

**PROSPECTS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE STATE AND NON-STATE  
SECTOR IN IMPROVING LEGAL LITERACY**

**Pozilova Muqaddas Xikmataliyevna**

Teacher of the Namangan State Pedagogical Institute

[alibekovser@gmail.com](mailto:alibekovser@gmail.com)

Namangan, Uzbekistan

**Abstract.** This article analyzes the importance of cooperation between the state and non-state sectors in improving legal literacy, existing experience, and promising areas. Legal literacy determines the level of awareness of citizens of their rights and obligations and serves to ensure the rule of law in society. The article examines international experience, approaches of world scientists, and prospects for cooperation based on the existing legal framework in Uzbekistan. Recommendations for improving the effectiveness of cooperation, innovative approaches, and problematic aspects are also highlighted.

**Keywords:** legal literacy, public sector, non-governmental sector, civil society, rule of law, legal advocacy, legal advice, international experience, cooperation, legal policy.

The issue of enhancing legal culture and literacy is becoming increasingly crucial for national development. In this process, non-governmental organizations play a significant role alongside the public sector. This is because a higher level of legal literacy, first and foremost, helps citizens better understand their rights and obligations, which in turn is a key factor in ensuring the rule of law in society and reducing the number of legal disputes. Specifically, cooperation between the public and non-governmental sectors paves the way for joint projects, training sessions, and social awareness campaigns aimed at improving citizens' legal knowledge.

Legal literacy not only positively affects an individual's personal life but also has a significant impact on important factors such as social stability, active civic participation, and the effectiveness of law enforcement throughout society. Indeed, in any democratic society, the ability to know and exercise one's rights elevates citizens' social consciousness and helps prevent legal offenses. The public sector, on the one hand, holds the authority to legislate, apply the law, and administer the justice system. "On the other hand, the non-governmental sector - particularly non-governmental non-profit organizations (NGOs), civil society institutions, international organizations, and private companies - can play an active role in this process by implementing various projects aimed at improving legal literacy, organizing lectures, seminars, and training sessions, and conducting advocacy campaigns through the media" [1; 45].

The purpose of this article is to analyze the approaches and existing experiences of global scholars regarding legal literacy and public-private sector cooperation, and to identify promising paths for future development. In particular, the article will explore the concept of legal literacy, the importance of state policy, the potential of NGOs and the private sector, and the outcomes that can be achieved through their collaborative efforts. The article will also pay special attention to the role of international organizations, including the UN, the European Union, and other regional cooperation bodies, in promoting legal literacy. In this regard, the scientific sources and international experience highlighted by the authors will be taken into account.

The term "legal literacy" refers to citizens' knowledge of laws, normative legal acts, and their own rights and obligations, as well as their capacity to apply this knowledge in their lives. Global scholars view legal literacy as a constituent part of legal consciousness. For instance, J. Rawls emphasizes that an understanding of law and justice is one of the most critical factors for building a just society among people [2; 45]. Accordingly, in societies with a high level of legal

literacy, citizens can actively defend their rights and prevent deviations from justice. R. Dworkin argues that law should not be merely a collection of statutes, but a system of norms that ensures justice, rights, and freedoms in the process of resolving conflicts of interest within society [3; 12]. An individual aware of this system of norms, when faced with legal violations, can choose the correct course of action, understand their obligations and responsibilities, and protect their interests through lawful means.

State policy plays a fundamental role in enhancing legal literacy. This is because the state, through the government, adopts laws and regulatory documents, organizes their implementation, and is responsible for protecting the rights and freedoms of citizens within the framework of the law. State policy can be implemented, first and foremost, through initiatives such as conducting legal reforms, creating targeted programs to improve citizens' legal knowledge, widely introducing legal subjects in educational institutions, and opening legal advisory centers.

It is important for state bodies, particularly the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the prosecutor's office, and the judicial system, to provide legal information to citizens and to organize legal advocacy, especially by launching programs with legal commentary and outreach through mass media. The state's political will and internal institutional cooperation in this area create the foundation for the widespread dissemination of legal knowledge. At the same time, it is necessary to establish clear mechanisms for the interaction between state representatives and the non-governmental sector.

