

## OPPORTUNITIES AND LEGAL BASIS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE AND THEIR ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITIES IN UZBEKISTAN

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### Abstract:

The article focuses on the new reforms carried out in the framework of the state policy on the issue of treatment of women in New Uzbekistan and their legal framework, protection of women's rights, freedoms and legitimate interests, increasing the social activity of women today, increasing their position in the family and society and the issues of increasing the role of women's labor in the development of small business and private entrepreneurship, the role of women entrepreneurs in the modern world, support for women's entrepreneurship and the creation of a business environment.

**Keywords:** Uzbekistan, women, economy, entrepreneurship, profession, small business, state, society, politics, development.

### Introduction

In recent years, women's issues and their comprehensive support have risen to the level of state policy in our country, and special attention is paid to the active participation of women in society and state governance in New Uzbekistan. These aspects are also widely recognized internationally. In particular, our President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, promoting the socio-political changes being implemented in our country in international circles, draws the attention of the entire world community to this issue. In this regard, systematic work has been carried out and concrete results have been achieved, aimed at increasing the position of women in state and public governance, their socio-economic activity, ensuring vocational training and employment, supporting entrepreneurial activity, creating the necessary conditions for their education and scientific activities, improving their living conditions, and most importantly, comprehensively protecting their rights and freedoms. At the same time, issues related to ensuring women's employment, attracting them to entrepreneurship, and training in modern professions are one of the current directions and main tasks in the field.

When it comes to increasing the activity of women in society, there are many commendable aspects in this direction. First of all, it can be said that in recent years, various regulatory

and legal documents have been adopted to enhance the effectiveness of measures to support women and create decent conditions for them. In particular, this issue is addressed in the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PD-29 dated December 3, 2021 “On priority areas of state policy for the development of entrepreneurship in the neighborhood, ensuring employment and reducing poverty”, No. PD-81 dated March 2, 2022 “On measures to improve the system of working with families and women, supporting neighborhoods and luminaries”, No. PD-87 dated March 7, 2022 “On measures to further intensify work on systematic support for families and women”, No. PD-5020 dated March 5, 2021 “On measures to further improve the system of supporting women and ensuring their active participation in public life” and the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On strengthening families and increasing the activity of women "On additional measures" dated December 21, 2023 No. PD-401, which sets out priority areas to be implemented in order to increase the socio-political activity and employment of women, and to develop entrepreneurial skills [1]. The relevance of the issue was also indicated by the President of Uzbekistan Sh. Mirziyoyev, and in order to raise women's entrepreneurship to a new level in our country and promote their employment, in March 2023 a special commission was established under the chairmanship of the Chairman of the Senate, and the issue of organizing work on vocational training, ensuring employment and attracting women to entrepreneurship in each region was set as a priority based on completely new approaches and systems.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

On February 22, 2021, in his speech at the 46th session of the UN Human Rights Council, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev stated: “We will resolutely continue our work on gender policy issues aimed at radically increasing the role of women in the socio-political life of our country and in the business sector,” and emphasized the resolute continuation of work aimed at radically increasing the role of women in socio-political life [2]. In our country, large-scale reforms have been implemented aimed at creating equal rights and opportunities for women and men, ensuring their full participation in society and state governance, and providing socio-economic and legal support. At the same time, important measures have been taken to strengthen the legislative and institutional basis for ensuring gender equality. These include the Resolution of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Presidential Decrees “On measures to improve the system of work with families and women, support for mahallas and nuroniy” and “On measures to further intensify work on systematic support for families and women” [3]. The object of the article is the system of socio-legal relations related to ensuring the rights and legitimate interests of women in need of social protection. The subject of the study is normative legal acts regulating women's entrepreneurial activities, scientific and theoretical views. Historical, comparative legal, logical, scientific methods were used in the research.

