



**EUROPEAN UNION
DELEGATION TO THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN**

**The best articles selected in the framework of the
Journalism Contest covering the activities of the
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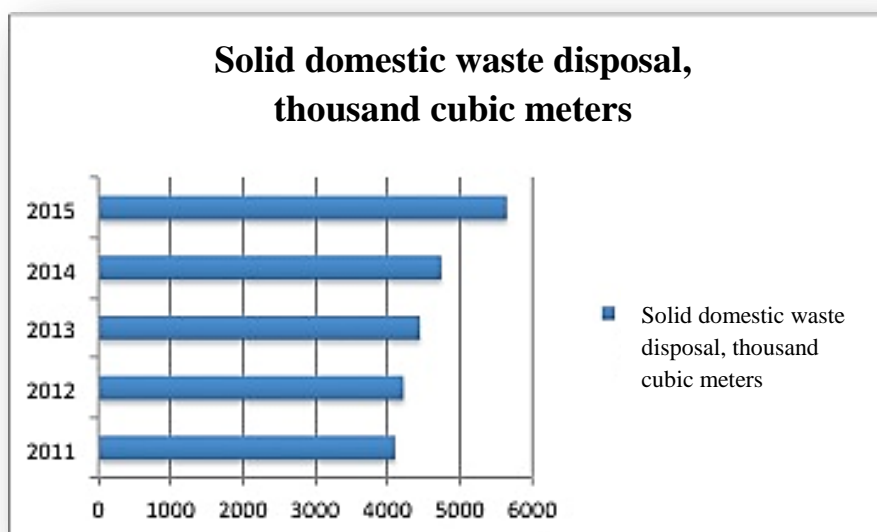
Samarkand: waste to revenue

Lola ISLAMOVA, Anhor.uz

The EU Project, highlighted in the article: "Improving of Solid Domestic Waste Management System in Samarkand"

Every year 35 million cubic meters of domestic waste are accumulated in Uzbekistan. It is about 254 thousand cars. If, for clarity, compress the waste into the line of 1x1 m section, it will be able to encircle the globe at the equator. Add to this an annual 100 million tons of industrial waste needed to be recycled, which for the time being is simply collected to landfills. There are a lot of landfills occupying hundreds of hectares of scarce irrigation land throughout the country. In Uzbekistan, there are no modern waste recycling and processing enterprises. To date, the country has accumulated 2 billion tons of waste.

The dynamics of solid domestic waste (SDW) disposal to landfills in the period 2011-2015 demonstrates a steady growth, which negatively affects the environment in the regions and in the country as a whole.



The average garbage can includes food scraps of about 25%, paper - 5-10%, polymers - 50%, as well as the rest is for metal, textiles, rubber, glass and other. The traditional way of waste disposal, when garbage is processed and landfilled, is potentially dangerous, such landfill is a source of "landfill gas", stimulating the greenhouse effect.

Conversations on the centralized separate collection of solid domestic waste (SDW) in Uzbekistan have been going on for a long time, but everything comes down to the lack of funding. Meanwhile, business related to waste recycling can be called attractive for investments and, perhaps, a Project that will be implemented with the support of the European Union and the French Development Agency (FDA) in Samarkand will be an example for others to follow.

Integrated Solid Waste Management in Samarkand

In Samarkand, the domestic waste management system will be built and organized in accordance with the best international experience and standards. The Project is implemented with the support of the European Union and the French Development Agency, which signed in December, 2016 with Uzbekistan a Loan Agreement for the amount of 23.5 million Euro. The European Union has supplemented it with gratuitous grant at a rate of 8 million Euro.

The Project finances the creation of the whole chain of waste management - collection, processing and disposal. The Project provides for the construction of a center for the sorting of solid domestic waste and a center for their landfilling, the construction and repair of 200 waste collection points, the acquisition of 70 refuse trucks, dump trucks, bulldozers, excavators and a forklift. In addition, facilities for processing the biogas from the landfill will be built.

Sanitary and technical landfill for sorting waste will be located 15 km from the center of Samarkand, in the village of Khishrau. The biogas collection system will be installed here and processed into compressed gas, which will be used for refueling garbage refuse trucks and other machines, providing electricity to the landfill. The complex will be able to accept and process about 80 tons of waste daily. The construction of a specially equipped garage for the maintenance of refuse trucks on an area of 2 hectares is planned. This complex Project is unique not only in Uzbekistan, but throughout Central Asia.

