



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

UZBEKISTAN



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STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

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ACRONYMS

A&A	Acquisition and Assistance
ADS	Automated Directives System
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDCS	Country Development Cooperation Strategy
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
DO	Development Objective
DOAG	Development Objective Agreement
EU	European Union
EAEU	Eurasian Economic Union
FSN	Foreign Service National
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIRoA	Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
GOU	Government of Uzbekistan
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDIQ	Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity
IR	Intermediate Result
ISKP	Islamic State Khorasan Province
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LGBTQI	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MoPE	Ministry of Public Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
NPI	New Partnership Initiative
OE	Operating expense
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PIO	Public International Organization
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
PSE	Private Sector Engagement
TB	Tuberculosis
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USDH	U.S. Direct Hire
USG	U.S. Government

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In September 2020, following Congressional authorization, USAID elevated its status in Uzbekistan from a Country Office to a full-fledged Mission. A full USAID Mission could better respond to new opportunities for increased cooperation between the United States and Uzbekistan resulting from the reforms initiated since 2016 by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. To guide its programming for 2022 through 2025, USAID/Uzbekistan developed this three-year Strategic Framework, which will be followed by a Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS).

USAID/Uzbekistan's Strategic Framework mirrors the five priorities laid out by President Mirziyoyev in the speech he made at the inauguration of his second term in office, in November 2021. As the Mission's first bilateral strategy, this Strategic Framework envisions a distinct approach from USAID's previous strategies that were managed from USAID/Central Asia but aligns with and supports the NSC-approved U.S. Strategy for Central Asia, State and USAID's Joint Regional Strategy, and USAID/Central Asia's Regional Development Cooperation Strategy 2020-2025.

The goal of USAID/Uzbekistan's 2022 – 2025 Strategic Framework is ***Toward a Reformed, Resilient, Inclusive, and Transparent Uzbekistan***. In support of this goal, USAID will advance the U.S. Strategy for Central Asia and the Integrated Country Strategy's objectives and will support the GOU's reform agenda. USAID/Uzbekistan will build an enduring and strong relationship with the GOU to support their goals of increasing institutional and systems capacity, maintaining national sovereignty, and achieving and preserving economic independence. USAID will also strengthen its engagement with Uzbekistan's private sector and civil society, helping them to engage constructively with the government and to strengthen transparency and accountability.

To achieve USAID/Uzbekistan's Strategic Framework's three-year goal, USAID will advance four development objectives. In support of **Development Objective (DO) 1: Effective Democratic Governance Strengthened**, USAID will ensure Uzbekistan's citizens and civil society play a greater role in decision-making processes and will strengthen local and national government institutions. To support **DO 2: Learning Outcomes and Skills of Children and Youth Improved**, USAID will support the GOU efforts to reform and modernize the education sector to ensure that Uzbekistan's citizens, including people with disabilities, can acquire the skills necessary to succeed in both education and employment. To advance **DO 3: Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth Enhanced**, USAID will support GOU reform efforts to diversify its economy, increase trade, and create meaningful employment for Uzbekistan's population, including women and youth. To support **DO 4: Quality, People-centered,¹ and Integrated Health Care Provision for Priority Disease Threats Expanded**, USAID will improve the quality and accessibility of comprehensive health services, while strengthening the GOU's ability to effectively manage and respond to the priority diseases affecting Uzbekistan, thus improving health outcomes.

In addition to addressing the sectoral themes with four DOs, USAID/Uzbekistan's Strategic Framework incorporates four cross-sectoral themes: youth, gender equality, private sector engagement, and digital transformation. USAID/Uzbekistan will also ensure guidance from the new Administration and USAID Administrator will be reflected throughout our work - in this Strategic Framework, our New Partnership

¹ USAID/Uzbekistan defines people-centered care as comprehensive services focused on people, not their diseases or conditions.

Initiative (NPI) Action Plan, our policy and planning tools, and activity designs. We will integrate lessons learned from decades of providing assistance to Uzbekistan as well as globally, build on our already strong foundation of collaboration with the interagency at Post, and strengthen donor coordination. We will also plan for all contingencies to adjust to on the ground demands and changing political and economic conditions in Afghanistan and the Central Asia region.

2. COUNTRY CONTEXT

With President Mirziyoyev’s administration, Uzbekistan is at a turning point in history and offers a range of opportunities for USAID to deepen its engagement. The operating environment in Uzbekistan has improved vastly since President Mirziyoyev came to power in 2016. He has demonstrated he is an ambitious reform leader who has opened the door for an unprecedented generational shift toward a more open and dynamic Uzbekistan. As Secretary Blinken said in February 2022, the “Government of Uzbekistan’s broad political and economic reform agenda sets an important benchmark for others.”

After 30 years of diplomatic engagement, relations between the United States and Uzbekistan have never been better. The United States and the GOU solidified their strategic partnership in the December 2021 Strategic Partnership Dialogue, during which the United States reaffirmed its commitment to support the people of Uzbekistan and partner with the Uzbek government and agreed on areas of mutual cooperation, including with USAID.

The GOU has embraced USAID’s elevated, bilateral Mission status in Uzbekistan, and has taken clear steps to collaborate more closely with USAID. There is strong political will coming from the highest levels in the government to partner with USAID as evidenced by numerous requests for USAID assistance and strategic analysis expertise by a range of government entities. Strong champions of USAID have emerged at the highest levels of the GOU. With a shift toward attracting Western assistance and expertise, there are also an unprecedented number of non-GOU strategic partners for USAID to engage with. The international donor community has expanded, and the private sector is growing.

In January 2022, the GOU launched the Development Strategy of the New Uzbekistan (2022-2026) with five priority areas: improving the system of state and public construction, ensuring the rule of law and further reform of the judicial system, economic development and liberalization, development of the social area, and security/inter-ethnic harmony/religious tolerance. USAID/Uzbekistan’s Strategic Framework mirrors all these priorities.

Driven by a robust expansion of the industry and services sector, Uzbekistan’s economy achieved 7.4 percent GDP growth in 2021. The growth was driven by public sector spending and domestic consumption and an increase in inbound remittances. The GOU’s economic policy for the mid-term is based on further reduction of monopolies in the economy, bank privatization, greater green energy generation capacity, and tax cuts. Despite the pandemic, many international financial institutions remain optimistic about Uzbekistan’s economic prospects. Although the country has partially recovered to pre-pandemic levels of foreign trade, agricultural sector growth fell below expectations at only 1.8 percent growth in 2021. In the first quarter of 2021, the number of Uzbek labor migrants issued work permits by Russia (Uzbekistan’s largest source of remittance inflows) declined by approximately 40 percent, but

remittance inflows from Russia increased by 12 percent, during that same quarter, to \$680 million. Remittances have grown in importance to the Uzbekistan economy. More than ten percent of the country's GDP now comes from remittances, which were up 34 percent, totaling \$8.1 billion, in 2021. However, due to the war in Ukraine, the World Bank forecasts a substantial remittance decline of up to 22 percent in 2022. The Mission will continue to monitor this situation, including analyzing the economic and social impact of decreased remittances and returning of labor migrants, and will review and update the Mission's strategy, as necessary.

