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Analytical Report

**Identification of key areas for assistance to women labor migrants
in Central Asia, Azerbaijan, and the potential role of CSOs in this assistance
Countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan**



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I once again express my deep gratitude to all who took part in this analytical report. I hope that its results and recommendations will benefit and assist civil society organizations in promoting the protection of women migrant workers' rights, as well as the rights of migrant workers' wives, including abandoned wives and widows. Furthermore, I hope this assistance will help facilitate the target population's participation in the life of the societies of Central Asia and Azerbaijan.

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Introduction

This analytical report was prepared based on the results of a study conducted within the framework of the Partnership for Innovation Program, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Its goal is to identify key areas for assistance to women migrant workers, wives and widows of labor migrants, including abandoned wives from Central Asia and Azerbaijan, and to identify the potential role of CSOs (CSOs) in providing such assistance.

The structure of the report includes an introduction, an executive summary, a description of the initial situation, an overview of the proposed key areas of assistance to target groups, and recommendations for involving CSOs in assisting the target groups. The executive summary includes a brief description of the study conducted and an overview of its main findings, as well as recommendations and lessons learned. In the description of the initial situation, a brief migration profile of the six countries in question is presented. It also identifies the target groups of women exposed to socioeconomic risks associated with labor migration and describes the risks themselves.

The section on key areas of assistance to target groups is based on the results of field research conducted in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Each area describes the current situation, measures taken, existing gaps and weaknesses of these measures, as well as examples of best practices in the relevant directions. The final section of the report includes recommendations on involving CSOs in rendering assistance to the target groups. Proposed recommendations are aimed at improving the situation of both women directly involved in labor migration, as well as women and children exposed to risks due to involvement in labor migration of their husbands, fathers or themselves.

The report identifies potential niches for the activities of CSOs, and recommends effective approaches and methods for their work in the respective areas of assistance to wives and children of migrant workers, including abandoned wives and widows, as well as women and potential labor migrants in the countries of origin. The role and place of CSOs are proposed based on the assumption that they will work in new areas, including addressing weak points of existing migration policy, and complimenting services provided by the state migration bodies and private employment agencies within the countries of Central Asia and Azerbaijan.

I. Executive Summary

At present, labor migration continues to be one of the most important factors that has a decisive influence on the well-being (and in many cases - on the possibility of survival) of a significant percentage of families in Central Asia and other post-Soviet countries. Issues around labor migration are taking on an ever greater social and economic significance.

One of the main contemporary trends has been an increase in the proportion and number of women among labor migrants. Women's labor migration is of particular significance. There is a critical need to provide assistance in the implementation of social, legal, and labor rights for women themselves as labor migrants in countries of destination, as well as for wives of migrant workers, including abandoned wives and widows, and their children.

Due to these issues, a need for expert research has emerged aimed at identifying key areas of assistance for target groups involved. These groups include women migrant workers in Central Asia and Azerbaijan traveling to destination countries, as well as women who are wives of migrant workers, including abandoned wives and widows in the countries of origin. This research addresses the potential role of CSOs in providing such assistance.

Expert Study Objectives Included:

- *Consideration of key social and economic issues and needs of vulnerable families led by abandoned wives of labor migrants in countries of origin and destination;*
- *Identification of key areas for assistance to women migrant workers, as well as wives, abandoned wives, widows and children of labor migrants in countries of origin;*
- *Identification of prospective niches for CSOs in these key areas of assistance to women migrant workers, as well as abandoned wives, widows and children of labor migrants.*

Methodology. The study's methodology was based on desk research in five Central Asian countries and Azerbaijan and field studies in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The desk research analyzed current labor migration trends pertaining to Central Asia and Azerbaijan, with the main focus on the gender aspects of migration. Relevant publications and statistical data on labor migration from the six countries were reviewed, including available gender statistics. The following target groups of socially vulnerable women who are exposed to risks because of labor migration from these countries were identified:

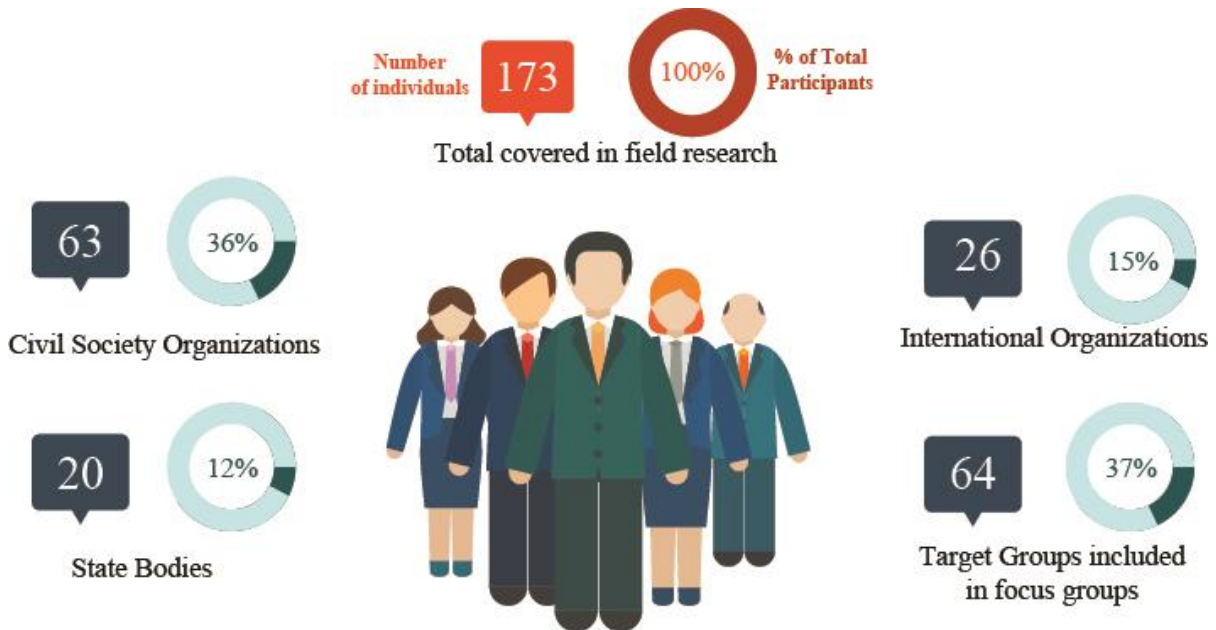
- wives of labor migrants;
- widows and abandoned wives of labor migrants;
- potential and returned labor migrants;
- women labor migrants;

- children of labor migrants in the countries of destination.

Field studies included in-depth interviews with representatives of civil society organizations, international organizations, government agencies, and discussions with representatives of target groups (focus groups) in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Field research was aimed at identifying the main risks for target groups resulting from labor migration. The goal was also to determine the target groups' main needs in terms of assistance and support from state and civil society that would help to prevent and reduce such risks. Interviews were conducted with 109 representatives from state bodies, civil society organizations, and international organizations. Sixty-four representatives from the target groups took part in focus group discussions.

Table 1. Field Research Participants

Groups Included in Field Research- Representatives From:	Number of individuals	% of Total Participants
Civil Society Organizations	63	36
State Bodies	20	12
International Organizations	26	15
Target Groups included in focus groups	64	37
Total covered in field research	173	100



This analytical report presents the results of the research. Key directions for rendering assistance to target groups in countries of origin and destination for labor migrants include:

- Creating opportunities for income and employment for the wives of labor migrants in countries of origin;

- Reducing the vulnerability of social and economic rights for abandoned wives and widows of labor migrants in the countries of origin;
- Ensuring that wives of labor migrants have access to social services in countries of origin;
- Reducing the vulnerability of the wives of migrant workers in countries of origin to violence and full dependence in cases of forced and early marriages;
- Improving opportunities for development and education for children of labor migrants in countries of origin;
- Raising women's awareness and preparedness for labor migration in countries of origin;
- Regularized status for women migrant workers and reduction of informal employment in destination countries;
- Ensuring access for women migrant workers, as well as wives and children of migrant workers, to social services in the countries of destination;
- Reducing the vulnerability of women migrant workers and their children to abuse and violence, forced slave labor and sexual exploitation.

For each of the key areas, a review of the current situation was conducted. This served as the basis for conclusions and recommendations on potential niches to involve CSOs in aiding target groups in countries of origin and destination.

Conclusions and recommendations

As a general conclusion, this study has determined that the level of involvement of CSOs in the provision of assistance to target groups is somewhat higher in labor migration destination countries. This is since these activities in the countries of destination are implemented with the active involvement of CSOs. Authorized state bodies in host countries are less interested in working with labor migrants, including members of their families and women migrant workers, during their stay in the country.

At the same time, the involvement of CSOs in countries of origin is lagging in the following areas: (1) creating opportunities for income and employment for the wives of migrant workers, (2) ensuring access for migrants' wives to social services, (3) raising awareness and preparing women for labor migration. Again, this relates to the fact that the main role in rendering assistance to target groups is carried out by authorized state bodies. In this regard, support is mainly provided via international and donor organizations. However, work in these areas, mainly through government bodies, does not allow full coverage of target groups, especially for rural communities. Taking this into account, this study recommends increasing the involvement of CSOs to improve the accessibility of relevant services for women in the target groups of this research, as well as through self-organization as part of informal networks, self-help groups, and associations.

In the countries of labor migration destination, CSOs' involvement is focused on providing information and consulting support, which is aimed at an undefined number of target group representatives. CSOs also provide legal support for women in difficult situations such as victims of violence, or human trafficking. This study proposes strengthening the involvement of CSOs in all three areas of assistance to target groups:

- Regularizing the status of women migrant workers and reducing informal employment in destination countries;
- Ensuring access for women migrant workers, wives and children of labor migrants to social services in the countries of destination;
- Reducing the vulnerability of women migrant workers and their children to abuse and violence, forced slave labor and sexual exploitation.

In countries of destination, promising niche areas for CSOs to work with target groups include work that allows for regular interaction and provision of information and consulting support, as well as the expansion of legal support services for women migrant workers, wives and children of labor migrants caught in difficult situations. An expanded list of services for legal support to target groups in countries of destination includes issues regarding payment of wages, employers retaining documents, deportation and administrative responsibility, and representation of labor migrants' issues in state bodies.

Based on the findings, the report provides recommendations on the involvement of CSOs in each niche activity area to assist labor migrant target groups in countries of origin and destination.

II. Initial situation and definition of target groups

At present, labor migration continues to be one of the most important factors that has a decisive influence on the well-being, and in many cases on the possibility of survival, for a significant part of families in Central Asia and Azerbaijan. Modern economic and trade ties and a visa-free space between the majority of post-Soviet countries encourage the mobility of the labor force, as well as the movement of workers and specialists between industries and economic sectors.

As the largest country in the region, the Russian Federation is the main receiving (destination) country for migrant workers from Central Asia and Azerbaijan. The main countries of exodus (origin) of labor migrants from Central Asia are Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. For the most part, these individuals leave Central Asia for the Russian Federation. Kazakhstan remains predominantly a receiving country for labor migrants from Central Asia. Turkmenistan does not make a significant contribution to the flow of labor migration, neither as a receiving country nor as a country of origin for labor migrants. The formation of a single labor market for the Eurasian Economic Union countries also contributes to the flows of labor migration between its members - Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia. However, there is no complete statistical data on labor migration between Russia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan.