According to the Project, pre-sorting of domestic waste should begin in the homes of Samarkand residents, where each member of the family will be consciously separating garbage and sorting it by category - separately paper, plastic, metal, food waste. Further, the waste should be transported to one of 200 collection points of SDW, equipped with galvanized tanks with lids of different colors.

Change in people's behavior, the formation of a new attitude towards domestic waste recycling, according to the EU Special Representative for Central Asia, Ambassador Peter Burian, is not an easy task, the solution of which will be spent efforts and funds of the European Union grant. This issue, according to Burian, will be solved in a holistic manner - by informing students, in mahallas, social commercials on television and radio, as well as media coverage. Part of the EU grant will be aimed specifically at educational activities to increase public awareness in the solid waste management.

According to the Head of the EU Delegation to Uzbekistan, Ambassador Eduards Stiprais, the European Union grant is also intended for training specialists in the field of SDW management, providing institutional assistance to the administration of Samarkand and the State Unitary Enterprise "Marokand Obod", specializing in waste collection and the Project Executor in the development of an effective SDW management system.

As noted above, the total funding amount will be 37.1 million Euro. The FDA allocates a credit in the sum of 23.5 million Euro, 8 million Euro is the EU gratuitous grant. The own investments of the Government of Uzbekistan in this Project will amount to 5.6 million Euro. It is expected that the main construction work planned under this Project will be implemented in the period from 2017 to 2019.

According to the representative of the Hokimiyat of Samarkand, all tender purchases and contracts within the framework of this Project will be carried out in accordance with the EU standards, the FDA and the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, openly and transparently on the city administration's website.

Currently, with the right approach, waste can be transformed into liquid goods, which can bring a serious profit. A well-established system for solid domestic waste processing can be very cost-effective, as it will produce valuable and sought-after raw materials, fuel and energy from conventional waste, along with solving the urgent problem of environmental protection and job creation.

Waste facts

- Uzbekistan has accumulated 2 billion tons of waste.
- Annually 35 million cubic meters of domestic waste and 100 million tons of industrial waste are accumulated in the country.
- Annually every citizen of Uzbekistan produces about 165 kg of domestic waste.
- 1 ton of recycled waste paper can save 1 tree.
- In one year, the metal recycling in the US can save resources enough to heat and light 18 million private homes.
- Processing one tin can saves energy, sufficient for the TV to work for three hours.
- Sweden is the best country at waste recycling. It is capable of processing up to 95% of the total amount of country waste. Sweden imports waste from the UK, Norway, Italy, to provide 32 power plants operating on the basis of waste incineration.
- Due to one year recycling and processing of secondary metals in the world, it is possible to save resources that will be enough to provide about 150 million private homes with heat and light.
- The most common waste on the planet is cigarette butts. They are dropped 4 500 000 000 pieces annually.

Knowledge - on a par with others

Suriya MAGDEEVA, the newspaper "Darakchi plus"

The EU project, highlighted in the article: "Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in Uzbekistan"

Schooling is coming to an end: only a term has left, and the children will be able to go on long-awaited school holidays. Nearing the time of summing up annual results, including those for pupils taught in the pilot program: on September 1, 2015, a pilot Project "Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in Uzbekistan" was launched in a number of schools in Uzbekistan.

One of the highlights in the development of children with special needs is their education and integration into society. It is worth noting that children with different types of diseases often do not attend a comprehensive school or kindergarten for several reasons: lack of special conditions and experience of teachers and educators, parents' fear of how their child will be taken, etc.

The Project "Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in Uzbekistan", launched last year, took into account these and other aspects, which allowed more than 1400 "special" children to integrate in the general education system in Tashkent and four regions of the country - Samarkand, Namangan, Khorezm and Surkhandarya, where innovation applied in 30 schools and kindergartens. All the institutions were selected by the Project management together with the Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan on 12 criteria, one of which was the interest of the schools and kindergartens to become inclusive and to develop in this direction.

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The Project is funded by the European Union and implemented with the support of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Labor of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as well as the Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

ONLY NUMBERS

In the framework of the Project, **60** trainers, **944** teachers and educators, **247** school experts and members of the support staff (speech therapists, volunteers), **714** parents, as well as **90** experts of the Medical-Psychological-Pedagogical Commission have been trained in special trainings and seminars.

