

WOMEN'S HUMAN INSECURITIES ACROSS
THE TAJIK-KYRGYZ BORDERS:
AN ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS
BY WOMEN ACTIVISTS



SHAHRBANOU TADJBAKHSI AND ORZU GANIEVA

2017

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This is a Final Report produced by Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh, PhD, UN Women's International Consultant based on findings from two regional workshops, on consultations with women of the border regions of Tajikistan/PBF project areas: (Isfara and B. Ghafurov districts of Sughd region) and Kyrgyzstan (Batken and Ley Lek districts of Batken region), and on the Human Security Reports prepared by women in their own villages with the support provided by Orzu Ganieva, National Consultant. The Report was produced for the Cross-border Cooperation for Sustainable Peace and Development project funded by the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) /Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and jointly implemented by five UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UN WFP, UN FAO, UN WOMEN). The findings in this report are based on the women's own perceptions of their problems and solutions, and does not represent the opinions of the authors, nor UN Women's Multi-Country Office (Central Asia).

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the United Nations, including UN Women or UN Member States.

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Preface

This report was prepared by Shahrbanou Tadjbakhsh based on findings from two regional workshops, on consultations with women of the border regions of Tajikistan (Isfara and B. Ghafurov districts of Sughd region) and Kyrgyzstan (Batken and Ley Lek districts of Batken region), on the Human Security Reports prepared by women in their own villages, and on the field work of Orzu Ganieva and conducted during the Summer and Fall of 2016.

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The findings in this report are based on the women's own perceptions of their problems and solutions, and does not represent the opinions of the authors, nor of the UN Women team in Tajikistan or in the Women Multi-Country Office in Kazakhstan. Thanks go to the team of UN Women in Tajikistan and the Multi-Country Team in Kazakhstan for supporting this work, and specifically, Nargis Azizova (UN Women Multi-Country Office, Kazakhstan) and Zaitunbib Naimova, Amir Madaminov and Bonu Shambezoda (UN Women Tajikistan)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the beginning of 2014, a number of clashes have been recorded among border communities in the Ferghana Valley (in the Batken region in southern Kyrgyzstan and northern region of Sughd in Tajikistan), despite close geographical, economic and cultural relations between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. Motivations have been most related to disputes over land and water and unresolved territorial disputes as a result of the lack of proper delimitation of borders. The clashes have resulted in, more than have been caused by inter-ethnic mistrust between Tajiks and Kyrgyz communities. This said, competition over natural resources, in a region where these are rare and poorly managed, could potentially lead to more durable inter-ethnic conflicts.

Women have not sat idle. In a region highly marked by the migration of men and where women have been left to tend the lands, run the household and meet ends meet by entering the labor market in full force, the disputes have seen women as both instigators and victims. At the same time, however, their contribution to peace-building has not been used to its full potential. They have been excluded from the decision making processes, be it on the resolution of the conflicts or the allocation of projects for reconstruction and trust building. Yet, women of the border communities are fully aware of their needs, their fears, and the indignities inflicted about their lives. They are also aware of their own capacities and vulnerabilities.

One way of turning women as positive agents of change is to let them identify and analyze their own insecurities and listen to the recommendations they make for practical and strategic solutions for alleviating the insecurities that impact their everyday lives. It is by concentrating on the local dimension that conflicts that seem to be inter-ethnic and cross-border could be diffused and boiled back down to what they are: community disputes over the sharing of natural resources etc..

To this aim, UN Women launched a project aimed at supporting women living in border areas to better understand their everyday insecurities, the consequences of these insecurities on their everyday lives, how these leads to conflicts across communities, and what needs to be done to alleviate insecurities within communities and prevent further conflicts across communities.

The point of departure of this consultation with women activists in brooder communities of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan was that the reason people fight is because they have fears, their needs are not being met, and they have been disrespected. Hence, by understanding the commonality of their everyday human insecurities (economic, food, health, political, personal, community and environmental), women in communities across the Tajik/Kyrgyz borders can also join forces to address cross-border initiatives. They can play an active role in decreasing tensions across the two countries while helping alleviating the insecurities within their own communities.

The present report is based on what activist women along the Kyrgyz/Tajik border assess about their most pertinent thematic human insecurity areas affecting their community organized around the 7 areas of human insecurities as identified by the UNDP 1994 Human Development Report. It looks at common insecurities, the consensus of these on conflicts and everyday lives and provides specific recommendations in terms of strategic and practical solutions (policies, approaches etc.), including on what can be done by women as part of joint initiatives (small cross-border projects) across borders to prevent further violence.

While the report analyses these insecurities for border communities in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan separately, they have proven remarkably similar across borders. This summary focus on main common areas.

Main areas of common economic insecurity

- High level of unemployment both for women and for men. The main source of employment is agriculture which is seasonal, low income and labor intensive. It is hard physical labor that undermines women's health and that for very little revenue.
- Limited employment opportunities for men and women resulting in labor migration of majority of men, and increasingly of women. Yet, due to the economic crisis in Russia, labor migration has decrease by almost twice and remittances have decreased considerably, leading to serious shortages in household budgets.
- Low incomes and low wages and now, low levels of remittances have all led to sheer poverty, with many people living from hand to mouth, unable to save any money for the future. Poverty has

led to indebtedness, conflicts within families and early and forced marriages among other consequences.

- Limited opportunity for trade in markets (lack of access to markets, lack of price control, monopoly etc.).

Consequences

- Unemployment and poverty have led to more conflicts within households, including more divorces, mostly due to the lack of dignity among unemployed men, extra pressures on women as breadwinners etc.
- Debt and inability to repay loans as a result of financial difficulty are a cycle that has affected many inhabitants in the region, with families increasing selling their property (cars, houses, lands) and stock.
- Cross-border consequence have been increasing disputes in bazaars. In times of conflicts, access to markets across the border were limited, which negatively impacts the activities of women, the main traders. While clashes have abated, Kyrgyz and Tajik women continue to compete over spots in the market and differences in prices.

Main common environmental insecurity

- Lack of water for drinking and for household needs and watering plots.
- Poor distribution of water resources and failure to observe agreements for water distribution due to lack of a mechanism of sanctions and enforcement.
- Poor maintenance of water infrastructure
- Shortage of land for farming, grazing and construction (especially on Tajik side).
- Lack of places for proper disposal of waste and garbage, leading to practices that pollute the soil and water.
- Lack of clean air, with the environment polluted mainly by waste emissions from residents, and the use of coal for heating.

Consequences

- Water disputes between communities with each side accusing the other of breaching existing water sharing agreements that are not being

enforced. One of the most serious confrontations in 2014 was caused by residents of the Tajik enclave of Vorukh trying to lay a water pipe on Kyrgyz territory.

- Lack of proper waste management leading to conflicts between households that engage in garbage war (disposal of garbage in each other's gardens) and accuse each other of polluting land and water with improper disposal of garbage.
- Shortage of land on the Tajik side for living, farming and grazing leading to what the Kyrgyz consider as land encroachment into their territories.

Main areas of common health insecurity

- Lack of access to adequate drinking water and communities drinking contaminated irrigation water leading to infections from water-borne diseases.
- Lack of access to quality health care and insurance schemes.
- Expensive and inadequate medical services, expensive treatments.
- Poor diet and malnutrition, much of it due to poverty and lack of incomes.
- High stress levels caused by everyday problems and concerns over education for children, feeing families, making ends meet etc.
- Spread of STDs and some HIV/AIDs as a result of lack of awareness and contamination of wives by returning labor migrants.
- Alcoholism as a growing problem among unemployed men.

Consequences

- Diseases creating additional strain on family budgets for seeking treatment, leading to conflicts in families about the waste of money for treatment. Women are afraid to disclose of disease in early stages because of expenses, leading to more complications.
- Conflicts across border communities and blaming of each other for spreading diseases, for polluting water with garbage, etc.
- High tensions and emotions from everyday problems and low standards of living create misunderstandings in the family, lack of tolerance towards others and psychological and physical violence.

Main areas of common food insecurity

- Lack of access to quality food with food supplied through agriculture products which are affected by seasons etc.
- Low quality standards and lack of knowledge to whether the perishable products on the markets are regular inspected for their quality and expiry dates.
- Restricted diets having impacts on health.: anemia, weakness of the body, decreased immunity and psychological diseases. Children are born weak, with a lack of calcium.

Main common personal insecurity

- Psychological violence, including violence in families and against women. Common are abuses of wives and daughters in the hands of husbands and mother in laws, and harsh economic situation exacerbates such tensions. Many women are subjected to some kind of violence at home, including insult, humiliation, intimidation, prohibition (to study, work, leave the house), coercion (to marry, to have sex etc.) as well as physical violence.
- Forced marriage and early marriage.
- Frequent insults hurled at women.
- Increases in petty crimes instigated by the youth, especially during conflicts.
- Child labor for work on farms and construction sites, given difficulties with the financial situation in every household, and the inability of adults to fully support their families.
- Cases of rape but silence about them for fear of shame and lack of support by society and the police.

Consequences

- Insults by young people from both communities at each other and verbal assaults. Lack of tolerance among the youth.
- While open conflict has abated between the Tajiks and Kyrgyz, a sentiment of mistrust persists which can flare up at any circumstance.

Main common community insecurity

- Conservatism. Religious illiteracy and its consequences in terms of ultra conservative

values. In such an atmosphere, women feel pressure both from their husbands and from religious leaders.

- Presence of radicalism and extremism and the need to prevent further extremism. A number of people have left the region to join Daesh in Syria/Iraq. Extremist groups have had a negative impact on women by reinforcing traditional values over their lives and they were responsible for spreading fears of destabilization for the future.
- Discrimination against ethnic groups.
- Lack of empowerment of women and lack of opportunities for them to participate in decision making.

Consequences

- Mistrust between ethnic groups. While cross-border conflict are mostly due to tangible insecurities such as water distribution, construction of roads, waste disposal, and access to pastures, they have led to mistrust between the two communities.
- Discrimination in relation to Tajik and Kyrgyz communities living in each other's lands leading to conflicts, mistrust etc.

Main common political insecurity

- Lack of border delimitation means lack of clarity about ownership of land and natural resources.
- Corruption at all levels of state and society.
- Border and customs checkpoints restricting the free movement of people across borders.
- Involvement of security forces in territorial dispute.
- High level of corruption and bribe taking by officials.
- Lack of local dispute mechanism and need for more citizen participation in local planning.

Consequences

- The existence of arbitrary boundaries and unresolved territorial disputes, water and land distribution inequalities and poor management leading to conflicts between Tajiks and Kyrgyz.
- Lack of coordination and mutual failure to inform about decisions give rise to speculations regarding actions of the other side.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Despite close geographical, economic and cultural relations between Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan, the lack of proper delimitation of borders in the Ferghana Valley (in the Batken region in southern Kyrgyzstan and northern region of Sughd in Tajikistan) has led to frequent skirmishes among border communities. Since the beginning of 2014, a number of clashes have been recorded among communities of Aksay and Aktatyrski aul districts, Batken district and the enclave Vorukh, as well as between communities of Khodja Alo and the Jamoat of Chorku. Motivations have been most related to disputes over land and water, as a result of unresolved territorial disputes, and resulting in inter-ethnic mistrust.

Women have not sat idle. In a region highly marked by the migration of men and where women have been left to tend the lands, run the household and meet ends meet by entering the labor market in full force, the disputes have seen women as both instigators and victims. At the same time, however, their contribution to peace-building has not been used to its full potential. They have been excluded from the decision making processes, be it on the resolution of the conflicts or the allocation of projects for reconstruction and trust building. Yet, women of the border communities are fully aware of their needs, their fears, and the indignities inflicted about their lives. They are also cognizant of their own capacities and vulnerabilities. One way of turning

women as positive agents of change is to let them identify and analyze their own insecurities and listen to the recommendations they make for practical and strategic solutions for alleviate the insecurities that impact their everyday lives. It is by concentrating on the local dimension that conflicts that seem to be inter-ethnic and cross-border could be diffused and boiled back down to what they are: community disputes over the sharing of natural resources etc.. As such, women can be agents of change in promoting peace and security in Central Asia, eliminating discrimination and violence against women, with particular emphasis on border areas.

UN agencies have been implementing a project on Cross-border Cooperation for Sustainable Peace and Development (PBF) with the support of the UN Peacebuilding Fund In Kyrgyzstan. UN Women has in turn contributed to a number of dialogues in Central Asia at the national and local levels to support women activists in their advocacy for the implementation of international commitments on women, peace and security. Within the Project on “Cross-border cooperation, sustainable peace and development”, UN Women is responsible for implementing the component on strengthening the capacity of women activists, ensuring the effective participation of women in identifying women’s rights violations, dialogue and the implementation of decisions to prevent and resolve conflicts in the border areas.

UN Women's contribution is informed by the belief that understanding and responding to women's everyday insecurities, in a broad sense of freedom from want, from fear and from indignities, would contribute to developing and implementing policies and programmes that are gender-sensitive response. This in turn would prevent women's involvement in the conflicts while supporting them to be meaningfully engaged in conflict prevention and management at the local level.

To this aim, UN Women launched a project aimed at supporting women living in border areas to better understand their everyday insecurities, the consequences of these insecurities on their everyday lives, how these lead to conflicts across communities, and what needs to be done to alleviate insecurities within communities and prevent further conflicts across communities.

Its point of departure was that the reason people fight is because they have fears, their needs are not being met, and they have been disrespected. As such, people seek freedom from fear, attention to their want/needs and alleviation of their indignities. The resolution of conflicts (including cross-border) and prevention of violence starts here, within our communities.

The assumption that guided the project was the following:

- By understanding the commonality of their everyday human insecurities (economic, food, health, political, personal, community and environmental), women in communities across the Tajik/Kyrgyz borders can also join forces to address cross-border initiatives.
- They can play an active role in decreasing tensions across the two countries while helping alleviating the insecurities within their own communities.

The aim of the project was to support women activists living in border areas:

- To better understand their everyday insecurities.
- To analyze the consequences of these insecurities in different domains.
- To understand how these lead to conflicts across communities.
- To suggest with what needs to be done at the practical and strategic level.
- To understand how women can contribute to strategic and practical solutions.

The project culminated in this present Women's Human Security Report of the Border regions of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

METHODOLOGY

The present report is based on what activist women along the Kyrgyz/Tajik border assess about:

- The most pertinent thematic human insecurity areas affecting their community.
- Similar human insecurities in communities.
- The Consequences of these in different areas on women's lives.
- Potential cross-border impacts and conflict drivers
- Specific recommendations in terms of:
 - Strategic solutions (policies, approaches etc.).
 - Practical projects to alleviate insecurities.
- Concrete Recommendations on how women can contribute to preventing violence and insecurities in their communities and at the cross-border levels.

The preparation of this report was based on a project of UN Women as part of the UN Joint Program on Cross-border Cooperation for Sustainable Peace and Development (PBF), which included 5 phases:

Phase 1: Initial Workshop, June 9-10th, 2016, Training Centre of National Bank, Guliston, Sughd Region

A group of up to 26 skilled women were trained on what is human security (concept and operational principles), what are components of human security, how to measure human insecurity using quantitative and qualitative indicators, what the implications of one insecurity are on other insecurities. The workshop trained them in terms of:

- Being able to identify a broad range of insecurities within their communities,
 - Analyzing the consequences of these (including potentially cross-border conflict and bleeding into other insecurity areas),
 - Recommending initiatives to address these insecurities (be they policies or projects).

Phase 2: Preparation of Reports

- During phase 2, women activists prepared Jamoat (village) and Ayul Okmotu levels Human Security Reports with the help of Orzu Ganieva, National

Consultant. Their findings were based a set of questions, focusing on:

- the most pertinent thematic human insecurity areas affecting their community,
- the multi-dimensional consequences of these on their lives,
- their potential spillover across borders.
- Propositions for:
 - 1) strategic and,
 - 2) practical solutions to resolve thematic human insecurities.

Phase 3: Second Workshop, October 20-21, 2016, Training Centre of National Bank, Guliston, Sughd Region

The second workshop was devoted to discussions on:

- 1) Similarities between the insecurities across the two countries.
- 2) Women's own recommendations for potential practical and strategies, policies and programs to alleviate human insecurities in the region.
- 3) Recommendations for and projects and initiatives among women on both sides for cross-border cooperation to prevent conflict.

Phase 4: Preparation of the Regional Report

- Similar Human Insecurities in communities.
- Consequences of these in different areas on women's lives.
- Potential cross-border impacts and conflict drivers
- Specific recommendations in terms of:
 - Strategic solutions (policies, approaches etc.).
 - Practical projects to alleviate insecurities.
- Concrete Recommendations on how women can contribute to preventing violence and insecurities in their communities and at the cross-border levels.