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## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

In accordance with the current changes and the expansion of globalization processes, the definition of the place of women in small business and private entrepreneurship and the problems that need to be solved in this regard are still waiting for their solution. As is known, in Uzbekistan, suitable conditions have been created to improve the status and role of women, ensure their rights and interests, increase their socio-political and economic activity, and generally expand their participation in the modernization of all aspects of life. The issues of equality between women and men, non-discrimination against women are enshrined in the Constitution. In recent years, under the leadership of President of Uzbekistan Sh. Mirziyoyev, large-scale reforms have been implemented in all areas, in particular, to ensure the openness of the national economy and create all necessary conditions for its integration into the world economy, strengthen investment attractiveness, and improve small and medium-sized businesses based on international standards. In the sustainable development of our national economy, special attention is paid to the issue of women, as well as to all urgent tasks. According to the results of a study published by the International Labor Organization in 2022, “women still face serious obstacles to decent work throughout their working lives. Today, the issues of wide involvement of women in entrepreneurship and ensuring their employment, in particular, improving the institutional and legal framework of the sector, are emerging as one of the urgent problems.

This issue is receiving special attention in the world community, and it is emphasized that it is precisely through the involvement of women in large-scale entrepreneurship that one of the main reasons for the development of the state and society is served. In particular, according to the International Labor Organization, today women make up about 50% of the world's population, and their contribution to the global gross domestic product is 40% [4]. According to World Bank forecasts, if the gender gap in employment is eliminated, in the long term it will be possible to increase the average global gross domestic product per capita by 20%, and if women start and expand their businesses at the same pace as men, this can add up to an additional \$ 6 trillion to the global economy [5]. Mastercard developed the “Index of Women Entrepreneurs” for the first time in 2017. Research conducted by the company has shown that women mainly develop their businesses out of necessity and through willpower. Two main obstacles that prevent women from starting their own businesses are limited cultural traditions and lack of opportunities for professional growth. Access to financial services and the creation of a favorable environment that supports the development of commercial activities serve to develop women's entrepreneurship and business activities [6]. In this regard, the UN General Assembly body - the Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) plays an important role in the development of women's businesses. In order to increase women's entrepreneurial activity, UNCTAD has implemented an international training program in a number of countries, within the framework of which the skills of women in international

entrepreneurship are being improved [7]. With such activity, women can make a worthy contribution to the development of the national and world economy and support our women at the international level, create all opportunities for them, in particular, improve their legal framework, is one of the urgent tasks facing us. Analysis of research results In recent years, a number of concrete results have been achieved in our country in this regard. First, special attention has been paid to improving national legislation based on international standards in the field of comprehensive support for women and ensuring gender equality. In recent years, more than 40 legislative acts and important conceptual documents in this area have been adopted. Within the framework of these documents, important measures are being taken to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men, strengthen the role of women in state and public administration, create favorable conditions for their education, ensure employment and vocational training, and increase the activity of women in economic life.

In addition, specific and targeted work is being carried out in our country to protect all aspects of women's rights and freedoms. In particular, in order to prevent domestic violence, the legislation was first improved (a separate law was adopted), and the practice of issuing protection orders was established. 29 women's rehabilitation centers were launched, a hotline was launched, and a door-to-door approach was introduced [8]. The Women's Rehabilitation Center provides women with medical, socio-psychological, and legal assistance. By issuing protection orders, various forms of oppression and violence against women are being prevented. To this end, a number of measures have been set out in the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan and the recently adopted "Uzbekistan - 2030" strategy. In particular, the "Uzbekistan - 2030" strategy envisages, in order to strengthen the system of support for women, ensure their rights and legitimate interests, increase their social, economic, political activity and ensure gender equality, firstly, to continue the policy of ensuring gender equality, increase the share of women in management positions by 30% by increasing the socio-political activity of women, secondly, to create an atmosphere of intolerance towards oppression and violence against women in society, ensure the rights and legitimate interests of women, thirdly, to create a transparent mechanism for targeted work with the "Women's Book", and to establish public control over these matters. In order to effectively organize and coordinate the activities of ministries and departments based on a unified approach, the Republican Commission on Increasing the Role of Women in Society, Gender Equality and Family Issues was established under the Senate of the Oliy Majlis. The Family and Women's Committee was established, which implements a unified state policy in the field of supporting families and women, protecting their rights and legitimate interests. 2018 was declared the "Year of Active Entrepreneurship, Support for Innovative Ideas and Technologies" in our country. Within the framework of the State Program adopted in this regard, preferential loans were allocated to women entrepreneurs. Today, the number of non-governmental and non-profit organizations in our republic aimed at social support for women, including the development of entrepreneurship,

