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ENSURING EMPLOYMENT OF RURAL POPULATION: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

A.M.Maksumkhanova - Candidate of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor, «Tashkent Institute of Irrigation and Agricultural Mechanization Engineers» National Research University

Abstract

This article talks about the problems of employment, which is one of the priority areas of social and economic development in our republic, and ways to solve it. Unemployment is one of the persistent problems, especially in rural areas. The results of the research show the need to consider the issue of employment management in the republic, measures to control unemployment, determine the number of unemployed people and develop measures to reveal the hidden unemployed. In particular, special attention is paid to solving the problem by improving the activities of farmers and homesteads.

Keywords: *labor market, unemployment, population employment, employment, agriculture, farms, labor resources, economically active population, jobs in the economy.*

Introduction. Increasing the speed of the country's development, improving the national economy, first of all, is related to the efficiency of human labor, which is considered a component of labor resources, which is considered the wealth of any country. Productive work is not only the main factor in the sustainable development of the national economy, but it also fulfills the function of ensuring a comfortable life and meeting the needs of a person [1]. In this regard, the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated January 28, 2022 "On the new development strategy of Uzbekistan for 2022-2026" No. annual growth of at least 5%" [2].

It is known that the issue of employment is one of the priority areas of social and economic development in our republic, because employment is a category related to many processes. The reason is that if we increase employment, if new jobs are opened, if added value is produced, the level of monthly wages of people increases, the standard of living improves, and social stability occurs in the society. In addition, we will solve the issue of eliminating poverty and creating a middle class by providing employment, reducing the unemployment rate. Today, the demographic process is developing at a steady pace in rural areas compared to cities. If we study the regional composition of our compatriots working abroad, most of them leave rural areas and work in other countries, and we can explain that the main reason for this is the persistence of the trend of low wages in agriculture. After all, the difference between the level of wages is one of the main reasons for the emergence of migration. In this regard, the creation of new jobs in rural areas, in particular, processing agricultural products related to the provision of agricultural and non-agricultural services, producing components for industry, as well as non-agricultural, non-agricultural service related jobs. fit for purpose.

Research methodology. In the conditions of the digitization of the socially oriented market economy, large-scale work is being carried out in our country to increase the socio-political activity of the rural population, to create conditions for them to realize their abilities and opportunities in various fields and sectors, and to ensure that their rights and legal interests are unconditionally respected. President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, in his speech at the event organized in connection with the 26th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, said that "necessary measures must be taken to ensure the employment of the population and reduce unemployment without delay. "The question arises: what is the number of real unemployed people in our country?" What percentage of the population is employed in the informal sector of the economy? What about the number of people who went abroad to look for work? We must understand one thing correctly: one unemployed person means ten problems. If we consider the damage these problems cause to the unemployed person, his family, neighborhood, and society, it becomes clear how serious the problem is."

Despite the fact that some time has passed, this problem has not lost its relevance.

Research results. In the conditions of Uzbekistan, the population and labor resources are one of the important factors that ensure stable economic growth. By the beginning of 2024, the population of our country was 36799.8 thousand, of which the number of men was 18525.0 thousand, the number of women was 18274.8 thousand, the number of urban residents was 18768.5 thousand, and the number of rural residents was 18031.3 thousand. . The population in the country is increasing mainly due to natural growth, i.e. high birth rate. At the same time, as a result of the decrease in the death rate, the country's demographic situation is qualitatively improving. The Republic of Uzbekistan is one of the countries with a large and young labor potential. The new model of employment envisages the rapid growth of jobs, the socio-economic development of the republic, the demographic calculation, and the improvement of the working conditions of the population. Today, the share of the working population in the total population growth in our country is observed to increase. Diagram 1 below shows the dynamics of labor resources, the number of economically active population and the number of people employed in the economy. The data are reflected in the period 2016-2023, and in 2023, the number of economically active population as part of labor resources was 15,038.3 thousand people (76.2% of the total labor resources), as well as the number of employees in the economy - 14,014.2 thousand people (71 .0 %). The share of the economically active population in the total population was 40.9% [2].