Phase 5: Presentation of findings

- The findings and concrete recommendations of this report are expected to be presented to UN agencies and local authorities for follow up.

The project covered representatives of the following villages on both side of the border:

Republic	District/Region	Jamoat
Tajikistan	Isfara district, Sughd region	Vorukh
		Surkh
		Chorku
	Bobojon Ghafurov district, Sughd region	Ovchi Kalachaa
		Histevarz
Kyrgyzstan	Batken region	Aksay
		Samarkandek
		Aktatyr
		Karabak

For the purposes of cross-border communications, the project paired the following villages have been paired below in clusters with their proximate village across the borders:

	Tajikistan	Kyrgyzstan
Group 1	Vorukh	Aksay
Group 2	Chorku, Ortoboz, Surkh	Samarkandek
Group 3	HistevarzHistevarz, Ovchi Kalachaa, Khistevarz	Kulundu and Maksat

THE OVERALL SITUATION

In a region where a large majority of men are or have been engaged in labor migration, having left home to seek work in Russia and in Kazakhstan, the presence of fewer men has altered and transformed women's role. Women have become increasingly involved in activities traditionally carried out by men: tending the small household farms (dekhan), selling products and produces in the markets, taking care of the family budget etc.. To the burden of domestic reproductive care work has been added demands for productive labor for income. These have increased women's involvements in the local conflict as well as their vulnerability to the conflict.

Women's engagement with natural resources is however not new. Most of the agriculture work, especially manual work, has always been carried out by women since Soviet times.

Women also transport household water needs in water buckets and get involved in negotiations over water use, and inevitably, in water sharing disputes across border communities. Furthermore, women's involvement in the conflicts is driven by proximity (for example by way of rivalries etc.). Women whose households are in direct contact with villages of a neighboring state, are less objective in their interpretations of events, as opposed to women living at a distance from the borders who are more open minded and flexible towards their cross-border neighbors. As such, women can be peacebuilders as much as they can be instigators or provocateurs of conflict. This has been most evident in the in the Jamoat of Chorku (Jamoat communities of Somonion and Khojai Alo) where women of border communities are highly aggravated by their Kyrgyz neighbors. The involvement of border guards and youth groups both serves as further aggravation of passions.

Proximity, forced sharing of resources among households, unmarked territory may be drivers of conflict. In such cases, women can play both a

- negative role (as instigators, as victims)
- positive role (as agents of change)

Women can be victims of violence and be subjected to physical or verbal attacks, displacement, and

become responsible for households in the case of death, disability or migration of their men-folks. They can however also be instigators of violence, being the ones who start disputes over irrigation water, land, price of goods in bazaars or escalate existing conflicts through mobilization of the youth, gang fights, quarrels, etc. On the other side of the coin, women can act as agents of peace, through engaging in negotiations, compromise, peacebuilders in families and communities, making compromise, activating others, teaching tolerance to the youth, organizing joint events with other communities etc.. Participants of the UN Women workshops called this role for women as *Zhenshini agenti* (a play on the Russian words Zhenshini (women) and agents).

In the case of the border regions of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, although women have become more active participants of cross-border disputes, they do not have the sufficient social status to influence decision making. They may be running the household budget and making ends meet, but they have very little involvement in formal decision-making processes in their communities, especially as heads of their Jamoats or local government structures. Women don't have enough resources to be involved for a variety of reasons: Weak representation of women in local decision making; Insufficient and unequal access to natural resources; Gender discrimination in family and society and threats of more violence; and Poorly developed community infrastructure.

Drivers of the conflict include:

- Poor demarcation of borders
 - Shared infrastructure
 - Competition over land and water
 - Competition over natural resources: limited land, pasture and water
 - Deep social problems: Economic insecurity
 - Food insecurity
 - Politicization of ethnicity and nationalism
 - Militarization and role of border guards
 - Background of deep social problems: economically depressed regions: agriculture water shortage, labor migration
-

Brief introduction to the conceptual framework: What is Human Security?

The concept of Human Security emerged in 1994 within the UNDP *Human Development Report* which sought to broaden the traditional notion of security focused on military balances and capabilities to a concept that included “safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease, and repression” as well as “protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life.” Human security thus implied economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security.

The concepts of ‘security’ and ‘insecurity’ have relative connotations in different contexts. For some, insecurity comes from sudden loss of guarantee of access to jobs, health care, social welfare, education, etc. For others insecurity stems from violation of human rights, extremism, domestic violence, spread of conflicts, displacement, etc. To be meaningful, therefore, security needs to be redefined as a subjective experience at the micro level in terms of people’s experience.

Human security debunks the question of ‘security’ from its realist conception of the safety of states from military threats to concentrate on the safety of people and communities. Once the referent object of security is changed to individuals, the concept proposes to extend the notion of ‘safety’ to a condition beyond mere existence (survival) to life worth living, hence, well-being and dignity of human beings.

Human security, in its broadest form, consists of three components which need to simultaneously exist: freedom from fear, freedom from want, and freedom from indignity. Freedom from fear refers to conditions that allow individuals and groups protection from direct threats to their safety and physical integrity, including various forms of violence arising from the actions of external states, from the action of the state against its citizens, from the actions of groups against groups, and from the actions of individuals against individuals. Freedom from want is the condition that allows for protection of basic needs, quality of life, livelihoods and enhanced human welfare. Freedom from indignity refers to a condition where individuals and groups can live in dignity, assured of the protection of their fundamental rights, and allowed to make choices and take advantage of opportunities.

Human security: Definition

- Freedom from want,
- Freedom from fear,
- Freedom to live in dignity.

HS is about risks (presence of dangers)

- Not just needs now but vulnerabilities that put them at risk for future needs too. Hence, responses not just about providing for needs but building resilience through practical and strategic interventions.

Threats to people’s (and women’s which may be different):

- **survival** (physical abuse, violence, persecution, or death),
- their **well being** (unemployment, food insecurity, health threats, etc.), and
- their **dignity** (lack of human rights, inequality, exclusion, discrimination, etc.).

Inter-relationship with 3 frameworks:

- Development (in averse conditions, insure against risks and threats).
- Security (focus on people).
- Human rights (same content, different normative approach: “from risks/insecurities” as oppose “to rights”, conditions for HR).

The original 7 components, as discussed in UNDP 1994 Report, and which have been used as the framework of analysis of insecurities of border communities, include:

Type of Security	Main Threats of particular types of insecurity on the individual(s)
Economic Security	Persistent poverty, unemployment, etc.
Food security	Hunger, famine, inability to purchase food, bad quality food, etc.
Health security	Deadly infectious diseases, unsafe food, malnutrition, lack of access to basic health care, etc.
Environmental security	Environmental degradation, resource depletion, natural disasters, pollution, etc.
Personal security	Physical violence, crime, terrorism, domestic violence, child labor, etc.
Community security	inter-ethnic, religious and other identity based tensions, etc., discrimination, marginalization etc.
Political Security	Political repression, human rights violations and abuses, etc.

1.

ECONOMIC INSECURITY

Main common economic insecurity of women in the border area

- High level of unemployment both for women and for men, and ensuing labor migration.
- Limited employment opportunities for men and women.
- Most work being conducted in agriculture which is season, low income and labor intensive.
- Limited opportunity for trade in markets (lack of access to markets, lack of price control, monopoly etc.).
- Low incomes and low wages.
- Sheer poverty.

Unemployment in Tajikistan

The main source of economic insecurity, according to respondents, is the high level of unemployment, related mainly to limited employment opportunities. The main source of employment for women in Vorukh is agricultural activity on small household farms (dekhan farms). Due to the small size of available land, the seasonal nature of the work and low wages, however, income from this type of activity is not sufficient for the family. Manual labor also prevails in agriculture. One woman entrepreneur mentioned that 25% of the laborers she employs to work on her land are women, of which 30% have their own small farms. Women in Ovchi Kalacha feed their families by working on small plots of lands where they grow strawberries, raspberries, tomatoes and cucumbers for sale. In Surkh, activists claimed that women have been forced to do a man's job: make brick, work on construction sites and in brigades on other people's farms, in addition to sewing and weaving.

Because there are so few places for formal employment in Khistevarz, women work as seasonal workers on agriculture, far from home, on Kyrgyz lands, in groups of 40-50 people. For the season and labor intensive job, they only however earn 300 somonies a week, which is too little to run the family expenses, so there are often disputes with Kyrgyz employers due to wages. Other income earning activities for women in Khistevarz include together in small groups, collecting scrap metals and sell it in Kyrgyzstan and China. It is hard physical labor that

undermines women's health and that for very little revenue.

The vast majority of households in Vorukh (up to 78% of families) include unemployed members, the majority being men. The predominant source of employment for men in Vorukh as elsewhere has been labor migration to Russia and Kazakhstan, which until 2015, consisted of the main source of replenishment of the family budget. *"In our village, 90% of the male population is currently in migration,"* mentioned a resident of Chorku. As the remittances coming in are not always sufficient, increasing number of women started migrating themselves, leaving behind children to their relatives.

However, in recent years, due to the economic crisis in Russia, labor migration has decrease by almost tow times and wages have decreased considerably. Unemployment among men has also been exacerbated by the mass deportations of migrants from Russia, even for minor violations of the law of the host country. The economic crisis in Russia has also meant that men can no longer send money home. Increasing numbers of men are also deported, returning home to the region and sitting idle, increasing the burden on the shoulder of women who need to work for the household budget. Economic crisis has also meant the closure of small shops. In Ovchi Kalachaa for example, about 20 families lost their shops in recent times with the closure of their shops. Some small entrepreneurs can no longer pay the electricity to keep their shops open.

Unemployment in Kyrgyzstan

Increases in unemployment also plague the inhabitants of Aksay and Samarkandek, like elsewhere in the country. Although women want to work to support the family budget, opportunities are limited, with sources of employment and income mainly related here too on agriculture, trade and labor migration. Most of the population in Aksay is engaged in cultivation of potatoes, cotton, tobacco, vegetables and fruits. Yet, many also do not have lands and sufficient plots. Factories and plants do not operate in the region. In Samarkandek, the only opportunities are crop cultivation, animal husbandry and poultry farming. In Ortoboz, the small plots of land are not enough to provide crops both for subsistence and sale, forcing women to look for other ways to earn a living, such as baking goods and making handicrafts and selling them in the market. In Kulundu, the population is mostly employed in agriculture - animal husbandry and agriculture (growing wheat, corn, apricots, persimmons, apples, grapes, etc.), crops largely exported to Bishkek, other regions of Tajikistan and Russia. About 20% of residents are mainly engaged in the cultivation of pistachios. Residents are also busy with resale over the border of coal mined in Sulukta, cement purchased in Kyzyl-Kiya, mineral fertilizers from Uzbekistan, as well as fuels and lubricants. The only salaried work available in Kulundu according to respondents is in one hospital school and village town hall. *"We used to receive salary from cotton harvest on time. But now we are no longer paid by the state for that. If we don't have enough time to gather our harvest in a timely manner, we invite Tajik women to help us in the field."*

On the Kyrgyz side of the border too men rely on labor migration to escape the high levels of unemployment and poverty, while lack of employment opportunities primarily affects women. Respondents in Ortoboz estimated that up to 80% of their men were either in Bishkek or in Russia, while 95% of their women were unemployed. Women in Samarkandek claimed that women have also begun migrating, leaving behind their children. Respondents in Aksay recalled that many women and girls do not have enough of education and literacy to be able to work in organizations when such opportunities do exist in the first instance

In Aksay too most women rely on trade. But that by itself involves insecurities: They risk conflicts by going to the market. In Ortoboz, the market is in a neighboring Tajik village, which limits access in times of conflict. In Kulundu women also rely heavily on the market to see their goods, Part of the population

is involved in cross-border trade with the citizens of Tajikistan. In the neighboring country close to the border is the wholesale market in which Kulundu women sell their products. They however complain about the low prices that do not allow them to make ends meet, buy gifts for their kids, etc. *"All the time we have to reassure our kids and promise them that when items sell, we will buy them something. But we cannot sell at a good price. We all suffer together. It is painful for the kids and for us."*, explains a woman from Kulundu.

Overall the economic crisis in Russia had a negative impact on the lives of rural communities in Kyrgyzstan because of the heavy reliance on remittances. It has led to losses in incomes a noticeable rises in prices and it has forced women to leave the villages in search of work and sources of income, as was noted by respondents in Ortoboz for example. *"The crisis in Russia has affected us, says a woman from Kulundu.. Not only they have left us, but they also don't send money anymore. It is a double blow for us."*

Low levels of income in Tajikistan

85% of the population of the Jamoat of Vorukh cite labor migration as a main source of their family income. The crisis in the Russian Federation and the decline of the Russian economy has as a result major consequences on family budgets in this mountainous region. As a number of respondents claimed, people are living from hand to month, unable to save any money for the future.

As women activists in Surkh mentioned, poverty is the cause of early and forced marriages in the village. Many poor families consider their daughters a burden, and considering the issue of early marriage as a positive decision for the family. In addition, the daughter's marriage is also cost-effective. In rural areas, a new illegal trend has come into practice among the poor where girls are being married at the age of 12-13.

Low levels of income in Kyrgyzstan

In Aksay, respondents noted that Women sit at home with children and the elderly, taking care of households. Children however are brought up increasingly in poverty, with deficiencies in terms of nutrition, and women making economies in terms of food, education, consumption, purchase etc. Poverty has also negative impacts on the psychological well-being of women. It increases stress within families, leading to conflicts and divorces. It forces children to take up work at a young age on manual jobs.

Inflation and high prices in Tajikistan

The price of building materials, in particular wood, has risen in comparison to the previous year, due to the fact that the Russian Federation increased its prices. The cost of basic vital goods like gasoline, meat, cement, coal remained the same due to the fact that these products were being traded on the border of Kyrgyzstan.

Inflation and high prices in Kyrgyzstan

The situation with prices is no better in Kyrgyzstan. Prices have increased, according to respondents from Aksay, for staple foods such as bread, pasta, rice, vegetable oil and granulated sugar. Low family budgets have meant cuts in expenses for food, medicine and every day household goods. In Samarkandek, women respondents recalled that having earnings were not enough given constant increases in prices, forcing people to save on and cut expenses from food, new clothes, medical treatment etc..

What is for sure is that both in Tajikistan and in Kyrgyzstan, it is the women who have to run the family budget and make the necessary savings on behalf of the household. This puts additional burdens on women.

Consequences

Conflicts in the household in Tajikistan

Men's unemployment and low overall incomes have created an unhealthy relationship between men and women, often leading to rising tensions and conflicts within families in the mostly traditional communities of Vorukh, Chorku and Surkh as elsewhere. As one respondent from Vorukh summarized the trend, *"Men are traditionally held to be the main breadwinners. But given their unemployment more women have started to work, something that does not please the men. As a result, there are more fights, conflicts and violence in the family even if they can feed themselves better."* Difficult financial conditions have also led to increasing numbers of divorces in the Jamoat of Vorukh and in Khistevarz. In 2015, according to women activists, 65 divorces were registered against 410 marriages. Divorce tends to be a long, tedious and expensive exercise which leaves women even more desolate. She often is forced to tolerate violence by her husband mother-in-law and husband's inner circle because of poverty. Others are forced to engage in illegal acts to make ends meet for their families.

Some men are also unhappy about their daughters and wives engaging in trade in the bazaar, but have to accept this so-called dishonor for economic reasons.

Conflicts in the household in Kyrgyzstan

Women activists on the Kyrgyz side of the border expressed the same sentiments: Unemployment and poverty had led to more conflicts within households, mostly due to the lack of dignity among unemployed men, extra pressures on women as breadwinners etc. A respondent from Ortoboz brought forth a counterargument: "When a woman works", she said, "she has no time to gossip or to engage in petty conflicts among neighbors."

Frivolous expenses and Social shame in Tajikistan

Women activists in most regions (Vorukh, Surkh, etc.) noted that the dwindling income has specifically decreased the possibility of families to engage in traditional practices coveted in their communities which they consider as their national customs: gift giving and organizing weddings deemed "decent" which determine their status vis-à-vis others. To regain their "social dignity" and keep up with the neighbors, the family budget is stretched thinly over expensive fabrics, clothing, weddings and circumcision ceremonies, home repairs, new cars etc. Social obligations and traditions are forcing the family into more debt or sells property or their animal stock if available. The further engulfs them into future economic hardships.

Frivolous expenses and Social shame in Kyrgyzstan

In Kyrgyzstan too, customs and traditions demand lavish gift giving for ceremonies. The inability to purchase fabrics and gifts gives rise to social stress and conflicts within households.

