



EQUIDEV

VALUE. INNOVATION. IMPACT



# Capability Statement

**2021**

[www.equidev.info](http://www.equidev.info)

## Who We Are

Equidev is an international public organisation providing expert development solutions and technical support to advance sustainable development and equitable growth in Central Asia and Afghanistan. We are a new, independent organisation, originally founded by Oxfam Great Britain—a leading global charity organisation fighting inequality to end poverty and injustice. Equidev partners with bilateral and multilateral agencies, governments, not-for-profit organisations, social enterprises and the private sector.

Headquartered in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, with a presence in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, Equidev offers a range of consulting, advisory and implementation support

services across diverse socioeconomic development sectors and practices. Driven by our core values—equity and justice for all, with an unwavering commitment to positive impacts—and powered by cutting-edge innovation, we offer integrated solutions for complex development problems that confront developing economies in the region.

We draw our strength and expertise from our deep knowledge of the region and our solid affiliate partner base throughout the region and in India.



# Our History

The Equidev journey began when our founding organisation Oxfam GB started its programmes and campaigns in Tajikistan in 2001. In the course of its two decades of operations, Oxfam GB built its leadership and reputation in designing and implementing programmes and influencing policies in sectors such as WASH, climate resilient agriculture, enterprise development, health and nutrition and gender justice. In 2018, as part of its global presence review, Oxfam decided to phase out of Tajikistan, but with a clear objective to carry forward its legacy, values and expertise. To this end, it set up a new public organisation called "Equitable Development", or "Equidev" for short, in February 2021.

Equidev is expertly mentored by Oxfam, which is supporting Equidev in setting up its robust strategic and operational base in the region through investments in capacity, network and assets over the next year. Oxfam will formally exit Tajikistan on 31 March 2022.

Today, we see a great opportunity to leverage our partnership and network in the region to deliver high quality services for our clients, based on global best practices. The region is poised for rapid transformation, with the opening of borders and economies, the infusion of technology, more power being given to young populations seeking jobs and a say in their future, and women increasingly asserting their social and political rights. Equidev aspires to be a catalyst in this change process, accelerating transformation by improving the effectiveness of policy, processes and outcomes.



## Governance structure

The primary responsibility of the Board is to foster the long-term success of Equidev, guide the institution towards ethical business practices based on our core values, and provide strategic guidance to maximise value for clients, stakeholders and investors.

# The Equidev Board of Directors



**Shovcat Alizadeh,**  
Head of Business Operations - Asia EA Node,  
Oxfam GB

Shovcat Alizadeh has worked as the Country Director of Oxfam in Tajikistan and will continue in this role overseeing Oxfam's exit until March 2022. Since 2000 she has been working as Country Director for Oxfam International in different countries, including Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Kenya and Somalia. She has more than 18 years of experience in the design and management of relief and development programmes concerning sustainable livelihoods, microfinance, community-based primary healthcare, WASH, inclusive education, community-based ERR, institutional accountability/local governance, gender equity, rights of disabled people and civil society development. Shovcat has a PhD in Radiation Chemistry and has authored 20 publications based on scientific research results.



**Seyed Faiz,**  
Country Relations Senior Broker (On secondment),  
Oxfam GB

Seyed has more than 20 years' experience in setting up successful institutions, effectively managing complex development programmes and humanitarian responses for international aid organisations and providing consultancy services to companies and bilateral/multilateral agencies. He has expertise in climate resilient agriculture, market systems and enterprise development, financial inclusion, private sector development, WASH, health and nutrition and gender justice. He joined Oxfam in 2015 as the Economic Justice Programme Manager and was then Deputy Country Director in Tajikistan before he took over the role of CEO for Equidev. Before this, he worked with the Aga Khan Foundation, WWF and Deloitte in India and South Asia. Seyed holds a degree from the London School of Economics in the United Kingdom and is fluent in English, with conversational abilities in Arabic and Tajik.