However, in comparison with figures, only those for whom it is directly created, can tell about the success of the Project in a more vivid manner - children with special needs and their parents.

TRUE STORIES AND MAN'S DESTINY

Mukaddas KHALIKOVA, mother of Diyorbek Rakhmonaliev, a pupil of the 1st "D" form, school No. 11 in Namangan:

- The birth of my firstborn Diyorbek passed with some complications, and the son subsequently had problems with speech. We sounded the alarm, when the boy was three years old, but he still did not

talk. Doctors found the child had a bilateral brain injury and put a disappointing diagnosis of "delayed mental and speech development." We began to treat our son, visited doctors in Andijan, Tashkent, followed their recommendations. When Dyorbek was 7 years old, naturally, we began to think about sending him off to school. But he was very shy, unsociable. Thanks to my acquaintances, I learned that the Project "Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in Uzbekistan" started in our city and attended a thematic seminar at school No. 11. Lola Muminova, a professor from Tashkent, took part in it. Taking advantage of the opportunity, I told her about my son. She invited us to an interview, after which Dierbek was accepted into the 1st form. I'm very happy for my child, who has changed before our very eyes: he has found friends and has begun to play with them. Today, he knows how to write and read, as well as he draws well, plays the drum. The child is happy. I help him to do homework, participate in open classes, class activities. I dream that Dierbek will grow up as a good person and make a worthy contribution to the development of our country. I thank the Project for an inclusive education that gives the opportunity to study on a par with others.

- September 1, 2015 became an exciting day for me as it was for several dozen children who went to school No. 11 in Namangan within the framework of the Project "Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in Uzbekistan", says **Maksuda MUKHSINBAYEVA, the Project Coordinator in Namangan region**. - Someone came to school, having learned about it through acquaintances and the media, someone was sent by a Medical-Psychological-Pedagogical Commission. How much was experienced by these kids, so that they could sit at the desks of ordinary schools and kindergartens! Of course, it can be said by numbers, for example, that 15 children with special needs began to study in this school in 2015-2016 academic year. However, the main thing, in my opinion, is that the society has accepted and supported the idea of inclusive education. Looking at the joyful faces of the children and their parents, I make sure that all our work has been done only for the good.

The school year is coming to an end, and it's already possible to tell about small but very important success. For example, a first-grader Abdulla Mansurov says that he likes school very much, he has friends here. He is proud of that he has begun to draw beautifully, trace out each letter painstakingly, as well as he has learned a lot of poems. However, he admits that reading the syllables is still difficult for him to master, but he tries. Another smart boy, Diyorbek Rakhmonaliev, also studies in the same form. At first, he did not even speak (the doctors diagnosed him as "alalia"), and now he utters whole phrases, sometimes even having time to complain about a neighbor, if he stops him from listening to the teacher or performing tasks (*he is smiling*). There are many such examples.

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Alalia - the absence or underdevelopment of speech in children with normal hearing and primarily preserved intelligence. The most common cause is damage to the speech areas of the cerebral hemispheres during childbirth, as well as brain diseases or injury suffered by the child in the preverbal period of life.

Mother of Dilnura Djurakulova, a pupil of the 1st "D" form, school No. 35 in Samarkand:

- After the burn, my daughter at the age of 1.5 years partially amputated fingers on both hands. Though, despite this, we were preparing to go to the secondary school No. 35. We were worried about how the teacher and children would take the child. However, today, after enough time has passed, I can say: we have made the right choice. My daughter is a good pupil, she is friendly with classmates, her feature has not become a hindrance for obtaining a quality education. Therefore, I want to tell the parents of such children: "You will succeed, do not be afraid of inclusion!"

Rajaboy SOLIKNAZAROVA, mother of Juramurod Juramurodov, Termez:

- Juramurod is my youngest son." His diagnosis of "alalia" did not allow him to clearly express thoughts with his peers, the movements of his hands were uncertain. On the recommendation of doctors, we took him to preschool educational institution No. 3. At first, Juramurod could not eat, move and talk without assistance. The motor skills of the hands were weak, intellectual abilities and memory were not developed. He is now five years old, and the boy's condition has undergone great change: he has learned to eat by himself, to undress and hang clothes in the wardrobe. Juramurod knows his name, can count up to ten, clearly pronounces, repeating after the teacher the names of his friends, who always support him. I am sure that by the time of admission to school the son will achieve even greater success. I am very grateful to everyone, who implements such an important Project for many children and parents.