Indebtedness in Tajikistan

Debt and inability to repay loans as a result of financial difficulty are a cycle that has affected many inhabitants of Vorukh as elsewhere in the region, with families increasing selling their property (cars, houses, lands) and stock. One respondent from Vorukh recounted her predicament: *"My brother and I took out a bank loan given our low standard of living. I started working with my husband in the market trading goods. It went well at first but then people started asking to buy goods on credit. Now we cannot recover our money from all the indebted people around and as a result we cannot repay our own loan in time."*

My husband fell ill from all the stress, I could not carry the burden alone, we could not pay the debt and were forced to sell the house. Now we live in my brother in law's house and I cannot imagine what will happen next."

In Surkh respondents talked about a category of people who could not pay their bank loans and had been left without a home consequently.

Indebtedness in Kyrgyzstan

One of the direct results of the economic financial crisis in Russia was a depreciation of the Kyrgyz Som, whose value depreciated by 26% in September 2015 as compared with the previous year. The entire country felt the impact of the crisis, and not just the 1.5 million Kyrgyz who are currently labor migrants. For women entrepreneurs, noted the women of Aksay, the crisis caused much financial damage. They can no longer sell their goods at the prices originally planned and cannot sell their stocks, hampering their ability to purchase new products. Both entrepreneurs and their clients fall behind on payment of their loans.

Generation gap in Tajikistan

Another consequence of economic insecurity in mountainous Jamoats like Vorukh is the outmigration of young men from the region to seek work in the town of Isfara or other regions. As opposed to the seasonal migration of male breadwinners who come back between late fall and early spring, the young tend to move away to start their lives elsewhere. While this trend may reduce population burden and making it possible for families to have an additional source of income, it leaves the elderly alone to fend for themselves. As one elderly woman from Vorukh lamented, *"Young people have the power to travel, they are young, full of energy. And what are we to do?"* Low incomes have direct consequences on the education opportunities for younger children who stay behind, on their nutrition and on their health.

Cross-border consequence: Disputes in bazaars

Cross-border trade in Tajikistan

Besides agriculture, the only other possibility for income for women comes from trade in the market, with women consisting 90% of traders in the market.

In times of conflicts, recalled the women from Aksay, access to markets across the border were limited, which negatively impacts the activities of women,

the main traders. Such was for example the case in January 2014 during the conflict between Kyrgyzstan and Tajik communities over the construction of a road on disputed territory. In Samarkandek, women respondents noted that Tajik women used to come trade freely in their small market, bringing vegetables and fruits. But since clashes have began, Kyrgyz and Tajik women also clash over spots in the market, and there have been cases of beating. This has created fears, even though mutual visits have picked up again. *"While we have started to visit each other again, we do not feel 100% safe"*, said a respondent from Samarkandek.

Before cross-border conflicts of 2013-2014, 2-3 Kyrgyz women used to trade in the Vorukh market selling dairy products (Kurut and churghot). They stopped trading for a while but Kyrgyz women are now apparently back on the market. Subsequently, Tajik traders also go to the Aksay mini market (on the Kyrgyz side) to trade on Wednesdays.

While the situation has stabilized, occasional skirmishes are due to competition over the best spots in the market between Tajik and Kyrgyz women traders. As one activist from Vorukh put it, *"it is remarkable that people living in the same neighborhood suddenly become enemies and intolerant of each other and fighter over the best spots in the market."* In the Khistevarz, there were specifically allocated trading places for Kyrgyz citizens. Nowadays, they are all mixed, giving rise to more conflicts over spots in additions to over prices.

Conflicts among mostly female traders also abound over differences in prices. In Surkh for example, respondents recounted how if a vendor tries to sell her goods cheaper, others won't allow her to do so, giving rise to disputes. When women come from across the border, they have to sell their goods more expensive to make up for transportation costs. This puts them at a disadvantage and more prone to disputes. Women of Ortoboz claimed they were not keen on trading in Tajik bazaars, even if access was no longer a problem. They felt intimidated by cases of what they perceived as discrimination over sport and over prices.

In Ortoboz, women had the impression that their lot was worse than families across the border in Tajikistan where the government had supposedly set the price of meat at 28 Somonis per Kilo. Women had to do the reverse trip to gain some money working as hired help agriculture lands in Kyrgyzstan.

That is why enhancing border markets makes sense, not only from an economic viewpoint (to create wealth), to answer needs, but also as a way for confidence building and peace building.

SAMPLE OF WHAT IS BEING DONE

Tajikistan

Government

- The state allocates money to low-income families. For example, 35 somonis per month are allocated to those living on less than 200 somonis (Khistevarz). It also provides subsidies for paying for water and electricity (Ovchi Kalachaa).
- The government has increased salaries by 10-20% but it is still insufficient, especially given the dearth of formal employment places in the first place (Chorku women).
- The state, together with business representatives, are trying to regulate prices in the market (Surkh, Chorku). The price of meat is for example is capped (Chorku women).
- The state offers training and retraining courses for the unemployed for free: weaving courses (Surkh), handicrafts (Ovchi Kalachaa) and training women as welders, seamstresses, confectioners (Khistevarz). After such trainings, 3-4% are usually able to gain employment.
- The state organizes a fair of agricultural products 3 times a month, where products are sold at a cheaper price (Khistevarz).

Associations

- Social support is provided for families through Mahallas and good neighbors (Vorukh women)
- A weaving atelier has been opened to produce national handicraft of silk and cotton weaving (Adrasbofi) (Ovchi Kalachaa).
- Local organizations give high-quality seeds for a good harvest and financial institutions provide low credit loans (Ovchi Kalachaa).
- The NGO sector is another way that women can gain employment, according to activists. By developing projects to reduce employment and applying for grants through international organizations and establishing trainings for women in various professions (Chorku women).
- Women - small entrepreneurs prepare business plans for the women committee and receive grants from the Women's Committee. (Ovchi Kalachaa).

- Women self-help groups operate together to create joint businesses such as for example bakeries and sewing shop. They seek support in terms of machinery, equipment, training etc. (Khistevarz).

Private sector

- Rich businessmen help their neighbors and villages with free food (Surkh).
- The private sector is trying to organize itself to provide jobs, putting order in the markets, distributing locations in a more orderly manner etc. (Chorku women).

International organizations

- International organizations provide humanitarian support (Surkh, Khistevarz).
- A number of international programs are being undertaken for economic security in the border region by international organizations, but as women respondents claimed, not many women are willing to participate in them, given their lack of knowledge, access etc. (Vorukh women)
- UNDP for example implemented a vocational training for young people in the Jamoat of Vorukh. It had also rehabilitated classrooms for carpet weaving but also welding and roof making (Vorukh women).
- International organizations educate women on how to harvest several times a year and grow crops in greenhouses (Khistevarz).
- International organizations are helping in the construction of cross-border markets. (Khistevarz)

Kyrgyzstan

Government

- The state is trying to revive the economy by helping the export of agriculture products (Aksay). It also gives allowances for electricity to alleviate household pressures (Aksay).
- The government has raised salaries for teachers and doctors, but jobs are few in the public sector (Samarkandek).
- The Ministry of Economy is monitoring the average retail prices of major food and industrial goods (Samarkandek women)
- Local government officials on both sides (Batken and Khujand) have met to discuss the problems in the markets and seek joint solutions (Kulundu).

Associations

- NGOs are another source of employment. With the help of donors, they have opened handicraft courses (Kulundu).

International organizations

- There are hopes that new financial opportunities for doing business in the country are opening up for business and investments as a result of the country joining the Eurasian Economic Union. Women had high hopes in the work of the Russian-Kyrgyz Development Fund that was supposed to help Kyrgyz entrepreneurs for example (Aksay and Samarkandek women).
- UNDP has implemented projects in support of women to produce food (vegetables and poultry), and training opportunities for women in cutting and sewing (Aksay).
- UNDP also built stalls for 200 trading places in the market (Samarkandek).
- International organizations provide training and consultation for farmers on the efficient management of agrobusiness (Kulundu).

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? WOMEN'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations from women of both countries can be summarized as followed:

- Job creation, especially for women. For example, creation of sewing and knitting workshops (to

use the excess stock of sheep and goat wool in Kyrgyzstan for example), weaving workshops for the production of national fabrics (silk, adras etc.) and carpet weaving. However, all such activities first and foremost require further capacity building of women's business skills, market analysis of demand and competitiveness of manufactured products.

- Improving access to markets and marketing of product through fairs, exhibition etc. using the cross-border markets.
- Supporting individual entrepreneurs, including through tax alleviation, favorable credit ratings, simplifying procedures of doing business (including through the adoption of a Law on Family Business similar to the one adopted in Uzbekistan in 2012 (also Moldova and Azerbaijan) in support of the development of family businesses.
- Development of business support programs and improving the business environment, Strengthening government regulatory mechanisms to control prices.
- Effective use of land resources (through investments into machineries, increasing capacity in the field of land management, the use of new technologies etc.).
- Assistance from international organizations especially food assistance and vocational training and retraining programs.
- Rational use of family budgets, including remittances.
- More involvement of local women in the planning stages and decision making process of projects by international organizations.

Recommendations by Clusters

Group 1 Vorukh (Tajikistan) and Aksay (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment • Low income and poverty • Limited access to market and high market prices • Impacts of the financial crisis in Russia • Disadvantages when converting money to different currencies • High taxes 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Creation of joint workshops on processing and selling of vegetables ⇒ Learning skills from each other ⇒ Promoting free access to cross-border markets	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Creating jobs Installation of information boards in the markets and boxes for citizens' complaints Skills training Creating commissions to regulate market prices Tax breaks for individual entrepreneurs	Improving market conditions Attraction of investments

Vorukh/ Tajikistan	Support to small scale businesses and private enterprises, especially those that employ women	State grants targeting vocational training and job creation.
Aksay/ Kyrgyzstan	Opening small enterprises for processing local agricultural products to give the opportunity to farmers to add value to their products. Creation of small enterprises for processing of wool and carpet weaving. Creation of a fund to support exporters. Tax exemption or simplification of the taxation of individual entrepreneurs.	Support for domestic producers. Reducing the cost of product certification procedures. Increasing the capacity of small-scale producers in quality management. Work out a set of special measures to ensure the safety of people involved in cross-border trade and the protection of their property.
Group 2: Chorku, Ortoboz, Surkh (Tajikistan) and Samarkandek (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment (not enough jobs for men and women) • Low incomes • Volatility in market prices; • Frequent cases of bankruptcy • Small plots of land 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Creating workshops for carpet weaving, production of satin fabrics and Adras (cotton and silk) for women across borders ⇒ Opening of more kindergartens in each other's community ⇒ Vocational courses and skills training such as crafts for women (cooking, sewing) and men (welding, carpentry etc.). ⇒ Implementation of joint small scale economic projects	
	Practical Solutions	Strategic Solutions
Common solutions	Contacting employment centers to find jobs, organizing job fairs. Projects by state bodies and international community for female entrepreneurship. Creation of a commission to regulate prices. Opening of pre-school institutions (in Chorku and Ortoboz). Help for vulnerable families from the state budget.	The eradication of corruption Organization of good market conditions Education on rational use of land; The introduction of a simplified system for entrepreneurs
Chorku/ Tajikistan	Opening of small enterprises: - sale of ice cream, sour cream, yogurt. - sewing factory. - Weaving company. - Bakeries. Teaching business writing projects . Reducing rates or tax exemption of small household enterprises, small farms.	Expanding literacy for farmers Quality control in markets and control of prices Improving conditions for loans State support to dehkan farms and small businesses
Surkh/ Tajikistan	Humanitarian assistance from international organizations. State and NGO to promote the sale of food products and basic necessities at low prices. Job creation. Provision of the minimum cash pension in case of unemployment. Regulation of prices on the market by the state so that they do not exceed the minimum consumer basket.	Joint projects of the state and international organizations to support small businesses and the poor through organization of courses. Retraining programs for girls and women as seamstresses, teachers etc. The state should always have an alternative way out of the crisis, and build its strategic plans taking into account the crisis.
Samarkandek/ Kyrgyzstan	Creation of new industrial enterprises in villages which provide employment for people, reduce dependence on the dollar rate fluctuations and remittances.	Creating jobs, cutting taxes, raising wages. The development of transport communications.
Ortoboz/ Kyrgyzstan	Creation of mini workshops where women could produce hand made products such as carpets, bakeries, greenhouses etc.	Teaching women to make rational use of money, land, etc. and do business. Improving infrastructure. Regulating prices.

Group 3: Histevarz, Ovchi Kalachaa (Tajikistan) and Kulundu (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment (not enough jobs for men and women); • Low incomes • Poverty • Lack of favorable business environment • High market prices • Negative impact of the economic crisis in Russia, affecting changes in exchange rates • Large expenditures on activities such as weddings etc. • Low levels of knowledge in the field of management • Lack of infrastructure (lack of markets, banks in the village) 	
Joint activities suggested	<p>Opening of joint mini workshops on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • processing of dairy products, crops, dried fruits, • canning, • handicraft. <p>Organization of courses on financial literacy and business planning</p> <p>Introduction of innovative technologies</p>	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	<p>Installation of greenhouses and dryers for growing vegetables, canning.</p> <p>Keeping control of the exchange rate.</p> <p>Job creation: small pastry shops, handicraft shops.</p> <p>Expanding access to markets (through fairs and exhibitions).</p>	<p>Skills training for women in handicraft.</p> <p>Investing into the efficient use of land resources (equipment, training of farmers etc.).</p> <p>Establishing a system to adjust market prices.</p> <p>Education on the rational use of family budget.</p> <p>Improving local capacity taking into account existing human resources.</p> <p>Maintaining currency control.</p> <p>Introducing investments for the efficient use of land resources (equipment, training of farmers).</p>
Histevarz Histevarz/ Tajikistan	<p>Investing into job creation through restoring (factories, plants) and producing high quality, competitive products.</p> <p>Improving market infrastructure for example through establishing covered spaces with good sanitary facilities and hygiene standards.</p> <p>Tax cuts for individual entrepreneurs.</p> <p>State unemployment benefits should be provided to everyone who does not work.</p>	<p>Investing into the education of young cadres and specialists.</p> <p>Concluding international agreements on the simplification of legal employment of Tajik citizens in Russia.</p> <p>Expanding mutually beneficial trade with other countries.</p>
Ovchi Kalachaa / Tajikistan	<p>Subsidies from the state and international organizations to buy farm equipment.</p> <p>Installation of greenhouses</p> <p>Creation of shops on processing raspberry, milk and other products.</p> <p>Creating an indoor market, with convenient seats and benches.</p> <p>Providing social pensions for women.</p> <p>Providing support to small business, and releasing them from taxes for 3-5 years.</p>	<p>Teaching women to write business plans.</p> <p>Facilitating legislation on taxes, pension funds.</p> <p>Releasing real official statistics on unemployment</p> <p>Equalizing prices between cities and villages.</p>
Kulundu / Kyrgyzstan	<p>Conducting agricultural fairs. Controlling prices in the market and tight control over private markets.</p> <p>Opening trading facilities every day and not only on special schedule (now once a week).</p> <p>Introducing electronic posts in borders to facilitate crossings and eliminating the human factor.</p>	<p>Investing in equipment to work the land.</p>

2.

ENVIRONMENTAL INSECURITY

Main common environmental insecurity of women in the border area

- Lack of water for drinking and for household needs and watering gardens.
- Poor distribution of water resources and lack of binding agreements on the use of trans-boundary rivers
- Poor maintenance of water infrastructure
- Shortage of land for farming and construction (especially on Tajik side)
- Lack of places for proper disposal of waste and garbage, leading to practices that pollute the soil and water and lead to conflicts

Environmental insecurity is associated with limited natural resources for a rapidly growing population, land and water use in violation of agreed borders, mistrust each other and a desire to solve the problems unilaterally, without consulting the neighbors. One of the most acute insecurities noted by women on both side of the problem of environmental insecurity related to the deficit of natural resources, bad management of water, and economic activity that puts stress on the land and water.

Water scarcity and poor water management in Tajikistan

Water scarcity both for drinking and for irrigation purposes was the major complaint noted in all the villages in both sides of the border. In Surkh, only about 8.6% of the population of the village are supplied with drinking water due to the increase in tariffs for water supply. By women's own estimates, approximately 15-20% of households in the Jamoat of Vorukh use tap water, with the rest getting their water from a ditch. In Khistevarz, activists estimated that 70% population of the Jamoat were not provided with drinking water. "We are provided only a few hours of water per day. When there is no water, it is as if life stops. *Everything seems dirty and unwashed. I do not have time to water the garden, the trees have dried and it stresses me out. I take 2 buckets to the nearest well, 700 meters from my home with a bike and bring home water too cook; For me and other women, the shortage of water is a disaster,*" recounted a respondent from Khistevarz.

