

On June 23, 2020, IWPR and CABAR.asia, together with the Uzbek non-governmental scientific institution “Caravan of Knowledge” (“Bilim Karvoni”) held an online discussion on effectiveness of public administration (the work of state institutions) in the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic in Uzbekistan. The event was attended by experts from Uzbekistan.

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#)



The discussion was moderated by the director of the non-governmental scientific institution “Knowledge Caravan” **Farhod Tolipov**. After a welcoming speech, Tolipov gave the floor to the first speaker, Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences, **Feruza Rashidova**, director of the academic lyceum at the Uzbek State University of World Languages, chairman of the Uzbekistan Teachers of English Association (UzTEA). Rashidova shared her view on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Uzbekistan, paying particular attention to the problems of internal and external monitoring, and the quality of continuing professional education training.



Feruza Rashidova

Rashidova noted that the question of how to assess the qualifications of citizens correctly is especially acute during the coronavirus pandemic. Since it was necessary to organize the educational process, and many teachers and government agencies were not prepared for the new realities. It became clear that the educational system needed the introduction of information technology.

Along with this, higher education has undergone such changes as the vacuum of training. Even without a pandemic, there was a question about how to assess the level of qualifications of personnel. For this, a national personnel qualification system was adopted in Uzbekistan. However, the problem is that - it does not spell out the qualification exam system.

“We have repeatedly come forward with an initiative through UNESCO and the Central Asian Education Platform to adopt a “Single Qualification Framework” for Central Asia that will allow personnel from Central Asia to move from one country to another to be able to maintain their qualifications and continue to work on the same qualifications.”

Rashidova added that in the 1990s there was a large outflow of qualified personnel abroad, which is still felt today. However, the country’s authorities are taking measures to address the shortage of personnel, for example, initiated the program “Million programmers for Uzbekistan” for 2020. Within the framework of this program, more than 200 schools for the training of IT specialists were created.

Feruza Rashidova also shared the results of her study on the level of “ISCE” (International Standard Classification of Education) in Central Asia. It turned out that academic lyceums and colleges in Central Asia cover only 1, 2, 3 levels of ISCE classifications. In other words, the 4 and 5 levels required by UNESCO remain in a vacuum. From here arise idle schemes in the educational system.

She and her colleagues raised this issue at the government level, and due to this, new educational schemes are launched in Uzbekistan this year. These are specialized schools designed for grades 9, 10 and 11. Additionally, technical schools that support these 4th and 5th levels. Thus, this vacuum closes and work is gradually being carried out to move to the 6th level where the sixth qualification in the European qualification will allow to have Europass.

The second speaker was political economist **Bahrom Rajabov**, on the topic of public administration innovations during the crisis of COVID-19.

He noted that, in general, no one was ready for a pandemic in the world, including Central Asia. According to the international scale of the Global Health Security Index, which is measured on a scale from 0 to 100, not a single country from Central Asia exceeded 50 points, that is, they did not overcome even half. If we talk about the global scale, then 73% of the world’s population did not have access to the basic necessary resources in order to overcome the 14-day phase of the disease.



Bahrom Rajabov

In the social system of protecting the population in Uzbekistan, there were problems at the initial stage, when the Ministry of Employment tried to provide single elderly people with practical nurses but did not have accurate data on those people who needed such assistance.

Government agencies and the public sector did not immediately succeed in improving methods of work, given that everything came quite unexpectedly. Mobile groups of volunteers and civilian initiatives turned out to be faster and more mobile, which were then encompassed by state organizations. Also, there were problems with the distribution of pensions and permissive stickers for cars. Since there are queues at banks for receiving a pension, and queues in front of affiliate agencies that issue stickers.

Due to the fact that all educational and other processes were transferred to online modules, the teachers had to continue education and get acquainted with new technologies. Since there was a serious load on the infrastructure, a question arose, which was acute even before the pandemic – the quality of Internet connection.

Innovations in the public sector were launched back in 2018, when the president declared this year the “Year of Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Technology”. The initiatives that were taken in connection with this began to pass a stress test during the crisis.