Dildora CHORIEVA, a teacher of preschool educational institution No. 3 in Termez:

- In connection with implementation of an inclusive Project, technical equipment has been brought to our kindergarten, as well as a group of teachers has passed special training, during which we have mastered new methods of teaching children with disabilities. Undoubtedly, this will bring results, because every child has the right to care and education to create his future.

Manzura MADRAIMOVA, mother of Islombek Abdullaev, Urgench:

- Five years ago my son was diagnosed with Down's syndrome, the fact of which was a great shock to us. To confirm the diagnosis, the examination was undergone in Tashkent, and, according to the recommendation of specialists, we began to take a course of massage on a regular basis. To help the child talk, we turned to logopedist of kindergarten No. 27, Latofat Ruzmetova, whom I met at the conference in the framework of the Project "Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in Uzbekistan." Today the son has already learned how to pronounce individual words - the result of regular lessons. This Project helps my family get the necessary knowledge about how to develop properly a child with special needs.

WHAT INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED?

- Three schools are participating in the Project in Tashkent (No. 324, 34, 254), where 28 children with special needs study, and three kindergartens (No. 607, 185, 497), attended by 18 children, says Dildora Tulyaganova, **the Coordinator for inclusive education in Tashkent region.** – This is not to say that the implementation of the Project is easy. Despite the training passed by the specialists, initially there were difficulties: how to deal with "special" children, evaluate them, etc.

An individual program is created for each newcomer, developed with the participation of a teacher, a psychologist, a defectologist and parents, because only close people can talk about the weak and strong aspects of the child, his psychological characteristics. Children do not always open up in a strange environment, on the contrary, they can close up like children with a diagnosis of "autism" who are very hard at perceiving everything new. However, a child with cerebral palsy, for example, because of his illness, writes poorly, but can respond well orally. Therefore, the teacher together with other specialists should find an approach to the pupil and help him to reveal himself.

Once again, it is worth emphasizing that inclusive education implies the principle that society (in this case, the school) is adapted to the child, not vice versa. There was a case when a boy with cerebral palsy did not pass a Medical-Psychological-Pedagogical Commission, but his mother insisted that the child be admitted to school and he was given a chance. Now he is studying at school No. 324, and there are notable success in his development.

WITH OWN EYES

We have visited school No. 324, where ten children with special needs are studying - eight children in the first form and two in the fourth one.

- There are three such pupils in my class: Abdurahmon, Mukhsina and Otabek," says **Zuhra RIKSIEVA, class teacher of the 1st "E" form**. - I'm very glad that they have found quickly their place among classmates, and all the other children are helping them in everything. Otabek, for example, almost could not sit quietly for more than five minutes in September: the child had to go through the class. By the end of the school year, he can already completely sit through a lesson and write a few lines. He has become more attentive, and this is a great progress. Mukhsina, in turn, comes to school with her mother Gulsara, who helps her to master the curriculum.

I was very happy to hear about the Project on inclusive education, because I wanted Mukhsina to go to a regular educational institution. Thus, after passing a special commission, we got here. My daughter likes to sit at lessons, trace out each letter painstakingly and draw. Doctors noted the positive impact of studying on the general state of the child: the number of Mukhsina's seizures decreased.

Box

In the classes, involved in the Project, the number of pupils is reduced in order to the teacher to have time for individual lessons with each child who needs it. Mother or nurse are sitting with some "special" children in the classroom.

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READY FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION?

It is necessary to recognize that the implementation of inclusive education is not an easy process, it involves the understanding not only of specialists working in this field, but also the whole society. Here is what the **Project Manager Jurgen BEKKER** says about this:

- The very concept and the phenomenon of "inclusion" imposes great responsibility on the school and the society as a whole to provide an adequate and accessible environment for teaching children with special needs. There are many issues in the inclusive class, as in any other. However, 7 months after the launch of the Project, there were no problems that could not be solved with the help of teachers and specialists.

