

2,554. However, the number of MoJ employees responsible for carrying out legal expertise remained unchanged. Moreover, Uzbekistan is currently suffering from a lack of an integrated approach to lawmaking with the use of modern tools for the participation of various stakeholders, civil society institutions, scientific and business circles as well as the underdevelopment and poor use of methods for predicting future changes and assessing the impact of new legislation. Frequent changes in rules negatively affect the investment climate and the business environment, as investors and entrepreneurs find it hard to plan their activities taking into account changes in legislation, which can lead to additional costs. At the same time, international players are reluctant to invest in a country where legislation changes are frequent and the legislative landscape is perceived as chaotic or unstable. Among citizens, this decreases the level of awareness of legal norms and, as a result, increases ignorance of their rights and freedoms, which leads to cases of corruption and other offenses.

Considering the importance of a multi-dimensional and cross-sectoral approach, and the overall goal to provide long-term advisory support to the public administration and anti-corruption reform, the action will engage a wide range of stakeholders. These include national government institutions, civil society and non-governmental organisations, media and journalists, research, academia and education institutions, local civic initiatives and associations covering women, youth and most vulnerable to corruption groups (persons with disabilities, elderly and others), local communities and self-governance bodies, business and private sectors. All stakeholders will be engaged in the design and implementation of specific activities and thus contributing to the sustainability of the proposed interventions. The action will involve all authorised state bodies responsible for developing and coordinating anticorruption state policy, namely the Anti-Corruption Agency, the General Prosecutor's Office (and its Academy), the MoJ, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Service for National Security. However, due to the scale of the action and its multi-sector activities covering public authorities at national and local levels, political will, commitment and ownership is required at the highest level. Therefore, the implementation of the action will be carried out under the auspices of the Administration of the President, with the function of direct implementation given to the Anti-Corruption Agency, the General Prosecutor's Office and the MoJ.

The action will also aim at specifically strengthening the organisational, administrative, technical and legal capacities of the MoJ in its role of coordinator of law-making activities and guarantor of a unified state legal policy to ensure stability and predictability of the national legal framework. Therefore, the MoJ will be targeted as a whole, including its Central Office in Tashkent as well as its 14 territorial divisions. In addition, the MoJ system includes a number of research and educational institutions, in particular the Tashkent State University of Law. This approach will help to ensure the uniform application of new procedures and processes resulting from the implementation of the action across the country. In February 2021, a new structure called Interdepartmental Commission for normative-legal systematisation in the field of technical regulation was set up. The main task of this body is to tackle the growing number of legal acts and the complexity of the legislative base and systematise technical regulation in order to improve doing business in Uzbekistan, as well as to create favorable conditions for the development of the economic, trade and investment environment. This new structure is likely to be the leading beneficiary.

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1 Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this action is to promote strategic, long-term and multi-dimensional administrative and anti-corruption reforms in the Republic of Uzbekistan and support the creation of an enabling regulatory environment for trade and economic development in the country.

The Specific(s) Objective(s) (Outcomes) of this action are to:

1. Improve national policy as well as legal and institutional frameworks with robust preventive, enforcement and punitive measures, in line with best international practices.
2. Strengthen integrity capacities of the national, regional, district and local government authorities with more dynamic anti-corruption transformations.