One of the most acute problems is associated with the distribution of water resources from the Isfarinka river, which is carried out through a system of canals. The failure to observe agreements for

water distribution due to lack of a mechanism of sanctions and enforcement has made the use of water an instrument of pressure over communities on both sides of the border. Ad hoc operation of outdated and poorly maintained water infrastructure further inflames the situation. The agreements on the distribution of the water canals are constantly broken as the population is growing on both sides and the volume of water does not meet the needs of all residents. "In this village, 240 families were given plots but people cannot cultivate or build on them given difficulty of access to water," noted a respondent from Surkh. They were counting on UNDP that had commissioned a pumping station to supply irrigation water.

Another problem is the poor quality of the water, with residents forced to use irrigation water for drinking because of lack of infrastructure. This adversely affects the health of residents, while adding to tensions and accusations among the two communities.

Shortage of clean water has led to infectious water born diseases, lack of enough water to wash and cook, low yields for agriculture as a result of lack of irrigation, and disputes between Kyrgyz and Tajik communities.

Water scarcity and poor water management in Kyrgyzstan

During the growing season, Kyrgyz villagers like those in Aksay complain of acute shortage of water, especially between June and August, due to the lack of government support to farm irrigation systems in general, and the poor condition of farm irrigation infrastructure. Moreover, villages on the Kyrgyz

side are considered to be downstream from the river and as a consequence get water that is less in quantity and more in contamination, as explained women of Aksay and Kulundu. Water is received in downstream villages through dug canals and ditches. While upstream villages located in Tajikistan get more water, water comes in insufficient quantities to downstream consumers.

One result of the water shortage is disincentive to invest in irrigation infrastructure to increase crop productivity on small-scale farmers. The problem may not be as much shortage of water for drinking and irrigation purposes as it may be the lack of adequate water supply network to distribute water to all residents and the need to repair canals.

Decision making channels are also inadequate and unfair. As a respondent from Samarkandek had mentioned, *“women have little access to the process of decision-making on water issues. Only two women head the association of urban water users ‘while 80% of those who use water are women’”*.

Lack of clean air / pollution in Tajikistan

In the Jamoat of Vorukh, there are no factories and businesses that pollute the air. The environment (air and water) is instead polluted mainly by waste emissions from the residents.

In the winter, in Khistevarz as elsewhere, because virtually all use coal for heating the housing, the air is polluted with smoke and soot.

Lack of clean air / pollution in Kyrgyzstan

The Kyrgyz inhabitants of Aksay complained that deforestation for the purpose of heating homes by the Tajiks (whose numbers are superior) brings environmental damage to the area.

The primary source of air transportation for border villages such as Aksay are emissions from road transportation. These environment pollutions are said to affect women’s health: fatigue, shortness of breath, insomnia etc.. Women respondents from Kulundu were more realistic about their own role: *“We complain about air pollution, but we do not think that almost every household has a car.”*

Land shortages in Tajikistan

On the Tajik side, Vorukh residents need to rely on pastures found in Kyrgyz territories to graze their

cattle. The problem of land shortage on the Tajik side of the Tajik population aggravates relations and Kyrgyz border villages on the issue of access to land and a direct relationship with the territorial claims of the two communities.

Lack of proper waste management in Tajikistan

The Jamoat of Vorukh, with its shortage of land, has no specifically allotted place for waste disposal and no proper waste collection and management system. Since there are no special places for garbage, people throw garbage anywhere. Most often it ditches and unused land. This leads to various diseases, environmental contamination.

The problem of garbage and waste management is acute elsewhere too, as for example in the Jamoat of Khistevarz. Respondents noted no special place for garbage disposal, garbage collection that only takes place from the central street in the village. Residents of Mahallas on the outskirts have to collect their own garbage or pay extra fees. *“Garbage is collected and distributed by the wind”*, said one woman from Khistevarz. Respondents also recalled how during the rainy season, outdoor toilets flood and overflow into the street and gardens and flow into the wells from which people drink.

Lack of proper waste management in Kyrgyzstan

Kyrgyz women activists similarly complained of the increase in the volume of waste in their villages, such as in Aksay, and the lack of technologies for proper collection and storage of household waste. Human waste, household waste, medical waste are all poured into water, contaminating it even further. Mothers have to constantly monitor their children not to pick up the garbage thrown by neighbors. As a respondent comically put it in Ortoboz, *“the neighbor turns away, I throw my garbage in her garden. I turn away, she throws it back.”*

Trans border consequences

Water as source of dispute

One of the main problem in these border communities is a problem of access to irrigation and drinking water. The source of water for the border communities is the Khoja-Bakirgan Canal, which was built in 1953 on the river Khoja Bakirgan with dam water intake. The length of the canal is 23 km, and it irrigates 8,000 hectares of land bordering the two communities. Conflicts around the border are not associated with an acute

shortage of water per se but the uneven distribution and rational use and what each community considers as violations of agreements on the other side to limit the use of water on both sides.

The strategy of water allocation and water use in the region was developed during the Soviet period in the mid-50s of the last century, and has not been revised ever since even though the social and political conditions have been radically changed. Every year, at the height of the irrigation season, there are many cases of incidents arise among water users in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan especially along the Leilek water resources in Batken and the Babajan Ghafurov district.

Another problem in these border areas is the problem of the release of domestic waste in the border areas, as well as the release of waste into the channels on the territory of Jamoat of Ovchi Karacha, which is the source of drinking water.

Water conflicts, as well as other conflicts over access to natural resources, have a number of root causes, including:

- High population growth and expanding base for users.
- Lack of revision of old agreements.
- The absence of mechanisms to reinforce existing agreements and penalize non-compliance.
- Poor technical condition of existing water supply systems and irrigation infrastructure.
- The low level of tolerance between communities
- The absence or weakness of the capacity of local communities to manage and prevent conflicts.
- Interventions by the security forces in the conflict, which only add fuel to local disputes.

Any technical solutions of water and other problems without delimitation and demarcation of borders between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan may lead to increased tension and confrontation between border communities. While solutions need to be found urgently, not enough use has been made of the potential of civil society, NGOs, as well as mechanisms of “people’s diplomacy”.

Water disputes seen by Tajiks

The most acute problem is the lack of water for drinking and for household needs and watering gardens. In the Soviet period between the Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic and the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic an agreement on the division of the amount of water it

has been signed between the two parties. As a result of this agreement, 79% of water from the Baghlan River was given to the Tajik side and 21% - to the Kyrgyz side. Currently, relevant departments of regional water resources of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are responsible for the monitoring and control of water distribution management issues. However, the agreed proportion of the water distribution is not properly enforced. In the spring and summer months, Kyrgyz communities often taken more water, which cause discontentment among the residents of Tajik villages.

In July 10 2014, a confrontation began after 30 Vorukh residents tried to lay a water pipe from Karavshin/Isfarinka River in Kyrgyz territory to the village of Bedak in Vorukh enclave. Kyrgyz border guards ordered the work to stop because it was in the disputed area. This led to a dispute with Tajik border guards which resulted in an exchange of fire that left seven border guards injured from both sides and one Tajik citizen dead. The residents Vorukh, noted women in their findings, still do not understand why Kyrgyzstan does not allow them to lay a pipe as it does not change the border lines nor diminish their water access. This topic has still not been discussed face to face in public, leading to resentments.

A particularly acute problem of conflict is the use of resources (water, gravel and sand) from the Isfarinka river. Respondents from Chorku recounted how last year a conflict erupted when Tajiks were prohibited from entering the Kyrgyz territory with their special trucks to gather gravel from the river, while the Kyrgyz had been allowed to collect the sand and gravel in the territory of the Jamoat Chorku.

As recounted by a respondent from Chorku, *“the source of the river Isfarinka originates from the Kyrgyz territory and they believe that the river belongs to them, although mixed populations live in the territory. In winter, there is not enough water for irrigation. There are villages that receive water once a year”*. What is certain is that the water disputes impact women mostly, because they need water for cooking, household purposes, watering their gardens and their agriculture plots. Given that more and more women manage farms in the region, they are left with the need to go defend their right to water.

Water disputes seen by Kyrgyz

Another problem raised was the removal of pebbles, gravel and sand from the river by local communities on both side to be used as construction material. Every day, noted the women of Aksay, between 100 and 200

trucks of gravel and sand are transported through the region on their way to Tajik villages, affecting and changing not only the flow in the water basin but also the quality of air as dust moves around.

Use of pastures in Tajikistan

Access to land is also one of the most contentious factors, both within the Tajik communities and in relations with neighboring Kyrgyz communities. With the growth of population in Vorukh there is a shortage of land suitable for living and farming, with such pastures only in the valleys, in Kyrgyz territory. Land for grazing is especially a thorny issue that exacerbates tense inter-ethnic situation. Given that the cattle is one of the main sources of income for all the communities in this area, the key problem is access to pastures. This problem largely affects the population Vorukh as pastures are mainly located on Kyrgyz territory. Residents fear that over time, access will become increasingly limited to grazing their livestock on the pretext of the negative impact on the environment and degradation of pasture lands.

In the future, as land for pasture and water for irrigation is expected to dwindle as a result of environmental conditions, increased economic activity and the unregulated use of those resources, conflicts could be expected to rise. As preventive measures, Kyrgyz inhabitants seek to sharply limit the use of their pastures to the cattle of Tajik households, which by itself can lead to more disputes and tensions if not properly explained. While disputed territories and water resources are being resolved, a solution for the joint use of pastures needs to be found to prevent the degradation of inter-ethnic relations in the future.

A woman from Ovchi Kalachaa illustrated the problem: *"I have 6 hectares of land, but the Kyrgyz say it is illegal for me to work on it. I go seek the help of the Jamoat administration, and they tell me to continue working, and try to avoid conflict. The government is slow in claiming our land and giving us certificates. It is not progressing fast enough."*

Land encroachment in Kyrgyzstan

Another point of contingency between Tajiks and Kyrgyz is the purchase of Kyrgyz lands by citizens of Tajikistan, given shortages on their side of border. The problem for the Tajiks is that they are unsure of the laws and wary of building less their houses are taken away from them. On the Kyrgyz side, people are wary of what they consider "creeping migration", assuming that the Tajiks will buy all their lands.

Use of waste

As explained by the women of Vorukh, one surprising weapon that was used in the conflict between communities was the disposal of waste in each other's courtyards, although this practice seems to have abated according to respondents, now that the Kyrgyz have cleared some land and declared a penalty of 1000 sums for improper garbage disposal. At nights, Tajik families used to throw their waste onto the plots of their Kyrgyz neighbors and vice versa. Both sides however understand that this is due primarily to the lack of proper mechanisms for waste collection in their own villages.

SAMPLE OF WHAT IS BEING DONE

Tajikistan

Government

- Measures are being taken to protect the environment by state bodies of the environmental safety monitoring structures (for example, planting trees etc.) (Chorku).
- Where there is no water, efforts are made to carry water through special equipment, dig reservoirs etc. (Chorku).
- The state organizes fairs of trees and saplings and builds fountains and also cleaning (Ovchi Kalachaa).

Mahallas and local governments

- Representatives of the Mahallas and villages are trying to conduct awareness raising campaigns on the negative impacts of environmental pollution among the populations (Surkh).
- The district administration, with the help of the private sector, rehabilitated the water supply lines to replace pipes to irrigate more than 250 hectares of land in Surkh.
- Local Mahalla administrations and local associations together have held contests on 'green patrol' to raise awareness of the population on environmental protection (Histevarz).
- Local administrations conduct awareness campaign among women and young people to explain the dangers of water shortages to reduce the risks of conflicts.
- The Mahalla administration carries out advocacy campaigns, competition etc. (Ovchi Kalachaa).

Local Associations and people

- NGOs have organized campaigns to lean irrigation ditches and canals and collect household waste. (Histevarz).
- Women have formed a collective to collect plastic, cups etc. and hand them over to collection points (Ovchi Kalachaa).
- Public organizations are conducting forum.
- The local government has encouraged voluntary work for brigades to clean ditches, plan trees, tend to gardens of the streets, etc.

International organizations

- UNDP helped put in place a pumping stages to supply the residents of the Gulistan Mahala with irrigation water. This has also helped decrease community tensions and resolve disputes between neighbors and cross-border communities over water shortage (Surkh).
- International organizations have installed trash cans and conducted workshops on environmental protection (Histevarz). The Agha Khan Foundation has allocated large sums to organize advocacy campaigns.

Kyrgyzstan

Local government

- Some local governments are investing large sums of money for purifying water in their districts, and working with the population for the collection and disposal of waste, instigating penalties for littering (such is the case for example for the local government in Aksay and in Kulundu).
- State authorities are trying to tackle the problem of environmental insecurity by cleaning ditches, planting trees, investing in aqueducts etc. (Ortoboz); building parks (Samarkandek).

- Awareness raising activities are carried out to alleviate the problem of deforestation(Aksay), forest fires, garbage dumping etc. (Kulundu).

Associations

- People are contributing to garbage removal, tree planting, collective work (Subotniks), raising awareness (Samarkandek).

International organizations

- Some international organizations are involved in improving access to water, such as ACTED in Aksay.
- UNDP has been engaged in reconstructing the cross-border water channels to reduce water loss through filtering (Samarkandek).

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? WOMEN'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations from women of both countries can be summarized as followed:

- Restoration and improvement of drinking water supply, waste disposal and garbage.
- Regulation through intergovernmental agreement on the use of drinking and irrigation water networks and a proper schedule for use of water by transborder communities.
- Installation and reconstruction of pump stations, irrigation water pipeline
- The need to teach the rational use of water.
- Installation of trash cans in villages, Mahallas and public areas.
- Creation of small businesses for the collection and disposal of garbage.
- Organization of join cleanup operations (and hasher) between communities.

Recommendations by Clusters

Group 1 Vorukh (Tajikistan) and Aksay (Kyrgyzstan)	
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of clean drinking water and irrigation water.• Air pollution due to the use of generators.• Problems of collecting household waste, the lack of places to deposit trash and lack of waste removal system leading to air pollution etc.
Joint activities suggested	<ul style="list-style-type: none">⇒ Creation of joint propaganda teams to conduct explanatory work on the collection and disposal of waste.⇒ Joint projects to provide drinking and irrigation water.⇒ Joint Subotniks to clean canals, villages etc.

	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Organizing water distribution schedules to cover all populations. Control of the chlorination of water and water bodies. Creating mini sewage treatment plants. Installation of garbage bins in public places. Imposing fines for waste emission in inappropriate places.	Strengthening the capacity of the Environmental Protection Committee . Launching education campaigns on environment protection. Educating communities on the rational use of water.
Vorukh / Tajikistan	Mahallas to organize tree planting, subtonics to clean ditches and collect waste. Provision of clean tap water for the entire population. Dedication of places dedicated to dumping waste. Organization of "Hashar" for cleaning villages.	Governments of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to resolve the issue of water at the highest levels. Involvement of local authorities and women in cross border negotiations. Raising awareness of environment protection.
Aksay / Kyrgyzstan	Installing containers for waste collection and management to cover all the needs of rural populations.	Raising awareness of populations to care for their gardens, plots and observe cleanliness. Education programs on conflict prevention, saving water and natural resources.