**Kate Attwooll,**  
Project Portfolio Manager, Oxfam

Kate is the first woman Chair of the Tajikistan Country Governance Group and the youngest ever Chair of the Asia Regional Governance Group. Kate is the Country Relations Senior Broker for Oxfam GB, covering Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. She has worked for Oxfam for 12 years, specialising in strategic governance and technical programme quality and impact. Kate has substantial field experience across all regions of the world, particularly fragile and conflict affected contexts such as Haiti, Myanmar, South Sudan and the Middle East. She has strong portfolio planning and investment skills, organisational and strategy development skills, and is experienced in managing risk and leading large, geographically dispersed, multicultural teams. Prior to Oxfam, she worked in HIV/AIDS and education in Brazil; mental health, substance misuse and homelessness in the UK; social entrepreneurship at the Skoll Centre of Said Business School; and postgraduate research in sociology at Oxford University.

Lan Mercado is Oxfam's Director for Strategy and Feminist Futures and, concurrently, is the Regional Director for Asia. She is an activist, a humanitarian and development worker with over 30 years of international experience working with civil society groups, environmental movements, and women's rights organizations. In the Philippines, she is a convenor and founding member of Every Woman and Baigani and is a member of the board of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism where she once worked on the environment desk. She is a founding board member of the Citizens for the Promotion of Human Rights. Under her leadership, Oxfam is implementing a future-oriented strategy in Asia for an inclusive, sustainable, and resilient region. Lan returned to Asia after serving as Oxfam's Deputy Director for Global Campaigns. Prior to this, she was Country Director in the Philippines and served as Advisor to the ASEAN on disaster management and emergency response. Lan has a degree in mass communication and pursued post-graduate studies on sustainable development. Working with the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism team of reporters, she had won first prize for investigative journalism. She was recently recognized by the University of the Philippines as a Distinguished Alumna for Poverty Alleviation and Human Development. In 2017, she was conferred the inaugural Glory Award by the UP College of Mass Communication for social advocacy and leadership in the development sector.



**Saidrakhmon Nazrizoda,**  
First Deputy Minister of Economic Dev. and  
Trade of the government of Tajikistan (retd.)

Saidrakhmon has more than 20 years of experience in working with the government of Tajikistan in various capacities. He actively participated and contributing to a number of important reform processes in the country as the Head of Department of Economic Reforms and Investments at the Administration of the President of the Republic of Tajikistan in 2007. In 2009 he held the post of Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Trade in Tajikistan and supervised the foreign economic relations and international trade, monitored the implementation of the economic reform process and coordinated the interaction between the World Trade Organisation and government of Tajikistan. Currently, Saidrakhmon is serving as an adviser for the Tajik Technical University.



**Lilian (Lan) Mercado**  
Asia Pacific Regional  
Director, WWF

# Management Team

Gulchehira has more than 20 years of experience in leading sustainable development projects and humanitarian work in Central Asia. She is bringing a wealth of technical leadership and programmatic experience and expertise in public health, child survival, reproductive health, control of pandemic diseases and child nutrition. Over the last few years, she has been leading various health and nutrition projects on food security, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) funded by USAID, SDC, EU, World Bank, DFID, OFDA, GIZ and UNICEF. Gulchehira was supervising the several health and nutrition and WASH programs in Central Asia including Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan.

Orkhan has more than 12 years of experience in project and business operations management. Apart from being the WASH Advisor to Equidev, he currently works as a Team Leader in WASH at Oxfam in Tajikistan. Before this, he fulfilled various positions, such as business development manager, project manager and/or consultant and university instructor, in diverse companies, public institutions, and international and local NGOs in Azerbaijan, Jordan, Georgia, Iraq, Myanmar, Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israel and Tajikistan. Orkhan's expertise is in improving market-based solutions for WASH products and services for customers using advanced marketing services, data-based decision-making tools, institutional/human capacity building and business innovations in both infrastructure building and value chain development. Orkhan also consults with the government on policy reforms and institutional development to enhance its potential in the implementation of national reforms.

Nazira has more than 20 years of experience in the humanitarian and development sectors. She has held leadership roles in implementing and managing large projects in integrated food security and community-based development, WASH, DRR and climate change, community-based rehabilitation and good governance. Nazira has engaged with civil society organisations across all five Central Asian countries and Afghanistan and has frequently travelled to these areas to oversee the quality of implementation, provide support for raising the financial portfolio, and act as the lead liaison to institutional donors and trust funds. She joined Oxfam in 2016 to lead the media and communications team and later took over coordination of the gender justice programme



