

The design

We will run a five-arm survey experiment with approximately 2,500 Uzbek adults recruited online (500 per arm; a 2,000-respondent fallback is discussed under power). Respondents are randomly assigned with equal probability to one of five conditions; arms are unlabeled. The four treated arms read the same factual description of Initiatives Budgeting and the same successful clean-water project; the arms differ only in the sentence or sentences that follow.

Common description (Treatment group 1–4):

Initiatives Budgeting (Open Budget) is a nationwide government program in Uzbekistan. Each year, residents can propose local projects and vote for the ones they want funded. Projects that receive enough votes are paid for from public funds allocated to the program and are built in the neighborhood (mahalla). In one mahalla in your region, a project chosen through Initiatives Budgeting replaced an old, failing water system, and households there now have reliable access to clean water.

Control group no description and no project; the respondent goes directly to the outcome blocks.

Treatment group 1 (neutral): the description only, approximating the ambiguous way citizens often encounter the program.

Treatment group 2 (community credit) adds:

The project won funding only after months of effort by residents. They proposed the project, encouraged their neighbors to vote for it, and collected votes for it. As a result of community organizing, a new water system came to the neighborhood.

Treatment group 3 (government credit) adds:

This happened because the government acted. The government funded the project and carried out the work. The government delivered the new water system to the neighborhood.

Treatment group 4 (combined credit framing) adds:

The project succeeded because residents organized and the government acted. Residents proposed the project, encouraged their neighbors to vote, and collected votes. The government funded the project and carried out the work. Together, community organizing and government action brought the new water system to the neighborhood.

Full survey questionnaire

S0. Consent and eligibility (gate)

Consent statement reads and the respondent checks “I agree to take part” to join the survey.

☐ Are you 18 years or older? *(Yes / No)*

☐ Are you a permanent resident of Uzbekistan? *(Yes / No)*

S1. Pre-treatment background and moderator (all arms; asked before the vignette)

☐ **S1.1** Region (viloyat) *(dropdown of regions, Karakalpakstan, and Tashkent city)*

☐ **S1.2** Do you live in a city or town, or in a rural area? *(Urban / Rural)*

☐ **S1.3** Age *(year of birth or age bands)*

☐ **S1.4** Gender *(Man / Woman / Prefer not to say)*

☐ **S1.5** Highest level of education completed *(list)*

☐ **S1.6** Knowledge of social rights (four items, summed 0–4):

1. Does the Constitution of Uzbekistan guarantee free general secondary education and make general secondary education compulsory?
(Yes; No)
2. Which statement best describes the right to state-funded medical care under the Constitution of Uzbekistan?
(Only children have a right to free medical care; Only formally employed citizens have this right; Citizens have a right to a guaranteed amount of medical care at state expense under procedures established by law; The Constitution does not mention state-funded medical care.)
4. Which institution reviews applications for child allowances and material assistance through the Social Registry?
(The mahalla citizens' assembly; The district hokimiyat; The Extrabudgetary Pension Fund; The National Agency for Social Protection under the President of Uzbekistan.)
5. How is a family's eligibility for child allowances or material assistance determined in Uzbekistan?
(Through an assessment of household information in the Social Registry; Through a public vote in the mahalla; Through a recommendation from the applicant's employer; Every family with children qualifies automatically.)

☐ **S1.7** Overall, how satisfied are you with life in your neighborhood these days? *(4-point satisfaction)*

- ☐ **S1.8** And how well is the current government doing its job overall? (*Very badly / Badly / Well / Very well*)

S2. The experiment (random assignment)

Respondents are randomized with equal probability to group 1–5 as specified in the design section. The control group proceeds directly to S4.

S3. Attention and manipulation checks (treated arms only)

- ☐ **S3.1** Attention check: What did the project improve in the neighborhood? (*The water supply / The roads / The schools / I do not remember*)
- ☐ **S3.2** Manipulation check (credit): In your view, who was mainly responsible for making this project happen? *except for T2 (*Mostly the community and residents / Mostly the government / Both about equally / Not sure*)
- ☐ **S3.3** If “government” or “both”: Which government do you have in mind mainly? (*The national government / The regional or district authorities / The mahalla leadership / Not sure*)

S4. Outcome measures (all arms; blocks Y1–Y5 in randomized order, items randomized within blocks; block M fixed last)

Y1. State legitimacy — deference and obligation (primary outcome)

- ☐ **Y1.1** People should follow government decisions even when they disagree with them.
- ☐ **Y1.2** The tax authorities always have the right to make people pay taxes.
- ☐ **Y1.3** If the central government has a right to make laws that everybody must obey

Y2. Legitimacy antecedents — evaluations of the state (secondary outcome)

- ☐ **Y2.2** I trust leaders in the national government to do what is right for people like me.
- ☐ **Y2.3** I trust leaders in my local government (hokimiyat) to do what is right for people like me.

Y3. Horizontal trust and collective efficacy

- ☐ **Y3.1** People in my mahalla can work together to solve shared problems.
- ☐ **Y3.3** Most people in my neighborhood can be trusted.

Y4. Support for Initiatives Budgeting as a tool

- ☐ **Y4.1** Which statement is closer to your view? (1) The government should decide local projects on its own. (2) Despite some problems, Initiatives Budgeting is a better way to decide local projects than leaving it to the government alone. (*forced choice*)

☐ **Y4.2** Have you ever taken part in Initiatives Budgeting, by proposing or voting for a project? *(Yes / No / Not sure)*

☐ **Y4.3** If yes, did the project receive funding? *(Yes / No / Not sure)*

S6. Debrief (treated arms)

“The description you read was about Initiatives Budgeting, a real government program, and the example project was illustrative of projects the program funds. The sentences about who was responsible for the project, and about how projects are organized, were written for research purposes and reflected possible views rather than a verified account of one project. Thank you for participating.”