Despite a positive economic growth trajectory, Uzbekistan has an expected 500,000 youth entering the workforce each year for the next 10 years, and the current employment growth will not be able to absorb these new entrants.² Uzbekistan has a high rate of unemployment, officially 13.2 percent in 2020³ and an estimated 20 percent for youth.⁴ Sixty four percent of the population is under 30.⁵ Over the next two decades, today's young population will move into the labor force, making it the largest Uzbekistan has ever had. The emerging Uzbekistan is young, increasingly tech savvy and open to new ideas to advance their country into new economic sectors and new opportunities for trade and investment. The youth bulge has both positive and negative implications for the prospect of economic and social transformation. The education system needs modernization to equip young people with the necessary skills for productive work especially in new industry and technology fields. With the right investments now, today's youth can be the generation that takes Uzbekistan to the next level of socio-economic development. Alternatively, a failure to adequately invest in the well-being of today's children and young people will lead to greater discontent, higher levels of youth unemployment, and young graduates unprepared for the workforce.⁶

The COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating existing inequalities in Uzbekistan, particularly in the country's poorest regions, adding further socio-economic stress to already high rates of unemployment and poor health outcomes. In particular, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) June 2021 Global Lists for High Burden Countries for Tuberculosis,⁷ Uzbekistan is among the top 20 countries with the highest multi-drug resistant tuberculosis rate. Uzbekistan has separate systems for national programs such as HIV and TB. These systems lack coordination, employ generally paper-based registration and health information systems, and their data are pooled at different levels of administration and/or available only upon request. Digital transformation is necessary for modernizing and improving health outcomes across the country. This is particularly evident during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis.

The World Bank estimates that the effects of COVID-19 on education will have a decade-long impact on the economy unless authorities act to recover learning losses and protect the human capital of affected cohorts. The World Bank estimates that learning in Uzbekistan will decrease and that the percentage of students performing below minimum threshold may increase by up to three percentage points (from 48 to 51 percent). Student cohorts affected by COVID-19 will reduce their expected earnings by an estimated

² [Asian Development Bank. 2020. *Uzbekistan: Quality Job Creation as a Cornerstone for Sustainable Economic Growth*.](#)

³ [The Unemployment Rate in Uzbekistan was 132 Percent](#)

⁴ [The Unemployment Rate in Uzbekistan was 132 Percent](#)

⁵ Asian Development Banks Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment. Update. December 2018.

⁶ [UNICEF Youth Policy](#)

⁷ [World Health Organization's Global Lists for High Burden Countries for Tuberculosis](#)

3.5 percent and an overall economic loss of up to \$425 million (2011 purchasing power parity) every year.⁸

Poverty and inequality are pronounced with urban-rural and regional disparities. The Aral Sea disaster in Uzbekistan's Karakalpakstan Autonomous Region has resulted in land degradation and desertification, a shortage of drinking water, malnutrition, and deterioration of the health and the livelihoods of the local population. The Karakalpak population suffers from high levels of poverty, unemployment, and poor health. The shrinking of the Aral Sea by 90 percent and desertification of most of its territory is one of the most visible environmental disasters in the world over the last fifty years.⁹ As a result, thousands of Karakalpaks have lost their livelihoods and are being forced off their land. The catastrophe is a warning for the rest of the country.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the situation for women in Uzbekistan has deteriorated. This is particularly represented in higher education¹⁰ (current enrollment is 38.2 percent for women versus 61.8 percent for men) and labor force participation¹¹ (53.8 percent for women versus 77.7 percent for men). These issues are further exacerbated by gender stereotypes that permeate each sector of the government and society and limit women's effective participation in the economy. To address horizontal gender segregation, additional support is required to combat gender stereotypes in education and employment, improving the quality of jobs in sectors where working women are overrepresented, and increasing the number of working women in sectors where women are under-represented.¹² To address vertical segregation, additional work is required to overcome barriers in access to, and retention of, employment, training and promotion.¹³

President Mirziyoyev's reform agenda has ushered in a greater appreciation for human rights and more freedoms for civil society and media. Today, many NGOs function free from government harassment and even receive direct support from government at the local and national levels. While progress has been made with civil society, and the opening for citizens to organize themselves and exercise their rights to freedom of speech and association remains fragile. Although the GOU has made impressive gains since the passing of former President Karimov, challenges remain. USAID and other donors continue to face challenges in registering national and international implementing partners.

Previously the primary obstacle to closer Central Asian integration, Uzbekistan is now advancing integration by striving to settle disputed borders, liberalize trade and tackle transnational issues. Due to geographic, ethnic and linguistic ties, Uzbekistan can play an important role in the stabilization of Afghanistan. Uzbekistan is eager to see Afghanistan enhance its role as a land bridge to Pakistani seaports on the Indian Ocean through the creation of rail routes from Mazar-i-Sharif to Kabul and then onward to

⁸ World Bank. Online briefing: *Education in Central Asia: Learning during the Pandemic*. August 2020.

⁹Elena Lioubimtseva, "Impact of Climate Change on the Aral Sea and Its Basin" in *Impact of Climate Change on the Aral Sea and its Basin*. (Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag, 2014), pp 405-427.

¹⁰ [Asian Development Bank. *Uzbekistan Country Gender Assessment. Update. December 2018.*](#)

¹¹ [ESCAP. *Examining Women's Economic Empowerment in SPECA countries. 2018.*](#)

¹² [ILO: *Women and the World of Work in Uzbekistan*](#)

¹³ [ILO: *Women and the World of Work in Uzbekistan*](#)

Torkham, on the Pakistani border¹⁴ Uzbekistan is also establishing a free economic zone on the border with Afghanistan.

3. STRATEGIC APPROACH

Strategic planning is essential in all the contexts in which USAID works - from relatively stable countries to those that are constantly in flux. A thoughtful, evidence-based approach to prioritizing and utilizing available funding and resources, staff, and convening power, is necessary for successful development in any context. USAID/Uzbekistan developed this three-year Strategic Framework based on this process.

USAID/Uzbekistan's 2022–2025 Strategic Framework is framed by the U.S. Strategy for Central Asia, the GOU's reform agenda, USAID emerging policy priorities, the USAID/Central Asia Regional Development Cooperation Strategy 2020-2025, Embassy Tashkent's Interagency Country Strategy, as well as State and USAID's Joint Regional Strategy. This Strategic Framework supports the key USG policy objective to strengthen partnerships with Uzbekistan and promote stability, resiliency, and prosperity in Uzbekistan.