H. Kelsen, noting that the state functions as the "core" of the legal system, emphasizes that state bodies must maintain constant communication with the public in the execution and application of laws [4; 77]. After all, if every segment of society is not informed about legal reforms, achieving the effectiveness of those reforms becomes difficult.

The non-governmental sector is a complex of civil society institutions, non-governmental non-profit organizations, private enterprises, and other organizations dealing with private interests. By working in cooperation with the state, they can make a significant contribution to the process of increasing legal literacy in society. NGOs primarily perform functions such as providing social protection, legal consultation, legal aid, and legal advocacy. Additionally, training sessions, seminars, and professional development courses funded by the private sector serve to enhance legal literacy. In some foreign countries, for instance, non-governmental organizations have established direct legal aid services, including free legal advice centers. Such centers provide substantial practical assistance, especially for socially vulnerable segments of the population. For example, M.K. Nussbaum emphasizes the importance of expanding access to legal opportunities for the comprehensive development of individuals, a process in which the targeted programs of NGOs can serve as an important tool [5; 52]. The non-governmental sector is not limited to legal literacy but also actively participates in preparing legislative initiatives and proposals for legal reforms. Because they work directly with mahallas, micro-enterprises, and various strata of society, they can more clearly identify primary problems. In international practice, it is common for the non-governmental sector - especially human rights organizations - to cooperate closely with parliament and government, providing feedback on improving legislation.

Another key actor in improving legal literacy is international organizations. International bodies such as the UN, UNESCO, the European Union, and the OSCE provide technical, financial, and methodological support for legal reforms in various countries. Specifically, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) implements special projects to raise the level of legal literacy among citizens in developing countries. They assist in organizing training sessions, seminars, and legal awareness campaigns in cooperation with government bodies and non-governmental organizations.

Within the European Union, a number of programs have been developed to ensure the rule of law. These programs serve to enhance the qualifications of government agencies, NGOs, and private sector representatives in various fields, enabling them to adopt best practices and utilize technical and innovative solutions. Similarly, within the Council of Europe, resolutions, conventions, and protocols concerning human rights, the rule of law, and democratic governance are developed, and practical guidelines are provided. As a result, the public and non-governmental sectors gain the opportunity to operate in accordance with international regulatory standards to improve legal literacy.

The main areas for improving legal literacy through cooperation between the public and non-governmental sectors may include the following:

**Reforms in education:** The quantity and quality of legal subjects must be increased at all levels, from secondary schools to higher education institutions. The state develops national curricula for these subjects, while NGOs can assist in preparing textbooks or conducting seminars.

**A network of legal advisory centers:** Establishing special legal aid centers for socially vulnerable groups, such as labor migrants, women, children, and the elderly. The state provides the infrastructure and initial funding for these centers, while the non-governmental sector organizes the work with qualified lawyers, psychologists, and social workers.

**Cooperation with the media:** Launching television shows, radio broadcasts, and dedicated channels on social media aimed at increasing legal literacy. The state provides reliable legislative information for the preparation of legal content, and NGOs conduct targeted outreach among the population.

**Online platforms and digital technologies:** Creating mobile applications, websites, and distance learning courses on legal literacy through the initiatives of the non-governmental sector. The state can support these initiatives through modeling, licensing, and providing technical assistance.

**Participation in legislative reforms:** NGOs can organize public discussions to improve draft legislation and conduct academic and legal expert reviews. The state, in turn, can introduce relevant amendments and additions to the laws, taking these considerations into account.

Thus, it should be emphasized that the prospects for cooperation between the public and non-governmental sectors in improving legal literacy are of particular importance for ensuring long-term development and social stability. This cooperation serves to increase the legal consciousness and engagement of the public, improve law enforcement, reduce social conflicts, and effectively protect human rights. In the future, the use of international experience and academic sources in shaping legal policy and reforms will further enrich the process and enhance its effectiveness.

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