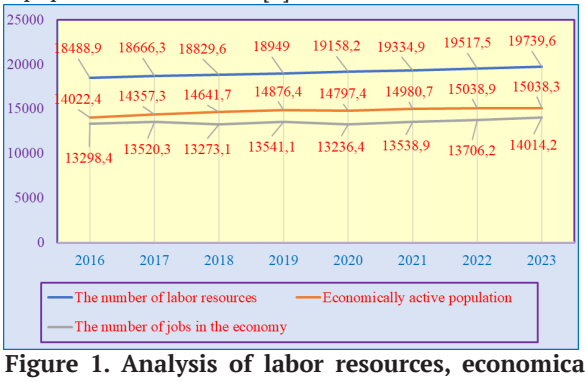


Figure 1. Analysis of labor resources, economically active population and employment dynamics in the economy

Source: Author's development based on the data of the Statistics Agency under the president of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The main aspect in the labor market of Uzbekistan is the growth of hidden unemployment. This is explained by the higher number of unregistered than registered in the labor market. Another feature of the labor market of Uzbekistan is that, along with unemployment, there are vacancies in the district poverty alleviation and employment assistance departments. In some cases, the satisfied demand for labor force is 1.3-1.5 times higher than the actual unemployed. If we analyze the data of the 2nd diagram below, the number of officially registered unemployed people in the republic in 2023 is 36,69 thousand people, while the actual number of unemployed people is 1,024,1 thousand people. We can clearly see in this chart that these figures have peaked, especially during the pandemic. The results of the research indicate the need to consider the issue of employment management in the republic, measures to control unemployment, determine the number of unemployed people and develop measures to reveal the hidden unemployed. The implementation of these measures is important in effective use of available labor resources in our country and prevention of underutilization of labor potential. Nevertheless, the problem of employment in rural areas remains at a high level compared to urban areas. Labor resources are increasing faster in rural areas than in cities. The level of employment is changing very slowly. Despite the measures taken in our country on these issues, there is a lack of jobs created in rural areas. The lack of suitable jobs leads to an increase in the demographic burden on the employed and a decrease in the economic activity of the population [3].

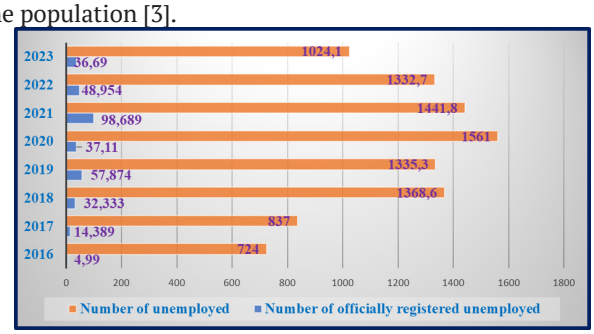


Figure 2. The number of unemployed and the dynamics of the officially registered unemployed (a thousand people).

Source: Author's development based on the data of the Statistics Agency under the president of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Acceleration of economic reforms, structural changes in the economy have a positive effect on the formation of employment and creation of new jobs. The growth of population employment occurred mainly in the non-state sector of the economy. The development of this process and relations was significantly influenced by the liberalization of the business sector and the introduction of the preferential lending system for small businesses. The fact that almost 80% of the total employed in the labor market today are working in the non-state sector is a clear proof of our opinion (diagram 3).

If we consider the conditions of rural areas in Uzbekistan, the rural labor market is related to agriculture. It is known that in 2023, 23.9 percent of those employed in the economy or 3,344,000 people are engaged in agriculture. This indicator was 27,4 percent in 2016, 26,4 percent in 2020, and 25,08 percent in 2022. The dynamics of the analyzes show that the share of agricultural employment in the total employed population in the republic has a tendency to decrease (diagram 4).