The goal for USAID/Uzbekistan's 2022-2025 Strategic Framework is "Toward a Reformed, Resilient, Inclusive, and Transparent Uzbekistan." In support of this goal, USAID will advance U.S. strategic objectives and support the GOU's wide-ranging economic, judicial, and social reforms.

USAID/Uzbekistan will build an enduring and strong relationship with the GOU to increase their capacity to maintain national sovereignty and achieve and preserve economic independence. USAID will also strengthen its engagement with Uzbekistan's private sector and civil society to engage the government and strengthen transparency and accountability.

Enhancing Localization: USAID/Uzbekistan will ensure guidance from the new USAID Administration will be reflected throughout our work - in this Strategic Framework, our NPI Action Plan (described at the end of the strategy), our policy and planning tools, and project and activity designs. As USAID/Uzbekistan shifts from a reliance on regional awards to a bilateral focus, we know that local entities are ready to cooperate with us. However, the capacity of these local entities to take on the additional burden of complying with USG regulations and policies is largely untested; we view new designs that support this Strategic Framework as first-generation programming. Thus, the Mission programs will look to prime awardees to build capacity of local entities over the implementation of this strategy.

Advancing the Government of Uzbekistan's Reform Agenda: President Mirziyoyev's reform-minded administration provides USAID an unprecedented opportunity to deepen engagement and advance profound reforms. USAID/Uzbekistan's Strategic Framework mirrors all five priorities in the GOU's Development Strategy of the New Uzbekistan (2022-2026). This Strategic Framework is the Mission's first bilateral strategy specifically tailored to the current context in Uzbekistan, and is thus distinct from previous strategies for Uzbekistan managed from USAID/Central Asia.

¹⁴ [U.S. Experiments with Three-way Dialogue with Uzbekistan, Afghanistan](#)

Afghanistan Crisis Consideration: The deteriorating situation in Afghanistan will continue to impact Uzbekistan (particularly in the region bordering Afghanistan). To adjust to on the ground demands and changing political and economic conditions, the Mission is planning for all contingencies. By increasing the capacity of local governance to deliver services in the border region, supporting the capacity of the GOU to meet the health needs of affected host communities, and expanding and strengthening the Free Trade Zone between Uzbekistan and Afghanistan, USAID/Uzbekistan will utilize resources to ensure continued stability in Uzbekistan and the inclusion of all residents into the economy, including addressing potential humanitarian crises.

Integrating Lessons Learned: Integrating lessons learned from previous programming is crucial to the success of this Strategic Framework. Foremost among them is the importance of engaging the GOU early and continuously through the design and implementation of strategy, activities and associated initiatives and evaluations. In 2019, USAID and the MoPE signed a five-year, \$50 million Development Objective Agreement (DOAG). This is the first and only DOAG signed by USAID with a Central Asian government. USAID/Uzbekistan will engage the GOU on potentially replicating the success and goodwill produced by the education DOAG in other sectors. Furthermore, the Mission will continue to utilize embedded advisors, which has significantly improved cooperation with government institutions and improved efficiency and overall activity results. As a new Mission, USAID will demonstrate how USAID's investments support U.S. policy priorities and align with GOU objectives. Lastly, USAID will prioritize partnering with the private sector to leverage resources to reach common development goals. Moreover, as the private sector is crucial to sustainability and is the primary driver of economic development and innovation, private sector engagement will play a pivotal role in how we design and implement activities.

Donor Coordination: With the increase in international development partners arriving in Uzbekistan during the past five years, there is a need to strengthen donor coordination to ensure limited resources are complementary and not duplicative, and the country's greatest development needs are addressed. USAID will take advantage of our leading role in coordinating development in Uzbekistan to advocate for an increasing localization agenda that builds local capacity to advance our mutually shared development agenda. USAID/Uzbekistan will expand outreach to strengthen donor coordination efforts and build on its current foundation to collaborate with a wider range of development partners. USAID leads or participates in the rule of law, public administration and open societies, media assistance, and countering trafficking in persons development partner working groups. These working groups facilitate the sharing of information and coordinate responses to GOU requests for assistance. In addition, USAID actively participates in health development partner meetings for the Global Fund TB awards, and the MoH-led Health Information Systems technical working group. USAID is the lead health development partner for drafting of the Pharmaceuticals Section of the MoH's new Health Strategy 2030, scheduled for completion in late 2030. USAID/Uzbekistan has taken the lead to mobilize key donors, including the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, on reforming the education sector. USAID/Uzbekistan coordinates closely with United Nation agencies on a number of issues, including governance, education, health, and the sustainable development of the Aral Sea Region. USAID also coordinates with the European Union (Aral Sea, governance, media assistance), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (governance, media assistance) and other European and Asian bilateral development agencies.

Cross-cutting themes

Gender and Youth Integration: USAID/Uzbekistan’s Strategic Framework supports the White House’s National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality, acknowledging that strengthening women’s economic security and labor force participation is essential to advancing Uzbekistan’s development.¹⁵ Therefore, USAID has increasingly integrated gender and youth considerations into our strategies and activity designs and implementation. As part of this strategy, USAID recognizes that the status quo has not worked for women, girls, and all those who experience gender-based discrimination, especially those who belong to underserved communities that have been systematically denied the opportunity to fully participate in economic, social, civic, and political life. USAID will incorporate youth considerations and youth will play an active role in all of USAID interventions, to ensure that youth have the necessary skills as they prepare to enter Uzbekistan’s economy as competent employees or entrepreneurs. According to a [2019 UNICEF nationally representative household survey](#) on Uzbekistan, 45 percent of households have a member with a disability.¹⁶ USAID activities will ensure that youth and people with disabilities have greater access to inclusive and quality education, employment opportunities, and access to disability benefits.

Increasing Private Sector Engagement (PSE) and Integration into USAID Programming: USAID recognizes that the private sector is fundamental to achieving development across the globe and in ending the need for foreign assistance. In Uzbekistan, USAID will work with the private sector to advance innovation and technical expertise across all USAID interventions. While there are constraints to inclusive and market-driven economic growth in Uzbekistan, USAID can play a catalytic role to accelerate this growth by deepening collaboration with the private sector. In 2021, USAID conducted a Private Sector Landscape Assessment¹⁷ to assess the private sector in Uzbekistan and identify opportunities for collaboration. Based on the assessment findings, USAID/Uzbekistan developed an Action Plan that identified a number of areas of collaboration including policy and regulatory reform, support to the private sector to effectively engage in public-private dialogue, and partnering with the American Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Higher Education to introduce new curriculum that assists youth acquire the necessary leadership and management skills in high-growth value chains, such as food processing, ICT services, medical devices, pharmaceutical, and renewable energy. In addition, to ensure our activities incorporate private sector approaches, interests and buy-in, USAID/Uzbekistan incorporated in the first Activity Design Mission Order the request to engage when possible with the private sector at the activity design stage. In 2021, USAID/Uzbekistan established a PSE working group to ensure the Mission’s vision of PSE is brought to fruition.

