



**WOMAN'S PATH
FESTIVAL**

**GENDER TEAM
UZBEKISTAN**

Context & Corporate Culture

Over the past year, GIZ Uzbekistan has experienced significant growth, having recruited almost fifty percent of its national workforce in 2023. As a result, there are many individuals who are not yet familiar with GIZ's gender principles. This is further complicated by societal attitudes towards gender equality in Uzbekistan, where terminology such as "gender" and "feminism" is viewed negatively. It is a common belief that international organizations inflate issues such as gender-based violence, and gender inequality wasn't of a substantial concern until it gained international recognition.

GIZ is endorsing the topic of regionalization to hasten the process, but the Central Asian region is intricate, with each individual country contributing its distinct internal factors to the gender discourse. Some countries in the region possess a robust and outspoken global standing attributable to women vocally asserting explicit demands, despite an unclear political inclination. Whereas, in Uzbekistan, there is a resolute political will to redefine the position of women; however, women themselves might not recognize disparities in power dynamics and see equality values as a foreign concept.

Insufficient contextual understanding at the mid-managerial level of government has led to a significant gap between legal policies and their implementation, resulting in a disadvantage for women. Furthermore, a deeply ingrained societal prejudice towards women exists in Uzbekistan, with these discriminatory beliefs unfortunately internalised by women themselves.

Engaging in self-depreciation also perpetuates patriarchal structures and promotes discriminatory practices. The internalisation of prejudice erodes solidarity, fosters competition, and impedes collective efforts toward achieving gender equality. Overcoming entrenched beliefs is a major impediment for women advocating gender equality, whose self-perception is constrained by societal and cultural limitations.

The GfP team in Uzbekistan has a crucial role in communicating the cultural context to international colleagues, which is important for effective collaboration. Additionally, there is a need to enhance the skills of both the existing GfP participants and new hires. Achieving staff development entails a profound understanding of cultural norms, transcending the mere technical capacity-building efforts. A successful gender strategy implementation in projects necessitates a firm adherence to gender equality, effectively conveyed through visual storytelling. Furthermore, a crucial aspect of the scheme is to propagate gender equality not only through projects but also within GIZ itself, creating a platform that nurtures collaboration among different projects. As part of this program, we have assembled diverse NGOs and social platforms with a gender-focused cross-cutting theme. Their association with GIZ projects yields synergies, cooperation prospects, and networking opportunities.

What have we done?

The "Ayol Yo'li" or "Women's Path" is a one-and-a-half-month-long festival that began on October 28 and is scheduled to conclude on December 3. It acts as a cohesive platform for civil society organizations and GIZ employees who share the understanding that gender equality is a cross-cutting issue. Throughout the festival, a diverse array of activities has taken place, encompassing lectures, discussions, talks, and movie screenings. Eminent speakers contributing to these events include human rights advocates, financial specialists, gender experts, journalists, representatives from NGOs and parliamentary working groups, as well as experts and managers from GIZ.



The fundamental concept driving the festival was to extend support to institutions dedicated to women's causes while concurrently delivering a series of lectures on crucial subjects. These topics encompassed challenges experienced by individuals with HIV, domestic violence, legal frameworks, inclusivity, water resources and energy concerns, as well as the roles of women in art, government, agriculture, and politics. The intended audience for these lectures was both the general public and GIZ employees. The overarching objective was to bring together experts in the field and cultivate the formation of a community of practice.

