**REPORT**

**on the activities of the Public Foundation for Support and Development of National Mass Media during 2023**

The Public Foundation for Support and Development of National Mass Media was established in November 2019 by a group of proactive journalists and bloggers to develop the media sector, provide material support, and uphold the rights of media community representatives in Uzbekistan. Since its registration, the Foundation has undertaken significant work to create equal conditions for mass media in the media market, promote their further development, and ensure the rights of journalists and bloggers.

The main sources of the Foundation's financial resources in 2022 were charitable contributions from local organisations. In total, **14,906 million sums** were credited to its account.

These funds were directed towards ensuring the implementation of the Foundation's statutory objectives in areas such as the development of national mass media and comprehensive support for media outlets, journalists, and bloggers; support for children with vision problems through the "Ko‘ngil Ko‘zi" project; development of the intellectual movement in the country through the capabilities of the NGO "Zakovat"; and assistance in addressing gender issues. In particular:

– In 2022, the Mass Media Foundation carried out active work and initiatives undertaken in the field of gender equality. For example, one of the significant moments of the year was on 7 May 2022, when the Foundation, together with active members of the media community, appealed to the Agency of Information and Mass Communications under the Administration of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan. They requested a competent gender analysis of news published in Uzbekistan, talk shows, and film productions to assess whether the portrayal of women complies with the country's gender policy and international standards, and to provide their findings;

– Throughout 2022, the Mass Media Foundation actively responded to situations involving pressure on journalists and freedom of speech in Uzbekistan. In particular, the Foundation promptly contacted journalists facing persecution and conducted investigations into violations of their rights. The Foundation also responded to the case where journalist Gulnoza Said was denied entry into the country, appealing to state bodies to resolve the situation. At the end of the year, on December 29, 2022, the Chair of the Foundation's Board of Trustees, Nozima Davletova, held an important meeting with Lolagul Kallikhanova, a journalist who was a defendant in a criminal case regarding the events in Karakalpakstan. They discussed conditions of detention and legal literacy within the journalistic community;

– In 2022, the Mass Media Foundation successfully implemented two important projects. The first was an online platform for enhancing the legal literacy of journalists, carried out in collaboration with the Embassy of the Swiss Confederation. The second was a project to promote gender-sensitive coverage in the media, launched by the Public Foundation for Support and Development of National Mass Media. Training sessions and content monitoring with the participation of experts helped develop guidelines for implementing gender-sensitive coverage.

– Throughout 2022, the Mass Media Foundation actively conducted seminars and workshops jointly with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation Representation in Uzbekistan, providing valuable training sessions for journalists and bloggers. A series of seminars held on July 6 was dedicated to the practical use of fact-checking tools and managed to attract more than 50 media representatives. Additionally, on August 2, new training sessions were launched, also devoted to practical fact-checking skills.

– In 2022, the Mass Media Foundation established productive cooperation with Meta, aimed at developing digital diplomacy and improving the online presence of Uzbekistan's diplomatic missions. Together, they conducted webinars aimed at enhancing diplomats' skills in social networks, which contributes to forming a positive image of the country abroad. Furthermore, the verification of more than 40 accounts of Uzbekistan's diplomatic representations on Facebook and Instagram was successfully completed, ensuring accurate and up-to-date information for foreign users and media. Moreover, within the framework of the Foundation's initiative, a workshop was held with the participation of Meta representatives, where issues of verification and methods of checking information for truthfulness were discussed.

– Throughout 2022, the Mass Media Foundation actively conducted negotiations and meetings with various partners, experts, and representatives of the media industry. In total, about 20 such meetings (both in-person and online) took place, noteworthy among them meetings with the President and CEO of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Jamie Fly (January 7); UNDP Resident Representative in Uzbekistan, Matilda Dimovska (May 11); Ambassador of the European Union to Uzbekistan, Charlotte Adriaen (April 14); UNESCO Representative in Uzbekistan, Alexandros Makarigakis (May 24); Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Republic of Germany to Uzbekistan, Dr Tilo Klinner (May 27); head of the UNICEF Representative Office, Munir Mammadzade (May 31); UNFPA Representative in Uzbekistan, Mr Yu Yu (July 6); head of the UNESCO Representative Office in Tashkent, Sara Noshadi (July 14); and Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs of the USA, Elizabeth Kennedy Trudeau (October 6)

During the reporting period of 2022, a key focus of the Foundation was strengthening the intellectual youth movement "Zakovat". The Foundation continued its activities as the sole founder of the NGO "Intellectual Club Zakovat", providing all the necessary conditions for actively engaging youth from across the republic.