Digital Transformation: As part of the reform agenda, the GOU has prioritized digital transformation and adopted the Digital Uzbekistan 2030 Strategy (Digital Uzbekistan Strategy) in October 2020. The Digital Uzbekistan Strategy sets out five priority areas for development: Digital infrastructure, e-Government,

¹⁵ White House: [National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality](#)

¹⁶ UNICEF uses the term ‘disability’ in line with the definition provided in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 1): “Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.” UNICEF Uzbekistan. 2020. “Building a National Social Protection System Fit for Uzbekistan’s Children and Young People.”

¹⁷ USAID/Uzbekistan Private Sector Landscape Assessment, September 2021

Digital economy, National IT sector, and IT education. In January 2022,¹⁸ USAID published findings from its Digital Ecosystem Country Assessment of Uzbekistan. The assessment identified opportunities and risks associated with digital technology and will be used to inform the design and implementation of USAID activities. The assessment is in support of the USAID Digital Strategy,¹⁹ which is the Agency’s vision for development and humanitarian assistance in the world’s rapidly evolving digital landscape.

4. RESULTS FRAMEWORK

a. Goal and Narrative

The goal for USAID/Uzbekistan’s 2022-2025 Strategic Framework is “Toward a Reformed, Resilient, Inclusive, and Transparent Uzbekistan.” In support of this goal, USAID will advance U.S. strategic objectives and support the GOU’s wide-ranging reforms. USAID/Uzbekistan will build an enduring and strong relationship with the GOU to increase their capacity to maintain national sovereignty and achieve and preserve economic independence.

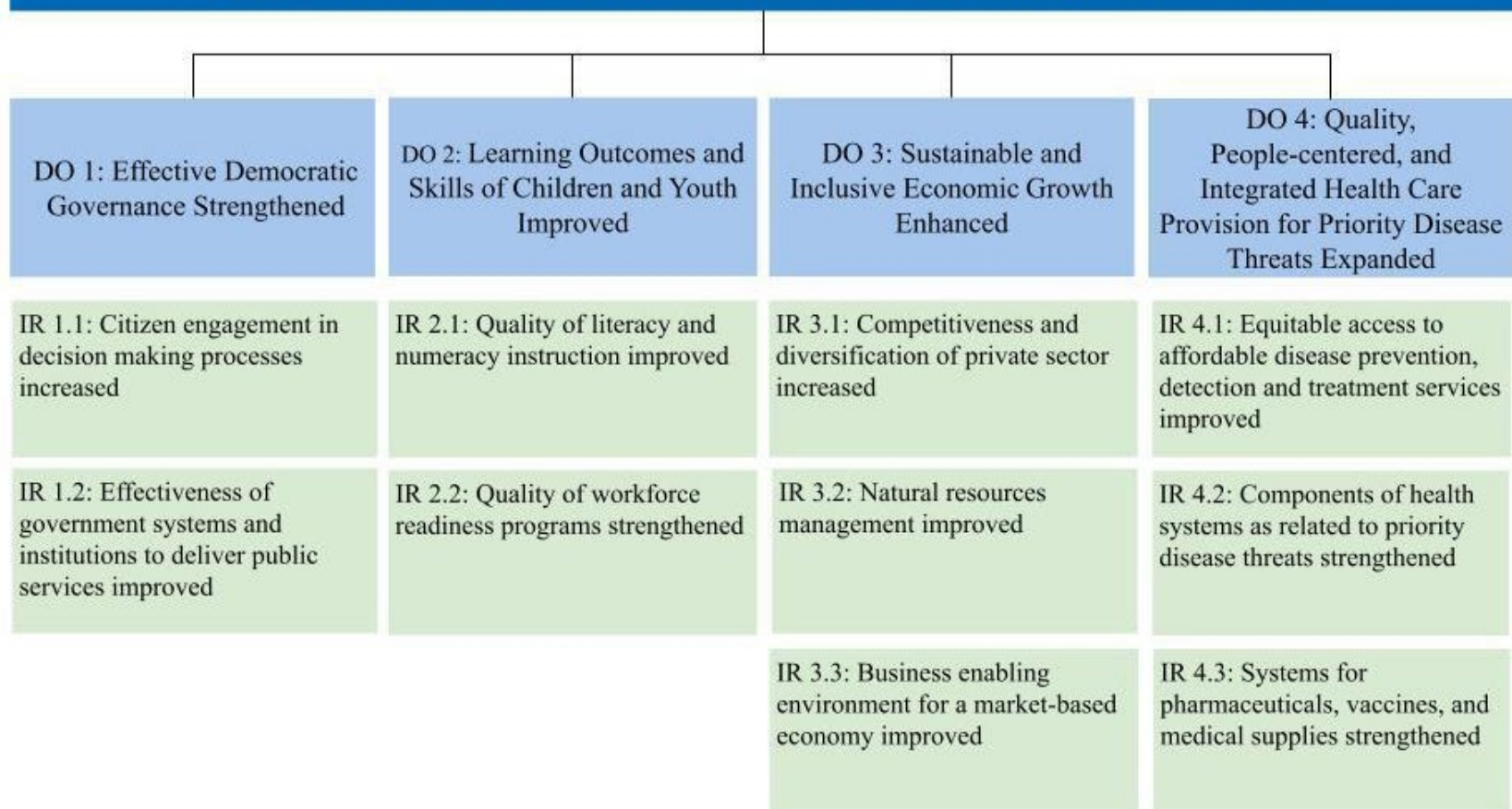
The goal statement refers to “resilience” as the ability of both the Government of Uzbekistan as well as Uzbekistan’s people (i.e. households, and communities) to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses. To achieve this kind of resilience, special emphasis will be given to creating policies that promote a climate resilient economy and develop sustainable economic livelihoods across Uzbekistan.

The term “inclusive” in this Strategic Framework refers to both marginalized populations (including youth, women and individuals with disabilities) and private sector diversification to encourage non-traditional business outside of agriculture.

¹⁸ Uzbekistan Digital Ecosystem Country Assessment, January 2022

¹⁹ [USAID Digital Strategy 2020-2024](#)

GOAL: Toward a Reformed, Resilient, Inclusive, and Transparent Uzbekistan



Cross-cutting themes: Youth, Gender equality, Private sector engagement, Digital transformation

b. Development Objective 1: Effective Democratic Governance Strengthened

*Development Hypothesis: **IF** Uzbekistan’s citizens and civil society knowledgeable and actively participate in decision-making processes, and local and national government institutions are more transparent, inclusive, and equitable, **THEN** good governance in Uzbekistan will improve, which will advance the GOU’s reform agenda.*

Through interventions that support USAID/Uzbekistan Strategic Framework DO1, USAID will ensure Uzbekistan’s citizens and civil society play a greater role in decision-making processes and will strengthen local and national government institutions. Through greater public participation, including the private sector, the GOU will increasingly develop and implement more inclusive and transparent policies and programs that advance accountable governance and a more open economy. To advance GOU reforms and achieve USG policy objectives, USAID will work closely with other USG agencies and develop partnerships with donors to ensure investments are strategic and create synergies rather than redundancies.