Gulchehira Boboeva,  
CEO, Equidev



Orkhan Ali,  
WASH Advisor



Nazira Kurbonova,  
Media, Communication  
and Gender Advisor

Farhod is a sustainable livelihood and economic development practitioner with more than 15 years of professional experience in the international aid sector, private agencies and the UN. Prior to joining Equidev, Farhod was coordinating the livelihoods projects of Oxfam in the Khatlon and Zarafshan regions. He has been involved in several development projects with various international donors, such as DfID, EU, GiZ, BmZ and JICA. Farhod was also the Economic Advisor for the UN Development Programme in the Khatlon region, leading a wide range of economic development projects. These included private–public partnerships for enterprise development, climate resilient agriculture, marketing and value addition, microfinance, legislative reforms and local development initiatives.

Mizrobsho has more than 20 years of experience in managing large and complex agricultural programmes related to sustainable development, agricultural policy advocacy and enterprise development in the Aga Khan Development Network in Tajikistan. He has published a number of agricultural research papers on water basins management, advanced technology in vegetable growing, livestock diseases prevention, pasture management and others. Mizrobsho has attended international professional development training and conferences and adds a wealth of agricultural experience and expertise.



Farhod Khalikov,  
Livelihoods initiative  
Advisor



Mizrobsho Amirbekov,  
Agriculture and  
Enterprise  
Development Advisor

# Organisational Structure of Equidev





# About Equidev

## Core values

We are enablers of change, and believe in catalysing transformation by bridging the world, brokering partnerships and establishing collaborations between government, aid agencies and local partners. Our unique strength is our cross-sectoral approach to development problems: we harness our expertise in WASH, climate resilient agriculture, enterprise development, health and nutrition and gender justice. We are restless innovators with a flair for challenging existing development paradigms, policy and practices in our quest for better solutions. To achieve our goal, we make extensive use of evidence, measurement, impact and data. Our in-depth understanding of realities on the ground, born of decades of community development experience, has endowed our diverse solutions with a unique sense of local relevance. We believe in long-term partnerships where we work hand in hand with our partners, learning together and using multiple engagement models to deliver an enduring value proposition.

We use our extensive regional and global network reinforced by a deep and diverse expertise base in different business areas, specialities and geographic locations to bring superior technical expertise, robust project management and unmatched quality to all our work.

Equidev's core team consists of staff members with extensive work experience in Oxfam. Drawing on the experience of our founding organisation Oxfam GB, we have a proven track record in designing, implementing and upscaling hundreds of programmes, humanitarian assistance projects and campaigns in the region. Our widely reputed models in WASH, climate resilient agriculture, enterprise development, health and nutrition and gender justice serve as benchmarks of excellence in these sectors. We do not rest on our reputation and continually seek to develop path-breaking strategies and improve the effectiveness of practices, tools and outcomes, while keeping client requirements front and centre.

## Mission and vision

We proudly enshrine the core values of our founding organisation Oxfam to end the injustice of poverty. To infuse our work culture with this mission, we are uncompromising in our values, relentless in our search for innovation and totally focused on impact.

Our vision for the development of the region is to foster holistic and inclusive development solutions on a scale that eliminates inequities, marginalisation, hunger and poverty. We strongly believe that an integrat-

ed and people-centric ecosystem that synergises the strengths of various partners is a must. The primary driver of transformational change is an enabling environment that integrates four elements: the capacities of the communities, the efficiency of the market, the reach and vision of the facilitators and the power of the state. To this end, we strive to design models and approaches, test them, nurture partnerships to reach scale and engage with policy to create enabling space.

## Our founding organisation

Oxfam is a global movement of millions of people who share the belief that, in a world rich in resources, poverty is not inevitable. Oxfam believes that to spread that change and make it last, political solutions are also needed to tackle the root causes of poverty and create societies where empowered individuals can thrive. Together with local partners, Oxfam works in more than 90 countries as part of the Oxfam International confederation to tackle the root causes of poverty and respond to emergencies.

## What we do

### Water, sanitation and hygiene

The challenges facing the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector in Central Asia today relate primarily to systemic issues around management and governance, and a lack of resources and expertise. Equipped with more than 20 years of experience from its founding organisation in managing large and complex WASH projects in the region, Equidev is well positioned to provide reliable and sustainable solutions that are relevant and acceptable to users. Equidev is dedicated to the WASH sector as a knowledge broker, innovator and enabler of change in the region.