Table 2. Acting patents and work permits in Russia, 1st and 2nd quarters of 2017

Country	Number of Patents and Work Permits			
	I quarter		II quarter	
	Patents, thousands	Work Permits, thousands	Patents, thousands	Work Permits, thousands
Azerbaijan	49.30	1.9	50.0	1,9
Tajikistan	401.4	8.0	407.3	7.5
Uzbekistan	892.2	7.8	925.6	7.7

Source: Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation, http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/doc_2017/magazine/st_ob2-rus.pdf



	I quarter	II quarter
Azerbaijan		
Patents, thousands	49,3	50,0
Work Permits, thousands	1,9	1,9
Tajikistan		
Patents, thousands	401,4	407,3
Work Permits, thousands	8,0	7,5
Uzbekistan		
Patents, thousands	892,2	925,6
Work Permits, thousands	7,8	7,7

Azerbaijan

At present, Azerbaijan remains to a great extent a sending country with regard to labor migration. The Russian Federation is the main destination country for the flows of labor migration from Azerbaijan. According to the Federal State Statistics Service of Russia, at the end of the first half of the year, 51,900 Azerbaijani citizens worked in Russia under patents and work permits. Traditionally, Azerbaijanis' employment relates to the trade and services sectors, and with trade in fruit and vegetables in Russian cities.¹ Given the specificity of Azerbaijani migrants' employment, reliable statistical data on the volume of labor migration from the country to Russia is not available. Apparently, the volume is significantly higher than official statistics. Remittances from the Russian Federation, used as an indirect tool for assessing the scale of labor migration, show that in 2015-2016 Azerbaijan was the fifth country among the post-Soviet countries after Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine in terms of volume of remittances.²

Kazakhstan

Since the beginning of the 2000s, Kazakhstan has become a destination country for labor migration and is now recognized as the second country in terms of the volume of migrant workers from Central Asia.³ Although the population of Kazakhstan is growing, there are a number of niches in the labor market that are unfulfilled by the country's own citizens. Those vacant niches are associated with the active expansion of development projects in the country, with a shortage of qualified technical specialists and workers, as well as with the lack of demand from the local population for certain non-prestigious jobs with low pay. There is a recognized need for the country to attract migrant labor for household work. In agriculture, for example, this would involve the production of vegetables, cotton and other crops.

The quota for attracting foreign labor for 2017 was approved for various types of economic activities at the number of 54,100 people. As of April 1, 2017, under the permission of local executive bodies, 28,842 foreign citizens worked in the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan.⁴ According to official statistics, the main countries of origin of labor migrants to Kazakhstan were China - 12,400 people or 43%, Turkey - 3,271 people or 11.3%, Uzbekistan – 2,256 people or 7.8%, Great Britain – 1,243 people or 4.3% and India – 1,226 people or 4.2%. However, the statistics regarding permits issued to employers do not provide a real picture of labor migration to Kazakhstan. The bulk of labor migration flows to Kazakhstan are represented by citizens of countries with a visa-free regime, primarily from Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.⁵ In 2016, according to official data, 210,000 foreigners received work permits from the internal affairs authorities to work as household employees in

¹ Labor and Employment in Russia, 2013, Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation, http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/b13_36/Main.htm.ed, Azerbaijan. Extended migration profile. Building migration partnerships (BMP), 2010, p. 50.

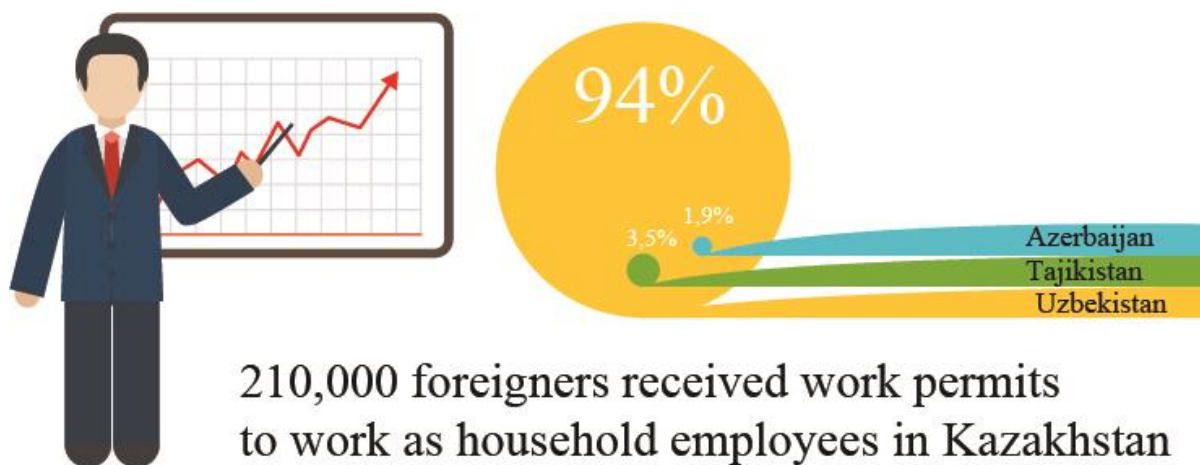
² Web site of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation, http://www.cbr.ru/eng/statistics/CrossBorder/Cross-border_16_e.pdf.

³ Rights of Migrant Workers in Kazakhstan: Analysis of National Legislation, International Standards and Law Enforcement Practices, International Labor Organization, 2008, p. 10.

⁴ Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Kazakhstan, <https://www.enbek.gov.kz/ru/node/344757>.

⁵ Mapping of unregulated migration in Central Asia 2014, International Organization for Migration.

Kazakhstan⁶. More than 94% of these work permits for individuals were received by citizens of Uzbekistan, 3.5% - Tajikistan, and 1.9% - Azerbaijan.⁷



Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyzstan is considered a country of origin for labor migration flows, primarily to the Russian Federation. The main traditional spheres of employment for Kyrgyz citizens in Russia are trade, construction, transport, home repair and other services for the Russian population.⁸ Data on the volume of remittances and work permits and patents issued show that at present, Kyrgyzstan is the fifth country of origin in terms of the number of labor migration flows to Russia.⁹ According to the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation, at the end of the first six months of the year, 1,500 Kyrgyz citizens had permits to work in Russia.¹⁰ This is due to the fact that with the entry of Kyrgyzstan into the Eurasian Economic Union, from August 12, 2015, Kyrgyz citizens are not required to obtain work permits and patents in the Russian Federation. The above statistics consider only previously issued valid work permits. Obviously, the number of Kyrgyz migrant workers in Russia is much higher, and in 2013 the number of people working in this country under individual patents was more than 90,000.¹¹ There is no reliable data on the number of migrant workers from Kyrgyzstan working in Kazakhstan, since most of them work outside the permit system in the informal sector of the economy. There is also frequent border crossing among migrant workers. At the same time, after the devaluation of the Kazakhstani tenge in 2015-2016, the attractiveness of the neighboring country's labor market for Kyrgyz citizens has decreased.

⁶ <http://easttime.ru/news/kazakhstan/statistika-trudovoi-migratsii-v-kazakhstane-za-2016-god/12811>.

⁷ <https://www.caravan.kz/gazeta/chto-proiskhodit-s-trudovymi-migrantami-v-kazakhstane-388901/>.

⁸ Kyrgyzstan. Extended migration profile. – B.: 2013.

⁹ http://www.cbr.ru/eng/statistics/CrossBorder/Cross-border_16_e.pdf.

¹⁰ http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/doc_2017/magazine/st_ob2-rus.pdf.

¹¹ Labor and Employment in Russia, 2013, Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation, http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/b13_36/Main.htm.

Tajikistan

Tajikistan is a country of origin with prominent labor migration flows. According to the 2010 population census, the number of migrant workers from Tajikistan who went to work in other countries amounted to more than 417,000 people.¹² Their main destination country is the Russian Federation (over 90% of migrant workers), and subsequent destinations are Kazakhstan and then Afghanistan. At the end of the first half of 2017, 407,300 Tajik citizens held individual patents and 7,500 held a valid work permit in Russia.¹³ As a rule, migrant workers from Tajikistan are engaged in low-skilled jobs in the Russian Federation. These include construction, trade, catering, housing and communal services.¹⁴ Compared to the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s, the majority of migrant workers from Tajikistan are from economically less developed regions and rural areas. The key factors stimulating external labor migration from the country are the lack of jobs in Tajikistan, low wages, population growth and the resulting growing competition in the domestic labor market.

Turkmenistan

Turkmenistan does not make a significant contribution to the flow of labor migration in North and Central Asia as a sending or receiving country. It is very difficult to draw more reliable conclusions based on available data, since even basic statistical information on the total population of this country is not easily attainable. At the same time, statistics available on the volume of remittances, work permits and patents issued for individuals in Russia and Kazakhstan does not show a high level of outbound labor migration from Turkmenistan. In 2010, according to the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation, there were 1,200 citizens of Turkmenistan working in Russia.¹⁵ These are the most up-to-date statistics on labor migration from Turkmenistan to Russia. The level of income and social security in Turkmenistan are higher than in other sending countries of Central Asia, which does not stimulate the population to pursue external labor migration. In addition, Turkmenistan has a visa regime for entry and stay with all of the other Central Asian countries. Only citizens of Kazakhstan and residents of border regions can enter Turkmenistan without visas for a period of up to 5 days. At the same time, the level of emigration from Turkmenistan to Russia and other countries remains quite high for those pursuing a goal of permanent residence.

Uzbekistan

The three main directions for the external labor migration flow from Uzbekistan include Russia, Kazakhstan, and countries outside Eurasia. According to the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation, by the end of the first half of 2017, 925,600 Uzbek migrant workers had work permits, and 7,700 Uzbek citizens worked on the basis of patents.¹⁶ This accounted for more than half of the total number of migrants working in Russia on the basis of work permits and patents (1,914,500 permits and patents). The main

¹² Agency for Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan, www.stat.tj.

¹³ http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/doc_2017/magazine/st_ob2-rus.pdf.

¹⁴ Tajikistan. Extended migration profile. Building migration partnerships (BMP), 2010, p. 48.

¹⁵ Labor and Employment in Russia, 2013, Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation, http://www.gks.ru/bgd/regl/b13_36/Main.htm.

¹⁶ http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/doc_2017/magazine/st_ob2-rus.pdf.

areas of employment are construction, trade, services, agriculture and transport. According to Kazakhstan's Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, over 2,000 people had official work permits from employers, and almost 200,000 Uzbek citizens received work permits as household employees. Migrants from Uzbekistan are actively involved in Kazakhstan in the construction sector, agricultural work (growing cotton, vegetables), public catering (cooks, bakers) and trade. Other popular destinations for labor migration flows from Uzbekistan are South Korea, European countries, the United States, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, and Iran. However, the scale of migration in these areas is significantly lower; based on permits, there were about 15,000 migrant workers from Uzbekistan in Korea at the end of 2013.¹⁷ Labor migration to other countries is constrained due to entry visa requirements, lack of knowledge of foreign languages by potential migrants, and lack of experience in relevant labor markets.¹⁸

Gender risks for labor migration and identification of target groups for research.



An increase in the proportion and number of women among labor migrants

One of the main trends of the early 2000s was an increase in the proportion and number of women among labor migrants. Women's labor migration is an issue that warrants special attention and study. The number of women migrant workers from countries such as Kyrgyzstan is already about 40%, and from Tajikistan about 20%.¹⁹ Women can arrive in the country of destination in the status of an independent migrant worker or as a migrant worker's family member. Men are much less likely to travel to countries of destination to accompany a spouse who has obtained a work permit in another country. Also, the active involvement of women in labor migration requires more attention to the possibilities of their entry and stay with children in the country of destination. These issues are related to the legislative provisions on the rights to family reunification as applicable to migrant workers. This also requires consideration regarding the absence of signs of gender discrimination and unreasonable restriction of rights. Often the country of destination can only recognize temporary stays for labor migrants and, on this basis, restricts the rights of migrant workers to family reunification.