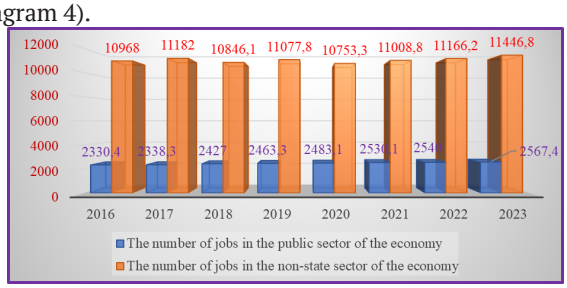


Figure 3. Dynamics of employment in the state and non-state sector of the economy (a thousand people).

Source: Author's development based on the data of the Statistics Agency under the president of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In our republic, every year, most of the labor resources in rural areas struggle to find the necessary jobs for themselves. As the main reason for this, it is possible to point out the disproportion between the supply and demand for labor force in the labor market in rural areas in terms of quantity and quality. Also, as a result of the reforms in agriculture today, the transfer of surplus labor force to other sectors is causing the employment problem in the countryside to intensify.

However, today, both those who are employed in agriculture and those who live in the countryside in general, regardless of what field they work in, are somehow related to agriculture. Whether he is a doctor, a teacher, or an employee of another field, he has a farm, that is, a farm. Such is the complexity of today's rural labor market. Their management is characterized by the complexity of coordinating their status [4].

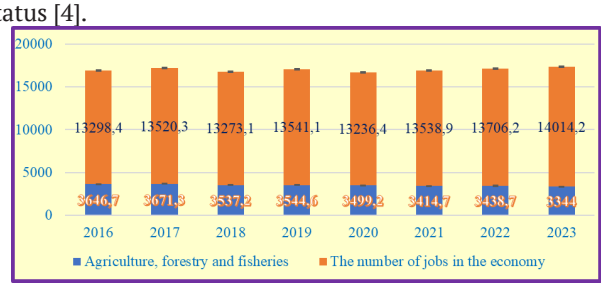


Figure 4. Analysis of the dynamics of people employed in the economy and in agriculture, forestry and fisheries (a thousand people).

Source: Author's development based on the data of the Statistics Agency under the president of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The analysis by economic categories shows that 63.1% of the total volume of agricultural products corresponds to peasants and homesteads, 29.8% to farms, and 7.1% to organizations performing agricultural activities. The high share of farmers and homesteads is explained by the fact that most of the livestock is raised in households, and the main part of livestock products is also produced. Also, the fact that 49 percent of the population living in the rural areas of our country provides themselves with these products and makes up a large part of the production of vegetables and fruits, which have a high share in agricultural products, had a significant impact. In addition, the establishment of cluster activities, the attachment of arable land to them is a factor in the year-by-year increase in the share of the category of organizations performing agricultural activities [5].

Analyzes by economic categories show that 87.4% of the total volume of agricultural products belongs to farmers and homesteads, 8.1% to farms, and 4.5% to organizations performing agricultural activities (Picture 1.). Analyzing the data on the main types of agricultural products grown

in January-December 2023 by farm category, 78.3% of grain crops production was contributed by farms, 9.5% by farmers and homesteads, 12.2% by agricultural activities. it should be noted that it corresponds to implementing organizations. Accordingly, 36.1% of vegetables fell to farms, 59.9% to farmers and homesteads, 4.0% to organizations implementing agricultural activities, and 27.8% of potatoes to farms, 69.9 % fell to farmers and homesteads, 2.3% to organizations performing agricultural activities, 55.5% of field crops went to farms, 39.8% to farmers and homesteads, 4.7% to agricultural activities 45.3% of fruit and berries went to farms, 51.4% to farmers and homesteads, 3.3% to organizations performing agricultural activities, 44.7% of grapes went to farms, 52 .4% fell to farmers and homesteads, 2.9% to organizations performing agricultural activities [6].