- Is our society ready to accept inclusive education today? This question can not be answered unequivocally, and such a situation is observed all over the world, - says **Vasilya ALIMOVA, Director of the Republican Center for Social Adaptation of Children (RCSAD)**. – However, there is potential in this direction in Uzbekistan, and within the framework of the Project we have met with many parents, teachers, children, ready for innovation. One of the main principles of inclusive education is that it should not be one-sided: society should provide conditions for its implementation. In a number of countries - and our country is not an exception - parents of ordinary children are sometimes concerned that their children will learn along with "special" children. Therefore, we should work with such mothers and fathers. I also want to note that one of the main goals of the Project is to inform parents of children with special needs that their child has the right to be a part of society. After all, there are cases when people with disabilities achieved high altitudes, it was necessary to give them the opportunity to be realized.

THEIR RIGHT TO EDUCATION LEGALLY

Supporting the aforementioned inclusive methods, the Government of Uzbekistan reaffirms its commitment to the realization of the universal right to education for everyone. Involvement of people with special needs in society is an important principle of recognizing the necessity to meet individual educational needs and the equality of all children to ensure the realization of their potential.

In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights called for the right to education without discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) also provides for the child's right to education. Uzbekistan has signed and ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which requires the State to recognize the right of people with special needs to education. In order to realize this right without discrimination, our Republic provides inclusive education at all levels.

PLANS

At the end of February, it was decided to extend the Project until October, 2016. During this period, conclusions will be drawn and appropriate recommendations will be provided to improve the work and application of inclusive practices for the 2016-2017 school year. In addition, the Ministry of Public Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan has taken the initiative to implement the Project in general education schools and kindergartens of the regions, where it has not been implemented yet. Also, the work will continue to improve the legislative framework for the introduction of inclusive education in our country. We should remember that every child is studied, we only need to create the necessary conditions for this.

Back to live again

Rimma SABIRDJANOVA, the magazine "Tasvir"

The EU Project, highlighted in the article: "The Road Home to a Full Life"

Return to a normal, full life "- how much these words mean for those who learned the true price. It does not always come back "from the dead" with the help of medicine. This way can be more thorny and long from the hell of bitter mistakes, disappointments, loneliness, and suffering - to yourself, your new identity, life and hope. The Social Support Center, located in Tashkent, is ready to help in this. For about a year, work has been carried out with people released from prison. Among those who turned to this Center, there are other people fell into a difficult situation – TBC patients, people with HIV-positive status and drug addicts.

The Social Support Center was established under the NGO RIEC "INTILISH" in cooperation with the international organization DVV International (Germany) within the framework of the Project "The Road Home to a Full Life". This Project is funded by the European Union in conjunction with the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany. The opening of the Center was held on June 28, 2016 with the participation of the Head of the European Union Delegation to Uzbekistan, Yuri Sterk, the Ambassador of Germany to Uzbekistan, Neithart Höfer-Wissing, DVV International Regional Coordinator for Central Asia, Tekla Kelbert, as well as representatives of the Ministries of Justice and Health of Uzbekistan, Women's Committee of Uzbekistan, public authorities of Tashkent and a number of other state and non-governmental organizations. The main target group of the Project are people released from prison, TBC patients, people with HIV-positive status and drug addicts. The Center aims to help them to restore lost socially useful links, to master a new profession or to increase professional skills, to gain self-confidence and to form a steady motivation to seek their place in society. Most significantly, try to overcome existing stereotypes in society in relation to them.

Each of those who applied to the Center (they are called clients here, because they are recipients of services - author's note) has own plight and varieties of fortune "before ..." the notorious line and "after ...", and, accordingly, the range of problems the solution of which often depends on how the rest of life will develop. As a rule, such issues from the Center's clients are a lot of, ranging from the restoration of documents and the implementation of civil rights to employment, the receipt of health care, the development of a new profession, and ending with the psychological difficulties associated with coming back to the family, the same social circle, etc. Therefore, a whole range of state and non-governmental organizations jointly solve the entire spectrum of these tasks from the very beginning of the Center's activities, based on cooperation and social partnership. These include, in particular, the Hokimiyat Departments, the Centers for Social Adaptation in Tashkent and the Center for Training and Retraining of the Unemployed Population at the Hokimiyat, as well as the District Departments of Internal Affairs, medical institutions and a number of international organizations.