Labor migrants mainly go to other countries to earn money to support their families and send home part of the earnings every month. There are also those who, when arriving to the country of destination, soon start second families in the receiving countries or stop caring for

¹⁷ <http://www.profi-forex.org/novosti-mira/novosti-sng/uzbekistan/entry1008208081.html>.

¹⁸ Labor migration in the Republic of Uzbekistan: social, legal and gender aspects, edited by Yevgeny Abdullaev. Tashkent, 2008.

¹⁹ See more at: Kyrgyzstan. Women and children from Kyrgyzstan involved in migration are the most vulnerable groups, FIDH with the participation of ADC Memorial and Bir Duino-Kyrgyzstan, 2016 No. 675.

their abandoned families in the countries of origin. Over the past few years, the community of abandoned women has increased dramatically because of massive outflow of male labor migrants and a large number of divorces. Today, only women and young people (schoolchildren and students) are left in rural areas of some Central Asian countries. In such abandoned houses, labor migrants' wives become actual heads of households. These women bear full responsibility to provide the family income, despite limited access to education, resources, micro-credit, social protection and employment opportunities. This is particularly common in rural areas.



Photo by CSO "Little Land", Tajikistan

Another concern regards statistics on labor migrants who die in the countries of destination. According to information from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan, in 2015, 843 bodies (including 84 women) were transported back to Tajikistan and 889 bodies (including 97 women) in 2014. These numbers do not include those who were buried in Muslim cemeteries in countries of destination. In 2016, the State Migration Service of Kyrgyzstan approved the payment of 928,000 soms as compensation for the transportation of bodies of Kyrgyz citizens who died abroad.²⁰ Among the dead, there are people with families; this means that the number of labor migrants' widows is also increasing.

Most labor migrants occupy low-skilled jobs in the labor market that are not filled by local workers. They also encounter various difficulties when entering destination countries.

²⁰ In 2016, the State Service of Migration approved the payment of 928 thousand soms of compensation for the transportation of Kyrgyz citizens who died abroad. AKIpress. 8.06.2017, <http://kg.akipress.org/news:1387985>.

Women are much more likely than men to become victims of slave labor and human trafficking. Those labor migrants (including women) whose status is not regulated by legislation if sent back to the country of citizenship receive very insignificant social and economic assistance. Unfortunately, the number of labor migrants whose entry is banned to the territory of the Russian Federation is very large. According to the Ministry of Labor, Migration, and Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan, as of November 20, 2016, there are 284,207 such labor migrants.²¹ And according to the State Migration Service of the Kyrgyz Republic, by the end of 2017, 43,000 Kyrgyz citizens will be removed from the "blacklist".²²

Considering the above-mentioned risks associated with labor migration, the following target groups were identified in countries of origin: wives, widows and abandoned wives of labor migrants; women who are potential labor migrants, women returning from labor migration, and children of labor migrants. Regarding women's labor migration in destination countries, target groups were identified as: women who are labor migrants; wives accompanying labor migrants, and children of migrant workers in the receiving country.

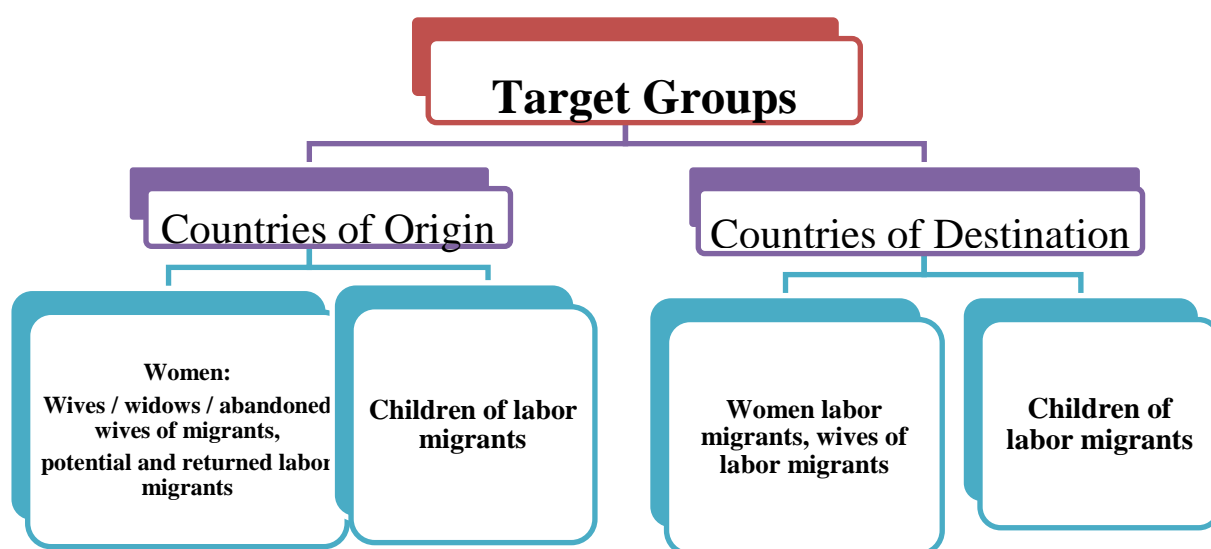


Figure. 1. Target groups for research

²¹ See more at.: Press release on the results of the work of the Ministry of Labor, Migration, and Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2016. 19/01/2017. <http://www.mehnat.tj/mehnat/ru/2017/01/19/пресс-релиз-об-итогах-%>.

²² Before the end of 2017, 43 thousand Kyrgyz citizens will be removed from the "blacklist" - the State Service of Migration. AKIpress. 19.05.2017. <http://kg.akipress.org/news:1383822>.

III. Overview of the main areas of assistance to target groups

3.1 Assistance to target groups in the countries of labor migration origin

Low level of income and employment among the wives of labor migrants in places of their residence

Mass migration of the employable male population often complicates the situation and conditions for women and children who remain in their homeland.²³ Among the main problems for families left at home are: a decrease in the standard of living below the poverty level (especially if remittances are received irregularly or at long intervals); more housework; children's upbringing by women alone; and work in the fields resulting from a shortage of hands to help. According to the research conducted, money earned by labor migrants, including women from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, mainly serves the daily needs of their families. However, these funds contribute little to the self-sustainability and development of citizens in the country of origin. Families receiving remittances spend the funds mainly on the purchase of short-term and long-term goods, as well as weddings, education and healthcare.²⁴ For example, this situation is observed in Tajikistan.²⁵ In the opinion of Anvar Babaev, the head of the "Population migration" Department of the Institute of Economics and Demography of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tajikistan, labor migrants' remittances are an additional source of financing for the budget, and the government needs to invest this capital in the state's economy and open new jobs.²⁶

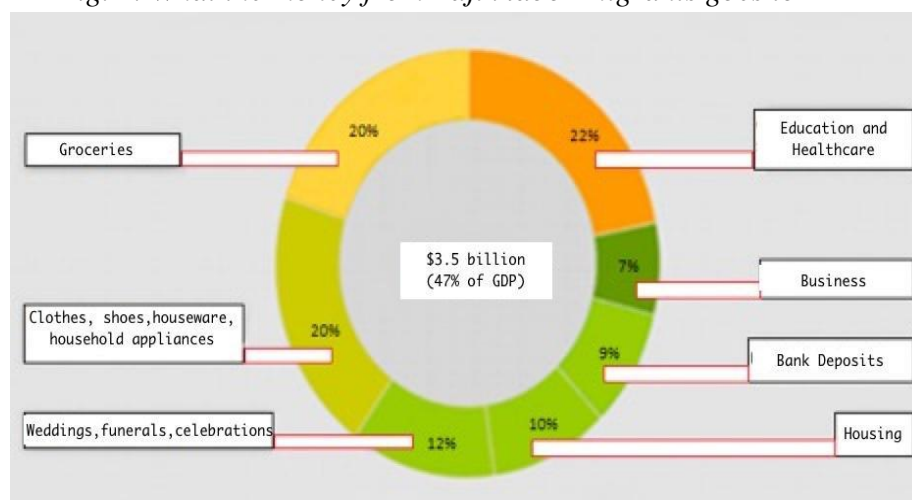
²³ See eg: Sitnyansky G.Yu., Bushkov V.I. Migration of the population in Central Asia: past, present and future. Moscow. 2016.

²⁴ See more.: Vasilkova A. Money of migrants: where from and where to. Evening Bishkek. 15/07/2016.
<http://members.vb.kg/2016/07/15/roman/1.html>.

²⁵ See more at.: Fashutdinov G. Tajikistan: where the money of labor migrants goes. DW.COM 01.03.2013.<http://www.dw.com/ru/таджикистан-куда-уходят-деньги-трудо-вых-мигрантов/a-16635146>.

²⁶ Babaev A. A. Contemporary problems of population migration in regions with a high rate of population growth (based on the materials of the Republic of Tajikistan ABSTRACT of the thesis for the degree of candidate of economic sciences (PhD Thesis abstract, translator's note), specialty 08.00.05 - Economics and management of the national economy (population and demography, Dushanbe- 2012.

Fig. 2. What the money from Tajik labor migrants goes to



Source: Ministry of Economic Development, Center for Strategic Studies of Tajikistan

Unfortunately, the high level of external migration does not solve the problem of unoccupied labor, nor of ensuring effective employment, or reducing unemployment to a natural level. It does not reduce poverty in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. According to the World Bank report "Diagnostics of job creation in Tajikistan: strategic directions for creating jobs" (2016), the country does not create enough jobs for a growing workforce. At the same time, women are at a disadvantage in terms of employment. For example, from 2003 to 2013, inequality in the level of employment between men and women in Tajikistan increased from 21% to 35%.²⁷ In Tajikistan in 2016, 119,709 citizens applied to labor and employment agencies, of which 77,349 were registered as job seekers. 51,299 citizens officially received unemployed status. 39,067 unemployed citizens (of whom 50-60% each year are women) were provided with jobs.²⁸

The problem of employment affects both target groups of wives of labor migrants, including widows and abandoned wives, and women returning from labor migration to their homeland. Together with the joint efforts to ensure employment and create jobs, it is necessary to address issues related to the creation of conditions for women's employment. This involves creating equal hiring and working conditions, ensuring balanced alignment of family and work responsibilities, and supporting the social status of working women.

²⁷ See more at: Diagnostics of Workplace Creation in Tajikistan: Strategic Directions for the Creation of Workplaces. 2017 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / World Bank. <http://www.vsemirnyjbank.org/ru/news/infographic/2017/02/14/tajikistan-jobs-diagnostic-strategic-framework-for-jobs>; <http://documents.vsemirnyjbank.org/curated/ru/460071486972590226/pdf/112666-REVISED-RUSSIAN-WB-TJK-JobD-RU-overview-web-opt-01.pdf>.

²⁸ See more at: Press release of the Ministry of Labor, Migration, and Employment of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2016 on the results of the work. 19/01/2017. <http://www.mehnat.tj/mehnat/ru/2017/01/19/пресс-релиз-об-итогах-%>.



