the income of dekhkans and farmers, while ensuring an annual growth in agricultural volumes of at least 5% through the intensive development of agriculture and the application of advanced scientific achievements.	Creation together with leading international scientific centres and higher educational institutions of the International Agricultural University. Deepening the integration of science and practice in the agricultural sector.	Developing capacity on M&E
<b>Goal 33:</b> Increase the volume of the regional economy by 1.4-1.6 times while ensuring the balanced development of the regions.	Implementation of five-year regional programs developed for 14 regions in the context of districts and cities. Development and implementation of individual programs for the development of cities and regions with "unsatisfactory" indicators in the ranking of the socio-economic development of regions. Implementation of the "City comfort index" to assess the quality of life of the population in cities.	Supporting locally based M&E and problem solving Addressing inequality
<b>IV. Implementing a fair social policy, developing human capital</b>		
<b>Goal 45:</b> Gradual provision of free meals to primary school students in the Republic of Karakalpakstan and Khorezm region.	Introduction of a system for providing free meals to primary school students (grades 1-4 ) as an experiment in the Republic of Karakalpakstan and the Khorezm region. Based on the results of the experiment, consideration of the issue of expanding the system of providing free meals to primary school students (Grades 1-4 ).	Potential evaluation of the pilot
<b>Goal 69:</b> Support women and further increase their activity in society.	Continuation of the policy of ensuring gender equality, increasing the socio-political activity of women, continuing the implementation of reforms to support them.	Prioritising gender

Goals	Relevant Elements	Relevance
V. Provision of spiritual development and raising this sphere to a new level		
VI. Approach to global issues based on national interests		
<p><b>Goal 79:</b> Prevent existing environmental problems that harm the health and gene pool of the population.</p> <p><b>Goal 80:</b> Protection of the ecology and the environment, improvement of the ecological state of cities and regions, implementation of the nationwide project "Green Land".</p>	<p>Promotion of initiatives in the field of the environment in the international arena, including the development of the World Environmental Charter.</p> <p>Improving the mechanisms for assessing the level of environmental pollution, monitoring the environment, predicting the level of its pollution, constantly providing information to state environmental control, monitoring the state of polluting sources and their impact on the environment.</p> <p>Carrying out the state environmental expertise to determine the compliance of economic and other activities carried out on the territory of the republic with environmental requirements.</p>	M&E of environmental sustainability
VII. Strengthening the country's security and defence potential, maintaining an open, pragmatic and active foreign policy		
<p><b>Goal 92:</b> Establish an effective system for the prevention and prevention of emergencies.</p>	<p>Improvement of legislative acts in the field of prevention and prevention of emergency situations.</p>	Addressing climate change



## Annex 6: Outcome Level Targets in Agricultural Sector Strategy

### Key Target Milestone and Indicators

To be achieved by the results of the implementation of the Strategy for the development of agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020–2030

S. No.	Indicator	Baseline (2018)	2021 Target	2025 Target	2030 Target
1.	Annual growth in agricultural value added	117.3 trillion soums (USD 14 billion)	3 %	5 %	5 %
2.	<b>Growth in the number of agri-food jobs:</b>				
	Agriculture	3,671,300	2%	1%	1%
	Food Industry	91,420	3%	4%	5%
	Textile Industry	140,200	3%	4%	3%
3.	Growth in the value of agri-food exports	USD2.3 billion	USD3.5 billion	USD10 billion	USD20 billion
4.	The proportion of undernourished population	6.3%	5%	3%	0
5.	Agriculture labour productivity (USD per agricultural worker per annum)	USD3,960	USD4,300	USD5,200	USD6,500
6.	Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture sources	15,740 gigagrams (2016)	10%	30%	50%

## Annex 7: Examples of Output Targets in Agricultural Sector Strategy

### Key Target Milestone and Indicators

By strategic priorities to be achieved by the results of the implementation of the Strategy for the development of agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020–2030

S. No.	Indicator	Baseline (2018)	2021 Target	2025 Target	2030 Target
<b>I. Ensuring food security of the population</b>					
1.1	An increase in the average yield of cereal crops	4.3 tons/ha	6 tons/ha	7 tons/ha	7.5 tons/ha
1.2	Increase in average milk yield of cow's milk	2,320 kg/per cow	2,700 kg/per cow	3,100 kg/ per cow	3,500 kg/ per cow
1.3	Percentage of farmland allocated to fodder production	7%	10%	12%	15%
<b>II. Creating a favourable agribusiness climate and value chains</b>					
9.1	Increase in availability and reliability of agri-food statistics data	Incomplete/unreliable	Annual publication of Agri-food statistics based on new collection systems	Annual publication of Agri-food statistics based on new collection systems	Annual publication of Agri-food statistics based on new collection systems
9.2	Increase in availability of market information on prices and trends	Sporadic/Incomplete	Weekly publication of market information Monthly and annual market trends review reports	Weekly publication of market information Monthly and annual market trends review reports	Weekly publication of market information Monthly and annual market trends review reports
9.3	Increase in availability of farm productivity data	Sporadic/Incomplete	Conduct of targeted farm assessments Publication of gross margin information	Annual publication of farm labour productivity	Annual publication of farm labour productivity

## Annex 8: Part of Roadmap for Agriculture Development Strategy

### Road Map

On the implementation of the Strategy for the Development of Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020-2030

S. No.	Activities	Date of Execution
I. Ensuring food security of the population		
1	Continuous monitoring of the implementation results of the food safety assessment system based on internationally recognised methodologies and best practices	Regularly
2	Conducting a social survey to study the consumption and incomes of the population in order to develop state programs and measures to assess the food security of the population as well as rural development.	2nd quarter of 2021
3	Development of long-term programs to promote a healthy eating culture	1st quarter of 2021