1. On 20 January 2022, the President of Uzbekistan adopted Resolution No. PP-96 on the development of the intellectual game "Zakovat" as a mass educational movement. An allocation of 50 billion sums was made for organising games, encouraging participants and spectators, paying experts and judges, creating an electronic platform for registration in the Intellectual Club "Zakovat", as well as grants for developers of educational games.

2. By the end of the 2021/2022 academic year, "Zakovat" clubs were organised in nearly 10,000 schools, 26 presidential educational institutions, and other types of educational establishments, attracting more than 300,000 schoolchildren, 33,000 students, and 11,000 pupils of colleges and academic lyceums.

3. In 2022, within the framework of the "Five Initiatives" Olympiad, two "Zakovat" tournaments among the mahallas of Uzbekistan were held. The first tournament gathered more than 700,000 participants and had a prize fund of 200 million sums. The second tournament attracted more than 100,000 participants, also with a prize fund of 200 million sums.

4. Professional "Zakovat" clubs have been organised in all regions of the country, where games among professional teams, "Zakovat Quiz" games, as well as student and school leagues, are regularly held.

5. In June, a tournament between media workers and bloggers was held, involving 330 media professionals and bloggers in 55 teams. The prize fund of this tournament was 200 million sums, with the winners receiving 100 million sums, second place 60 million sums, third place 30 million sums, and fourth place 10 million sums.

6. In August and September, two significant "Zakovat" tournaments were held. The Championship of Uzbekistan in Russian gathered 280 participants in 40 teams, with a prize fund of 95 million sums. The top 20 teams advanced to the 1st Central Asian Cup, where they met teams from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. In this regional tournament, 336 experts participated in 48 teams, and the prize fund amounted to 200 million sums.

7. In September–October, "Zakovat" tournaments were held among students of various educational institutions. In the district stage for schoolchildren, more than 60,000 pupils participated in 9,000 teams. In secondary and vocational educational institutions—3,700 pupils in 535 teams; and in the schools of the Agency of Presidential Educational Institutions—180 pupils in 26 teams. The winners and prize-winners received "Zakovat" scholarships, benefits for the next level of education based on the basic paid contract without entrance exams, and laptops.

8. On 29–30 October, the final of the chess tournament "Zakovat-Gambit" was held with the participation of 1,569 players and grandmasters Alexei Shirov and Harika Dronavalli. After six qualifying rounds, an award ceremony was held with a prize fund of 600 million sums.

9. In December, championships in "Zakovat" and "Svoya Igra" were held in Uzbekistan with the participation of 2,898 people. The prize fund for "Zakovat" was 95 million sums, and for "Svoya Igra"—60 million sums. Winners in various categories received from 10 to 50 million sums.

10. In December, the first "Intellectual Olympiad" was held among university students, involving 1,353 students in 123 teams. They competed for eight sets of medals in six types of games. The winners and prize-winners received gifts from the President and cash prizes totalling 900 million sums. They were also granted "Zakovat" scholarships and benefits for further education without entrance exams.

Additionally, during the reporting period, the Foundation continued the implementation of the "Ko‘ngil Ko‘zi" project, aimed at assisting in the social rehabilitation of people with visual disabilities, creating favourable conditions for providing the blind and visually impaired with necessary literature, access to cultural venues, and professional support for workers in this field.

During 2022, the "Ko‘ngil Ko‘zi" project actively developed its "Caravan of Gifts" initiative, designed to support the education and development of children with special needs. Special attention was paid to visually impaired children in Jizzakh. Within this initiative, specialised school kits were compiled and delivered, intended specifically for this category of students. Each kit included devices for writing in Braille, allowing children with visual impairments to fully participate in the educational process. Additionally, the kits contained special sports equipment adapted for safe and effective physical education.

Thus, the project makes every effort to ensure that the younger generation, including children with disabilities, can utilise the conditions being created in the country and be full and equal participants in society.

The report on the activities of the Public Foundation for Support and Development of National Mass Media for 2022 was discussed by the members of the Board of Trustees. They noted that during the reporting period, the Foundation managed to make a significant contribution not only to the support and development of the entire mass media sphere in Uzbekistan but also to increasing youth interest in science and education.