Photo by CSO "Little Land", Tajikistan



**«Expansion of economic opportunities
for rural women in Kyrgyzstan »**

economic opportunities for rural women in Kyrgyzstan." The project aimed at improving the status of rural women in food security and nutrition, increasing the capacity of women farmers, and improving their access to assets. The program implemented 77 projects, with the participation of 4,246 individuals. Impoverished individuals also received flour and vegetable

Centers for the promotion of employment and social protection of the regional administrations under the Ministry of Labor of Uzbekistan provide advice on obtaining new skills, as well as consult on registration status for those unemployed. These centers function throughout the country. Experts interviewed for this research pointed out that in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, there are various state programs and joint projects with donors on economic development and support of entrepreneurship among women. In particular, the UN World Food Program supported the project "Expansion of

oil for participation in the projects.²⁹ Within the framework of the German Society for International Cooperation Program "Professional Education and Employment Promotion", Kyrgyzstan's Ministry of Labor and Social Development (MLSD) and its territorial subdivisions are supporting the improvement of the quality of public services to promote employment. During the period from 2014 to 2016, specialists from 10 pilot districts and municipal departments of the MLSD completed intensive training on the basics of counseling for unemployed individuals on choosing professions, and in implementation of paid social projects. They also became acquainted with various types of cooperation with employers.³⁰ Another example is the project "Peaceful Coexistence and Success" in Tajikistan, supported by the US State Department Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration from 2016-2019, in the city of Vahdat and in Rudaki district.³¹

Due to these international organizations' projects in these countries, some of the women in the target group study had the opportunity to undergo training in areas including marketing, management, legal aspects of entrepreneurship and taxation. They also had the opportunity to receive various consultations. Some of them received loans in cash for seeds, livestock, fertilizers, equipment, etc. However, neither the government programs nor international organizations' activities to support and lend to women's income-generating activities and entrepreneurship, especially in rural areas, can cover all regions in both countries. Projects implemented at the government level are limited in their ability to organize networking activities for local communities. They are also limited in their ability to identify leaders among local communities who could ensure the sustainable results of projects supported by international and donor organizations. One example of a best practice is a grant program for women in Kazakhstan, supported in the early 2000s by the US State Department through the CSO Center for Safe Energy. The program implementer maintained communication between program participants for the next 15 years.

At the same time, state employment services programs only cover a small segment of the population and mainly cover occupations that are already in demand on the labor market. According to Kyrgyzstan's Ministry of Labor and Social Development, training for unemployed citizens in 2016 was carried out mainly for professions in demand on the labor market. However, over the course of eight months during that year, the "Labor Exchange" program sent only 155 people for training in various specialties.³² Simultaneously, CSO projects often work women in rural communities. These projects, while not always registered formally with state employment services, involve women in economic activities by creating jobs that were previously absent in the local labor market. These include opportunities for rural entrepreneurship, handicrafts, and work at home.

²⁹ <http://www.mlsp.gov.kg/?q=ru/content/ministr-tisakunova-v-kochkorskom-rayone-proinspektirovala-hod-realizacii-programmy>.

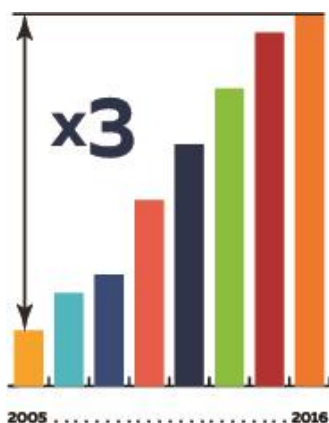
³⁰ <http://www.mlsp.gov.kg/?q=ru/content/germanskoe-obshchestvo-po-mezhdunarodnomu-sotrudnichestvu-okazyvaet-podderzhku-mtsr-v>

³¹ <http://www.dialog.tj/news/gosdep-sha-vydelil-dla-okazania-pomoshi-afghanskim-bejentsam-i-semyam-tajikskih-migrantov>.

³² <http://knews.kg/2016/09/bezrobotitsa-v-kyrgyzstane-mif-ili-realnost/>.

Vulnerability: Abandoned wives and widows of labor migrants' social and economic rights

Experts from civil society organizations at focus groups in Dushanbe and Bishkek indicated that labor migrants' departure from the country also leads to the weakening of



family relations. Many men stop communicating with their families, or do not return home for anywhere from one to several years. They leave wives and children without financial support. According to Tajikistan's Agency for Statistics, the number of divorces tripled during the period from 2005 to 2016. Six out of 10 divorces in the country are due to the fact that the husband is a labor migrant.³³ According to the International Organization for Migration, as of 2015 there were 250,000 abandoned women in Tajikistan whose husbands had left to earn money abroad.³⁴ Previously in some regions of Tajikistan, they practiced SMS divorces, when a migrant leaving for Russia could simply send his wife notice of divorce via an SMS message.³⁵ While remaining behind without an income or other

means of survival, labor migrants' wives sometimes starve, fall ill or are exposed to various kinds of violence which can even lead to suicide. According to official figures, about 600 people in Tajikistan commit suicide every year. The majority of those who die are young women who kill themselves due to family conflicts, and most often after a divorce.³⁶

Very often, husbands are never officially divorced from their spouses. This does not allow the wives to collect alimony from their husbands, or to use state allowances intended for socially vulnerable groups. As a rule, the wives of such labor migrants who remain at home face common legal problems such as the partition of property, changing residences, obtaining a birth certificate for children, collecting alimony, etc. According to many lawyers, the main problem from women without husbands is the lack of papers confirming either divorce or the death of their labor migrant spouse.

Another related social and economic problem is that according to custom, many of the wives of labor migrants are forced to live in the home of their husband's parents. In doing so, they often lose the right to make decisions independently and sometimes experience harassment from the spouse's parents or other relatives. Moreover, a husband's parents can simply kick the daughter-in-law and her children out of the house. These women often thus have to wander around to other relatives or try to secure rented apartments.³⁷ Without supporting documents, proving ownership of real estate or land recorded in a husband's name

³³ See: A. Salimov. Leave the marriage (infographics). MG "Asia Plus". 12/02/2016

<https://news.tj/ru/news/tajikistan/society/20160217/vyiti-iz-braka-infografika>.

³⁴ <http://www.dialog.tj/news/poknutye-zheny-migrantov-silnaya-zhenshchina-panatseya-ot-sotsialnykh-bed>.

³⁵ G. Fashutdinov. Consequences of Migration: Abandoned Wives and Ruined Families. 06/03/2015.

<http://www.dw.com/ru/последствия-миграции-брошенные-жены-и-разрушенные-семьи/a-18300254>

³⁶ The figure of the day. Suicides among women in Tajikistan. OPENASIA. 19/05/2016. <http://theopenasia.net/articles/detail/tsifra-dnya-samoubiystva-zhenshchin-v-tadzhikistane/>

³⁷ See eg: Tatiana Em: Disenfranchised women of Tajikistan. 20/11/2015. <http://golos.kg/?p=28723>.

or his relatives is extremely difficult, and the issues of women's rights to this property are often not resolved in their favor in the absence of their migrant husbands.

Women abandoned by their husbands because of labor migration are often limited in access to areas such as finance and markets, infrastructure, and equipment. It is more difficult for such women in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to gain access to land than for men. Many women living in rural areas tend to be poorly informed about their economic rights, and in particular, the right to use land. For example, in Tajikistan, the majority of women, as members of *dehkan* farms, do not know that they have a legal right to receive land when they leave the collective farm. Often, as formal members of these collective farms, they do not make any substantive decisions. Instead, they are engaged in heavy non-mechanized work, and receiving a very low salary for this work.³⁸

One of the main obstacles to the rights and freedoms for wives of migrant workers, abandoned wives and widows is a low level of awareness of these rights. In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, there are various information and consultation centers that provide services for free primary legal assistance. They are supported both by state funding and by international organization projects. As a specific example, we can use the free legal aid centers opened under the Ministries of Justice of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. In particular, Kyrgyzstan's Ministry of Justice, with the support of UNDP, launched the project "Bus of Solidarity" in June 2016. Judicial authorities' lawyers regularly provide free legal assistance and legal information to the local population. However, it should be emphasized that legal and counseling centers in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are most often opened in regional cities and regional centers. They do not always extend services to regions and remote areas where a significant part of the population lives, including the wives of migrant workers, abandoned and widowed women. Consequently, it is nearly impossible for women in these rural areas to receive proper consultations. In addition, most of the vulnerability risks for abandoned wives and widowed women don't get past the family and household level, where opportunities to identify such cases and remedies are limited.

In 2014 - 2015, a joint project was implemented by the International Organization for Migration and United Nations Women in Tajikistan. Through this project, in addition to addressing legal issues for abandoned wives and widows of labor migrants (registration of children's birth certificates, divorce, other legal documents), participants were trained in various aspects of business. Women from target groups were assisted with hiring processes and employment. CSO involvement in this project provided more comprehensive coverage for individuals in terms of consultations and legal assistance. The participation of local non-governmental organizations provided the opportunity to work at the level of local communities by bringing these women together, conducting information campaigns among them, and informing them in advance about expert services available.³⁹

³⁸ See eg: Olimova SK. Tajikistan: the role and status of women in the migrant household. *Diaspora*. 2012. № 2, pp. 86-123

³⁹ <http://www.dialog.tj/news/pokinutye-zheny-migrantov-silnaya-zhenshchina-panatseya-ot-sotsialnykh-bed>.

Inequality of access for wives of labor migrants to social services (education, health)

Women's level of education, including the wives of migrant workers, has a significant impact on their economic activity and progress in employment. During focus group discussions in the study, wives of labor migrants (including abandoned and widowed women), as well as returning labor migrants in both countries (Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan) suggested that secondary education should be accessible to girls. During their interviews, experts from civil society organizations and international organizations emphasized that the number of girls leaving educational institutions after the 9th grade is quite high and, as a result, the gender gap in vocational and higher educational institutions is significant. Target groups and experts also expressed concern about the lack of opportunities for vocational education for women and girls in rural areas. For example, at the end of 2016, 25,523 students were enrolled in institutions of primary vocational education in Tajikistan. Of those 4,805 were girls, which is only 20.7%. It is important to overcome the entrenched social gender norms which give little importance to girls' education. This is particularly relevant after the 9th grade in upper secondary education, and during admission to professional institutions, technical schools, and universities. If given a choice of whom to provide education to, as a rule, preference is given to training boys.



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Experts noted that it is necessary to solve the problem of early marriages and to expand opportunities for girls to receive professional or higher education. Women from the target groups in focus group discussions in Bishkek and Dushanbe noted a significant increase in the number of early marriages. In rural areas of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, they try to marry girls early, thereby depriving them of the opportunity and the right to achieve their full potential. Thus, it becomes a priority to implement vocational training programs for women in professions that are in demand on the labor market.

When discussing assistance to the wives of migrant workers, including abandoned wives and widows, as well as women returning from labor migration, women in focus groups noted that access to health services is hampered by low incomes, inadequate free medical services⁴⁰ and lack of free specialized qualified doctors. Payment for medical services includes formal and informal payments. At times the high cost of medical services forces women not to go to medical institutions in the case of an illness. Due to the high costs, women from migrant workers' families can delay the receipt of birth certificates for their children, which may prevent them from receiving medical care.

⁴⁰ A memo of a Kyrgyz citizen when receiving medical services under the State Guarantees Program. http://www.foms.kg/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=213.

During the focus group discussions, target groups in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan stressed the problems of limited and remote medical facilities for people living in rural and mountainous areas. If men are engaged in work as labor migrants, their wives may also become vulnerable during the commute to remote health facilities. This makes poor people, including the wives of migrant workers, unable to seek medical help for themselves and their children. As a result, the number of home births is increasing, which in turn becomes the cause of high child and maternal mortality. Experts from civil society organizations and international organizations also emphasized the importance of raising awareness for the most vulnerable segments of the population on the prevention of infectious and noncommunicable diseases, maternal and child health, the rights of women and girls to a healthy lifestyle, and strengthening international cooperation in health.

In 2016, Tajikistan introduced the National Health Strategy. One of its goals is to promote a model of family medicine with the proposal of affordable primary health care throughout the country by the year 2020.⁴¹ In Kyrgyzstan, the National Health Reform Program "*Den sooluk*" has been implemented via broad-based cooperation (SWAp) since 2012. Its goal is to create conditions for the protection and promotion of the health of the entire country's population, without exception.⁴² At the same time, these policy documents are aimed at improving the quality and accessibility of medical services. However, their effectiveness depends on how well the vulnerable groups, including migrant families, are aware of and able to use them.