If we look at the composition of the farm, from a social point of view, it is a form of economic management with a very diverse regional structure, and it is a form of economic activity that is legally equal to farms or agricultural enterprises, regardless of their size. The main issue is the introduction of a unified statistical system in the calculation of labor resources employed on farms or their re-registration. It is known that today there is no single settlement system in farms. Many small families market their farm produce, but they do not have legal status. In our opinion, if they get a legal status, open a labor book, and get a job, then the employment issue will be solved to a certain extent and will lead to a decrease in the number of unemployment in rural areas.

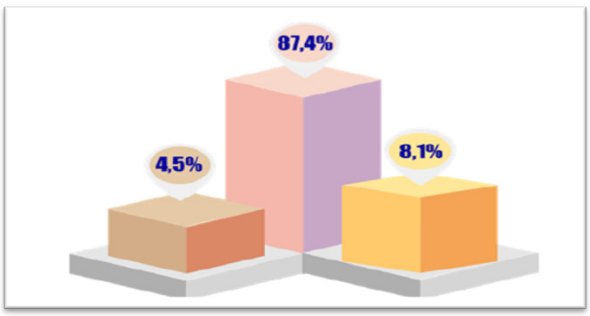


Figure 4. Composition of gross agricultural products, in percent. (year 2023)

It is no exaggeration to call employment in agriculture today professional employment. After all, we have many higher education institutions that train specialists for the agricultural sector. However, the other side of the issue is that it is difficult for a highly educated agronomist, mechanic or zootechnician to find a job on a farm, because the size of the farm does not allow hiring a specialist. In particular, more than 80 percent of farms do not have their own accountants, which means that the calculation and analysis system also has its own problems.

In turn, to eliminate these problems, the following measures should be implemented:

- introduction of a unified statistical system for accounting or re-registration of labor resources employed in peasant and homestead farms;

- formation of online markets that can meet the requirements of the times for the sale of products produced by farmers and homesteads, and improvement of their activities;

- in rural areas where the product sales system is not well developed, i.e., in areas far from consumers, opening reception points for livestock products grown by farmers and organizing processing workshops on an industrial basis;

- development of a system of long-term, relatively low-interest targeted loans for farmers and homesteads to purchase breeding livestock, equipment, and increase the scale of production;

- development of measures to improve the professional qualifications of subjects of this type of business and to send them to foreign countries to study the experiences of foreign countries;

- creation of a single electronic system that buys farmers' products in the village at contractual prices, supplies the necessary goods, tools and materials to the villagers;

- it is appropriate to start electronic marketing activities in the development of the system of independent export of products grown by farmers and homesteads.

Conclusion. It is known that the issue of providing employment to the population requires in-depth research based on the nature of the labor market, its operation and development. Although a person's participation in economic relations in the labor market turns him into an economic resource, he remains both a potential and a beneficiary of labor at the same time. In this respect, the labor market is somewhat different from other markets. The main economic issue in the labor market is the issue of efficiency, that is, in practice, the issue of increasing its efficiency through the economic evaluation of wages, employment and unemployment levels.

Based on the national traditions and historical mentality of our republic, it can be said that today those who are looking for a job find a suitable place of work for them not through employment assistance centers, but through acquaintances.

From this point of view, the development of the self-employment system is important in ensuring the employment of labor resources in rural areas. Today, rural areas have sufficient labor resources to support labor activities such as self-employment and sufficient reserves to expand it. As a result of the research, it was concluded that it is necessary to consider the issue of employment management, the measures to control unemployment in the village, to determine the number of undetected unemployed and to develop measures to reveal the hidden unemployed. The implementation of these measures is important in effective use of all available labor resources in the village and prevention of underutilization of labor potential.

In conclusion, it can be said that in the development of the labor market in rural areas, it is important to organize and develop agricultural farms, as well as various types of small enterprises in the fields of processing agricultural products and providing services.

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