

## Improvement of Institutional Mechanisms of Gender Equality Policy

**Shukhrat Otakulov**

MTTDQTMOI “Social Sciences” head of department Associate Professor, Political Science,  
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

**Abstract:** This article focuses on the issue of gender equality through legal frameworks, state policy priorities, constitutional norms, special laws and national strategies, as well as reforms implemented by our republic within the framework of its international obligations. It also analyzes practical mechanisms aimed at ensuring equal opportunities in state bodies, civil society institutions, educational and labor organizations.

**Keywords:** gender equality, legal guarantees, constitution, equal opportunities, public policy, legislation, social justice.



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Today, in the process of large-scale reforms being implemented in Uzbekistan, special attention is paid to strengthening the principles of human rights, social justice and democracy. In the process of these reforms, the issue of gender equality is gaining relevance in the socio-political life of the country. In particular, ensuring equal rights and opportunities between women and men, encouraging their equal participation in the political, economic and social spheres is emerging as one of the important priorities of state policy. To this end, a number of legislative acts have been adopted in the country, institutional mechanisms have been introduced, and various initiatives are being implemented in cooperation with civil society institutions. In particular, significant work is being done to increase the share of women in leadership positions, open up wide opportunities for their participation in entrepreneurship and the labor market, and create equal opportunities in the fields of education and healthcare.

At the same time, it is necessary to further strengthen efforts to ensure the full effectiveness of work in this area in practice, to further improve legal and institutional mechanisms, and, in particular, to eliminate problems in the implementation of gender policy in practice at the local level. Because achieving full implementation of the norms established in official political decisions and laws in life is closely related not only to the adoption of regulatory legal acts, but also to the effectiveness of their implementation mechanisms. From this point of view, increasing the effectiveness of reforms being implemented in the field of ensuring gender equality, in-depth analysis of existing problems and the development of clear and effective mechanisms for their elimination are one of the urgent tasks of today.

The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan specifically states that women and men have equal rights and freedoms, and this norm is an important legal guarantee aimed at ensuring the principles of gender equality in the country. In particular, Article 58 of the Constitution enshrines the equality of women and men <sup>1</sup>. At the same time, the Law “On Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men”, adopted in 2019, creates the legal basis for state policy aimed at ensuring gender equality in Uzbekistan. This law prohibits any forms of discrimination on the basis of gender, establishes institutional mechanisms for the implementation of equal rights and opportunities between women and men, and also clarifies the obligations of state bodies, civil society institutions and labor organizations in this area.

This regulatory framework plays an important role in ensuring gender equality as one of the main conditions for building social justice, sustainable development and an inclusive society in the country. The adoption of this Law is in line with Uzbekistan's international obligations, in particular the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and other international norms and standards.

The law defines gender equality as a principle that should ensure equal enjoyment of rights and opportunities by women and men in all areas, and their active participation in the development of society and the state. According to it, state bodies, local authorities, non-governmental non-profit organizations, educational institutions and employers have specific obligations to ensure gender equality <sup>2</sup>. In particular, mechanisms have been developed to prevent gender inequality in the areas of recruitment, creation of working conditions, appointment to leadership positions, education and healthcare. Also, Article 6 of this law clearly indicates the directions of state policy in the field of ensuring gender equality , including the introduction of a gender expertise system, increasing the participation of women in decision-making processes, combating violence, including the prevention of domestic violence.

According to this law:

state bodies and organizations have a number of obligations to ensure gender equality;

gender expertise and monitoring systems are being introduced in all areas;

An institutional network has been established - for example, the State Committee for Family and Women, as well as other structures.

Nevertheless, although some progress has been made in the existing legislation, it is necessary to further improve the work in this regard:

Although the law exists, it is necessary to further strengthen control and reporting mechanisms in its implementation.

Effective implementation of gender expertise in all spheres of society is considered necessary. It is necessary to further improve the gender assessment of all adopted legal documents.

Often, factors that may affect gender equality are not sufficiently taken into account in the process of developing and adopting draft laws. The number of structures and specialists responsible for conducting gender expertise is small, and existing mechanisms may not work effectively. Many regulatory and legal documents may be developed on the basis of the principle of "same rules for all". This, in fact, denies that they may have different impacts on different social groups, in particular women and men. For example, regulatory documents on labor or tasks in the field of social protection may in some cases limit women's opportunities or do not take into account their

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<sup>1</sup> Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan. - Tashkent, 2023.

<sup>2</sup> Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men". 2019 .

needs. In some cases, although gender expertise is carried out in relation to regulatory and legal documents, this process may be more of a formal nature. That is, instead of a real analysis and impact assessment, it may be limited to simple conclusions. This leads to the fact that real problems are not seen. It is necessary to increase the involvement of civil society institutions, women's organizations and specialists in the gender expertise process. This, in turn, increases the possibility of ensuring an objective and inclusive approach to decision-making. Statistical data disaggregated by gender, which is necessary for gender analysis, may not always be available or reliable. This can reduce the ability to accurately assess the impact of adopted documents on women and men. Insufficient gender expertise prevents legislation from ensuring equal rights for women and men. This, in turn, limits women's opportunities in the political, economic and social spheres. Therefore, it is very important to establish an effective and in-depth gender analysis in the process of adopting regulatory legal acts, train responsible specialists in this regard, and strengthen ongoing cooperation with civil society.