Group 2: Chorku, Ortoboz, Surkh (Tajikistan) and Samarkandek (Kyrgyzstan)

Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of water. • Irrational use of water. • Lack of waste management system. 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Joint agreements on the use of the water systems. ⇒ Joint agreements on the release of debris. ⇒ Creation of joint education campaigns on the need to protect the environment, collect and disposal waste and rational use of water. ⇒ Joint projects to provide drinking and irrigation water. ⇒ Joint Subotniks.	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Investing in machines for waste collection in a systematic manner. Ensuring access to clean water for all. Set fines for waste emission in inappropriate places. Creating mini sewage treatment plants.	Launching education campaigns for the rational use of water . Education campaigns on environment protection. Create a mini sewage treatment plant.
Chorku / Tajikistan	Creating programs for the processing of household waste. Organization small enterprises for waste management through government grants. Organizations "Green Patrols" International organizations to support projects aimed at solving the problems of waste collection and management Upgrading the pumping stations and the main sanitary equipment Introducing new technologies for disinfection and filtration of water.	Enforcing the capacity of the environment protection departments at the national and local levels. Regulating and resolving the issue of water at the local and highest level
<u>Samarkandek / Kyrgyzstan</u>	Cleaning the ponds, lakes and rivers. Ensuring transparency within water users associations, asking them to provide quarterly reports to users Monitoring the chlorination of water	Starting environment protection education from kindergartens.
<u>Ortoboz / Kyrgyzstan</u>	Building toilets and sanitation facilities in the right places Organizing regular collection, use and disposal of garbage	Concluding agreements with the Tajik side on water use Conducting seminars on improving the environment
Surkh / Tajikistan	Creating conditions for proper waste disposal and monitoring on behalf of local government Organizing villagers to patrol and monitor and control proper waste disposal	Developing a system for penalizing environmental pollution

Group 3: Histevarz, Ovchi Kalacha (Tajikistan) and Kulundu (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clean drinking and irrigation water • The absence of proper waste management system • Air pollution from exhaust gases (car diesel transformers) 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Organization of joint information campaigns on waste collection ⇒ Conducting joint activities for the chlorination and purification of water in the reservoirs and irrigation ditches ⇒ Installation of waste containers ⇒ Joint collection of garbage	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Improving waste disposal systems Organizing joint promotional activities and waste collection Carrying out joint activities to chlorination and purification of water in the reservoirs and irrigation ditches; Installation of waste containers Organizing tree planting activities Expanding water channels	Education on respect for the environment Enforcing the regular changing of vehicle filters and regular monitoring by state bodies Creation of a Commission on the equal distribution of water resources
Histevarz / Tajikistan	Protecting ditches so that people don't litter them Creating workshops for recycling Placing special containers and intensifying waste collection	Disseminating information on the need for proper waste disposal as a matter of disease prevention
<u>Ovchi Kalacha / Tajikistan</u>	Constant removal of waste The establishment of private small enterprises for garbage collection Building a power plant,	Providing the population with constant electricity. Ensuring access to drinking water Prohibiting the burning of leaves and waste and cutting down of trees
<u>Kulundu / Kyrgyzstan</u>	Repairing roads Organizing joint Subbotniks and Hashars for tree planting, cleaning of canals and roads, etc. Teach women's careful treatment of the environment and prevention of diseases.	Organizing seminars for environmental protection for the youth Educating women on the careful treatment of the environment and the prevention of spread of diseases

3.

HEALTH INSECURITY

Main common health insecurity of women in the border area

- Poor quality of drinking water leading to health problems.
- Diseases from drinking contaminated irrigation water.
- Spread of infectious diseases (diarrhea, hepatitis, typhoid etc.).
- Poor diet and malnutrition.
- Prevalence of anemia and diseases of the endocrine system.
- High stress levels.
- Inadequate sanitation.
- Lack of access to quality health services and proper diagnosis of diseases in border villages, especially on the Kyrgyz side.
- Expensive and inadequate medical services, expensive treatments.
- Shortage of qualified medical personnel.
- Increase in the number of diseases due to migration is a concern (tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases, etc.), but the high price of health care services keep women on the timely treatment to specialists.
- Alcohol and drug abuse, especially among communities not under the strict influence of Islam.

Infectious diseases and water-born diseases in Tajikistan

The difficult conditions of life, namely the hours of physical labor, scant diet, lack of rest, constant stress, poor-quality water (such as drinking, using irrigation water) negatively affect the health of women and children. Economic problems is the high level of morbidity, especially among women. Forced to work long hours, eat poorly, not being able to be treated in time and have a rest, to live in constant stress, chronically ill woman. This also added to the problem of water quality, waste pollution and the pressure in the family, if the husband does not work.

The absence of a functioning water system and the use of contaminated water, non-compliance with hygiene standards and the low level of knowledge about the disease and ways of infection, lack of qualified medical staff and the remoteness from the central medical institutions has led to high levels of illness, particularly infectious diseases.

The number of people living in the Jamoat Vorukh who have become ill with infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, acute respiratory infections and various intestinal infections. According to women respondents, the causes are primary due to the deteriorating living conditions of the inhabitants, the non-observance of elementary norms of hygiene, poor-quality health care services, polluted air, water and the environment and the fact that people are not seeking timely medical help.

Water has been and remains a major problem for residents of Vorukh, Chorku and Khistevarz. The problem is both water shortage and the shortage of clean water for consumption. Many residents have fallen ill from drinking from irrigation ditches and canals in Chorku and Vorukh. As one Chorku respondent noted, “in one village people water their cows and sheep from ditches and women wash their linens, while residents of another village downstream drink from this stream”. Respondents in Ovchi Kalacha recounted an epidemic of typhoid fever 5 years ago. Since then many infectious diseases have been recorded: tuberculosis, syphilis, hepatitis, etc. In Surkh, respondents complained about the lack of awareness about the dangers of water contamination among women. Toilets are located close to the irrigation ditches, polluting water and leading to various diseases. In Khistevarz, carbon monoxide poisoning and deaths were reported from leaky charcoal fueled stoves. Cases of Hepatitis C are growing from lack of hygiene in dental and gynecological offices in Khistevarz.

Infectious diseases and water-born diseases in Kyrgyzstan

The main problem of health insecurity described by women in Aksay had to do with the spread of diseases as a result of contaminated water. Lack of proper waste management and bad disposal of used medical supplies near settlements have contaminated the water that people drink. This problem also has to do with the lack of proper pipelines reaching households.

Each year, the country recorded about 30,000 acute intestinal infections, and the share of illnesses related to the parasitic, accounts for 24% of all cases. Only 535 of the total of 1.4 thousand people in the village of Kulundu get drinking water through pipes in Kulundu. Most local families in the village use the water from the well. Idle water in the well is a source of various infectious diseases.

According to the Kyrgyz Ministry of Health, in some rural areas from 61 to 79% of cases of disease of children (ascariasis, giardiasis and hymenolepiasis) stem from the lack of access to safe drinking water. Other diseases result from the consumption of unwashed fruits and vegetables, and perishable food products purchased in unauthorized places of trade, as well as failure to comply with hygiene requirements.

Malnutrition is also an acute cause of health insecurity in border villages. As a respondent from Kulundu recounted, ““ Our diet mainly consists of pasta, rice, flour, milk, and seasonal vegetables and fruits grown in the garden. For months, we do not eat meat. We also do not have enough money for sugar.”

Other diseases recorded are typhoid, polio, and intestinal infections. Furthermore, there have been cases of teenage death from plague disease from the bite of a marmot while grazing near the slope of mountain ranges in Aksay village.

Given the distribution of labor within households, contamination puts women more at risk who come more in contact with water for their housework. In Kulundu, women talked of suffering allergies and respiratory track diseases as a result of the dirty environment.

Lack of access to quality health care in the medical center / hospital in Tajikistan

“According to the constitution in Tajikistan medicine is free, however, all institutions demand expensive treatments from patients... Good doctors have left, diagnosis capabilities are very weak and expensive, and if one does not pay, one does not get quality treatment”, respondents from Khistevarz explained a general feeling. Despite the fact that in 2015, healthcare financing increased by one million Somonis nationwide, the quality of medical services and protection of public health is poor in villages such as Vorukh. According to respondents, there is a lack of qualified professionals in the village, and hospitals are far away. Inhabitants have to carry their patients

to the Isfara Hospital some 45 kilometers away, over roads that are complicated by the need to drive through Kyrgyz territory. Respondents from Chorku similarly lamented the needs to spend money and efforts to reach major towns for the necessary high-quality medical services

Activities from Surkh noted the lack of competence of doctors and the high cost of medical services forcing women to stop their treatment prematurely.

Lack of access to quality health care in the medical center / hospital in Kyrgyzstan

Malnutrition, hard physical work, stress, unsafe drinking water and inadequate sanitation provoke high levels of morbidity, especially infectious diseases. The residents of Ortoboz for example have medical insurance policies, but the lack of the necessary expertise in the village forces them to apply to the medical institutions of Tajikistan, where these policies are not accepted. According to women activists in Ortoboz, there is one maternity ward, one nurse, a mid-wife and a dentist in their village, and these are not highly skilled.

Women of Aksay complained about expensive medical treatments and lack of insurance possibilities. In our region, they wrote, there are not enough doctors, paramedics or midwives.

In Kyrgyzstan, compulsory health insurance/ cash funds are intended to finance state-guaranteed medical care. In rural areas, however, there are no conditions for full treatment. As across the border in Vorukh for example, women of Aksay have to go to the center of their region to seek proper treatment. The women of Kulundu go across the border to Khojend. But in Tajikistan, their Kyrgyz medical insurance schemes are not accepted. As a woman from Ortoboz explained, “*we have great benefits in Kyrgyzstan, but because of lack of specialists, we have to get treatment in Tajikistan and pay three times more for expenses.*”

STDs and HIV Aids in Kyrgyzstan

Sexually transmitted Infections have also spread among women as a result of migration of men. Another health insecurity plaguing border communities, especially those hosting migrant returnees is HIV infections and AIDs. As the respondents mentioned in Aksay, migrants are not aware of HIV/AID risks and contaminate their wives when they return.

6214 Kyrgyz citizens have been reported as infected with HIV/AIDS. The number of infections among women. Cases of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) infected from men returning from labor migration were also noted in Khistevarz.

Stress and mental health in Tajikistan

Women respondents put a lot of emphasis on the problem of stress caused by everyday problems and concerns over education for children, feeding families, making ends meet etc. Everyday problems related to lack of income and unemployment has also led to more violence in households among men and women. As a woman from Surkh put it: "Stress is a normal condition of rural women in *our times*."

Stress and mental health in Kyrgyzstan

Women in the Kyrgyz side also complained about high stress and maladies of nervous origin because of worries and stress over poverty, inability to make ends meet, heavy household chores and lack of popper resting possibilities, with TV providing the only source of entertainment. "*When everyone in the village barely makes ends meet, everyone suffers from stress and nervous breakdowns are constant at home everywhere, in homes, in the streets, in the market,*" lamented a woman from Aksay. Respondents from Ortoboz claimed that up to 80-90% of women suffered from stress.

Alcoholism in Tajikistan

Women activists pointed out to a growing problem within the village, that of increasing number of people who consume alcohol. This seems to be a problem especially among unemployed men, especially those that have returned from Russia and banned from going back and cannot find work. Their numbers however is not large because the population of Vorukh remains deeply religious and Islam strictly forbids alcohol and drinking. Nonetheless, Unemployment, debt, bankruptcy have increased vulnerability to alcohol consumption and various types of petty criminality, such as theft, hooliganism etc. Alcohol consumption leads to various diseases (cirrhosis of the liver, stomach problems, depletion of the nervous system) as well as conflicts and quarrels within the family. Women of Khistevarz complained that their young people go to night clubs on the territory of Kyrgyzstan where they spend their money drinking, and that many of the men labor migrants who have been deported from Russia return depressed and pick up drinking out of despair. As for alcoholism among

women, they put it comically:" *Two types of women drink in our societies: Those have no problems and those who have a lot of problems.*"

Alcoholism in Kyrgyzstan

Use of alcohol was also recorded among women activists on the Kyrgyz side. Aksay women for example mentioned that the use of alcohol has led to hepatitis and liver damage but also to the disintegration of families, disrespect of neighbors, friend and relatives etc. Focus group discussions in Kulundu revealed the high-level consumption of alcohol by men, but also to an extent of women.

Disability as a result of in-breeding in Tajikistan

A number of case of disability among children in Vorukh has been related to the problem of marriages among family members. Children have been born with limb defects, congenital hydrocephalus, heart failure, and nervous diseases. Families have also been torn apart as a result of children being born with disabilities when young people getting married fail to pass the preliminary medical examination.

Consequences

Additional expenses in Tajikistan

The consequences of diseases is additional strain on the family budget for seeking treatment. People are forced to spend a lot of money on medical care and conflicts have been known to arise in families about the waste of money for treatment.

Conflicts within households in Kyrgyzstan

Religious families, for example as explained by women in Aksay, reject the vaccination against measles and rubella, and it became a source of conflict within families. Husbands often blame their wives in the birth of a disabled child. Women are afraid to disclose of disease in early stages because of expenses, leading to more complications.

Cross-border consequences

Accusations and emotions in Tajikistan

The fact that a number of people have fallen ill by drinking contaminated water has led to conflicts between Kyrgyz and Tajik families accusing each other of polluting ditches and ponds.

High tensions and emotions from everyday problems and low standards of living create misunderstandings in the family, lack of tolerance towards others and psychological and physical violence. As one respondent put it, “All nerves have reached their limits. As soon as there is a small excuse for a conflict, people do not control their emotions and unleash verbal abuses that exacerbated the fights.”

Accusations and emotions in Kyrgyzstan

Women of Aksay also reported on blaming of other communities for spreading diseases, for polluting water with garbage, etc.

SAMPLE OF WHAT IS BEING DONE

Tajikistan

Government

- For families with low income, the government organizes free medicine, free medical examination and free consultation by specialists (Chorku).
- During an outbreak, a special government commission went house to house to chlorinate water (Histevarz).
- Employees of state institutions (schools, hospitals, etc.), are tested for infectious diseases every six months (Histevarz).
- The state has approved a National Program on the fight against iodine and on the prevention of iron deficiency and anemia in the Republic. Funds have been allocated but the impact is still small. The state conducts vaccination and provides a cure for anemia for women up to 35 years.

Associations

- Associations and medical institutions are raising awareness on the prevention of infectious diseases, especially through contaminated water, through seminars, meetings and public information days (Vorukh, Chorku, Surkh).
- The Mahallas carry out preventive measures for the prevention of alcoholism and drug addiction (Vorukh, Chorku).
- People suffering from alcoholism and drug addiction are continuously monitored (Chorku).
- The Women’s Committee conducts outreach campaign on the harmfulness of alcohol and drug abuse through the media, TV spots etc. (Surkh). They also organize meetings with women to identify dysfunctional families and work with them (Histevarz).

- The clergy is also involved in advocating against the drinking of alcohol and drug abuse in mosques (Histevarz).
- Doctors are involved to meetings in Jamoats to explain the harmful consequences of consanguineous marriages among relative. (Histevarz) and of the important of water sanitation (Ovchi Kalacha).
- Civil society organizations provide hotline services (Histevarz).

Private sector

- Private clinics and diagnostic centers are opening around the region (Histevarz)
- Clinics distribute medicines to reduce the spread of parasitic infestations for children and adolescents up to 15 years.

International organizations

- The OSCE is supporting a resource center where women can get psychosocial help, legal advice etc. (Vorukh).
- WHO provides humanitarian aid (Histevarz)
- International organizations conduct free diagnosis for drug addicts (Histevarz) and HIV/AIDs (Ovchi Kalacha). They give out disposal syringes to drug addicts (Ovchi Kalacha).
- With the support of international organizations, reproductive health centers distribute means of protection against unwanted pregnancy (Ovchi Kalacha).
- UNDP is building pipelines to carry water for needy Mahallas (Histevarz).

Kyrgyzstan

Government

- Each year, the fight against diseases transmitted through drinking water, costs the state an amount of 4.8 billion sums.
- The state is responsible for building new FAPs (medical and obstetric centers) and health facilities (Ortoboz).
- State institutions are increasingly relying on private institutions/private sector (Samarkandek).
- The state has approved and implemented more than 19 government programs, including anemia, hypertension, alcohol, smoking, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition, parasitic diseases, malaria, etc. (Samarkandek).
- The Kyrgyz Academy of Education has helped introduce the subject of “Healthy Lifestyle”

has been approved for use in the curriculum of educational institutions (Samarkandek) Civil society organizations and the State of conduct information campaigns on disease prevention (Aksay).

Public associations

- NGOs are carrying out advocacy against narcotics use, especially among young people (Kulundu).
- Advocacy materials and guideline are regularly published and distributed on public health (how to disinfect, how to handle used syringes in health care settings etc.) (Samarkandek).
- The media often run programs advertising against the danger of alcohol, smoking, drugs (Samarkandek).
- NGOs carry out frequent awareness-raising campaigns among students. (Samarkandek)
- The Republican AIDS Center conducts seminars on prevention among school children and vulnerable populations (Aksay).
- NGOs advocate for the toughening the punishment for drinking alcohol in public places and introducing amendments to the Administrative Code (Aksay).

International organizations

- International organizations are assisting NGOs in procuring equipment for medical clinics (Kulundu). They also conduct joint studies and research on epidemics etc.

- The Red Cross conducted a tuberculosis program in 2015 (Ortoboz).

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? WOMEN'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations from women of both countries can be summarized as followed:

- Strengthening of preventive measures.
- Development of health infrastructure for accessible and affordable medical services.
- Training of medical staff from among local youth.
- Continuous monitoring of women suffering from various chronic diseases: anemia, iodine deficiency, etc. in clinics and health centers.
- Purification and chlorination of water sources.
- Information campaigns on disease prevention, causes and consequences of diseases.
- Strengthening of the technical and professional capacity of health care facilities.
- Developing mechanisms and rules admitting patients, including foreign citizens in hospitals and health centers.
- Control over the quality of medications and diagnostic services.
- Introducing the subject of "Healthy Lifestyle" in the curriculum of primary education.
- Training of psychologists and social workers to help women with stress control.
- Integrated programs for alcoholics and drug addicts and tighter control of drug trafficking on the border.