In support of the U.S. Strategy for Central Asia objectives *1: Support and strengthen the sovereignty and independence of the Central Asian States, individually and as a region, 5: Promote rule of law reform and respect for human rights, and 6: Promote United States investment in and development of Central Asia* and the GOU reform agenda,²⁰ activities that support DO1 will support the GOU’s wide-ranging reforms in the judiciary and civil society sectors. USAID will strengthen the capacity of Uzbekistan’s core judicial administration entities to manage the judiciary, coordinate competencies, and improve the performance of judges and the courts. During the course of the strategy, USAID will expand interventions to strengthen the administration of justice, improve professionalism and integrity of the judiciary, and strengthen the transparency of and public trust in the judiciary. Inclusive governance efforts will work to address low levels of participation of women, youth, and people with disability in governance at local and national levels.²¹

Furthermore, to support governance reforms at the local level, USAID interventions will build local governance capacity to enhance citizen engagement with local authorities and public service delivery across the country. Complementing these efforts to strengthen government capacity, USAID interventions will improve the regulatory environment for independent media and strengthen civil society capacities in advocacy and network building to better engage the government and exert pressure on the GOU to deliver an inclusive and citizen-centered reform agenda.

During this strategy and in response to GOU requests, USAID will expand to new governance areas to engage in more transparent, participatory, and evidence-based dialogue around reforms, and build the capacity of key actors to implement and monitor reforms.

IR 1.1: Citizen engagement in decision-making processes increased

Most civil society and media outlets are ill-equipped to take advantage of the openings offered through

²⁰ [Action Strategy 2017 - 2020](#)

²¹ USAID/Uzbekistan Strategic Framework Supplemental Gender Analysis, January 2022

President Mirziyoyev's reform agenda due to lack of capacity to effectively engage or partner with the government. Continued censorship and/or harassment of media and civil society groups which address sensitive issues also stifles civil society and media participation. Activities under intermediate result (IR) 1.1 will assist Uzbekistan's government and civil society in ensuring citizens are fully engaged in decision making and that the government maintains an effective governance system that is transparent, accountable, protects citizens' rights and is accessible for all. USAID activities will foster a cohort of civically responsible youth leaders, strengthen civil society's role in fostering greater government accountability and transparency and improve institutional capacity and resiliency of civil society to address emerging society needs and undue government pressure. USAID's support to the media will improve its capacity to provide balanced, informed, and unbiased reporting on key policy and public interest issues and counter disinformation, increase media and information literacy especially among the youth, improve the legal enabling environment for traditional and digital media and strengthen media/blogger resilience to withstand censorship or harassment. In anticipation of the 2024 election of national and local lawmakers, USAID will strengthen the media and civil society's role in promoting a more democratic electoral process.

IR 1.2: Effectiveness of government systems and institutions to deliver public services improved

President Mirziyoyev and senior government officials have said repeatedly that a top priority is reform of the public sector, to include increased transparency, accountability, control of corruption, and improved skills of public officials. However, the public sector itself often lacks the capacity to successfully implement GOU administration priorities. This will slow the reform efforts until these skills are raised. USAID activities under this IR 1.2 will increase public sector transparency so that citizens can see the value created by a responsive and accountable public sector and can assist with oversight. Activities will also support Uzbekistan's legal and judicial sector reforms to make justice sector institutions more accountable to the public. USAID will provide technical assistance and training to key judicial administration bodies, including the Supreme Court, the Supreme Judicial Council and the Higher School of Judges, and work with individual courts to improve the working methods, processes, and resources related to court administration, case management, public communication and the delivery of justice services. Flexible assistance will be provided to national policy makers to incorporate international best practices into legislative acts that support a reform agenda, such as civil society codes, gender equity and gender-based violence, decentralization, and economic policies, among others. To advance Uzbekistan's decentralization reforms, USAID will support local government bodies to improve citizen participation and strengthen accountability for providing services that meet citizen needs. If the government demonstrates sufficient will to hold competitive elections, USAID may consider limited support to electoral management institutions.

c. Development Objective 2: Learning Outcomes and Skills of Children and Youth Improved

Development Hypothesis: IF the quality of literacy and numeracy instruction is improved, and IF the quality of school-based and after-school work readiness programs is strengthened, THEN the knowledge and skills of children and youth will be improved, preparing them to succeed in school and later in the workplace, and to ultimately contribute to Uzbekistan's development.

Through DO2, USAID will support the GOU's efforts to reform and modernize the education sector to ensure Uzbekistan's citizens, including girls, boys, and people with disabilities, can acquire the skills necessary to succeed in both education and employment. USAID's education activities will support the

Education Sector Plan of Uzbekistan’s vision and objectives to help “children and youth [be] prepared for life through quality education and life-long learning, leading to an improved quality of life, enhanced job opportunities and a consistent increase in real income.”²² Furthermore, USAID will advance reforms in primary and secondary education that are evidence-based, inclusive, sustainable and relevant to a modern economy.

In support of the U.S. Strategy for Central Asia objectives *1: Support and strengthen the sovereignty and independence of the Central Asian States, individually and as a region*, and *6: Promote United States investment in and development of Central Asia* and GOU reform principles, current and planned activities entrench and advance the ongoing reform efforts in the education sector and ensure that the expected 500,000 Uzbek citizens, boys and girls, entering the workforce each year over the next 10 years have the skills to create or obtain gainful employment.

Through the four-year (2019-2023), \$29.5 million Uzbekistan Education for Excellence Program, USAID is laying the foundations for improving teaching and learning in math, Uzbek Language Arts, information and communications technology (ICT), and English as a Foreign Language. New teaching and learning materials, newly developed learner standards, assessment, and a comprehensive approach to improving teacher practices are being piloted in phases to allow learning, revision and adaptation before the MoPE scales up and rolls out these interventions to public schools nationwide. Also supporting DO2 is the five-year (2021-2026), \$10 million Uzbekistan Youth Workforce Development and Entrepreneurship Activity, which assists the MoPE to equip youth in Grades 8-11 with the necessary skills to enter Uzbekistan’s economy as competent employees or entrepreneurs. This activity aims to improve the quality of school-based economics and entrepreneurship programs, improve the quality of afterschool entrepreneurship, soft skills and work readiness programs, and strengthen the enabling environment to support and engage youth, especially girls and youth with disabilities. The activity also seeks partnerships with the private sector to ensure alignment between educational offerings and labor market needs and for leveraging of private sector resources.