Vulnerability to violence and complete dependence in cases of forced and early marriages

Unfortunately, in traditional society, domestic violence is considered to be exclusively a family matter. It is the cause of early marriages which leads to young girls' inability to continue their education, as well as a number of other social problems. Often, early marriages are organized for couples to have children before the husband leaves for labor migration. According to the media in Kyrgyzstan, juvenile marriages make up about 13 percent of the total number of marriages. This means that about 7,000 adolescent girls are married each year⁴³. After their marriage, due to their vulnerability, these young women often become completely dependent on the members of the family they marry into.

Another acute social problem is the practice of forced marriage in the form of bride kidnapping in Kyrgyzstan. As a rule, girls stolen by force remain in their new family. The reason for this is the lack of support from girls' parents and relatives, ignorance of their rights, and a perception of the theft of brides as a national tradition.⁴⁴ According to information from the "Women's Aid Center" CSO, on average there are 32 cases of theft of

⁴¹ http://medt.tj/documents/main/strategic_national_programm/strategic_national_prog_ru.pdf

⁴² See more at.: <http://densooluk.med.kg/ru/home-ru/2-uncategorised/3-den-sooluk-2.html>

⁴³ Elkeeva K. Theft of brides - broken destinies. Radio Azattyk. 26/05/2017. <https://rus.azattyk.org/a/28510626.html>.

⁴⁴ Et al.

girls against their will happening daily in the country. Annually, there are **11,800 cases of bride kidnapping**, as well as **2,000 acts of rape**.⁴⁵



According to media reports, more than 3,500 crimes against women and girls are committed annually in Kyrgyzstan: murder, physical abuse, rape and forced marriages.

Members of target groups and experts from civil society organizations and international organizations agree that the wives of migrant workers, including abandoned and widowed women, are also at risk of violence in the family for the following reasons:

- Limited access to or lack of services and resources for social and psychological support, especially in rural areas;
- A traditional perception of the subordinate role of women, typical for most rural regions, where women experience more difficulties in seeking help, compared to women from cities;
- A lack of confidentiality in small villages that can prevent such women from seeking help.

Victims of domestic violence often do not turn to the appropriate authorities to protect their honor and dignity due to low legal literacy, material dependence of women on men, low self-esteem, and other reasons.⁴⁶ Many of these young women do not have a profession or even a completed secondary education, and without the husband's support after the divorce, very young women can become trapped in extremely difficult situations. Young women in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan are increasingly becoming second, or even third wives, having only gone through the Muslim wedding ceremony (*nikah*). Such marriages do not entail legal consequences since the state does not recognize religious marriages.⁴⁷ According to a survey conducted by UNICEF in Kyrgyzstan in 2009, polygamous marriages most often occur in Batken (3.6%) and Chui oblast (3.1%), as well as in Osh and Jalal-Abad.⁴⁸

In Kyrgyzstan, the Ministry of Social Development, with the support of the United Nations, is implementing a project to combat domestic violence, coordinating actions by the state and civil society. One of the activities includes piloting improved support services for

⁴⁵ In the Kyrgyz Republic, more than 3,500 crimes against women and girls are committed annually. Radio Azattyk. 09/12/2015. <https://rus.azattyk.org/a/27415872.html>.

⁴⁶ Eliferenko A., Temirova T., Moldosheva A. How much does violence in the family cost? 2012.

⁴⁷ In January 2011, amendments were introduced to the Family Code of Tajikistan, which do not allow the commission of a Muslim rite without a document on the legal registration of marriage.

⁴⁸ Rashida Manjou, a Special presenter on violence against women, its causes, and consequences, following an official visit to Kyrgyzstan in November 2009, published on 29 May 2010, A / HRC / 14/22 / Add.2: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/14session/A.HRC.14.22.Add.2_en.pdf in Russian: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G10/137/61/pdf/G1013761.pdf?OpenElement>

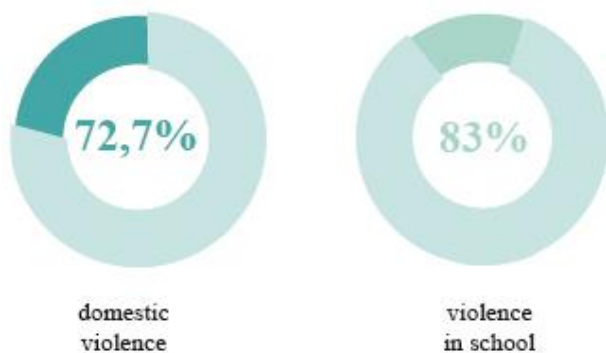
women in two regions for victims and women at risk, in Bishkek and Osh.⁴⁹ In Tajikistan, a national program for the development of a healthy lifestyle for the period 2011-2020 was adopted in 2010. One of the tasks was to create and improve a system for providing psychological assistance to people. However, there is still a shortage of psychologists and psychological support services from the state.⁵⁰ Crisis centers in Kyrgyzstan (about 20)⁵¹ and Tajikistan (around 40)⁵², created with state support or through donor assistance, are doing a great deal of work with women and children who have experienced domestic or sexual violence. These centers are mostly located in the capital cities, regional cities and in a small number of district centers. However, target groups in rural communities are most exposed to the risks of domestic violence.



Limited opportunities for labor migrant children's development and education

To this day in rural areas of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, there is a problem of access to education for children. The CSO Association for the Advancement of the Rights and Interests of Children in Kyrgyzstan and the Center for the Protection of Children cited data that, as of the beginning of 2015, minors (children) constitute 36.5% of the total population of the country. In the first half of 2015 alone, there were 16,680 children without parental care in the country, and most of them were children from families of internal and external migrants. Every fourth child must work and feed his/her family, and there are 592,000 children engaged in child labor. To survive, migrant workers' children are often involved in the worst forms of

Children, who are subject to violence



child labor, beginning to work long before reaching the minimum legal age to work. They are involved in collecting bottles, washing machines or assisting at the bazaar. Unlike many of their peers, they do not attend school, are often brought up on the streets, and can be influenced by criminal activity. 72.7% of children are subject to domestic violence and 83% of children are subjected to violence in school. The research found that crimes against sexual inviolability and freedom of children in 2014,

compared to 2011, increased by 83%.⁵³

Experts and focus group participants interviewed noted that children from poor migrant worker families face difficulties in accessing secondary and vocational education,

⁴⁹ See more at.: <http://www.mlsp.gov.kg/?q=ru/content/trastovyy-fond-oon>

⁵⁰ National program for the formation of a healthy lifestyle in the Republic of Tajikistan for the period 2011-2020. Pg. 18.

⁵¹ See eg.: <http://soros.kg/programmes/pravovaya-programma/contacts-crisiscenter>

⁵² See eg.: <http://pdv.tj/ru/counseling/apply/>

⁵³ Children of Kyrgyzstan in figures, or 15 recommendations for parties. 21/09/2015. http://zanoza.kg/doc/324828_deti_kyrgyzstana_v_cifrah_ili_15_rekomendaciy_dlja_partiy.html

due to formal and informal payment for education. In addition, some schools and educational institutions are very far away, which makes them geographically difficult to access, especially for those who are unable to pay transportation costs.⁵⁴ In the absence of fathers, the children of labor migrants are often restricted not only with respect to material resources for education, but also with a vulnerable position in terms of their drop off and pick-up if they are far away from their places of residence.



Participants in the focus groups indicated that the lack of pre-school institutions also hampers the involvement of wives of migrant workers, including abandoned wives and widows, in the labor market. They noted the importance of alternative models of preschool institutions with the involvement of parents and community representatives.

Participants from civil society expressed concern that bureaucracy and burdensome taxation may prevent the expansion of educational institutions for preschool children. In the interviews, women in focus groups and representatives from civil society organizations highlighted the problem of access to leisure and sports for children of labor migrants, especially those abandoned by fathers. Even if you can find sports schools or children's playgrounds with sports equipment in the cities and regional centers of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, it's very difficult to find these in the districts or in the countryside. Children in rural areas probably don't even know about these opportunities.

Another problem that requires resolution is that of children left at home by families and women during the period of labor migration. When both parents or divorced women leave for labor migration, their children are more often left in the care of grandparents or other relatives whose task is to feed them, buy clothes, send them to school, and ensure that they are doing their housework. These extended family members are often unable to give them the necessary education, provide them with care, and give due attention to their concerns and problems. At the same time, relatives with whom parents entrust their children do not always prove worthy of their trust. For example, over the last two years the media in Kyrgyzstan has repeatedly covered topics about children exposed to both domestic and sexual violence by their own relatives and guardians.⁵⁵ According to Yukie Mokuo, head of the UNICEF office in Kyrgyzstan, such children are more prone to threats of physical violence, not to mention psychological trauma. Because their needs are neglected, children do not feel due custody

⁵⁴ Fayzullaev B., Biloli Sh., Karaev S. Schools are few, children are many: is total illiteracy next? 02/25/2017. ASIA PLUS. <https://news.tj/news/tajikistan/society/20170225/shkol-malo-detei-mnogo-dalshe-totalnaya-bezgramotnost>

⁵⁵ See eg: Children of Kyrgyzstan: abandoned, beaten, killed. How the investigation proceeds. 2.03.2016. http://kaktus.media/doc/334115_deti_kyrgyzstana:_broshennye_izbitye_ybitye._kak_prodvigaetsia_sledstvie.html.

and protection, which leads them to dissatisfaction, anxiety, and disappointment.⁵⁶ As a result, such children fall into the group highly susceptible to the impact of criminal and radical elements.⁵⁷



Many labor migrants' children are in boarding schools, such as boarding school No. 4 in Dushanbe, where up to 30 children are admitted each month. No one is in a hurry to take them, and this worsens the children's already poor psychological condition. It should be noted that studies conducted in 2013 in Kyrgyzstan showed that the government sends the lion's share of cash benefits to institutions rather than to families in need, forcing institutions to "compete" with families. It turns out that needy families cannot compete

with the state, and they are forced to give their children to shelters".⁵⁸ According to experts, parents' long absence can lead to a number of psychological and social problems. Over the past 20 years, a whole generation of such children has grown up without parents and have already begun to migrate as migrant workers themselves, without fully experiencing family care and upbringing. In such circumstances, the family, as a societal institution, may begin to disintegrate.⁵⁹ In 2009, in the framework of the project "Early Child Development" with the financial support of the Aga Khan Foundation, 80 pre-school education centers were opened. As a result, the percentage of children in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast has increased from 9% in 2009 to 33% in 2012.⁶⁰ In 2015, UNICEF and local authorities, with the support of the British Embassy in Kyrgyzstan, opened 17 kindergartens. More than 1,000 children from border and remote areas of Kyrgyzstan gained access to education. In March 2016, "Danaker" and "Seytek", two more community kindergartens, were opened in the villages of Leyli and Maksat in Batken province in the south of Kyrgyzstan. In these two schools, services for children's development and education are provided in shifts: one group in the morning and one in the afternoon.⁶¹ Nevertheless, according to official data from the Ministry of Education and Science of the Kyrgyz Republic, the percentage of children with preschool education increased from 6.2% in 2003 to 18.1% in 2015. This demonstrates that Kyrgyzstan still lacks preschool facilities.⁶² When adopting the National Strategy for the Development of Education of the Republic of Tajikistan until 2020, it was noted that the

⁵⁶ See further.: Zhumadylova K. Children of migrants - lost stratum of population? VESTI. KG.09.06.2016.
http://www.vesti.kg/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=40810:deti-migrantov-%E2%80%93-poteryannyiy-plast-naseleniya?&Itemid=80.