Recommendations by Clusters

Group 1 Vorukh (Tajikistan) and Aksay (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of access to quality health care and adequate insurance • Lack of trained health workers (such as surgeons) • Late referral to doctors by women • The prevalence of anemia and genetic diseases resulting from consanguineous marriages • Trauma and stress as a result of domestic violence • Diseases from contaminated water (typhoid, others) • Alcohol consumption (Aksay) 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Organization of joint information campaigns (including on the purification of water) ⇒ Medical services of Tajikistan made more user friendly for Kyrgyz citizens ⇒ Exchange of know how between medical personnel ⇒ Access to a lawyer and psychologist consultations to Kyrgyz citizens (specifically through the Jamoat Support Center at Vorukh)	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Allocation of quotas for medical students Creation of infrastructure in health facilities (modern equipment, hot water, etc.) Control of the quality and prices of medicines Keeping clear statistics on maternal morbidity and mortality rates Making available psychological counseling	Improving the qualification of physicians Educating the population in healthy lifestyles Training doctors in primary care and in infectious diseases

Vorukh / Tajikistan	Instigate mandatory vaccination Mahallas to organize frequent "Hashars" for the purification of water, cleaning the environment etc. Allocation of funds for the construction of new hospitals. Allocation of quotas for future doctors	The state with local authorities become responsible for providing access to clean water Launching education campaigns for the prevention of diseases through sanitary practices Health workers to work with communities on family planning, health and sanitation etc. Healthcare workers to organize psycho-social work with pregnant women Mahalla and Jamoat committees and NGOs to take measures to prevent alcohol and drug abuse.
Aksay / Kyrgyzstan	For local government to monitor wells and provide certification of rural water supply Equip villages with medical facilities for the maternal wellbeing, diagnosis facilities for blood tests etc.	Preservation of the environment. Increasing the price of alcoholic beverages Informing migrants about methods of disease transmission

Group 2: Chorku, Ortoboz, Surkh (Tajikistan) and Samarkandek (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of access to quality health care and adequate insurance • Spread of infectious diseases, including through water • Alcohol and drug use (Samarkandek) • Stress and mental health problems 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Joint health projects among medical personnel on both sides of the borders ⇒ Organization of joint information campaigns for preventive measures	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Purification of water reservoirs and irrigation ditches; Ensuring that women refer to medical institutions in early stages of a disease Controlling the sale of alcoholic beverages Implementing integrated and free programs for alcoholics Monitoring the quality of laboratories The state to reduce prices for medicines and control their quality Providing new equipment medical centers and hospitals, and specialists who will work for them	Training physicians and improving their qualifications for proper diagnosis Educating the population on healthy lifestyle and the use of boiled water Informing the population about the benefits of insurance Training of Psychologists; Allocation of quotas for medical students Training doctors in infectious diseases Educating the population in healthy lifestyle and disease prevention (use of boiled water, to see a doctor in the early stages of sickness) through information campaigns
Chorku / Tajikistan	The government, international organizations, and wealthy people to provide support and assistance for the operation of hospitals Invite qualified doctors in training Opening of crisis centers or helplines	Training of doctors and nurses in new methodologies and diagnosis Campaigning and advocacy to inform people of the benefits of insurance schemes Implementing programs to improve the skills of rural doctors Introducing the subject of psychology in schools and preparing specialists among rural Strengthening legislation to ban the use of alcohol and drugs Religious leaders and elders to publicly discuss the problem of alcoholism and drug addiction
Samarkandek / Kyrgyzstan	Building a properly equipped medical institution in rural areas	Educating populations on the proper use of water and proper nutrition
Ortoboz / Kyrgyzstan	Constructing more water pipes for clean water Equipping health facilities with modern equipment Monitoring the work of doctors, particularly for the protection of mothers and children	Campaigning through of elders about the dangers of alcohol. Implementing a program of quotas for students from rural areas in medical schools with subsequent employment in rural areas
Surkh / Tajikistan	Cleaning water ditches and canals Distribution of free medicines as humanitarian assistance Opening a Center for the treatment of alcohol and narcotics addiction	Supporting the admission of rural girls and boys to medical institutions Constant monitoring of the qualifications of health professionals

Group 3: Histevarz, Ovchi Kalacha (Tajikistan) and Kulundu (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread of infectious diseases (hepatitis, typhoid etc.) especially those due to polluted water • Prevalence of anemia, diseases of the endocrine system and congenital diseases • Mental health problems from stress • Lack of access to quality health services • Lack of children's sanatoriums and camps (Kulundu) • Lack of adequate sanitization facilities (toilets and public baths) 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Organizing regular Open Health Days to extend diagnosis facilities to citizens of Kyrgyzstan in Tajikistan ⇒ Organizing bilateral Subbotniks ⇒ Supporting clinics that admit foreign patients	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Investing in boosting the performance of medical institutions Improving access to medicine by opening more pharmacies Improving the health insurance system Ensuring the supply of clean drinking water	Educating population on healthy lifestyles, the correct use of medicine and prevention of various infectious diseases Training psychologists and social workers
Histevarz / Tajikistan	Ensuring adequate insurance coverage and affordable medicine for vulnerable social groups Ensuring access to health services and compulsory insurance for all Organizing internships and specialization courses for practitioners in places such as Russia and Germany	Boosting the qualification of doctors Educating the public of the benefits of insurance Training more psychologists and social workers Propagating the dangers of alcohol and drug addiction through the media
<u>Ovchi Kalacha / Tajikistan</u>	Diagnosis and analysis made available and cheap Ensuring treatment is made affordable and of good quality Increasing the professionalism of doctors Toughening up the laws to punish for the distribution and use of narcotics	Opening sports facilities and playgrounds for a healthy lifestyle Using the media to educate populations about diseases and preventive measures
<u>Kulundu / Kyrgyzstan</u>	Creation of new leisure places Ensuring the supply of clean drinking water for villages Constructing and equipping new Diagnostic Centers	Using the media to propagate the harms of alcohol Training qualified personnel Organizing seminars to educate women on the prevention of infectious diseases Raising awareness about insurance and its benefits.

4.

FOOD INSECURITY

Main common food insecurity of women in the border area

- Poor quality of drinking water
- Poor quality food, expired products in markets etc. and lack of access to quality food due to low incomes
- Unbalanced nutrition
- Lack of control over the quality of food
- Insufficient knowledge of the population about the rules of proper nutrition (diet, vitamins benefit)
- The lack of vegetable storage and storage facilities
- Overuse of chemicals in agriculture

Low quality standards in Tajikistan

While access to food may not be a problem, quality of products available on the market are more questionable. Respondents from Vorukh, like elsewhere, worried about the lack of knowledge as to whether the perishable products on the markets are regularly inspected for their quality and expiry dates.

Lack of access to quality food in Kyrgyzstan

Women on the Kyrgyz side similarly complained of lack of control over sanitary and hygiene conditions on foods sold in markets. In Ortoboz for example, they also mentioned that food tends to spoil faster given the low voltage electricity in their villages which render dysfunctional the refrigerators. During the conflicts with the Tajiks, Kyrgyz women could not sell their agriculture products, which led to bankruptcy among small traders. “We kept our products a few days in the hope they will sell but when the conflict continued, our fruits and vegetables became sour. I myself had to eat the products spoiled by the crisis”, lamented a trader from Ortoboz.

In these border villages, food is primarily supplied through agriculture products. During the cold season, winter crops become less fruits and vegetables more expensive, limited access to food. In Aksay, for example, women mentioned that they eat mostly agriculture products, a little meat and almost no fish. The restricted diet has impacts on the organism. The consequences of the lack of food leads to diseases: anemia, weakness of the body, decreased immunity and psychological diseases. Children are born weak, with a lack of calcium.

SAMPLE OF WHAT IS BEING DONE

Tajikistan

Government

- The government keeps sanitary control of certain types of products, such as meat (Vorukh, Surkh). Shops are controlled for food quality and shelf life by specialized agencies. The administrative bodies of the markets also strictly control the quality of goods. Chorku; Histevarz).
- State bodies also conductive awareness raising campaigns for traders about the dangers of substandard and expired products and goods.
- The media often denounces warehouses with expired products but health services often turn a blind eye to these and sell expired products to private enterprises (Ovchi Kalacha).
- The state imposes special procedures from production companies but many are working without a certificate of conformity (Ovchi Kalacha).

People

- When buying products from Kyrgyz markets, Tajik traders try to choose quality products as they will have to sell to people in their own villages (Chorku).
- Some businessmen help their neighbor or villages with free food (Surkh).

International organizations

- International organizations provide humanitarian aid in some villages (Chorku, Surkh, Histevarz).

Kyrgyzstan

Government

- The state helps some families with disabilities (Aksay). For example, veterans are provided with food, especially on holidays (Samarkandek). It also provides food benefits to low-income families for children, but it is quite small and not all poor families receive (Kulundu).
- State agencies are tasked with controlling the quality of food in markets and shops, but they don't always work well (Samarkandek).
- State bodies are set up to control the prices and quality in markets but they often fail, and traders set their own prices.

International organizations

- After joining the Eurasian Economic Union, Russian and Kazakh products have increased in Kyrgyzstan (Aksay). Membership has increased the access to quality food products (Ortoboz).

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? WOMEN'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations from women of both countries can be summarized as followed:

- Strengthening control over sanitation and storage of food products
- Public information and awareness raising about proper nutrition, proper choice of food, consumer rights, the negative consequences of the use of expired products, etc.
- Creation of small processing plants
- Create warehouses and vegetable stores in households
- Increase farmers' capacity to grow ecologically clean agricultural products
- Regulation of pricing and food quality in the markets through the establishment of special committees and monitoring bodies

Recommendations by Clusters

Group 1 Vorukh (Tajikistan) and Aksay (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of access to quality food • Shortage of drinking water • High prices for products • Lack of vegetable storage and storage facilities; • Prevalence of expired food in markets • Lack of vitamins 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Organizing joint workshops for processing of milk and milk products ⇒ Exchanges of experiences on nutrition, preservation of quality of food, food safety, etc. between households in both communities	
	Practical Solutions	Strategic Solutions
Common solutions	Creating warehouses for proper storage of vegetables in households Providing populations with quality food Investing in family projects to breed chickens and cattle on family plots Constant monitoring of markets by state structures	Ensuring the control of prices for basic food Educating the population on proper nutrition, food storage, food choices etc.
Vorukh / Tajikistan	Strengthening control over the quality of products	Veterinary and sanitary control of certain types of products such as meat
Aksay / Kyrgyzstan	Ensuring transparency in supervisory agencies and institutions	Encouraging the population to eat organic food Teaching the population about the benefits of good nutrition and on spending on quality food

Group 2: Chorku, Ortoboz, Surkh (Tajikistan) and Samarkandek (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of access to food (both in terms of quality and quantity for some) Lack of confectionery and dairy plants Cultivation of crops for sale only and not for consumption 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Organizing joint cooking courses ⇒ Organizing joint workshops for processing milk	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Ensuring the control of food quality before it reaches shelves in markets Creating favorable conditions for traders in markets (a place for garbage, public toilets, power, security etc.) Ensuring control of the prices of basic food; Simplifying the certification of food products	Constant monitoring of market by state structures Educating households on right choices for food
Chorku / Tajikistan	Encouraging people to grow their own fruits and vegetables Supporting small enterprises for local food processing Providing humanitarian assistance to the poor	The state should have at least a 2-year supply of food in advance.
Samarkandek / Kyrgyzstan	Regular control of sanitary conditions of markets	Teaching traders about fundamentals of food hygiene
Ortoboz / Kyrgyzstan	Ensuring tight control of access to high-quality products	Encouraging all neighboring countries to join the Economic Customs Union
Surkh / Tajikistan	Increasing humanitarian assistance by international organizations. Jamoats to make list of the most vulnerable populations that need food	Strict control over the quality of products

Group 3: Histevarz, Ovchi Kalacha (Tajikistan) and Kulundu (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No access to quality food (due to low income); The lack of control over the quality of food; Insufficient knowledge of the population about the rules of proper nutrition (diet, the use of vitamins); The lack of vegetable storage and storage facilities; High% of agricultural chemicals; No high-quality seeds and seedlings; 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Involving experts from Kyrgyzstan in processing of food products ⇒ Launching joint initiatives for the use of the land for growing crops ⇒ Organizing joint trainings on new farming techniques ⇒ Creating joint storage spaces	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Providing secure access to markets in times of conflict Ensuring quality price control in markets Increasing the capacity of farmers for the cultivation of ecologically pure agricultural products	Teaching populations about healthy eating
Histevarz / Tajikistan	Training farmers to grow high-quality varieties of vegetables and fruits. Investing in new technologies Enhancing inspection institutions	Eradicating corruption among inspecting organizations.
Ovchi Kalacha / Tajikistan	Training people to be attentive to quality food. Establishing anonymous hotlines work for consumers	Strict control and eradication of corruption. Informing consumers so that they could defend and protect their legitimate rights.
Kulundu / Kyrgyzstan	Opening more markets to cut the cost of transportation	Raising awareness of the population on recycling of garbage, as well as producing and consuming quality products.

5.

PERSONAL INSECURITY

Main common personal insecurity of women in the border area

- Psychological violence, including violence in families
- Domestic violence, forced marriage and early marriage
- Crime
- Child labor
- Family separation due to migration
- Harassment in public places
- Registration procedures at the border (humiliation, insults)
- The threat of violence in the dark, deserted alleys
- Ignorance of the traditions and customs of neighbors

Psychological violence, including violence against women in Tajikistan

Among the communities of Vorukh, the problem of forced marriage and early marriage, although prohibited by law, persists in some villages. Psychological violence exists in the form of insults and abuse of women at home, in the streets and in public places. Common are abuses of wives and daughters in the hands of husbands and mother in laws, and harsh economic situation exacerbates such tensions. Approximately 40-50% of women are subjected to some kind of violence at home, including insult, humiliation, intimidation, prohibition (to study, work, leave the house), coercion (to marry, to have sex etc.) as well as physical violence. Such abuse is also condemned in traditional communities where it is believed that a husband has the right to insult or even beat his wife. Inequalities between men and women and poor parenting allow such practices to perpetuate. These practices stem from and lead to further material and moral dependence of women on their husbands.

Psychological violence, including violence against women in Kyrgyzstan

Women activists from Kyrgyzstan overall felt that Kyrgyz women were more free, more 'democratic' and liberated among their societies, and the ability to earn incomes and have assets increased their status within household and society. While Kyrgyz society may be less conservative and more open than the Tajik one, pressure within households are still put on women and girls. "Young brides are constantly

subjected to abuse by her mother in law and her husband's relatives," lamented a resident of Aksay. In general, responded women of Ortoboz, men do not limit the freedom of action of women. "Previously husbands forced wives to stay at home, and now do not interfere with them to work." Yet, sometimes there are conflicts when men begin to feel that women occupy the position of the main breadwinner in the family and women are able to raise their voices and stand for their rights now that they make money.

In many ways, women's rights are infringed upon in families, with religion giving men a more prominent role, according to local beliefs. Force is often used to make women adhere to the rule of patriarchy. In Kulundu, women respondents claimed that "violence happens in every family, but it is not in the Eastern mentality to wash dirty linen in public. For example, the custom of stealing brides is prohibited by law, but it continues in fact. The girls and their mothers have no choice, they have to put up with old traditions." In Samarkandek women told the story of a girl who had studied three years of college, but her boyfriend stole her from the village and immediately made her interrupt her studies. Such cases were common knowledge in many parts.

Rape in Tajikistan

Fortunately, there has not been any cases of rapes reported by the police in the Jamoat of Vorukh, although respondents had heard of at least one recent case of the rape of a girl by a relative. They noted that cases tend to go unreported because of feelings of shame and the lack of support by parents or society

in general. Even if the victim goes to the police, the result is most likely to be impunity for the perpetrator. The consequences however are devastating for the victims: The sense of shame and despair, the feeling of fear and low self-esteem and the need to hide among parents. Women of Ovchi Kalacha similarly told the story of a 17-year-old girl raped by her cousin and gave birth to a disabled child. Options for such women is often to commit suicide or migrate as it is very hard to prove such crimes and society condemns the girls. The feeling of uselessness, and lack of support and compassion in society was a common theme. If a relative is involved, the facts are carefully concealed so as not to disgrace the family within the community and be judged by other relatives. The result is the alienation of women and their low self-esteem.