Some of the representatives of these organizations and institutions before the work in this Project have passed special training, as a result of which a system of interrelations between them has created, aimed at providing services to the above-named individuals. So, in the Social Support Center specially trained social workers, psychologists and lawyers provide clients with psychological support, legal support in restoring documents, redirecting to medical examination and solving other important issues, as well as assisting in obtaining professional training using social support as the main approach in working with vulnerable groups. All this is on a voluntary, free and confidential basis.

The results of this work have been discussed on April 25, 2017 at a meeting of employees of NGO RIEC "INTILISH" and DVV Branch in Uzbekistan with the Head of the EU Delegation to Uzbekistan, Ambassador Eduard Stiprais. It was also attended by employees of DVV International Head Office, arrived from Germany.

First results

- To date, 240 people have become clients of the Center, 57 of them are women, - says Tatyana Nikitina, Director of NGO RIEC "INTILISH". - The Center provides services in Uzbek and Russian. In accordance with the approach of social support, an individual plan is drawn up with each client. On its basis, we solve those problems that are relevant for a person today and that will help him to adapt and take responsibility for his own life. The most important things for people, who have just been released from prison, as practice shows, are employment issues that give the opportunity to feel themselves full members of society. Returned convicts often can not find a job, or the profession they have had before, is no longer relevant. Therefore, we send our clients to the Center for Training and Retraining of the Unemployed Population at the Hokimiyat in Tashkent.

Having come to the vocational training and retraining courses, the Center's clients today can master the profession in the following areas: PC repair, sewing of women's clothes, massage, gas metal-arc welding, hairdressing, PC literacy, office work and others. The most popular, as Project Coordinators noted, are PC repair courses and hairdressing.

-At the end of the vocational training courses, the Social Support Center provides a State-recognized Certificate, which increases the possibility of finding employment for our clients, - explains T. Nikitina. - We also try to assist in finding a job. For example, the Job Fair, recently held in Sergeli district of Tashkent, was attended by the clients of our Center. The representative of the Women's Committee, Dilorom Rakhimjanova, helped them with an interview with employers. I think that in the future we will apply this practice. Moreover, it is pleasant to note that often people, having received a profession, get a job themselves, we do not even have time to make efforts to it.

Although, as the social worker of the Center Rano Ismailova notes, the clients themselves are not ready for such changes in their lives.

- Our task, first of all, to establish contact with clients. - says Rano Ismailova. - This is not always possible from the first time, especially with those who have only been released from prison because of the stress they are experiencing. Many of them turn in on themselves, not realizing the possibilities of the help offered in the Center. They say that they will be able to cope with everything themselves, even though they have problems with documents, housing, coming back to a family that has broken up during the term for serving punishment, etc. If we manage to convince them to attend psychology courses, this usually helps our clients in their further social adaptation. Often we resort to the help of the parents of our potential clients. First, we tell them about the social services that their children could receive in the Center for their "return to full life." At the same time, there are no age restrictions in the provision of social services. Elderly people, for example, to be released from prison shortly before retirement, are given support in the registration of a pension, etc. Also, there are cases when our clients bring later other acquaintances, sharing their own experience in obtaining services. The main achievement in the overall work of the Center's team of specialists at the moment is that there is no cases of "relapse" with our clients. Coming here, they are all trying to get a profession, to succeed in life, become more confident.

Significant assistance in solving social issues, such as the placement of the clients' children in a kindergarten or other household matters, as the Director of the Center T. Nikitina notes, is provided by the representatives of the Women's Committee of Uzbekistan, the work in partnership with which has begun in 2013. Today the issues, raised by the clients, are almost all successfully solved.

Success stories

Behind any reported data is the fate of people. Here are just a few examples of the clients' true stories, received the services of the Social Support Center within the framework of the Project.