Shuhrat Ganiev

The next speaker was a lawyer from Uzbekistan, **Shukhrat Ganiev**, director of the Humanitarian Legal Center. In his speech, Ganiev brought about the issue of rising unemployment among repatriated labor migrants and the need for social partnership between executive authorities and civil societies.

Ganiev cited the results of his observation in the Bukhara region: since March, the number of unemployed has increased by 100 thousand people. Basically, they come from villages and were supposed to leave for Russia in spring to earn money, and this is data from only one region of the republic. These one hundred thousand breadwinners, who support their whole families, today sit at home without work.

He also noted such problems as a non-working social elevator for university graduates and the lack of a transparent approach on the part of state bodies in employment. It is imperative that state executive authorities engage in dialogue with civil society activists.

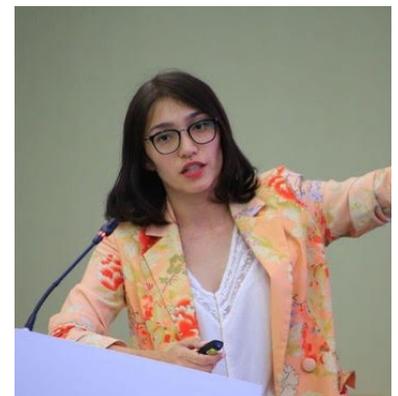
In addition, corruption especially in financial institutions interferes where there is a question about the need for loans for small businesses. In this regard, it would be good for experts to participate in monitoring and increasing the transparency of the work of power structures.

At the end of his report, Ganiev added that as part of this strategy, it is necessary to develop an urgent initiative for social partnership with civil society.

The next speaker was **Dilfuza Kurolova**, a human rights lawyer, legal consultant at the international commission of lawyers. Her presentation was devoted to the issue of legal challenges in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic in Uzbekistan.

Uzbekistan did not declare a state of emergency or emergency situation, and a law on the state of emergency was not adopted. But at the same time, the authorities carried out the restrictive measures that were necessary in this situation.

Kurolova noted that there were problems in the legislative and legal system even before, and that coronavirus only exacerbated the existing problems. For example, a legal restriction on the



Dilfuza Kurolova

deviation of countries from international obligations. States were required to notify UN committees and the General Assembly that they would restrict the rights of their citizens. The only country from Central Asia that made it was Kyrgyzstan.

The second aspect in her report was related to the legality of decisions. Each law adopted by the state must be open, public, transparent, accessible and predictable. This is a component of the legality of decisions. But in fact, the opposite is observed, for example, the resolution or protocol of the Republican Commission on Coronavirus has not been published anywhere.

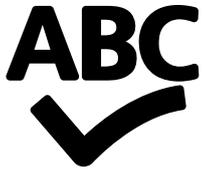
The third aspect was about the temporary or permanent nature of the measures taken. When in international law, if a state of emergency was declared and some restrictions occur in the country, then they should be exclusively temporary. They should be proportional to a specific problem. Once this problem has been resolved, these laws should be suspended. But in fact, wearing masks is already an administrative violation, and the dissemination of fake news is already subject to criminal penalties. That is, these violations, these restrictions are not temporary, but are assessed as permanent.

Kurolova stated that in the judicial system there are problems associated with the investigation of criminal cases such as providing online evidence, calling witnesses to obtain online evidence. This problem exists all over the world, as the world is now facing a new phenomenon. But it should be noted that the procedural laws are not yet written in such a way that obtaining evidence online is equivalent to a written or full-time appearance.

The moderator of the event, **Farhod Tolipov**, closed the expert meeting, by thanking all participants for their hard work and expressing the hope that this event will facilitate further research.

IWPR Central Asia is grateful to the Knowledge Caravan partner organization for helping organize the event. Joint events with international partners and experts from the Central Asian region will be continued in order to promote stability, peace and harmony in the region.

Watch the full video recording (in Russian language) of the expert online meeting:



If you have found a spelling error, please, notify us by selecting that text and pressing *Ctrl+Enter*.