Rape in Kyrgyzstan

On the Kyrgyz side, the feeling of shame was explained in similar terms. Women of Kulundu also talked about how victims would be the ones expelled from the village or forced to go live with relatives in Russia, especially if the rape happened within the family.

Petty Criminality in Tajikistan

No violent crime or homicide has been recorded in Vorukh although small scale acts of theft and hooliganism exist, which responds associated with economic insecurity among families, drunkenness etc.

Petty Criminality in Kyrgyzstan

During times of conflict, crimes were rampant, mentioned women of Ortoboz. But now, they are rarer and related to the theft of livestock mostly.

Prostitution in Tajikistan

According to respondents of Vorukh, prostitution is a growing phenomenon in the region mainly as a result of divorces in young families and the presence of the border nearby, whereby increasing chances for clients.

Prostitution in Kyrgyzstan

Respondents on the Kyrgyz side claimed that prostitution was a phenomenon seen in large cities, with little known instances in villages. They blamed its existence on economic instability, unemployment,

greed for an easy life as well as information in the media on j pornography that is available to the youth. The consequence was shame on the entire family. They were also aware of women being trafficked abroad but did not know of any cases from their region.

Child Labor in Tajikistan

Child labor may be illegal, but it is a fact that it exists. Respondents of Khistevarz openly talked about how children are often seen working in the streets, washing cars, selling water, carrying loads in markets etc. In many large families where parents cannot provide for all their children, boys are often working to buy clothes and necessary materials for schools. Some girls work in the fields with their mothers. In Ovchi Kalacha girls are known to drop out of school to help their mothers in the fields, weeding, collecting apricots, apples and picking cotton. Hard work affects girl's health but it also teaches them the value of money and time from a young age, as well as respect for those who do hard labor for a living, as recounted a respondent from Surkh.

Child Labor in Kyrgyzstan

Respondents from Kyrgyzstan were also open about it: Given difficulties with the financial situation in every household, and the inability of adults to fully support their families, child labor was common in rural areas. As activists from Ortoboz mentioned, for example, “ *During the season, the children earn by unloading coal and cement. Often parents have left their children in the care of relatives while they migrate abroad for work. Children learn some trade from an early age.*” Child labor is used to care for livestock, for the construction of the house, for hauling carts in bazaars and delivering purchases to home etc. In cases of the loss of breadwinner in the family, children are used to gain income even though children are paid considerably less. This apparently happens not only among poor families.

Cross-border Consequences

Insults, criminality, squirmiest in Tajikistan

Responded noted the presence of insults by young people from Kyrgyz communities hurled at Tajik passerby and vice versa. The predominance of water dispute, waste disposal problem and border crossings become excuses for verbal assaults among the two communities. Ultimately though, it is the lack of tolerance among the youth that fuels such fire. While

open conflict has abated between the Tajiks and Kyrgyz, a sentiment of mistrust persists which can flare up at any circumstance.

Women activists from Ovchi Kalacha mentioned ongoing aggression and clashes among young people from Tajik and Kyrgyz communities. *"We have no personal security",* one mentioned. *"I am afraid at the slightest noise, thinking that the fighting has started again".* Local government bodies are supposedly actively trying to work out conflict prevention and mediation initiatives.

Residents of border villages noted their sense of unease with the criminal activities of groups roaming on the Kyrgyz side. As noted above, fights persist among young people on the streets by Tajiks and Kyrgyz, and the presence of the border enhances opportunities for prostitution. In Ovchi Kalacha, respondents claimed that young people are not allowed to loiter in the streets at night as part of measures to avoid conflicts.

Insults, criminality, squirmiest in Kyrgyzstan

The feeling of personal insecurity was not less among Kyrgyz respondents. As one resident of Aksay mentioned, *"We live in mixed neighborhoods and feel pressure from the Tajiks every day. Every day we get insulted by them."*

Respondents from Ortoboz complained of personal insecurity provoked by aggressive attitudes as they passed through the posts of security and border guards and passing through neighboring villages and markets. The close proximity of homes from different jurisdictions (national territories) creates frictions. *"Women often suffer abuse from law enforcement agencies,"* they remarked.

Residents of Aksay mentioned that during the conflict in 2014, there was a lot of fighting in the streets between Kyrgyz and Tajik youths, involving blocking roads, access to grazing land, breaking machineries etc.; Women were both directly involved (by getting actively involved in physical fights) and indirectly through taking care of their husbands and sons.

While physical confrontation has abated, there is still a feeling of mistrust, with at residents of Aksay for example voicing the concern that *"Tajiks are involved in the theft and stealing of cattle,"* sometimes in a state of intoxication, and most often because of money. Aksay residents complained of hooliganism and petty crime by Tajiks, especially

during celebrations. Respondents from Kulundu complained about the rude attitude on the part of law enforcement agencies, especially border guards, which women who had to cross borders in both directions were facing. Women always worry when they are on foreign soil, and have to pay attention to intimidation by representatives at various points, from crossing the border up to trading on the market. As one woman from Kulundu recounted, *"We have to go to the market in Ovchi Kalacha (on the Tajik side) to trade. One day, a Tajik man, annoyed by me taking a position in the market, kicked my bucket of strawberries, causing me great loss."*

SAMPLE OF WHAT IS BEING DONE

Tajikistan

Government

- The state, neighborhood committees, law enforcement agencies have conducted a variety of activities for the prevention of domestic violence, prostitution, etc. (Chorku, Surkh).
- The government and law enforcement agencies conduct regular preventive work on child labor with the populations. They also explain the rules and procedures for crossing state borders (Chorku).
- The state has instituted a number of prohibitions by law (against child labor, domestic violence, non-enrollment of children in schools etc.) (Ovchi Kalacha). Mandatory 9 years of education is forcing parents to send their children to school (Chorku).
- On the 20th anniversary of independence, the President gave amnesty to all women prisoners.

Public associations

- Mahalla committees in conjunction with the Resource Center in Vorukh hold seminars and meetings on human rights, especially women's rights. The Resource Center also provides advocacy work on the prevention of domestic violence (Vorukh).
- Neighborhood Committees in collaboration with international organizations and civil societies also hold regular seminars on human rights (Chorku, Ovchi Kalacha).
- Mahalla Committees, representatives of Jamoats and Committees on Women and Family hold discussions and meetings on domestic abuse and monitor child labor (Chorku, Surkh).

- Local organizations hold seminars and trainings for women on legal literacy and they support projects to lobby for new legislation to protect women (Histevarz, Ovchi Kalacha).
- The Women's Committee work in confidence with women who turn to them because of domestic abuse. They work with their families, and in necessary cases, they involve the police (Histevarz).
- NGOs provide psychological counseling and public legal organization provides legal advice to women who apply (Histevarz).
- Public organizations conduct forums and interactive theater performances involving the audiences in problem solving around domestic violence, youth conflicts etc. (Histevarz).
- Legal non-governmental organizations are working with criminals in prisons (Histevarz).
- In Bobojon Ghaffurov a clinic has been set up to work with sex workers, providing them with condoms, health inspection, a place to bathe and sleep etc. (Histevarz).

International organizations

- The OSCE has supported the opening of a "Resource" Center to provide psychological and legal advice support for women (Vorukh).

Kyrgyzstan

Government

- Government agencies have set up hotlines to report on domestic violence (Aksay).
- The state has increased the number of police officers to protect civilians, and increased patrols in conflict areas (Aksay, Ortoboz). In every village law enforcement agencies, have established a team and an action plan (Aksay).
- Police Assistance Units, with the help of NGOs, conduct outreach, training and exercise to help women protect themselves (Aksay).
- State institutions conduct advocacy to fight against extremism (Ortoboz).

Public Associations

- NGOs hold seminars against extremism and the media conducts advocacy (Ortoboz).
- Schools hold open lessons and seminars on tolerance (Samarkandek).
- The state works with the clergy in almost all localities and uses Friday prayers to promote non-violence and tolerance (Samarkandek).
- The association of the elderly get involved in dispute resolution and in propagating for tolerance. (Samarkandek)
- Public organizations have opened courses on theater, languages etc. to motivate young people, especially women (Samarkandek).

International Organizations

- The UN has helped install night lights in villages (Aksay).

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? WOMEN'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations from women of both countries can be summarized as followed:

- Development of legislative measures to protect women and promote gender equality and mechanism for the implementation of the law "On Prevention of Domestic Violence".
- Education and awareness-raising activities with the involvement of local authorities and religious leaders of communities.
- Information campaigns and social actions to raise awareness on the needs of victims of violence.
- Promoting women's education as a preventive measure against violence. Reinforcement of access of girls to education in grades 9-11 and expansion of girls' access to tertiary education.
- Training for police officers.
- Regular patrols of Jamoat, installation of surveillance cameras in alleys and at border crossings.

Recommendations by Clusters

Group 1 Vorukh (Tajikistan) and Aksay (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence by state authorities • Insults on the streets • Family separation due to migration and absence of men in households • Long-term registration procedures at the border (humiliation, insults) • Harassment in public places • The use of child labor • Domestic violence • Threat of violence in the dark, deserted alleys; • Increase in crime • Rare cases of rape: Aksay • Lack of public transport (village Maksad) • Ignorance of the traditions and customs of neighbors • Lack of textbooks on Uzbek language 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Educating youth in families for tolerance and respect for women and ethnic groups ⇒ Joint trainings on legal literacy ⇒ Seminars, round tables for youth, men, women's rights and the ethics of dialogue, and tolerance towards others ⇒ Advocacy for disclosing criminal incidents in communities	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Improving standards of living Ensuring security in the border areas Parents to instigate more strict control over their children Organizing regular patrols in Jamoats Providing protection for the victims of crime and conflict, and punishing instigators	Developing mechanisms for the implementation of the Law "On Prevention of Domestic Violence" Educating the youth on conflict-prevention, communication, tolerance, etc.
Vorukh / Tajikistan	Meetings and activities to protect rape victims Jamoat and Mahalla representatives together with the police to hold talks and meetings on the prevention of violence Conducting individual psychological work with women Strictly controlling child labor Reviewing social policies and laws to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prevent domestic violence • increase the level of public knowledge • punish criminals 	Fully implementing the various laws designed for protecting the rights of women, including and especially the Domestic Violence Act Conducting advocacy among communities on tolerance towards neighbors and on equal rights for men and women
Aksay / Kyrgyzstan	Toughening punishment for hooliganism, child labor, involving minors in prostitution, etc. Increasing fines for crimes Increasing the number of police officers and patrols	Workshops for women and men on equality, tolerance etc. Bringing up children in the right way, instigating moral education and limitations for children Reforming the education system to motivate more the youth

Group 2: Chorku, Ortoboz, Surkh (Tajikistan) and Samarkandek (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of water • Irrational use of water • Lack of waste management system 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Joint agreements on the use of the water systems ⇒ Joint agreements on the release of debris. ⇒ Creation of joint education campaigns on the need to protect the environment, collect and disposal waste and rational use of water ⇒ Joint projects to provide drinking and irrigation water ⇒ Joint Subotniks	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>

Common solutions	Investing in machines for waste collection in a systematic manner Ensuring access to clean water for all Set fines for waste emission in inappropriate places Creating mini sewage treatment plants	Launching education campaigns for the rational use of water Education campaigns on environment protection Create a mini sewage treatment plant;
Chorku / Tajikistan	Creating programs for the processing of household waste Organization small enterprises for waste management through government grants Organizations "Green Patrols" International organizations to support projects aimed at solving the problems of waste collection and management Upgrading the pumping stations and the main sanitary equipment Introducing new technologies for disinfection and filtration of water.	Enforcing the capacity of the environment protection departments at the national and local levels Regulating and resolving the issue of water at the local and highest level
<u>Samarkandek / Kyrgyzstan</u>	Cleaning the ponds, lakes and rivers. Ensuring transparency within water users associations, asking them to provide quarterly reports to users Monitoring the chlorination of water	Starting environment protection education from kindergartens.
<u>Ortoboz / Kyrgyzstan</u>	Building toilets and sanitation facilities in the right places Organizing regular collection, use and disposal of garbage	Concluding agreements with the Tajik side on water use Conducting seminars on improving the environment
Surkh / Tajikistan	Creating conditions for proper waste disposal and monitoring on behalf of local government Organizing villagers to patrol and monitor and control proper waste disposal	Developing a system for penalizing environmental pollution

Group 3: Histevarz, Ovchi Kalacha (Tajikistan) and Kulundu (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime • Insults, including by border guards • Inappropriate behavior on the part of drug addicts and alcoholics • The threat of being bitten by stray dogs • Theft of livestock 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Joint initiatives between local governments and law enforcement agencies of border communities ⇒ Organization of joint cultural events	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Simplifying procedures for registration and border crossings Streamlining the system of processing complaints received by authorities Organizing joint traditional activities among young people and women in border communities Creating shelters for women Patrolling the streets and providing lighting in streets Extermination of stray dogs	Improved relations between the border guards and customs control (compliance with the ethics of communication); Youth Education conflict-free communication; Human rights education of the population; Mechanisms for implementation of the Law on the prevention of domestic violence; Information about the law, Strengthening measures to prevent child labor; Organization of special training courses in order to prevent radicalization
Histevarz / Tajikistan	Reducing the number of inspection bodies Ensuring decent work for parents who may use child labor Opening shelters for victims of violence Propagating through the media examples of success stories of women who overcome domestic violence Conducting activities for youths in both communities	Creating conditions for women's economic independence Introducing ethics, peace education, communication etc. in school curriculum Making education accessible and free of charge Organizing awareness campaigns among men on the status and role of women Launching information campaigns to increase tolerance and compassion for victims of crime

<u>Ovchi Kalacha / Tajikistan</u>	Opening mini workshops for children to work on vacations Creating self-defense courses for girls and women	Creating jobs to enable women to work and support the family Educating mother-in-laws on proper behavior towards new brides The media to show the truth about those who commit suicide as a warning to others The media to portray stories of punishments for crimes to dissuade others
<u>Kulundu / Kyrgyzstan</u>	Creating women's centers and points of trust. Instigating tough punishments for stealing and bribe taking	Training people on how to behave in another state or in the border area, what documents to carry etc. Training of border guards on respect for the rights and freedoms of every citizen

6.

COMMUNITY INSECURITY

Main common community insecurity of women in the border area

- Conservatism and religious illiteracy and its consequences in terms of ultra conservative values and pressure on women
- Growth of extremism and radicalism and extremist propaganda
- Inter-ethnic problems manifested in every day life
- Discrimination against ethnic groups
- Risks of ethnic conflict (on the basis of irrigation water, grazing land and roads)
- Lack of empowerment of women and lack of opportunities for them to participate in decision making
- Low levels of education and women's rights infringement

Conservatism and radicalism in Tajikistan

The Jamoat of Vorukh is known as a region which generally tends to host conservative and religious families. In such an atmosphere, women feel pressure both from their husbands and from religious leaders. Fear and pressure from religious leaders affects the growth of members of the society, with women bearing the public fear of public censure. Women for example get accosted in the streets if they are perceived to be wearing what is deemed as inappropriate (modern) clothing by the youth and religious elements. Women's refusal to cover their hairs in the manners dictated leads to quarrels and conflicts in families.

As one respondent gave an example, *"Our neighbor is a very smart and progressive woman who wants to become a doctor when she finishes her 9th grade. But her parents are very religious and would be sick at the idea of having their daughter continue her education. They will kill all her dreams. How can I help her?"* Respondents from Khistevarz recounted how the radicalization of women was often instigated by the husband or brothers who forced them to wear headscarves and recite prayers. Often, male relatives are acting not as much out of religion as out of honor and shame, so that other men who pray with them do not condemn them for not protecting their wives/sisters. Women are forced to submit to the will of their husbands and cannot resist.