Equidev ensures that services are extended to both urban and rural remote areas, and that technical solutions are tailored to the specific needs of communities and foster sustainability and enhanced quality of governance in the WASH sector. We work with international development partners, local and central authorities, the private sector and civil society to promote best international practices in WASH projects in the region.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the provision of safe water, sanitation and hygiene has become vital to protect human health for economic activities. Access to WASH infrastructure, facilities and consumables is a fundamental determinant of reduced transmission, especially among people living in poverty. Equidev offers its expertise in timely planning for and responses to COVID-19 outbreaks through capacity building of local government institutions, communities, households, schools, marketplaces and healthcare facilities. This ensures improved and consistently applied WASH practices and proven behaviour-change techniques to prevent human-to-human transmission of COVID-19.



## Agriculture, enterprise and skills

The agriculture sector in the region suffers from systemic constraints ranging from poor productivity, the absence of technology diffusion across value chains and low capital investments to a weak private sector. We work with market systems, business intermediaries and associations and policymakers to create transformational change in agriculture. This is done by building competitiveness across value chains, enhancing the capacity of producers, processors, suppliers and marketers and engaging in policy advocacy for an enabling business environment. In this way, we seek to foster vibrant business ecosystems that support inclusive and equitable growth, enhance income, generate productive employment, deepen the resilience of farmers and benefit business players. We facilitate the development of market systems across domains through the promotion of enterprise clusters, bottom of the pyramid incubation, private sector intermediation and advancing cross-sectoral collaboration. We provide technical support, design, incubation and implementation services using multiple engagement models embedded in cross-sectoral expertise that bridges the world and provides sustainable solutions to the problems of poverty.

## Climate change and disaster risk reduction

Climate change threatens food, energy and water security in the region, with a particularly severe impact on the economies, lives and livelihoods of vulnerable communities. We build holistic, community-based disaster risk reduction (DRR) solutions in this climate fragile region. We focus on community-based adaptations enabled by a strong systemic capacity to respond and build sustainable solutions. We work with government institutions, emergency response teams and community-based responders to design, facilitate and develop integrated models of DRR and management. We have proven capabilities in building long-term capacity in the emergency response chain with a bottom-up approach. This facilitates institutional reform and enables policymakers, key responders and grassroots activists to mount effective strategies to confront the short- and long-term challenges of disaster risk.





## Green growth

In recent years, there has been a shift in economic growth paradigms in the region, with policymakers increasingly focusing on green growth strategies, practices and investments using policy–regulatory, financial and institutional instruments. We see the whole green growth sector as an emerging opportunity where Equidev can play a catalytic role in transforming local economies towards secured sustainable development pathways. We work with policymakers to advocate for optimal policy choices that accelerate green investments, with manufacturing and industries to shift towards cleaner, low carbon technologies, and with civil society, lobbyists, academics and interest groups to generate support for policies that promote a sustainable future. We address both core green growth issues and underlying drivers such as green finance, consumer preferences and technology to build a compelling narrative based on data and evidence that leads to policy reform and action on the ground. Our main sectors in the near future will be clean energy and sustainable tourism, as both these sectors are important in the regional economy and can play a major role in propelling economies towards sustainable futures.



## Cross cutting

Themes such as gender, minority rights, human rights, governance and conflict management cut across sectors, domains and practices and have a huge impact on social and economic development outcomes for the countries in the region. Our experience demonstrates that these cross-cutting themes play a critical role in the socioeconomic, cultural and political context of the region, where discriminatory gender norms are persistent, human rights violations are common, governance and accountability systems are weak and protracted conflicts are endemic. Addressing these issues is vital to ensure inclusive and sustainable growth and a high quality of life for citizens in the region.

Our approach to addressing these cross-cutting themes is twofold. First, we highlight these issues in design and development across all sectors and practices. Equidev uses the global expertise of its founding organisation to launch standalone programmes in areas such as gender rights, governance and accountability to target specific changes in policies, legal frameworks or social norms that drive the outcomes. Equidev draws on Oxfam's extensive experience in designing and implementing programmes, conducting campaigns and influencing policies in domains such as unpaid care work for women, time poverty and gender justice, social accountability in WASH, capacity building for grassroots democracy and governance and reinforcing human rights through sustained advocacy.







## CONTACT US

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