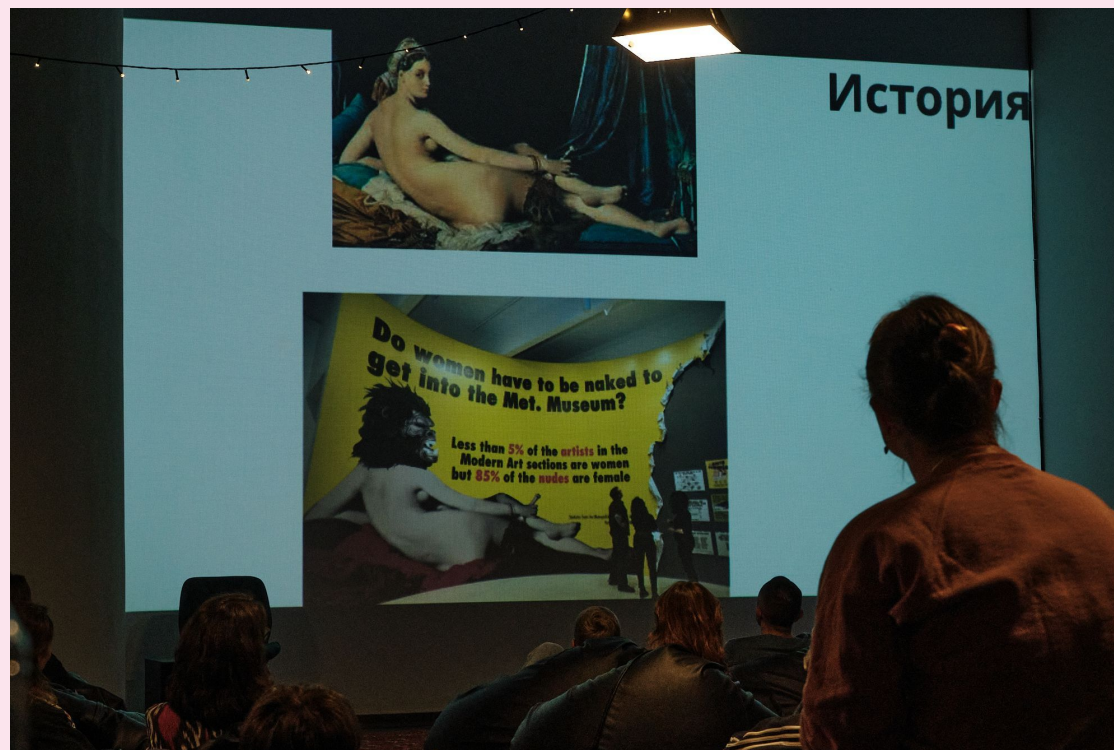


Agenda

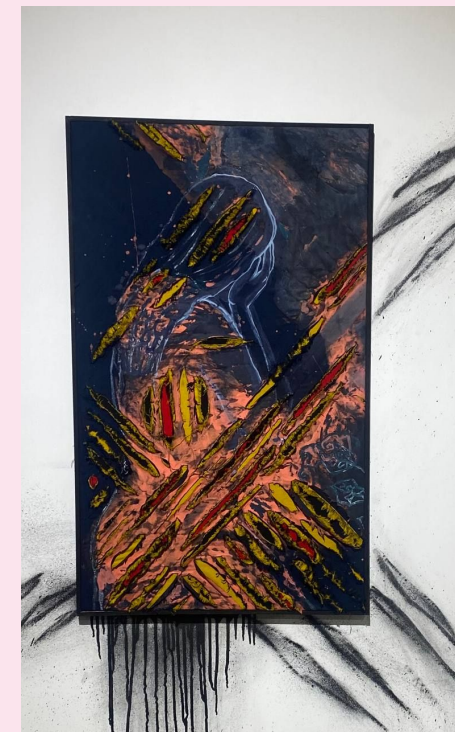


Exhibition

- Interactive Lectures Exploring Legislation Addressing Violence against Women and Children
- Workshop with a Discussion on Decolonial feminism
- Lecture on fostering Inclusivity
- Gender Education series
- Public Talk from "Women's Activism" initiatives
- Community Discussion on the Instruments of Civic Engagement
- A Cinematic Presentation and Conversation Regarding Women Living with HIV
- Screening and Post-film Dialogue "Pina – Dance of Passion"
- Presentation on Employment Rights by Accounting and Legal Professionals
- Women's Involvement in Environmental Issues
- Screening of the film - SUV (water)
- Discussion of water and environmental problems and their interrelation with vulnerable parts of the population: women, people with disabilities, children, etc.
- Public Talks on "How feminism Changed the World of Art"



- As part of the festival, an exhibition titled 'I Am Not Ashamed' was inaugurated.



painting by Namraeva Umida 'What am I going to say to my mum?'

- This exhibit, curated by young Uzbek artists, aimed to foster dialogue, acceptance, and support for individuals who have encountered or are currently facing instances of sexualized violence



Success factors

Stand up for what you believe in

We strongly believe in the principles and values of GIZ. However, there are instances where it becomes crucial not only to communicate these principles to external stakeholders but also to reaffirm them within the GIZ community. By upholding a steadfast commitment to the core beliefs guiding our actions, we fortify ourselves and our team with the resilience needed to continue our work.

Communication and transparency

Not having the same resources as the projects sometimes made negotiating with local civil society institutions more challenging. However, transparency and honesty played a crucial role in fostering dialogue between civil society and the government, facilitating the inclusion of one of our partners in the governmental working group. Additionally, distributing tasks effectively among all members allowed everyone to contribute to the festival's work, even if it went beyond their usual duties.

Result-Oriented Approach

With the GfP team being newly formed this year, not all procurement procedures and processes initiated by the working groups were familiar to us. However, thanks to the commitment of procurement officers to finding solutions and the persistent efforts of the GfP team, we successfully addressed the challenges and charted a way forward.

Outcomes

GIZ has gained access to a valuable pool of gender experts, fostered relationships with stakeholders, and witnessed an expansion of the GfP team due to increased interest in the gender topic. GfPs from partner institutions gained insights into GIZ's projects through a dedicated lecture on the organization's portfolio. We successfully facilitated a dialogue between the institutions supported during the festival and governmental entities and initiatives. Moreover, we played a role in establishing a community of practice for our partners, actively participating in it ourselves.