Ramil. "According to the Program Director of NGO RIEC "INTILISH", Center Manager Elena Devyatova, Ramil was released from prison with a sense of guilt and hopelessness. When he entered the Project, it was revealed that the young man had many emotional and psychological problems: fears, stiffness, depression, insecurity. For Ramil, together with him, a plan for his individual accompaniment by the Project specialists was drawn up, and for 2 months he attended all the psychological support sessions without missing classes, increasing his self-esteem, developing confidence, learning effective communication with other people. Earlier, according to his confession, the young man worked as a programmer, but after the release he could not find work in this specialty, even despite appeals to numerous instances. Therefore, after discussing with him questions about acquiring a new specialty in the Social Support Center, he was sent to hairdressing courses at the Center for Training and Retraining of the Unemployed Population in Tashkent. On completion of the courses, Ramil received a Diploma in Hairdressing in a state-approved format and got a job. He still occasionally comes to the Center, where he communicates with other clients and motivates them with his example. "We are here learning to communicate with people, to fight with our fears," says Ramil. - Most significantly, thanks to the Center's social support, boundless horizons open up before us, including in the professional sphere."

Alexander. "He was sentenced to 18 years in prison. Being released from prison, he was completely maladjusted, as a significant period of his life was practically cut off from society. When determining needs, he could not formulate them, had great difficulties in dealing with people, often showed aggression. An additional problem was the lack of a passport, as well as the lack of faith in the possibility of its reissuance. After passing a full 2-month course of psychological support, Alexander got a positive perception of life and a hope for improvement. In the office, a mini-course on basic PC and Internet skills was conducted for him, and the Project's lawyer provided assistance and support in reissuance of the passport. Alexander expressed the desire to learn PC repair. On completion of the course, he got a job and returned to life in society. Today he continues to come to the Center, thereby motivating the other participants of the Project. "

Damira: "I served 7 years. At first, after being released from prison, it was very difficult. The fear was so strong that I was afraid to cross the road, not to get a job somewhere. It was not so easy to overcome this fear, not one day and even a year could be spent for it. Gradually, I tried to establish some connections with people, began to look for a job. I made my living by working in the service sector. I was a dishwasher, a saleswoman, a cleaner, etc. Due to my friend I learnt about this Project and came to the Center. Thus, I am in this Project since December. First of all, I wanted to mention the psychological help I received here. I reconsidered my whole life and decided that I should go and strive for more, for better. Therefore, I decided to return to my main specialty, an accountant, that I had before my conviction. I was sent from the Center to 1-C accounting courses, on completion of which I was able to get a job as a chief accountant. The help was even in the fact that for visits to training classes I was given a ticket at the Center. This was a very significant support for me. Thanks to sessions with a psychologist, things have gotten much better, including personal life. I would also like to note the support that DVV International provides to women directly in prison. Still, being there, we could learn PC literacy, various kinds of needlework and sewing, due to the technical support of this international organization and other sponsors. This, I confess, has very brightened up our gray, monotonous everyday life in prison."

Ilkhom. "Being released from the prison, I began to collect documents to get social assistance. I was lucky that once coming to the Hokimiyat, I went into the office together with the Center's social worker Rano Ismailova. She told me about the Project. We had a conversation, and right there I filled the application form for participation in this Project and literally the next day came

here. At that time, I had a very difficult period. My wife and children left me, although we registered our marriage when I was still serving a sentence, and she was pregnant at the time. When I came back, it was difficult for us to communicate with each other. I was very angry. My wife could not stand it, she filed for divorce and left, taking the children with her. In this Center, for the first time I was able to talk about my problems. The psychologist, working with us, helped me to understand myself. I even had a period when I did not come here, but continued my internal struggle with myself. Besides, attending classes here, it became somehow easier for me to communicate with people. Because earlier, only being released, I looked at people around and felt cut off from "normal" people. Being engaged here among those who, like me, got through this, I felt self-confidence. Coming out of here, I am no longer afraid, with a feeling of something bright and kind in my soul. I am very grateful that they could listen to me, understand and direct me. As a result, I reconciled with my wife, we again together and raise our children. Now I am working on launching my business, and my wife supports me in everything. The Center's lawyer helped to solve a problem with house registration in my own name".

Along with vocational training, as mentioned earlier, the Center's services cover another category of vulnerable groups: TBC patients, people with HIV-positive status.

- The reception of TBC clients is conducted first on the street, where they fill in special screening forms to find out if this client can receive services in our Center," explains the Director of NGO RIEC "INTILISH". – Then the person is sent to the tuberculosis clinic for a consultation with a tuberculosis specialist. Only after doctor's decision, a person can enter the Center. This is done to protect the health of other clients of the Center, including people living with HIV. During the Center's activity, five people during the survey had an open form of tuberculosis, and all these people are now receiving treatment at the dispensary. As for people with HIV, if they are registered in the AIDS center, they can get all other services, such as a TB screening and phthisiatrician consultation for redirection from the AIDS Center's city office".