⁵⁷ See further.: Social orphan hood: children of migrants. «Регион. kg». 06.06.2017.

http://region.kg/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2376:2017-06-06-06-48-20&catid=42:2014-02-02-11-14-01&Itemid=7.

⁵⁸ Tursunov Hamid. Kyrgyzstan: Labor Migrants Leave Behind "Social Orphans". EURASIANET.org 22.01.2013.
<http://www.eurasianet.org/node/66436>.

⁵⁹ <http://www.stanradar.com/news/full/11697-ibraeva-trudovaja-migratsija-razrushaet-institut-semi-v-kyrgyzstane.html>.

⁶⁰ <http://www.tjknews.ru/news/9694>.


⁶¹ Vashchenko V. Community kindergartens help to solve the problem of preschool education in Kyrgyzstan.

http://kg.one.un.org/content/unct/kyrgyzstan/ru/home/news/kg-news/2016/_-_-_-_-_-_.html.

⁶² http://edu.gov.kg/univer/?lg=1&id_parent=15.

percentage of the population with access to pre-school education programs, including the preparation of children for school and other education, is over 10%.⁶³

In Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, government measures are being taken to fully enroll children in secondary education. Tajikistan sets minimum quotas for admission to study at secondary special and higher education institutions.



Awareness and preparedness of women for labor migration

The prospect of facilitating employment opportunities for women as potential labor migrants is possible through the provision of information, advice, and skills training before leaving for the country of destination. Opportunities for many migrants from rural areas in access to services and information are significantly limited because of their remoteness and the high cost of the commute. Access to virtual aid through organizations' websites can also be inaccessible to many citizens, given that not all migrants have internet skills, and not all regions have access to the internet.

However, pre-travel informational support and training in the case of women's labor migration has many specific nuances, with a need for more training than for solely male labor migration. First, women's labor migration often follows male labor migration. Men go to other countries for work, and then they start leaving with their families. Less often, women go as labor migrants themselves. Second, traditional channels to obtain information on the conditions of labor migration (friends, diasporas) are usually focused more on male migration. Third, women migrate as part of family; that is, with her husband and/or children, which greatly increases the need for access to social services, decent housing, and living conditions for the family. And of course, women's labor migration can be associated with increased risks for sexual exploitation, physical abuse, dependence on the employer, involvement in work at home, at night time, and other factors.

The prospect of facilitating employment opportunities for women as potential labor migrants is possible through the provision of information, advice, and the upgrading of skills before leaving for the country of destination. Under the Migration Service of Tajikistan, it is planned to establish ten state institutions titled "Centers for the Advice and Training of Labor Migrants before Leaving".⁶⁴ At the moment only 4 of them work: those centers in Dushanbe, Khujand, Khorog, and Kurgan-Tube, where 361 meetings and consultations were held for 21,049 labor migrants in 2016 alone.⁶⁵

⁶³ Statistical compilation of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Tajikistan for the 2010-2011 academic year. http://www.ilo.org/dyn/youthpol/en/equest.fileutils.dochandle?p_uploaded_file_id=511.

⁶⁴ <http://www.migration.tj/index.php/ru/features/pravila>.

⁶⁵ See: Report of the Ombudsman for Human Rights in the Republic of Tajikistan for 2016. Dushanbe. 2017. Page. 44. www.ombudsman.tj.

Providing consultations on the issues of traveling abroad



The Information and Consulting Center under the State Migration Service of Kyrgyzstan⁶⁶ regularly conducts educational and consulting work regarding employment opportunities within the country, as well as in the countries of the near and far abroad. In 2016, this center provided consultations on the issues of traveling abroad for 15,337 people, of

whom 5,459 were women. With the help of donor support, information terminals have been installed for migrants at the Ak-Jol checkpoint, information, at the consultation centers of the State Migration Service, and in the buildings of government representative offices in the regions of Osh, Jalal-Abad, Batken, Talas, Naryn and Issyk-Kul oblasts. Also, a mobile application "Migrant's Handbook" was developed on the rules of stay in the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union and near abroad, and on risks of human trafficking.⁶⁷

Uzbekistan's Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations regards migrant workers as one of its target groups and provides advice and services on pre-departure adaptation.⁶⁸ The Agency for External Labor Migration under the Ministry provides information on labor contracts in the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation, and these services are also via a call center. Despite efforts made to pre-train potential migrant workers in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, including women, the problem of open access to these services remains unresolved.⁶⁹ Opportunities for many migrants from rural areas to access the services and information are significantly limited because of their remoteness and the high cost of commute. Access to virtual aid through organizations' websites can also be inaccessible to many citizens, given that not all migrants have internet skills, and not all regions have access to the internet.

⁶⁶ <http://mz.gov.kg/reports/view/4>.

⁶⁷ For further information, reference.: <http://iom.kg/?cat=3>.

⁶⁸ <https://mehnat.uz/ru/is/group/mehnat-migrantlariga>.

⁶⁹ See eg: CSO report. To the UN Committee on the Rights of Migrant Workers on the implementation of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families by the Republic of Tajikistan. 2012.

3.2 Assistance to target groups in countries of labor migration destination

Unregulated status of women migrant workers and their predominantly informal employment

Many women departing for labor migration to Kazakhstan, Russia or other countries of destination do not think about the need for prior acquaintance with their legal status in the future host country. They don't register on time at the place of residence in the host country, and/or they do not obtain work permits for individual labor activity as household employees. Many of them cross the border illegally and do not take a migration card, which excludes the possibility of obtaining registration. Moreover, they are not aware of the need to abide by these rules or of the consequences of their violation when getting into a critical situation.⁷⁰ For the most part, due to their low level of qualification, women from Central Asia are forced to work in the informal sector and are involved in agriculture, trade and as service staff. They also become engaged in the field of sexual exploitation. There are women migrant workers who come as part of their families to work in the fields in the south of Kazakhstan. Others find work in the service industry, as waitresses, cleaners, etc.⁷¹ Often they earn half or less of what men earn, or employers pay less than what was stipulated in advance. Employers can deceive and offend these women, and sometimes do not even pay women's salaries. Working in the informal sector, these women have neither permits for work and individual labor activities, nor formalized employment contracts with their employers.

The main reasons for being categorized as 'illegal migrants' in the country of destination are employment without obtaining a permit, and temporary residence without proper registration. Most of the 'illegal migrants' come to Kazakhstan and Russia from the closest countries with a visa-free regime, mainly from the former Soviet republics.⁷² For example, in Kazakhstan in 2008, only 12% of migrant workers with registered status were from the former Soviet republics, while it is generally accepted that the main countries of origin are the neighboring former Soviet republics (Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan).⁷³ According to data from Kazakhstan's Committee of Migration Service under the Ministry of Internal Affairs dated May 29, 2017, 12,654 foreigners were brought to administrative responsibility for violating the rules of stay in the Republic of Kazakhstan, including 275 foreigners from non-Soviet countries, and 12,379 from the post-Soviet republics. Among the people extradited from Kazakhstan, 15 were foreigners from non-CIS countries, and 1,355 were from CIS countries⁷⁴

⁷⁰ <http://ru.sputnik-tj.com/migration/20170529/1022437742/migranty-tadzhikistan-tut-zhdut-sotsset-sayt-rabota.html>

⁷¹ See more.: FIDH report with the participation of ADC "Memorial" and "Bir Duino-Kyrgyzstan", dedicated to this issue: FIDH, "Women and children from Kyrgyzstan, affected by migration", 2016. <https://www.fidh.org/ru/regiony/evropa-i-central-naya-aziya/kyrgyzstan/central-naya-aziya-prava-migrantov>.

⁷² Migration in the Russian Federation: A Country Profile, International Organization for Migration, 2008, Extended Migration Profile. Kazakhstan.

⁷³ Special Report on the Situation with the Rights of Migrants in the Republic of Kazakhstan, Commission on Human Rights under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2013.

⁷⁴ http://mvd.gov.kz/portal/page/portal/mvd/mvd_page/min_activity/mvd_materials/mvd_migration_service_committee/mvd_voprosy_proti_vodeistviya_nezakonnoy_migratsii.

Complicated formal procedures and conditions for obtaining work permits are considered as the main reason for unregulated migration, and many migrants prefer to specify other reasons for entry when crossing the borders of Kazakhstan and Russia than employment. Often, women labor migrants learn about work, rules of paperwork, and the procedure for legalization in the country of destination from relatives, friends, acquaintances, intermediaries or employers. They resort to the help of acquaintances who assist them in finding a job, not official sources. In Kazakhstan and Russia fines are imposed on migrants identified with irregular status. They can also be detained and deported from the country depending on what administrative offense they are charged with. Usually, extradition of migrants with unregulated status from the territories of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation is carried out in court and with the application of a ban; this usually involves expulsion for subsequent entry for 5 years, or in Russia, for a period of 5 to 10 years⁷⁵.

In previous years, the Russian Federation sought to regulate the status of migrant workers by simplifying procedures for obtaining work permits and introducing patents for the provision of services working as household employees. As a result, the number of unregistered migrants in the country has decreased several times. However, the Federal Migration Service acknowledges that as many as 3.6 million migrants can still be persons who have indicated a false purpose of their entry and stay. They work without obtaining work permits or a patent for the provision of services working as household employees.⁷⁶ Kazakhstan began to simplify its procedures for admission of foreign workers in 2014, introducing permits for citizens from countries with visa-free regime for services working as household employees, but it is too early to make any estimates about the results of these measures' implementation. Despite the regime's simplification regarding attracting foreign labor, migrants arriving (women included) do not register in time. Migrant workers do not register for the right to work or perform private labor activity. For many of them, compliance with all legal requirements becomes an onerous procedure and financially prohibitive. This forces women to resort to borrowing money and often going into debt to fellow countrymen, the employer or intermediary organizations even before starting work in the host country. Women refuse this situation, preferring to work illegally.⁷⁷

For women migrant workers with irregular status in the destination country, their vulnerability is exacerbated by the fear of being brought to administrative and criminal responsibility. Mistrust of irregular migrants towards the authorities (migration police, state security service, customs, tax service, etc.) is exacerbated by the corruption of government officials. Fearing the raids of controlling bodies, arrest, imprisonment, and deportation because of their unsettled situation, women migrant workers are sometimes forced to pay bribes and face the bias of law enforcement agencies. In 2012, when surveyed by the Crisis Center "Friends" in Kazakhstan, 95% of labor migrants noted that they feel safe in Kazakhstan. However, three quarters of the respondents indicated biased treatment of the police and the migration service. Among them, 70% of labor migrants noted payment of fines for late renewal of registration done unofficially. That is, these payments were conducted

⁷⁵ http://mvd.gov.kz/portal/page/portal/mvd/mvd_page/min_activity/mvd_materials/mvd_migration_service_committee/mvd_voprosy_proti_vodei_stviya_nezakonnoy_migratsii.


⁷⁶ http://www.fms.gov.ru/press/publications/news_detail.php?ID=76179.

⁷⁷ <http://easttime.ru/news/kazakhstan/statistika-trudovoi-migratsii-v-kazakhstane-za-2016-god/12811>

"from hand to hand"⁷⁸. These problems are related to the lack of awareness among people coming to work about the country of destination's current legislation, and about their rights and responsibilities within it. In this regard, they become the object of money expropriation, starting at the border post.