Building and expanding on current program achievements, new basic education programming is anticipated to further improve the literacy and numeracy outcomes of learners in the early grades of primary school. New programming will strengthen and ensure the sustainable capacity of the education sector to provide quality learning environments with the instruction, materials and support that children need, not only while they are in school, but also in the community. With equity and inclusion as core principles, interventions will include a deliberate focus on addressing the learning needs of children with disabilities to ensure that approaches reach all children. Approaches will be data-driven and informed by and respond to the findings of national Early Grade Reading and Math Assessments conducted with the MoPE in 2021.

Overall, USAID interventions will improve the knowledge and practices of teachers, support curriculum reforms, improve the quality and availability of teaching and learning materials, contribute to improved assessment systems, and support the capacity building of key GOU systems and counterparts, in order to improve English, ICT, and early grade reading and math learning outcomes, and work readiness and

²² [Education Sector Plan \(ESP\) of Uzbekistan 2019-2023](#)

entrepreneurial skills. USAID investments in this sector will deliberately promote the inclusion and advancement of girls, young women, and children and youth with disabilities. As a part of this effort, USAID investments will contribute to a better prepared and educated workforce, ready to strengthen Uzbekistan's links with and capacity to engage in the world's economy and to move past an overreliance on Russia and the People's Republic of China. With the right investments now, today's youth can be the generation that takes Uzbekistan to the next level of socio-economic development. Alternatively, a failure to adequately invest in the well-being of today's children and young people will lead to greater discontent, disenfranchisement, and higher levels of youth unemployment.²³

IR 2.1: Quality of literacy and numeracy instruction improved

The educational system in Uzbekistan and the practices of its teachers remain entrenched in antiquated Soviet models. In order to change this reality over the course of the next three years, USAID will assist the MoPE to build the internal technical knowledge and capacity required to meet its commitment to reform. This includes supporting the GOU plan for the institutionalization, expansion, and sustainability of USAID-supported interventions so that our successes can reach schools nationwide. IR 2.1 will focus on core subject areas of numeracy and literacy, to support improved instruction in classrooms. Under this IR, with a focus on Grades 1-4, USAID will support development of appropriate standards and revise curricula, improve the quality and availability of teaching and learning materials and assessments in classrooms, improve teacher practices, and increase the availability of reliable learning data.

IR 2.2: Quality of workforce readiness programs strengthened

Despite near-universal enrolments in secondary education, most students currently perform below expected curricular standards in their ability to "apply" their knowledge and use it for reasoning.²⁴ IR 2.2 will strengthen the quality of work readiness programs through improved classroom instruction in economics and entrepreneurship in Grade 8-11, as well as in English and ICT starting in primary school up through secondary school. Improved classroom instruction will require engagement with the MoPE but also with the private sector to strengthen the relevance of learning to the labor market. In-classroom instruction will be complemented by after-school activities that engage not only youth but also their families and communities to prepare them for future employment opportunities.

d. Development Objective 3: Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth Enhanced

*Development Hypothesis: **IF** Uzbekistan's private sector competitiveness and diversification is increased, management of natural resources is climate resilient and improved, and the business enabling environment is market-based, **THEN** Uzbekistan's economic growth will be inclusive and sustainable.*

Through DO3, USAID will support GOU reform efforts to diversify its economy, increase trade and create meaningful employment for Uzbekistan's population, including women and youth. The GOU is pursuing a number of economic reforms that includes liberalization of the currency market, ending corruption, reforms to the tax system, and better data gathering and publishing. Advancing economic reforms that diversify and liberalize the economy, economically integrate Uzbekistan into Central Asia

²³ [UNICEF Youth Policy](#)

²⁴ UNICEF Youth of UzbekistanL Challenges and Prospects (2020)

and the world's economy, provides GOU greater leverage to engage other economic and investment opportunities.

In support of the U.S. Strategy for Central Asia objectives *1: Support and strengthen the sovereignty and independence of the Central Asian States, individually and as a region*, and *6: Promote United States investment in and development of Central Asia* and GOU reform efforts, USAID interventions will support the private sector to create economic activities that are resilient to climate risks, transformative, and sustainable. USAID interventions will support the GOU to increase cross-border trade, improve business to business opportunities, and expand trade activities in the Free Trade Zone with Afghanistan. To ensure Uzbekistan's private sector has the ability to innovate and drive its economy, USAID investments will better align jobs training programs to employment needs, expand the digital economy, and ensure women, youth and people with disabilities have access to the skills and capital to productively contribute to the country's economy. Through partnering with local and multinational companies, USAID will leverage private sector expertise, capabilities, and resources to catalyze market-based solutions that unlock the country's economic growth potential.²⁵

USAID will develop the capacity of women-owned enterprises and encourage entrepreneurial business development outside of agriculture in areas where climate change has reduced or eliminated traditional agricultural work. USAID investments will consider challenges and opportunities associated with gender, youth, people with disabilities and other marginalized groups. Through integrating gender considerations in implementation and developing gender specific targets, USAID will address underlying factors that limit women's economic opportunities and ensure our activities are tailored to challenges facing women and men in Uzbekistan.²⁶

In line with the current USG Administration's focus on climate change and resilience, and to expand economic development to underserved communities, USAID will also support the Aral Sea basin region by providing assistance in areas such as business development, clean drinking water, biodiversity management, tree inventory, and air pollution monitoring. USAID will also establish partnerships with other donors and development actors working on Aral Sea basin regional issues including sustainable agriculture, education and public health protection.

DO3 will integrate climate resilience across its portfolio and advance reforms across the government that increase private sector participation in the country's economic development. Due to recent reforms that decentralize specific aspects of governance, USAID will engage local governments on creating policies that promote a climate resilient economy and develop sustainable economic livelihoods across Uzbekistan and in particular in Karakalpakstan.

IR 3.1: Competitiveness and diversification of the private sector increased

IR 3.1 focuses on advancing private sector engagement through attracting more investors and businesses. This will be accomplished through supporting the private sector to create economic activities that are resilient to climate risks, transformative, and sustainable. The Mission has already incorporated new Women's Economic Empowerment Funds to assist in the engagement and development of new female-

²⁵ USAID/Uzbekistan Private Sector Landscape Assessment, September 2021.

²⁶ USAID/Uzbekistan Strategic Framework Supplemental Gender Analysis, January 2022

owned private sector businesses and the expansion of women-owned businesses through co-financing. This will lead to increased competitiveness in diversified sectors of the economy. The Mission was selected for a Digital Ecosystem Country Assessment report which was finalized in January 2022 and highlights the opportunities for investors in the digital divide. This information has led to our Agribusiness Development Activity also focusing on increasing the competitiveness in the sector by providing digital opportunities through its training which will also increase new private sector businesses engagement and additional investments by having staff that have the skills to meet their businesses digital needs. IR 3.1 is the foundational IR to the other two IRs to ensure natural resources are protected as the country moves to a market-based economy. Activities supporting this IR will be linked to those under IR 4.3.