For these people, as the specialists of the Center note, psychological assistance is also important, as well as their families. Therefore, classes are organized in psychological support groups directly with a psychologist, and, if necessary, these clients are also sent to vocational training courses. It should be noted that social support in this Center is not limited to strictly time frames.

- Those people who have completed a full course of psychological adaptation and have passed vocational training, visit the Center, at least once a month, or just call and tell what they are doing at the moment," T. Nikitina continues. - So, the Center's employees are monitoring the clients' subsequent life. Even after a while, our clients still have the opportunity to get certain services, psychological or legal advice. Regarding the terms of social rehabilitation in this Center, it is usually from 1.5 to 3 months. During this time, the person applied here, attends vocational training courses depending on the chosen profession, and classes with a psychologist, solves legal issues with the help of a lawyer, and, if necessary, gets a referral for a medical examination.

Issues still requiring solution

The experience of such well-coordinated work of the Center and a number of state organizations that together help people of vulnerable groups to find a "new way" in life has also revealed a number of other issues of acute vital necessity that are just waiting to be solved. One of these is the issue of housing. Alas, not everyone who has been released from the prison, is waited for at home. It was considered during the discussion of the prospects for further cooperation at a meeting of specialists held in NGO RIEC "INTILISH".

- These are the most difficult questions for us," says Tatyana Nikitina. - To date, we help to solve these issues as far as possible. However, there are such questions among them, which we can not solve yet. This, for example, a situation where a person is released from the prison, and by this time

either his relatives or family have already left and sold the apartment. Or the person has sold the apartment himself before the serving of punishment, and he simply has nowhere to return. These issues, in our opinion, should be solved already at the legislative level (as the lack of housing for these people carries the potential risk of a relapse, as it has been noted at the meeting - author's note). Today, housing issues and partly employment issues remain rather complicated. Employers, as a rule, are afraid of the criminal record of our clients, especially if there is more than one criminal record. Nevertheless, they should be employed. In my opinion, one of the ways out of this situation is the possibility of creating a social enterprise under our organization, so that those clients who can not find work in other organizations can work for the enterprise at our Center.

As the Project's coordinators note, this is one of the most important factors affecting the subsequent lives of people in vulnerable groups. It is important not only the well-coordinated work of partners participating in the project in resolving these issues, but also the introduction of these issues for consideration at the legislative level. In the meantime, the work on the accumulation of experience within the work of the Social Support Center should continue. This opinion was concluded at the end of the meeting by the EU Ambassador to Uzbekistan Eduards Stiprais:

- I am satisfied with the way the Project develops as a result of getting acquainted with the work done in the Center on the social and psychological rehabilitation of people in vulnerable groups and their involvement in the social environment. Work, as can be seen, has been done tremendously. I am glad that within the framework of the Project, very close cooperation was achieved between the Center and the partner state organizations of Uzbekistan, in particular, with the regional and city Hokimiyats of Tashkent, District Departments of Internal Affairs, as well as various medical institutions. It is extremely important that representatives of these state and non-governmental organizations have the opportunity to meet regularly within the Project in order to timely discuss the progress of the Project, the emerging issues and coordinate further work with people from targeted vulnerable groups.

I see great potential for further expansion and deepening of the Project. I also want to note that there is probably no country in the world where the problem of social adaptation and rehabilitation of representatives of vulnerable groups has been completely solved. Therefore, work in the framework of the Social Support Centre is an excellent opportunity for the specialists of Uzbekistan to adopt the European and, in general, world experience. Also, I believe that due to the successful implementation of the Project in Uzbekistan, partners from EU countries will be able to find a lot for themselves. Certainly, it is impossible to solve all the issues of vulnerable groups within the framework of only one Project at this stage. Therefore, in the future, the EU will consider expanding this Project to include other categories of socially vulnerable groups, and help in finding solutions to their adaptation in society."

The material has prepared with the assistance of DVV International Branch in Uzbekistan and NGO RIEC "INTILISH". The names of the clients of the Social Support Center in Tashkent, mentioned in the material, have been changed.