Kazakhstan provides free legal advice and assistance to hundreds of labor migrants and members of their families. This involves legal counseling points and a hotline in nine regions of the country, supported by international organizations and donors⁷⁹. Non-commercial organizations produced many information materials on the regularization of their stay and work activity in Kazakhstan. Migrants can receive free consultations by phone, at fixed and mobile points. There are legal clinics and assistance centers for migrants who carry out the same activities, as well as access to justice and the provision of free lawyers if violations of labor migrants' right (including women) take place.⁸⁰

The reality of legal clinics, migrant support centers and other CSOs providing legal advice to migrant workers shows that migrant workers they are poorly informed about their rights and obligations, and do not know how to protect them⁸¹. Such activities including provision of legal information and counseling are of great importance in resolving the emerging problems of labor migrants, including women. To date the demand for free quality information and legal services for migrants continues to exceed existing supply.



Limited access of women and children of labor migrants to social services (education and health) in destination countries

In Kazakhstan, to free medical care for migrant workers is guaranteed only with respect to a legally defined list of acute diseases that pose a danger to others⁸². It includes various infectious diseases, including diphtheria, influenza, tuberculosis, plague, and others. In addition, citizens of member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States⁸³ under the Agreement on the provision of medical care to citizens of CIS member states, are guaranteed free emergency medical care. In other cases, medical services for migrant workers and members of their families are provided for a fee. In the Russian Federation, all foreign citizens and stateless persons are guaranteed free emergency medical care, whereas any planned medical care is provided for a fee⁸⁴. At the same time, migrant workers in this country do not have the right of access to the compulsory health insurance system.⁸⁵ In

⁷⁸ <http://www.amansauilyk.kz/ru/deyatelnost/migranty/migranty-publikacii/1623/>

⁷⁹ See more at: Abysheva H., Zhasynbekova S., Khaliulina L. Practical manual on the organization of advisory centers for migrants (based on the practical experience of the migrant support centers in the framework of the regional program on labor migration, 2010-2014). Shymkent. 2014.

⁸⁰ See further .: Abysheva Kh.A., Khaliulina LZ, Khasanova Sh.K. Monitoring of human rights: observance of the right to receive guaranteed legal assistance to migrant workers. 2016.

⁸¹ Zhulmukhametova Zh. "Turncoat". BNEWS.KZ. 22.05.2017.

http://bnews.kz/ru/dialog/interview/svoi_sredi_chuzhikh_kak_trudovim_migrantam_vizhit_v_kazahstane.

⁸² Approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan dated November 26, 2009 No. 1937.

⁸³ Approved by the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 320 of February 29, 2000.

⁸⁴ Paragraph 5 of the Rules for the Provision of Medical Assistance to Foreign Citizens in the Territory of the Russian Federation, approved by Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 546 of September 1, 2005.

⁸⁵ Item 10 of the Federal Law of the Russian Federation of November 29, 2010 No. 326-FZ.

accordance with the Federal Law No. 409-FZ dated December 1, 2014, a mandatory inclusion exists to provide medical assistance during the term of employment in labor contracts with a foreign temporary employee. This is procured by means of a health insurance agreement or a contract between the employer and healthcare provider.


Apart from free urgent medical care, other medical services are provided to migrant workers at their own expense, or at the expense of the employer, the voluntary medical insurance system and/or other sources permitted by the legislation of the country of destination. Participants in the focus groups pointed to the inaccessibility of quality medical care, an inability to receive emergency medical assistance in a timely manner, and the extortion of money for childbirth in hospitals in the countries of destination. Primary care is provided to both the mother and the child, but soon after the birth of the children, women resume work; their work and health are unprotected in the absence of maternity benefits. Social, cultural and psychological barriers, coupled with discriminatory cases, force women to self-medicate, try to be treated "on the phone" (or on the Internet) and apply for medical care late, when the moment is missed and the disease is more difficult to treat. One of the solutions for them is the help of their networks from countries of origin. If referencing planned (not emergency) medical care, women migrant workers are forced to look for "their" doctors and "their migrant" clinics that understand their problems, including psychological ones. In addition, they are hindered not only by their ignorance of their rights in the field of health insurance, but also by the high price for doctors' services when it comes to serious medical treatment. In many district clinics there are paid services, but discriminatory practices exist as well.

In the countries of destination, there are various projects with state and international funding to prevent various infectious diseases, including tuberculosis and HIV. They provide medical services and assistance to labor migrants, including women, such as the Aman-saulik Public Foundation⁸⁶. However, these programs do not cover most women migrant workers. And in this regard, there is an urgent need to expand these areas for disease prevention and health improvement.

Regarding migrant workers and members of their families' access to childcare and education services, existing restrictions in this area are usually not related to direct legislative prohibitions. The legislative recognition in Kazakhstan and Russia of the right to reunite with the family is available only for certain categories of migrant workers, especially for highly skilled workers. This can be regarded as an indirect restriction on the rights of members of their families, even if they come from a country with a visa-free regime. A legal conflict arises because the absence of a directly stipulated right to family reunification of other migrant workers can be used as a reason to restrict the migrants' children from access to education in the country of destination. In reality, the reception of migrant workers' children in kindergartens and schools largely depends on the administrations of relevant institutions and the ability of migrants to provide the requested documents (confirmation of registration at the place of residence and certificates from the place of work). As a rule, the services of public kindergartens and schools are officially available only for regular migrant workers registered at their place of residence, and working based on a permit or a patent.

"On Compulsory Medical Insurance in the Russian Federation".

⁸⁶ <http://www.amansaulyk.kz/ru/deyatelnost/migranty/migranty-publikacii/2030/>.



The vulnerability of women migrant workers and their children to abuse and violence, forced slavery and sexual exploitation

Migration is actively used by criminal groups to recruit people for commercial sexual exploitation, and forced labor in the construction industry and agricultural production. As a result, citizens of countries of origin, primarily Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan, often become victims of trafficking in countries of destination⁸⁷. Many experts emphasize that for unregistered women labor migrants the danger of becoming victims of exploitation and violence is especially high. Their illegal status sometimes hinders their willingness to reach out for help and protection because of fear of possible punishment, deportation, and because of restrictive rules of the governments in several countries of destination. Reimbursement of expenses related to migrant holding centers is often carried out by clients who have legal residence status, which excludes the possibility of helping illegal women-migrants⁸⁸.

Authorities in the countries of destination make efforts in the legislative, criminal and other spheres to detect and punish persons involved in human trafficking, as well as helping victims of such crimes. At the same time, the actions of state authorities in the countries of destination are not effective. In Kazakhstan, for example, the improvement of the legislative framework in the fight against human trafficking is mainly limited to introducing amendments and additions to the current criminal legislation of the republic, but has not led to the establishment of effective control and fight against organized criminal communities engaged in human trafficking⁸⁹. According to the United Nations Office for Combating Organized Crime and the Drug Trafficking (UNODC) in 2016, among the victims of trafficking in Central Asia, 63% identified were men, 31% women, 4% and 2% girls and boys respectively⁹⁰. Official statistics available on Kazakhstan for 2009-2013 show a low level of victims of trafficking identified from other countries - 46 people. They are mostly citizens of Uzbekistan; others include six Kyrgyz citizens and one woman from Tajikistan. These crimes are committed mainly for the purpose of sexual or labor exploitation, and the greatest number of victims are women aged 14 to 25 years. However, according to statistics provided by the Supreme Court in the Special Report in 2013 on the Situation of Migrant Rights, in 2011 sentences were handed down under article 128 of the Criminal Code on Human Trafficking in 8 cases. 17 people were prosecuted, and 15 women were recognized as victims. None of these human trafficking cases qualified as connected with the import, export or transit transportation through the territory of Kazakhstan. Thus, it can be concluded that all these cases of human trafficking were related to people domestically.

⁸⁷ See more: Commission on Human Rights under the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Special Report. Actual problems of protection of human rights in the field of combating human trafficking in the Republic of Kazakhstan. 2014. No. 32-47.327. http://www.adilet.gov.kz/sites/default/files/spec_doklad_po_torg_rus.pdf

⁸⁸ S.Baibusinov "Kazakhstan registers up to 400 facts of human trafficking annually", 07.10.2016, <http://khabar.kz/ru/news/obshchestvo/item/65730-v-kazakhstane-ezhegodno-registriruyut-do-400-faktov-torgovli-lyudmi>

⁸⁹ Human Trafficking in the 21st Century: the Situation in the World and in the Republic of Kazakhstan. www.caravan.kz. 06.06.2005. <https://www.caravan.kz/articles/torgovlya-lyudmi-v-xxi-veke-situaciya-v-mire-i-v-rk-372072/>

⁹⁰ See more at: UNODC Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2016, http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2016_Global_Report_on_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf; Zainab Dost: Problems and Challenges in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Central Asia. 18.01.2017. <http://cabar.asia/ru/zajab-dost-problemy-i-vyzovy-v-borbe-s-torgovlej-lyudmi-v-tsentralnoj-azii/>

With the support of international organizations, information campaigns are being conducted and hotlines are being organized based on non-governmental organizations for victims of the slave trade. Information support, legal support and special social services for victims of trafficking are provided by the CSO "Sana Sezim" on a regular basis⁹¹. Nevertheless, there is a recognized need to expand assistance programs related to the protection of migrant workers, especially women, from exploitative recruitment and employment practices. There is a need to provide assistance, including through crisis centers, for the protection, socio-psychological rehabilitation, and prevention of traffic and violence.⁹²

⁹¹ <http://sanasezim.org/?q=node/62>.

⁹²See further.: US Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report 2016, <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/258876.pdf>;
Торговля
людьми в Казахстане: проблема сохраняется. 28.07.2015. www.rus.azattyq.org <https://rus.azattyq.org/a/otchet-torgovlya-lyudmi-kazakhstan-mir/27156206.html>.

IV. Prospective niches for CSOs to assist target groups and recommendations for involvement in their participation

4.1 Prospective niches for CSOs in countries of labor migration origin

The current level of involvement of CSOs in the main areas of work with target groups is shown in Table 3 and is assessed as "low" and "medium." The low level corresponds to CSOs' basic level of activity, where their main efforts are aimed at drawing the attention of society and the state to a particular social problem. Direct work with the target groups is still not involved, or if so, at a very minimal level. The average level is a more advanced level of involvement for CSOs when certain work is conducted directly with the target groups. For example, this may involve the preparation and distribution of information materials, creation of specialized information and counseling centers, hotlines, psychological support services, etc. A "high" level implies a system in which CSOs are an integral part of oCSOing work with target groups organized by authorized state bodies or by representatives of target groups based on self-organization. According to the assessment performed, a high level was not achieved in any of the main areas of activities with the target groups. Hence, for each of the areas, there is perspective for future activities and engagement.

Table 3. Current niches for CSOs to work with target groups

Area for assistance	Current niches for CSOs	Level of involvement
Creating opportunities for income and employment for the wives of labor migrants in countries of origin	Raising public awareness	low
Reducing the vulnerability of social and economic rights of abandoned wives, widows of labor migrants	Increasing public awareness, informational work with local communities	average
Ensuring the access of wives of labor migrants to social services in countries of origin.	Raising public awareness, creating community kindergartens	low
Reducing the vulnerability of the wives of migrant workers in countries of origin to violence and full dependence in cases of forced and early marriages	Activities to raise public awareness. Establishments of psychological support services, crisis centers, and hotlines	average
Improving opportunities for migrant children's' development and education	Public awareness activities. Creation of public preschool institutions	average
Working to raise women's awareness and preparedness for labor migration in countries of origin	Raising public awareness	low
Regularization of the status of women	Raising target groups' through the	average

migrant workers and the reduction of informal employment in destination countries	production of brochures, information campaigns, and consultations	
Ensuring access for women migrant workers, wives and children of labor migrants to social services in the countries of destination	Increased awareness for target groups through the publishing of brochures, rendering consultations.	average
Reducing the vulnerability of women migrant workers and their children to abuse and violence, forced slave labor and sexual exploitation	Raising public awareness, identifying victims, providing victims with information, legal assistance, and special social services	average

General Conclusions

The review of the main areas of assistance to target groups in the countries of origin and destination of labor migration shows that state bodies are not very involved in the activities of CSOs; this is especially evident in the countries of labor migration origin. The main work takes place in the framework of projects implemented by various international organizations. Involvement is less in the implementation of relevant government programs and projects by authorized state bodies. At the same time, state bodies in the countries of destination do not pay much attention to working with migrant workers and members of their families during their stay in the country. This activity is largely carried out by CSOs with the support of international organizations and projects (*see table 3*).

