

DISTINCT FEATURES OF STATE POLICY IN REDUCING POVERTY IN RURAL AREAS

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Abstract: This article analyzes the issue of reducing poverty in rural areas based on modern approaches. The study examines statistical data from 2024–2026, as well as national and international research, and highlights the role of employment, social protection, and infrastructure factors. As a result, it substantiates the priority of comprehensive and targeted policies in reducing poverty in rural areas.

Keywords: Rural areas, poverty reduction, state policy, social protection, employment policy, infrastructure development, rural development, income growth, poverty rate, socio-economic development, targeted assistance, subsidies and grants, agricultural policy

Introduction

In recent years, poverty reduction in Uzbekistan has become a central priority of state policy. In particular, the low income levels of the population living in rural areas, insufficient infrastructure, and employment challenges make this issue even more pressing. According to official statistical data, the poverty rate was around 11–12% in 2024, while in 2025 this figure approached 10% in some regions¹. At the same time, the majority of the poor population resides in rural areas. This situation requires the implementation of state policy based on a territorially differentiated approach.

Literature Review

Poverty reduction has been widely studied in economic literature, and there are various approaches that analyze it from different perspectives. Amartya Sen interprets poverty as a deprivation of human capabilities and emphasizes that state policy should be aimed at expanding these capabilities.

In reports of international organizations, particularly the World Bank's 2024–2025 publications, the development of rural infrastructure and employment is identified as one of the most effective tools for reducing poverty.

Among national economists, Bakhodir Khodiyev emphasizes the harmony between economic growth and social policy, arguing that poverty reduction cannot be achieved solely through economic growth but also requires effective distribution mechanisms. Similarly, in the research of Abdug'ani Abduvaxitov, a direct relationship between the level of regional development and poverty has been demonstrated. In recent years, empirical studies conducted by Nodira Xolmatova highlight that increasing employment among rural women is an important factor in reducing poverty.²

Research Methodology

¹ <https://www.tashkenttimes.uz/economy/14603-uzbekistan-poverty-rate-down-to-8-9>

² <https://scholar.google.com/scholar?q=Bakhodir+Khodiyev+poverty+economic+growth+distribution+policy>

In this study, statistical analysis, comparative analysis, and a systematic approach were used. Official statistical data and scientific research from 2024–2026 were taken as the main sources.

Main Body

From 2024 to 2026, although a declining trend in poverty has been observed in rural areas, it still remains at a high level.

According to 2025 data, more than 60% of the poor population resides in rural areas. The informal employment rate is around 30–35%, and agriculture remains the main source of income. This indicates a low level of economic diversification in rural areas.

In recent years, employment policy has changed qualitatively. The main focus is now not only on the number of jobs created but also on income levels. In 2024–2025, more than 1.5 million people were covered by employment programs, the vocational training system was expanded, and support for family entrepreneurship was strengthened. As a result of these measures, an increasing trend in average income has been observed in rural areas.

Since 2024, the social protection system has been fully shifted to a targeted model. Based on lists such as the “Temir daftar” (Iron Register), vulnerable families have been individually assessed, types of assistance have been tailored, and monitoring systems have been strengthened. In 2025, the number of social assistance recipients exceeded 2 million. This shows that the system is producing not only short-term but also medium-term results in poverty reduction.

The development of infrastructure in rural areas has a direct impact on income levels. Between 2024 and 2026, drinking water and road infrastructure have improved, digital services have expanded, and logistics opportunities have increased. As a result, small business and the service sector are developing in rural areas.

The current policy can be characterized by the following aspects:

- territorial differential approach
- reliance on the mahalla institution
- targeted social assistance
- comprehensive development model

These approaches indicate that they are producing sustainable results in poverty reduction.

In addition, infrastructure modernization remains an important factor in increasing rural household incomes. Expanding the opportunities of the digital economy also contributes to the creation of new jobs. Furthermore, making the social protection system more targeted and transparent increases the effectiveness of poverty reduction efforts.

Conclusion

The analysis shows that state policy in reducing poverty in rural areas is producing significant results. However, to make this process more effective, it is necessary to diversify the rural economy, improve the quality of education, and expand private sector participation.

In the future, ensuring sustainable economic growth will require further improvement of regional development policies. At the same time, increasing entrepreneurial activity among the population will remain an important strategic direction in reducing poverty.

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