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ANALYSIS OF REFORMS AND ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED IN THE SOCIAL PROTECTION AND HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS OF NAVOI REGION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF STATE PROGRAMS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Parmonov Husan Shomurot o'g'li

Navoiy davlat universiteti Tarix fakulteti Tarix
kafedrasi o'qituvchisi Mustaqil izlanuvchisi
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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes reforms implemented in the social protection and healthcare systems of Navoi Region, state programs, targeted social assistance mechanisms, and the practical outcomes of cooperation with international and charitable organizations. The study highlights, on the basis of quantitative indicators, measures aimed at supporting lonely elderly people, pensioners, low-income families, children, and persons with disabilities. It also demonstrates the impact of medical examinations, perinatal and neonatal screening, the provision of modern medical equipment, international grants, and charitable funds on the effectiveness of social policy in the region. The article assesses coordinated cooperation among the state, civil society, and international partners as an important factor in improving the social protection system.

Keywords: Navoi Region, social protection, healthcare, implementation of state programs, low-income families, lonely elderly people, pensioners, children with disabilities, international cooperation, medical examinations.

INTRODUCTION

Studying the development of the social protection system at the regional level is of significant academic importance for assessing the practical outcomes of state policy. In the case of Navoi Region, this process has manifested itself in material and medical support for socially vulnerable groups, improvement of the quality of healthcare services, development of modern medical infrastructure, and strengthening cooperation with international and non-governmental organizations. This article analyzes the main manifestations of these processes on the basis of archival documents, periodical press materials, and statistical data presented in the study.

MAIN PART

In Navoi Region, extensive measures were implemented to support socially vulnerable groups, particularly lonely elderly people and low-income families, in order to ensure the implementation of the state program “Year of Patrons and Doctors.” Within the framework of the program, the homes of 1,900 lonely citizens were completely renovated. In addition, 5 billion soums in direct financial assistance was allocated to families and elderly people in need of social support. In total, the amount of social assistance provided to lonely elderly people, pensioners, and large families exceeded 47 billion soums. Pension and allowance payments for 104,012 pensioners in the region were financed on time. The circumstances of 603 single citizens living in the region were also assessed, and targeted social services were provided to 96 people identified as being in particularly urgent need of social protection. Within these measures, they received a total of 13 million 509 thousand soums in material assistance.

Under the patronage of the Navoi Mining and Metallurgical Combine and its affiliated organizations, financial assistance and food products were provided to veterans, lonely elderly people, and bedridden elderly patients whose health had deteriorated. Holiday events were organized for them, with a total of 14 million 632,900 soums spent. The Central Mining Administration of NMMC provided 50 thousand soums to each war veteran and 25 thousand soums to each labor veteran, while 33 persons registered with the Zarafshan City Social Security

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Department received 35 thousand soums each, and labor veterans received 20 thousand soums each.

As the social protection system continued to develop, non-governmental organizations such as the “For a Healthy Generation” and “Family Center” international charitable foundations, the “Mahalla” and “Nuroni” foundations, a number of non-governmental non-profit organizations and societies, as well as voluntary sponsors and investors, paid particular attention to improving the social conditions of the population. For example, within cooperation with the “For a Healthy Generation” International Charitable Foundation, qualified physicians from Inha University of the Republic of Korea conducted in-depth medical examinations of 504 residents in Karmana District in order to rehabilitate sick and disabled children from low-income families in the region and to treat children with congenital heart defects through surgery. Mohiniso Sattorova from Karmana underwent surgery in the Republic of Korea under a grant after being diagnosed with grade III congenital kyphoscoliosis of the thoracolumbar spine. The German international organization “Friedensdorf International” conducted in-depth medical examinations of 36 sick children.

Through the “Salomatlik” (Health) train, 1,942 residents of environmentally disadvantaged areas of the region underwent medical examinations, while humanitarian assistance was provided to 2,945 people. Under an agreement between the “For a Healthy Generation” Foundation and the German “Friedensdorf International” clinics, and in cooperation with the regional healthcare administration, surgical treatment was provided for children under 14 years of age with congenital cleft lip and palate defects. In April, the regional branch of the charitable foundation for the rehabilitation of children with disabilities in Germany compiled a list of 22 children from low-income families and sent them to the multidisciplinary children's hospital in Bukhara Region for medical examinations. Following the examinations, the medical histories of Medet Boyzakov, a resident of Uchkuduk District, and Oydinoy Usmonova from Kyziltepa were reviewed by specialists from the German organization “Friedensdorf International,” and they were sent for treatment.