General Recommendations

1. To direct more efforts to support the activities of CSOs toward target groups in the countries of labor migration origin, where the level of involvement is estimated as low.
2. Consider opportunities for greater involvement of CSOs in the following areas of work with target groups:
 - a) creating income and employment opportunities for the wives of labor migrants in countries of origin;
 - b) ensuring the access of labor migrants' wives to social services in countries of origin;
 - c) raising awareness and preparedness of women engaged in labor migration in countries of origin.

Creating opportunities for income and employment for the wives of labor migrants in countries of origin

Conclusions

Mass migration of the employable male population from the countries of labor migration origin strongly impacts the situation in families of labor migrants. This further complicates the situation and conditions for women, making them dependent

on often irregular remittances from their husbands who are in other countries. At the same time, migration leads to a weakening of family relations. This becomes the reason for the increased number of early marriages and bigamy, often committed via a Muslim marriage ceremony (*nikah*). In such situations, wives and children left behind in the motherland sometimes remain without any means of subsistence.

The lack of financial and technical support for women, including the widows and abandoned wives of migrant workers and returning women migrant workers, hamper efforts to expand economics rights and opportunities for these women. This includes their unequal access to material assets, capital and resources, as well as traditional and customary practices with regard to access to intangible resources. This leads to significant discrimination in all areas of social life and exacerbates the problem of the feminization of poverty.

The governments of labor migration countries of origin do not identify wives, abandoned wives and widows of labor migrants as a target group for their employment assistance activities for the general population. Moreover, in practice, greater priority is given to the employment of men. In addition, projects implemented at the governmental level and with the assistance of international and donor organizations are limited in terms of networking opportunities for local communities; they are also limited in identifying leaders who could ensure the sustainable results of initiatives to organize jobs and small businesses for women, especially in rural areas.

Recommendations

This study recommends the following areas of involvement for CSOs in this field:

1. Assist identifying major income-generating activities and employment to ensure sustainable income for women who are heads of families of migrant workers in rural areas;
2. Assist in attracting personal savings for women heads of labor migrants' families in income-generating activities and private investments;
3. Organize practical skills training on manufacturing and production from local resources by means of training, seminars, and experience exchange;
4. Develop training programs and modules for women's financial education to teach budgeting, identify possible types of income-generating activities and selection of profitable loan schemes to ensure sustainable income;
5. Provide technical assistance in fundraising to maintain and/or finance start-up capital for women heads of families of labor migrants and provide emergency assistance to farms headed by abandoned wives of migrant workers;
6. Organize and/or support self-help groups and interaction among women to promote each other in their common business;
7. Together with state institutions, assist the development and implementation of distance and other forms of quality vocational education, training, skills, and skill improvement for women to support their competitiveness in the labor market.

Ensuring the access of wives of labor migrants to social services in countries of origin

Conclusions:

High unemployment rates and low wages, as well as the weak infrastructure and quality of the services of educational and medical institutions, increase the vulnerability of women. This leads to problems of maternal and child mortality, especially in remote rural areas. The remoteness of institutions that provide social services and limited opportunities for men to accompany women to these places and the traditional priorities placed on men's education further exacerbate these problems. Often, the wives of labor migrants who remain in their homeland face such widespread legal problems as the division of property, the problem of moving in and out of living spaces, obtaining a birth certificate for children, collecting alimony, and other issues.

Recommendations:

Considering the above-mentioned problems and special needs of target groups, this study recommends the following niches for involving CSOs in work in this area:

1. Extension of legal advice for women and their children;
2. Expanded access to health and social services, as well as benefits and insurance;
3. Promoting healthy lifestyles and family planning, preventing and protecting against diseases among women and children;
4. Diagnostics and comprehensive rehabilitation programs and psycho-corrective work with a set of available social and medical services for women and children of labor migrants;
5. Increased participation of women in decision-making regarding their interests and rights (as wives of migrant workers, including abandoned wives/families and widows).

Increasing women's awareness and preparedness for labor migration in countries of origin

Conclusions

The further growth of the female component of migration shows the need to expand targeted information campaigns and develop specialized information materials and strategies. Women migrant workers in destination countries have less access to information than men, including opportunities for consultation. Often, women migrant workers crossing the border face serious difficulties in entering and registering in the country of employment. It is the absence of knowledge about the laws and procedures for the admission of foreign labor in the country of destination that leads to offences by women migrant workers, which entails the payment of a fine and expulsion. Other challenges for women labor migrants include lack of professional qualifications, incompatibility or absence of professional qualification to

the labor market requirements of the country of destination, as well as problems with the Russian language and/or language of the country of destination. Insufficient knowledge of local traditions and norms of behavior factor in as well.

The spread of unregulated hiring practices and employment in the informal sector leaves migrant women without legal protection, making them vulnerable to exploitation and discrimination and leading to high risks of forced labor. Often, illegal migrant workers become victims of fraud and deceit by recruitment agencies and various employment intermediaries, leading them to get involved in commercial sex services. Migrants with irregular status can easily become victims of psychological and physical violence, as well as be subjected to cruel treatment on the part of the employer. They are particularly vulnerable to forms of modern slavery, such as forced labor.

At the same time, the newly created legal counseling centers for migrants in countries of origin are most often opened in regional cities and regional centers. They do not adequately cover the regions and remote rural areas, where a significant number of potential labor migrants live. To obtain legal information or assistance in the center of the district, residents may need to spend half a day or have no opportunity to use such services at all. This makes access to their services limited, especially for women.

Recommendations

Given the high risks for women migrant workers in countries of destination, including those associated with risks of being involved in illegal migration, becoming victims of violence, forced exploitation, this study recommends that CSOs work with this target group in countries of origin in the following areas:

1. Informing and preparing women for labor migration in the country of destination (rights, duties, who to contact in case of necessary assistance, etc.), especially in rural areas and in remote areas;
2. Assisting in the expansion of employment opportunities for women migrant workers by informing them about online employment resources in the countries of destination;
3. Organizing intensive Russian language courses and introduction to the Russian culture;
4. Providing legal information, advice, and organization of legal support for women migrant workers;
5. Establishing and/or expanding crisis and rehabilitation centers and shelters for legal, medical, psychological assistance to women labor migrants who find themselves in difficult life situations;
6. Developing self-help associations for women labor migrants;
7. Networking with CSOs that aid migrant women in destination countries.

4.2 Prospective niches for CSOs in countries of labor migration destination

Currently, CSOs are relatively more involved in activities to assist women in labor migration in countries of destination. This is largely since they are mainly supported by international and donor organizations and such activities receive little attention from authorized state bodies in host countries. It should be noted that the focus of this work is aimed at providing information and advice for all interested migrants. Particular attention in this area of CSOs' work is given to training women migrant workers as soon as they cross the border of the destination country with information about their rights, opportunities, and responsibilities, as well as the consequences of non-compliance with the laws of the country of employment.

At the same time, this activity is limited by the undefined number of representatives of target groups for information raising campaigns, as well as consulting and legal support for people in difficult life situations. Under ordinary conditions, the organization of more permanent work by CSOs is hampered by the difficulty to identify representatives of target groups in destination countries and attract their attention to affordable services provided by CSOs. This complicates opportunities for a higher level of involvement of CSOs in working with women and children in labor migration.

The legalization of women migrant workers and the reduction of informal employment in destination countries

Conclusions

Work in this area includes informational and consultative assistance in areas including how to register at the place of stay, change of residence, free receipt of IIN (ID number), obtaining a permit and employment procedure, as well as entering into an employment contract, which reduces or eliminates any form of discrimination and helps with legalization of migration. On the other hand, there is also a need for higher awareness among women migrant workers about where to get the necessary help in solving difficult situations. This includes how to send children to school and kindergarten, and improving knowledge of the destination country language. It also involves helping with adaptation and facilitating greater loyalty on the part of the local population.

Recommendations

Considering the complexity involved in identifying representatives of target groups by CSOs and providing informational and advisory assistance by authorized bodies, this study proposes strengthening the involvement of CSOs through the following measures:

1. Holding regular informational campaigns on the authority of border and customs officers, migration services and law enforcement agencies at the stage of entry and exit of the destination country for women migrant workers;
2. Distributing information materials on the rights of women labor migrants through ethnic cultural centers, with help of billboards on various topics to protect women migrant workers' rights;

3. Broadcasting an “hour of labor migrant” on radio and/or television with the opportunity to ask questions, requests and receive answers and consultations on the air;
4. Open lessons by ethnocultural mobile centers and provide video materials on topical issues regarding stay in the country of destination.

Ensuring the access of women migrant workers, wives and children of labor migrants to social services in the countries of destination

Conclusion

As in the case of the legalization of status for women migrant workers, the expansion of opportunities for work of CSOs requires improving their ability to identify target groups, their recognizability, and ensuring relevant action in this field.

Recommendations

In view of the above priorities, this study recommends the following measures for CSOs to more effectively assist target groups:

1. "Universal Social Telephone" and mobile teams aimed at providing urgent assistance to women migrant workers and their children in need of medical and social support, as well as by telephone (consultations on medical, psychological and social issues);
2. A single site or a group in social networks where comprehensive information will be posted about all institutions and organizations providing educational and medical services and social assistance to labor migrants in need;
3. Points of medical, social and psychological assistance for migrants within the migrant community in places of their permanent or regular stay (places of residence and work, as well as hospitals, schools, and kindergartens), as well as in diaspora organizations;
4. Mobile schools with tutoring for accelerated training of children of labor migrants on basic general educational subjects;
5. Mobile schools for the development of a "healthy living space", where women migrant workers will be able to share their experience of disease prevention practices themselves or with the assistance of primary first aid;
6. Self-help associations for women labor migrants.

Reducing the vulnerability of women migrant workers to abuse and violence, forced slave labor and sexual exploitation

Conclusions

Despite existing projects providing legal information and consultations to various CSOs and international organizations for labor migrants in the countries of destination, there is still a need for migrants' access to legal assistance. The issue of access to the justice system in comparison with citizens of countries of destination, as well as the urgent need to protect migrants' rights and interests in judicial and law enforcement bodies remains difficult.

The provision of comprehensive information and legal assistance consultations to all categories of women migrant workers, including domestic workers and victims of trafficking, can be carried out in two ways: through direct requests by written claims regarding breach of their interests and rights via various specialized CSO centers, or with help of around-the-clock "hotline".

Recommendations

In this area of work, the study recommends the expansion of legal support services provided by CSOs to migrants on the following issues:

- Defense of the rights to wages, including overtime, and defense regarding confiscation of passports by the employer, as well as prosecution of the employer for violations committed under the laws of the country of destination;
- Legal support for the protection of rights and interests in law enforcement and in court litigations;
- Legally challenging decisions of migration authorities and courts on extradition, bans to enter the country of destination or undesirable status of stay on its territory;
- Writing applications, complaints, petitions and other legal documents for further treatment in state and non-state institutions;
- Managing contacts and networking with embassies or consular institutions from the country of migrants' citizenship for more effective protection of their rights.