Insufficient institutional support at the local level can lead to a lack of systematic and sustainable support for the protection of women's rights in society and their participation in socio-economic and cultural life. Although special units for working with women have been established in all regions and districts, their potential and capabilities remain limited for various reasons. The main reasons for this are:

There is a perceived lack of adequately trained specialists or staff involved in the field in regional and district-level departments. This makes it difficult to identify women's problems and develop and implement appropriate measures.

It is necessary to organize more effectively and systematically the formation and analysis of information on women's problems and their solutions in institutional networks at the local level. If serious attention is not paid to these aspects, the strategies and programs being developed may not fully correspond to the real situation.

Insufficient or ineffective cooperation between local organizations, the non-governmental sector, and government agencies in the field of working with women leads to ineffective allocation of resources and opportunities.

Traditional attitudes, gender inequality, and prevailing stereotypes in local society limit women's social activism. This makes it difficult to strengthen institutional support, as extensive educational work is needed to change cooperation and public opinion.

the same time, if the capacity of departments working with women at the regional and district levels is limited, this in turn hinders the effective resolution of local problems. Such limitations lead to a reduction in the number of programs that should be implemented in the full scope of institutional activities, making it difficult for them to ensure positive changes on the ground. As a result, great difficulties arise at the local level in achieving the goals of protecting women's rights, expanding their social opportunities, and ensuring gender equality.

Stereotypes in society and traditional views on gender roles limit women's political and economic activity.

World experience shows that effective institutional organizations, clear indicators and data-based decision-making are important to ensure gender equality<sup>3</sup>. For example:

In Sweden , every public policy undergoes a gender impact assessment.

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<sup>3</sup> UN Women. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Uzbekistan. - UNDP Report, 2022.

In Canada , the "Gender-Based Analysis Plus" (GBA+) method analyzes the interests of women and men in each program.

In Rwanda , a special budgeting practice (gender budgeting) has been introduced to implement gender equality policies.

These experiences can serve as a basis for developing the following proposals for Uzbekistan.

Implementation of a decision-making system based on clear and reliable gender indicators.

Although the existence of a legal and institutional framework aimed at ensuring gender equality is an important step, for its full realization in life, it is necessary to strengthen work in the following directions:

**Creation of a robust monitoring and reporting system** , including introduction of an evaluation mechanism through independent organizations;

Further increase knowledge and skills on gender issues by introducing **special training programs for civil servants** ;

**Creation of methodology of gender expertise and expanding the scope of promotion work** ;

**To inform the general public and improve legal culture** through mass media and educational system .

Developing indicators of gender equality and strengthening the statistical base. The impact of policy decisions is assessed through evidence-based data.

Effective organization of the system of mandatory introduction of gender expertise to all state programs.

For this, it is necessary to establish an independent group of experts.

Organization of resource centers on the implementation of gender policy at the regional level.

Strengthen public control over gender equality.

Non-governmental organizations, civil society institutions should be widely involved.

Reducing stereotypes in society through education and awareness.

Ensure public oversight by strengthening the role of civil society institutions. Subjects covering the topic of gender equality can be introduced in schools and HEIs.

In recent years, Uzbekistan has implemented a number of legal and institutional measures to ensure gender equality. The legislative framework has been updated, laws have been adopted that guarantee equal rights and opportunities for women and men, and various state and public organizations are operating. These efforts serve as an important foundation for addressing gender issues in society.

At the same time, there is still a need to further improve practical mechanisms in this area. In particular, the full implementation of legal norms, implementation of policies at the local level, raising public awareness, eliminating gender stereotypes, and strengthening the economic, political, legal, and social activity of women are among the priorities.

Global experience shows that achieving gender equality should not be limited to creating a legal framework. In this process, institutional reforms, increasing gender sensitivity in the education and upbringing system, conducting spiritual and educational work through the media, as well as strengthening cooperation between men and women are of great importance.

Taking into account national traditions and values, promoting gender equality in Uzbek society can ensure the active participation of women not only in the family, but also in the economy,

public administration, entrepreneurship, and science and education. This, in turn, will serve to ensure the sustainable development of not only women, but also society as a whole, establish social justice , and increase economic potential.

In conclusion, the existing legal and institutional framework for ensuring gender equality in Uzbekistan is an important first step. Now it is necessary to further deepen this process, improve practical mechanisms, and shape a sustainable and effective gender policy by changing the consciousness and thinking of society. This will be a solid step towards a more just, inclusive, and prosperous society in the future.

**References:**

1. Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan. - Tashkent, 2023.
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