IR 3.2: Natural resources management improved

IR 3.2 will be addressed through coordination with government ministries and lines of authority where business decisions impact the environment. The Mission's focus on climate change and the environment is key to assisting the GOU in meeting the country's clean energy development goals, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, climate change adaptation and mitigation, sustainable management of natural resources and mitigating the far-reaching consequences of the Aral Sea demise. The Mission will develop a new climate activity to assist in reaching these goals, which are also in line with the current U.S. administration priorities. The new activity will ensure two objectives. First, the new climate activity will improve natural resource management by developing a climate change capacity building plan, prioritizing the design based on which staff need which skills and behaviors to successfully implement the Climate Strategy. This will include training to develop the essential skills for designing, implementing, monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and learning in equitable and inclusive climate change programming. Second, the new activity will provide coordination in order to help all sectors (including agriculture, economic growth, education, governance, and health) to identify and operationalize actions for our Climate Change Strategy implementation. Our activity will also relay relevant climate strategy updates and work closely with USAID's regional office, the Department of State, and USAID/Washington to ensure coordination and collaboration.

IR 3.3: Business enabling environment for a market-based economy improved

USAID will support the private sector to create economic opportunities that are more inclusive to disadvantaged populations by working on digitalization to ensure transparency in contracting, trade, payment systems, and smart agriculture. By advancing the economic reforms that diversify sectors of the economy beyond agriculture and diversifying the entrepreneurial base to include women, youth, and the disabled, USAID's support of the private sector will help build a more open, inclusive economy. This will allow the GOU greater leverage to engage other economic and investment opportunities to boost economic growth and make the economy more resilient to climate risks and malign economic influence. This sustainable model of a sovereign government using the free enterprise system can help shift Central Asia to a more open, inclusive economy and toward a more democratic model of government.

e. Development Objective 4: Quality, People-centered,²⁷ and Integrated Health Care Provision for Priority Disease Threats Expanded

Development Hypothesis: IF all people in Uzbekistan at high risk of or suffering from priority diseases are informed about and receive integrated, high quality, and affordable health services and commodities, THEN they will live healthier and more productive lives.

Current tuberculosis (TB) activities support Uzbekistan's National Tuberculosis Program to combat TB, especially its more severe forms of multidrug resistant TB (MDR-TB) and extensively drug resistant TB. Uzbekistan is among the 30 highest-burden countries globally by the estimated number of MDR-TB cases. Activities currently funded by USAID insert TB care into the general health system while strengthening links between healthcare workers, communities, and vulnerable populations. Implementing partners are scaling up evidence-based TB interventions, such as modified shorter treatment regimens, new drugs, and diagnostic technologies. Embedded in its TB portfolio, USAID also supports a pharmaceuticals systems support activity, directly providing technical assistance to the MoH's new Agency for Development of the Pharmaceutical Industry. Recent achievements include certifying and regulating WHO-approved vaccines to allow for COVID-19 vaccines and registering the first two medicines through the WHO-certified process for licensed medicines in Uzbekistan. In addition to its 'bread and butter' portfolio of TB and health systems support work, since mid-FY 2021, USAID has managed and expediently planned for, obligated and overseen emergency COVID response funding, e.g., American Rescue Plan Act funds valued at over \$4 million.

Going forward, activities that will contribute to DO4's three IRs will continue to build upon current support to health systems but will also do the following: 1) address TB risk factors and TB-adjacent comorbidities, 2) employ innovation and implementation research into new activity designs to seek efficiency and 3) grow USAID's engagement with the private sector to partner with the public health system to build sustainability. USAID's new flagship TB activity will integrate access or referrals to comprehensive screenings and health checks at the primary health care level. This and other activities supporting IR 4.1 will improve the quality and accessibility of comprehensive health services while strengthening the GOU's ability to effectively manage and respond to the priority diseases affecting Uzbekistan, thus improving health outcomes. Activities supporting IR 4.2 will expand USAID's support to strengthen all aspects of the health system, including management and governance and health information systems. This will support reform efforts to transition from vertically managed, specialized care towards a flatter, integrated system of managed health care. Finally, activities focused on pharmaceutical systems support will continue to strengthen the MoH Agency for Development of the Pharmaceutical Industry to better register, regulate and license medicines and will also grow private sector engagement to partner with Uzbekistan's health care systems.

In support of the U.S. Strategy for Central Asia objective 6: *Promote United States investment in and development of Central Asia* and GOU reform efforts, USAID interventions will build the capacity of the MoH to monitor and evaluate government health initiatives, train a new generation of medical professionals, and scale up innovations in diagnostics and treatment regimens. Additionally, USAID will

²⁷ USAID/Uzbekistan defines people-centered care as comprehensive services focused on people, not their diseases or conditions.

support contact tracing for priority communicable diseases, diagnosis and case management, and digital applications for data recording, analysis and utilization and reporting. In support of the ongoing reform in Uzbekistan, USAID will expand innovative programming to components of health system strengthening that are related to priority diseases.

USAID health programs will increase access and inclusion for hard-to-reach and marginalized groups, including women, children and adolescents, individuals with disabilities, densely packed residential areas, and isolated, rural communities. Because fifty-five percent of new TB cases in Uzbekistan are men, activities will include outreach efforts to ensure that they have proper information on availability of services. USAID will develop activities that address people stigmatized by TB, particularly women. As nearly 90 percent of frontline health workers in Uzbekistan are women, USAID will develop programming to address their needs.

Diverging from previous interventions in Uzbekistan, activities under this Strategic Framework will take a systems-wide approach, particularly in strengthening health systems governance and management and digitalization of the health information system. Where technically appropriate, USAID interventions will augment or complement the CDC and other development partners' investments to further strengthen the structure and sustainability of Uzbekistan's health system. CDC is currently providing technical assistance to the MoH capacity in the areas of COVID-19 laboratory diagnostics, public health emergency management, and COVID-19 surveillance, border health security and in building Uzbekistan's research capacity in genotypic sequencing. If other non-TB Global Health Program (GHP) resources become available, the Mission intends to expand activities to address maternal and child health issues such as malnutrition and undernutrition; cervical cancer; and priority diseases that are comorbidities to TB in Uzbekistan, such as diabetes and hypertension.

IR 4.1: Equitable access to affordable disease prevention, detection and treatment services improved

Activities that support this IR focus on service delivery. It reflects the prevention, early detection, screening, and treatment of the priority diseases and conditions. Activities under IR 4.1 will support a paradigm shift from a hospital-based TB care system towards one that is patient-centered, with access to comprehensive TB services through screenings and referrals. This aligns with Uzbekistan's health reform agenda to move away from specialized, tertiary care and instead focus on accessible prevention and outpatient care services. Activities will continue to advance the quality of integrated TB services, expand new shorter treatment regimens for drug-resistant TB, and address smarter management of side-effects. In addition, activities will reinforce the roles of and collaboration between civil society organizations, communities, and the public and private health and pharmaceutical system to ensure decentralized health care that is available and affordable to all.