sports and the spread of a healthy lifestyle is more than a hundred. Among these, one of the most actively working organizations is the Association of Business Women of Uzbekistan and its regional branches. In the direction of strengthening education and science, favorable conditions have been created for women, new quotas and grants have been allocated, and a practice has been introduced where fees for women wishing to study at a master's degree are financed by the state. In particular, a system has been introduced to annually reimburse contract fees for single women in need and girls who have lost their breadwinners in higher education, as well as for all women studying at the master's level, to provide interest-free educational loans (for a period of 7 years) to pay for women's educational contracts, and to allocate at least 300 targeted quotas for women for doctoral studies annually. 2 trillion soums are allocated from the state budget for these purposes annually. Also, subsidies and loans are being allocated by the state to support women in ensuring employment and vocational training, and new opportunities are being created. In this regard, Women's Entrepreneurship Centers are being established in the regions of the republic, remote neighborhoods and villages, and women are being trained in them.

Secondly, the sustainability of women's economic and entrepreneurial activities is being ensured. Our women have been making significant contributions to all the main "drivers" of the economy - be it industry, agriculture, small business, family entrepreneurship, services. As a result, today the share of women in the economy and industrial sectors is 46 percent. If in 2017 the share of women in entrepreneurship was 21 percent, today it is 37 percent [8]. In 2022 alone, more than 95 thousand women who wanted to start a business were registered as entrepreneurs, and to date, about 184 thousand new jobs have been created by these women entrepreneurs. Over the past 5 years, the number of businesswomen in Uzbekistan has doubled, and the number of women entrepreneurs who have started their own businesses has exceeded 205 thousand. In 2023, more than 13 trillion soums of loans were allocated to more than 279 thousand business projects, and almost 300 billion soums of subsidies were allocated to about 57 thousand women. Also, about 200 thousand women were trained in professions and entrepreneurship. Most importantly, more than 400 thousand women were provided with jobs [9].

Systematic work was carried out on various bureaucratic and other obstacles and shortcomings that may arise in the implementation of women's proposals and initiatives for entrepreneurship. In this regard, opportunities were created for the further support of temporarily unemployed, socially and economically disadvantaged, needy single women and girls who have lost their breadwinners, for their active participation in economic life, and various benefits, loans and subsidies were allocated to implement their entrepreneurial initiatives and provide practical assistance [13].

More than 5.1 trillion soums were allocated to provide socio-economic, medical, legal and psychological support to more than 2.5 million women through the "Women's Notebook" system, which was launched in 2020. As a result, the economic independence of women was strengthened, their income increased and their employment was ensured. There is



another important aspect here, namely, an important point of our policy in this area is to reduce poverty by ensuring the social rights of women. More than 1.5 million women work in various sectors of agriculture alone, and rural women make a significant contribution to the socio-economic development of their regions with their activity. In order to provide socio-economic support to women and ensure their permanent source of income, a targeted work system has been introduced [12]. The main focus has been on increasing the activity of socially inactive women in society and economic life. Millions of women have been supported in recent years through the Women's Book alone. This idea is confirmed by the fact that in 2023 alone, the problems of about 994 thousand women were solved at the expense of 1 trillion 234 billion soums under the Women's Book [10].

## **CONCLUSION**

The Global Women's Entrepreneurship Index measures the prospects for the development of women's entrepreneurship around the world. The quality of women's entrepreneurship is determined by three main factors: the entrepreneurial environment, the entrepreneurial ecosystem, and women's desire to engage in entrepreneurship. In preparing this document, a number of factors are taken into account SJIF 2021:5.5 License type supported CC: Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) 12 [11]. These include factors such as women's access to the education system and resources created in the business sector, the infrastructure of services provided by state bodies and commercial banks, and the collection and provision of statistical data on the development of women's entrepreneurship. Today, it is important to continue to improve the regulatory framework for women's support systems based on international standards, to further expand opportunities and guarantees for women, using gender expertise effectively, and to implement norms to prevent economic oppression. It is an urgent task to prevent various stereotypes regarding gender equality and to widely promote related legal norms among the population. It is important to pay attention to the issues of training women in modern professions, especially in the fields of information technology, programming, online commerce, and creating opportunities for them to work in this area. Taking into account the principles and experiences of women's livelihoods in rural areas, it is important to increase their socio-economic activity, as well as improve approaches to organizing decent employment for women, and to develop national legislation in this regard based on international standards.

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