The Foundation supplied the screening center in Navoi city with reagents for diagnostic equipment used for the early detection of congenital and other pathologies in newborns and pregnant women, aimed at preventing the birth of children with congenital disabilities. It also distributed the necessary kits for identifying children with congenital hypothyroidism and phenylketonuria. A total of 11,058 pregnant women underwent perinatal screening, while 15,831 newborns underwent neonatal examinations. In 2013, medical-social patronage teams examined 10,356 women of reproductive age in the region, recommended treatment, and provided necessary medicines where possible. In addition, 20,683 people, including 1,597 men, 4,975 children, and 1,893 adolescents, received medical monitoring. The social conditions of families, the psychological environment within them, and the health of family members—especially women of childbearing age, children, and elderly people—were studied in 90 mahallas and 47 villages of the region.

Furthermore, under the “Equal Opportunities” project established in children's homes in the region, seminars and meetings were organized in higher education institutions, mahallas, and military units with the participation of healthcare and civil registry office employees. Topics included “Prevention of Early and Consanguineous Marriage,” “The Role of Men in the Family,” and “Why Is Consanguineous Marriage Dangerous?”

International organizations and foreign sponsors providing humanitarian assistance occupy a special place in the field of social protection. The Asian Development Bank supplied the maternity complexes of eight district medical associations and the regional perinatal center with modern medical equipment worth 1.5 billion soums. In addition, children's institutions of city and district medical associations were equipped with 126 medical devices of eight types under a Chinese grant. Many more such figures could be cited for the period under study.

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As a result of ensuring the continuity of healthcare reforms, the culture of medical service improved and its quality increased. Based on the Cabinet of Ministers' resolution of March 18, 2008, "On Measures to Improve the Organizational Structure and Activities of Regional Healthcare Institutions," the regional multidisciplinary medical center began operating. Approximately 8.3 billion soums were allocated for the construction and reconstruction of the 200-bed center. Its consultation polyclinic also began providing services. With funding from a Japanese grant, the international organization JICA equipped the center's surgical, blood diagnostics, anesthesiology and intensive care, and laboratory departments with 112 types of therapeutic, diagnostic, and endoscopic equipment.

The regional healthcare system employs 1,758 highly qualified physicians and 10,699 mid-level medical workers. Among them, 831 are mid-level medical workers and 3,510 have professional qualification categories. Within measures to protect motherhood and childhood and strengthen reproductive health, socially vulnerable residents of the region have been regularly provided with medical examinations. A number of measures have also been implemented to improve the material and technical base of healthcare institutions and equip them with modern medical devices.

Under Uzbekistan's 2005 "Year of Health and Well-being" State Program, the material and technical base of medical institutions was strengthened, and the homes of nearly 2,000 lonely elderly people were renovated. The "Nuroni" Foundation organized a trip to Tashkent for 50 veterans selected from mahallas in Karmana and Navoi city. In addition, during the year, 2,500 children from low-income families in Navoi, Kashkadarya, Samarkand, Jizzakh, Syrdarya, and Tashkent regions and Tashkent city underwent medical examinations together with foreign specialists, and 280 children with disabilities received plastic surgery funded by the "For a Healthy Generation" Foundation. The Department of Labor and Social Protection of the Population provided prosthetic devices to 2 children, wheelchairs to 49 children, hearing aids to 11 children, and crutches to 16 children.

The Decree of the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated March 19, 2007, "On Measures to Further Improve and Strengthen the Social Protection System of the Population," provided for further improvement of state activities in this area. During the period studied in the dissertation, social protection was not limited merely to providing assistance to disadvantaged people; issues such as increasing citizens' employment levels, introducing a system of decent remuneration corresponding to the quantity and quality of their labor, and providing continuous social support to the population were also addressed.

CONCLUSION

The reforms implemented in Navoi Region in the fields of social protection and healthcare demonstrate that social policy was not limited to material assistance. Targeted assistance to socially vulnerable groups, support for lonely elderly people and pensioners, provision of medical services to children from low-income families, and treatment and rehabilitation of children with disabilities were carried out in an interconnected manner. Healthcare reforms enriched the content of social protection by strengthening the material and technical base of medical institutions, ensuring the work of qualified specialists, and expanding preventive medical examinations. The participation of international organizations, charitable foundations, sponsors, and local civil society organizations served as an additional mechanism complementing state capacities. The presented data show that the social protection policy in Navoi Region gradually improved on the basis of the principles of targeting, medical and social services, and cooperation.

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