IR 4.2: Components of health systems as related to priority disease threats strengthened

Health workforce, information systems, leadership and governance, and financing are included under IR 4.2. Although they are not priority building blocks for USAID/Uzbekistan, the Mission must address them either as part of our direct interventions or through leveraging other government, development partners, or private sector support for them. USAID's new activities will focus on training (workforce), leadership and governance (for example our work with Health Strategy 2030 and working to develop policies, guidelines, and standard operating procedures). Activities will support digitalization of the health

information systems, currently paper-based. This will be done by building MoH capacity in areas that include management of Global Fund awards, vaccine surveillance and building capacity to adopt digital health technologies for contact tracing and reporting. Emergency response programming to support the MoH's COVID-19 response will continue to build the technical, management and operational capacity of the public health sector in the areas of human resources for health, governance, health promotion and messaging, and supply chain and logistics.

IR 4.3: Systems for pharmaceuticals, vaccines, and medical supplies strengthened

Quality, affordable, accessible and safe medicines and medical supplies are critical to the health of a population. Activities under IR 4.3 will support Uzbekistan's pharmaceutical systems to register, regulate, and ensure the quality of medicines and medical devices. Activities will also support the local production and distribution of medical products and (possibly) vaccines for priority health conditions. The proper regulation (registration, quality assurance, inspection, surveillance, and pharmacovigilance) of drugs and medical products will be supported. USAID will continue to provide technical assistance to the new MoH Agency for Development of the Pharmaceutical Industry and select private sector entities. Improved pharmaceutical system strengthening (policy and regulation development, strategic planning, pharmaceutical management information systems, financing - including investment, and monitoring and evaluation) will result in fewer poor-quality or falsified medicines, both of which potentially accelerate the spread of drug resistance. USAID is currently the only bilateral donor supporting the GOU's pharmaceutical sector and President Mirziyoyev's health reforms. Activities that support this IR will also include aggressive outreach and partnership with the private sector to share in state-of-the-art technical support and pharmaceutical system management approaches. Partnerships and activities will be closely coordinated with activities under the Economic Growth IR 3.1.

5. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING APPROACH

USAID will establish and use a rigorous Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) system that integrates various processes and instruments and deploys them to meet the Mission's data and analytical needs. The performance management plan (PMP) is the foundation of the MEL system. It describes the learning priorities and how monitoring, evaluation and other data gathering and analysis processes will inform the learning questions. Given the short duration of this Strategic Framework and its role as a bridge to a subsequent CDCS, the MEL system will not focus on strategic adaptation, but rather on collaboration and learning to inform the future strategy. The MEL system will track progress at the DO and IR levels and convene stakeholders as appropriate to inform adaptive management practices. USAID is committed to adaptive management, incorporating recommendations and lessons learned into new activities, and adapting to both internal and external changes during the period of implementation.

The Mission documents its MEL system for the Strategic Framework through a PMP that unites programmatic monitoring (indicators, baselines, and results), evaluation needs, and a learning agenda throughout the life of the strategy. In accordance with USAID policy, the Mission will complete development of a PMP within three months of strategic framework approval. The Mission will also use portfolio reviews and learning events to facilitate discussion on programmatic progress, utilizing data and analysis to make informed decisions and adapt the portfolio as needed. As part of the MEL system, the Mission will increase engagement with local stakeholders, experts, and MEL practitioners to integrate local capacity building within all its MEL activities.

a. Monitoring

The PMP will select indicators, set baselines, and establish targets for the life of the strategy. The Mission will ensure indicators within the PMP track activity progress, produce sufficient and timely data, and assess contextual opportunities or challenges so that Mission management can make informed decisions.

The Mission will also use IT systems to improve MEL system effectiveness. USAID/Uzbekistan will use geographic information systems expertise in order to produce timely and accurate mapping of activity distribution and deployment. USAID/Uzbekistan will also use the Development Information System to house monitoring data and allow for ease of data manipulation and analysis for decision making.

The Mission does not foresee difficulties in collecting programmatic data throughout the life of the Strategic Framework; however, COVID-19 and instability in Afghanistan may pose additional restrictions or difficulties in accessing remote or border areas. If in-person monitoring opportunities will be limited, the Mission will adjust its MEL techniques to ensure effective continued monitoring.

b. Evaluation

USAID will invest in different types of evaluations to understand if interventions are impacting Strategic Framework outcomes as planned. USAID will ensure that the evaluation methodology and questions advance the Learning Agenda, where possible. In accordance with ADS 201, the Mission will undertake at least one performance evaluation per IR. Through the Strategic Framework period of performance and consistent with the USAID Evaluation policy, USAID will explore opportunities for rigorous impact and other types of evaluations to determine the results of interventions and activities.

While the Mission is free to choose the evaluation mechanism that best suits its needs, the USAID/Central Asia Regional Mission evaluation IDIQ remains available for USAID/Uzbekistan. Irrespective of the mechanism, USAID/Uzbekistan will insist upon the use of local expertise and organizations during the evaluation, to both build and support local capacity.

c. Learning

USAID's emphasis on a Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting Framework will strengthen internal and external collaboration and coordination, improve use of existing evidence, and inform strategic and programmatic decision-making. As part of the PMP, the Mission will establish a robust learning agenda to inform future development of the CDCS, consisting of learning questions, learning events, and portfolio reviews. Learning questions (illustrated below) contain the key knowledge gaps that the Mission believes are crucial to understand in order to inform future programming, test development hypotheses, and hone new development approaches. Through the use of the monitoring and evaluation tools described above, the Mission will seek to answer these learning questions and leverage the responses in development of the future CDCS. As well, the Mission's PMP will be designed taking into consideration the transformative nature of this Strategic Framework. Mission learning will be research-based, ensuring lessons learned from previous programming are captured into new designs. As donor coordination expands during the course of this strategy, that exchange of learning will also be reflected in the PMP. As

a living document, the Mission will also continue to revisit and adapt the PMP, ensuring contextual changes are adequately reflected.

In accordance with USAID policy, the Mission will host at least one portfolio review per year. Portfolio reviews serve a dual purpose in the MEL system to both facilitate discussions on activity implementation and to analyze progress on responding to learning questions. Similar to portfolio reviews, learning events provide an additional platform for discussion on strategy implementation, and are tailored to meet specific Mission needs. Such events will allow the Mission to gain and share knowledge on a regular basis which is critical for adaptive management in such a fluid context.

ILLUSTRATIVE LEARNING QUESTIONS

These illustrative learning questions will be reviewed, revised, and finalized during the PMP process.

- What are the windows of opportunity for new programming given the operating environment and COVID-19?
- What are the new ways/approaches the Mission can realistically use to partner with both U.S.-based small businesses and the local private sector to enforce the New Partnership Initiative strategy?
- How can private sector engagement support Uzbekistan in advancing sustainability?
- What strategies are the most effective in improving inclusiveness throughout the portfolio?