Conservatism, radicalism in Kyrgyzstan

Women of Kulundu also spoke about their perception of the spread of religious zeal, with the number

of mosques reaching 8 in their village in recent years. Given that people are often illiterate when it comes to knowledge about religion, they are easily manipulated by Imams who preach extra conservative interpretations. Women thus succumb to the pressure of religious and are then forced to wear the veil or suffer psychological or physical consequences. *"Women in rural areas are not allowed to dress as they wish",* lamented the women of Ortoboz. *"The clothing has to be below the knee, which is very inconvenient to walk and work in these clothes in the hot summers with 46 degrees."*

Extremism / Terrorism in Tajikistan

According to official figures 10 people from Jamoat Vorukh left Syria and joined the terrorist groups. Some fanatical citizens of Tajikistan have never hidden their desire and willingness to join the international jihad. But by and large, they tend to be poorly educated and often unemployed people, with limited prospects in the future. The motivations are also, according to the women respondents, incorrect interpretations of the cannons of Islam and lack of knowledge. They also pointed out to the presence of recruiters and Salafi groups in the Jamoat, although they have mostly been arrested and recruitment has diminished and stopped in Vorukh in the past two years. In Khistevarz, women claimed that 2-3 people from their villages had left for Syria, apparently cheated in the promise of a job. *"Our people are very naïve,"* they said. *"Law enforcement authorities constantly monitor these newly conservative families, including the relationships between husbands and wives."*

Extremism / Terrorism in Kyrgyzstan

Extremist groups modify and distort the values of Islam and traditional values, claimed the women of Aksay. They had a negative impact on women by reinforcing traditional values over their lives and they were responsible for spreading fears of destabilization for the future. They mentioned that women were especially vulnerable to become prey to recruiters when promised money, or a trip to the Hajj. They also get easily incited to join fights, appealing to emotions. In July 2010, for example, many women were will going to go to the battlefields when the media showed how humiliated girl students had been.

Cross-Border Consequences

Mistrust between ethnic groups, Tajik views

Women activists recognized that the cross-border conflict are mostly due to tangible insecurities such as water distribution, construction of roads, waste disposal, and access to pastures. They also pointed out that 2-3 Kyrgyz families live in teach village of the Jamoat of Vorukh and that relations are ‘smooth’. Nonetheless they conceded that conflicts (over water, land, waste etc.) have led to mistrust between the two communities which result in mistrust and differences in mentality. At the same time, they understood that discrimination in relation to the Kyrgyz living among them could result in a more tense ethnic conflict and to realization by Kyrgyz authorities that could lead to an economic blockade given that Vorukh is an enclave.

Respondents from Ovchi Kalacha recounted the good old days during the Soviet Union when communities lived together without conflict. The older generation, they claimed, are more tolerant as a result of their memories. *“I have a son who is a doctor by profession, but he hates the Kyrgyz. I do not know where he got this hatred from,”* claimed a woman, herself a school teacher.

Mistrust between ethnic groups, Kyrgyz views

Women activists from Aksay region raised the problem of ethnic problems between the two communities, resulting in the feeling that they are starting to feel like an ethnic minority in their own home. With young people moving away from the village and Tajik citizens ‘illegally obtaining’ their land (referring to purchase of land or lease of land on disputed territory). They referred to the deterioration of inter-ethnic relations between Kyrgyz, Tajiks, Uzbeks. In

Kulundu, women also talked about mistrust but also gave examples of joint activities, such as volleyball competition, cultural events etc. At the same time, one incident stood in memory: the time when a large delegation of 40 people from Batken came to visit the historical places of Sughd but were prevented from entering Tajikistan by the border guards who demanded foreign passports.

Other cases of discrimination were raised related to the lack of birth certificate for children of Kyrgyz women born on the territory of Tajikistan.

SAMPLE OF WHAT IS BEING DONE

Tajikistan

Government

- The government tries to hold joints meetings and events and conduct advocacy for tolerance between Kyrgyz and Tajiks but effects are minimal (Vorukh).
- The Sughd region Hukumat (local government) has an office in Batken region which assists in revolving minority rights issues (Histevarz). The state forbids the wearing of the Hijab in state institutions (Ovchi Kalacha).

Public Associations

- Jamoats and public organizations hold meetings between representatives of communities across borders (Chorku).
- Representatives of the Jamoat organize talks about the treats of extremism. They also hold meetings and conduct outreach about the effects of discrimination based on ethnicity (Surkh) and on tolerance and stereotypes among women (Histevarz).
- Public organizations and crisis centers provide training on gender equality (Histevarz).
- NGOs provide training on tolerance and peace-building (Ovchi Kalacha).

International organizations

International organizations provide trainings on mediation and prepare mediators to intervene in disputes when needed (Histevarz).

Kyrgyzstan

Government

- Law enforcement agencies monitor mosques during Friday prayers to guard against extremism and insecurity (Ortoboz).
- Different agreements have been conducted among representatives of communities across borders (Aksay).

Public associations

- School conduct educational programs on religion, extremism etc. (Ortoboz).
- NGOs conduct trainings and seminars with the participation of both countries and hold joint celebrations (Aksay).

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? WOMEN'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations from women of both countries can be summarized as followed:

- Emphasis on women's rights to education and professional development as a matter of community well-being
- Outreach to religious community leaders on women's rights, prevention of radicalization etc.
- Awareness raising among families and communities on the dangers of radicalization
- Strict control over the activities of extremist religious groups
- Creation of a joint commission to eliminate religious / extremist groups
- Public education and awareness raising on recognition and response to discrimination and extremism
- More contacts organized among communities on both side of the border
- Conclusion of interstate agreements on the rational use of land, civil status and security procedures for people living and working in another territory.
- Joint training of Jamoat to reduce the risk of conflict and tolerance in order to strengthen friendship and good neighborliness.

Recommendations by Clusters

Group 1 Vorukh (Tajikistan) and Aksay (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of extremism and the threat of terrorism • Pressure on women from religious groups • Conflicts over land use between communities • Lack of schools in the border Mahallas 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Joint trainings on ethics of dialogue and mutual respect for different communities in schools ⇒ Joint activities to strengthen friendship and good neighborliness ⇒ Joint training for Jamoat employees to decrease the risk of conflicts ⇒ Joint discussions, meetings on tolerance among young people	
	Practical Solutions	Strategic Solutions
Common solutions	Strict control over the activities of religious groups. Law enforcement agencies to work harder to identify and punish extremist groups. Building schools in the border Mahallas	Improving the infrastructure of streets and public places Teaching youth about the negative consequences of extremism
Vorukh / Tajikistan	Implementing the mandatory 11-year education law Conducting frequent meetings with progressive religious leaders who support the participation of women Strictly punishing discrimination against different ethnic groups	Local authorities to involve women in the fight against extremism The state to strictly monitor the activities of all religious groups and to identify extremist attitudes.
Aksay / Kyrgyzstan	Regulating the activities of all religious groups Monitoring all flows of people across borders	The State Agency for Religious Affairs to work closely with civil society, local and international experts in the field of religious education

Group 2: Chorku, Ortoboz, Surkh (Tajikistan) and Samarkandek (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal illiteracy • Gender inequality • Pressure on women by religious groups and extremist parties • Threats of extremism and radicalization of the youth • Discrimination against ethnic groups 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Creating a group of activists in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to hold joint meetings to address ethnic discrimination ⇒ Joint discussions, meetings on tolerance among young people ⇒ Organizing a variety of events on the negative consequences of extremism by the Jamoat, Mahalla Committees and law enforcement agencies on both sides of borders ⇒ Implementing joint measures to combat terrorism ⇒ Strengthening the role of women's committee in conducting conflict prevention ⇒ Establishment of an early response teams to prevent conflicts	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Organizing parents for cooperation on prevention of extremism Building more schools in the border Mahallas Strict control over the activities of religious groups. Organizing competitions and joint events between representatives of the Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Tajik communities Monitoring the activities of religious parties and groups	Conducting gender training sensitivity Teaching youth about the negative consequences of extremism Launching broad public awareness campaigns, including through the media, about tolerance, anti-discrimination, gender equality etc. Intensifying work with families vulnerable to radicalization of the youth
Chorku / Tajikistan	Creating groups of representatives of ethnic communities to mediate between conflict, solve crisis, provide legal advice etc. Conducting gender awareness training for government officials, representatives of neighborhood committees and law enforcement agencies)	Working with representatives of religious communities to advocate for women's rights
Samarkandek / Kyrgyzstan	Organizing competitions and joint events between representatives of the Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Tajik communities Organizing meetings and seminars about the dangers and threats of extremism and terrorism	The government to devise a solid strategy to work with religious groups and turn them away from extremism Teaching communities about respect, cooperation, trust and conflict prevention
Ortoboz / Kyrgyzstan	Working with communities to sow the seeds of peace and harmony, tolerance and patience in society	Working with religious leaders to reduce pressures on women More gender awareness for women to properly use and protect their rights
Surkh / Tajikistan	Fully implementing existing laws that protect women's rights Controlling the activities of religious and extremist groups	Neighborhood committees, Jamoats, public and international organizations and representatives of the clergy to organize and participate in seminars on the role of women in society and equality with men. Organizing workshops on conflict-prevention
Group 3: Histevarz, Ovchi Kalacha (Tajikistan) and Kulundu (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High risks of ethnic conflict (over disputes over irrigation water, grazing land and roads) • Risks of youth's involvement in extremism, radicalization and terrorism • Pressure on women in the family • Mistrust among communities 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Better control of drug trafficking on the border ⇒ Creation of joint work plans and exchanges of experiences on prevention of conflicts among communities ⇒ Joint education programs to fight extremism and raise awareness about its consequences	

	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Providing sanitation, utilities (electricity, gas, water) conditions in border communities to decrease chances of conflict Opening centers for inter-ethnic dialogue Implementation of measures for the rehabilitation of returning migrants	Conducting gender sensitivity training for law enforcement agencies Empowerment of women so that they could take part in decision-making processes Conducting counter-propaganda against extremism by training the youth
Histevarz / Tajikistan	Organizing joint event towards the rapprochement of ethnic communities with an equal share of responsibility and costs.	Educating officials and law enforcement bodies on equality of men and women
<u>Ovchi Kalacha / Tajikistan</u>	Instigating punishment for polygamy	Conducting education programs on peace, tolerance, compromise, dialogue etc.
<u>Kulundu / Kyrgyzstan</u>	Collaboration with Tajiks across the border in devising regional plans Organizing joint events for mothers from different communities	Organizing seminars on gender equality

7.

POLITICAL INSECURITY

Main common political insecurity of women in the border area

- Unresolved issues of territorial demarcation. Lack of border delimitation means lack of clarity about ownership of land and natural resources
- Corruption at all levels of state and society
- Border and customs checkpoints restricting the free movement of people across borders.
- Involvement of security forces in territorial disputes and of border guards in local conflicts
- High level of corruption and bribe taking by officials
- Lack of local dispute mechanisms
- Need for more citizen participation in local planning

The issue of disputed territories in the border regions of Batken and Isfara districts is compounded by the presence of several cards issued in different periods, and the fact that the determination of the status of the disputed land side refer to different maps that best suit their national interests. High population growth and density, and an acute shortage of land for individual construction on the Tajik side make this problem even more acute. As a consequence, the allocation of land for housing and household plots is subject to corruption, even though the land may not be the subject of bargaining.

“There is always anxiety”, lamented a respondent from Aksay. Residents of the village of Aksay can get to central Badken area only through the village Khojai Alo Tajikistan and residents Vorukh in turn to get in Isfara have to navigate through the Batken region of Kyrgyzstan.

Conflict and security, Tajik view

According to local residents, the conflicts are caused not so much by the existence of disputed territories or undefined borders, as much as by the presence of border and customs checkpoints restricting the free movement of people across borders. Security forces’ involvement in territorial disputes exacerbate tensions and increase incidents.

Conflict and security, Kyrgyz view

From the point of view of Kyrgyz respondents, the existence of arbitrary boundaries, unresolved

territorial disputes, water and land distribution inequalities and poor management are the main causes of conflicts between Tajiks and Kyrgyz. Residents of Aksay are mostly concerned about what they consider as seizure of their lands by Tajiks, and a migration crisis that has reached its peak after 10-15 years.

Corruption in Tajikistan

For women activists in Ovchi Kalacha, political insecurity is mainly associated with corruption and the common practice of extortions and bribe taking at all levels. *“We have to pay a 15 Somoni bribe and 30 Somonis on Fridays to go trade in markets in Kyrgyzstan”,* they reported.

Respondents of Vorukh believed that corruption exists in almost all institutions (government, law enforcement), and that it is especially predominant in the allocation of household lands, which is very important for the inhabitants of the enclave. People have gotten used to the fact that without a bribe, their cases will not be resolved. As one respondent in Surkh put it, *“With money you can solve any problem.”* This creates a feeling of impunity in society in addition to a strain on the family budget with extra costs. Conflicts and disputes are for example frequent in families about the need to spending money on bribes for school children. People also don’t have enough incentives to fight for their rights and achieve their goals without resorting to illegal action.

Corruption in Kyrgyzstan

Respondents on the Kyrgyz side were pessimistic given their understanding of widespread corruption and bribe taking which without which favorable decisions would be impossible in courts.. As one resident of Aksay mentioned, *“Bribery and extortion have become a form of existence of many employees of state agencies. Corruption has been a way of life and, always will be as long as there are people. Everyone demands money or uses his or her official position to achieve their goals.”* *“Although we have a democratic state, corruption exists.”*

Bribe taking is also a product of the low wages on which people cannot depend. A respondent from Samarkandek, noting that even children knew that to get something they need to give money, called widespread corruption as *“the virus of the 21st Century which has affected each and all of us”*. For the younger generation witnessing this, it makes no sense to try to achieve their goals through hard work.

Kulundu respondents blamed corruption for much of the water disputes and squirmiest that happen between border communities. They mentioned that tensions were high because ultimately they did not know how money is allocated for the various needs of their own villages by the management, how that there is no oversight of how money is spent. There is also corruption among the water guardians (‘mirabs’) responsible for controlling the distribution of water supply, who are bought by influential farmers who get to use water out of their allocated time anytime they want.

The infringement of human rights in Tajikistan

The lack of freedoms and personal liberty, freedom of speech and expression were raised by some respondents. Activists in Ovchi Kalacha claimed: “

Women activists in Vorukh pointed at the inequality in society, not only among men and women which is something that has become a norm in society, but also in the distribution of land, plots, houses etc.; Deputies, they lamented, fail to comply with their promises and obligations.

Human rights violations in Kyrgyzstan

Women activists in Aksay region complained that about treatment by law enforcement bodies, including in courts and in prisons. “Women cannot seek justice because they have fewer resources”,

mentioned a woman from Aksay. One point of contestation has been about the impression, among Aksay residents, that Kyrgyz courts give concessions to Tajiks regarding land ownership.

Cross border Consequences

Border conflicts seen by the Tajiks

Lack of coordination and mutual failure to inform about decisions give rise to speculations regarding actions of the other side. The problem of the construction of a new road by the Kyrgyz illustrate this point as a good example. On the Kyrgyz side, three so-called alternative roads were being constructed: Koktosh-Aksay, Aksay-Tamdyk-Kishemish and Vorukh - Isfara bypassing Aksay village. The residents of Vorukh prevented the construction of the road which according to them passed through disputed territories. In the absence of precise knowledge as to the motivations, speculations were rife among Vorukh residents as to why the Kyrgyz needed these alternative roads. These included for example speculations about plans to build a large hydroelectric power station, or to gain access to mercury deposits or to change the stream of the river, cutting access to water to the inhabitants of Isfara and Kanibodam in Tajikistan and Kokand in Uzbekistan. People expressed their dissatisfaction at the lack of information and a platform for dialogue for joint planning. *“If we knew that the road was needed just to get to pastures, we would not have been so disruptive”* mentioned one resident of Vorukh.

Border conflicts seen by the Kyrgyz

The border with Tajikistan is a source of income for a large number of villagers. Respondents from Kulundu for example noted that each day more than 1,000 Kyrgyz pass the border crossing points to trade etc. However, that part of the borders have not been delimitedated and demarcated properly is often a source of conflict between the population of the border areas of the two countries, as well as border guards. Not coincidentally, Kulundu often mentioned in the media in connection with cross-border situation. The most widespread controversy due to unauthorized grazing the people of Tajikistan in the territory of the village of Kulundu, the distribution of irrigation water, and the involvement of border guards in these disputes.

SAMPLE OF WHAT IS BEING DONE

Tajikistan

Government

- The state has set up anti-corruption bodies and commissions that are charged with eradicating corruption (Vorukh, Histevarz).
- Negotiations are held to resolve the conflict between the local authorities (Vorukh).

Public associations

- Public associations give talks about the dangers of corruption for state and society (Surkh).

International organizations

- International organizations such as the OSCE have urged the protection the freedom of speech and lifting restrictions in the media (Histevarz).

Kyrgyzstan

Government

- The state is involved in anti-corruption work (Ortoboz).
- Border demarcations efforts are on-going (Ortoboz).
- The media is controlled so as not to leak false information and add fuel to conflicts (Ortoboz).
- Deputies have proposed to adopt the law “On special border towns of the Kyrgyz Republic” through the parliament.

Public associations

- The media published a hotline to which citizens could address all cases of corruption (Aksay).
- There are no media restrictions and level of democracy and freedom of speech is developing year to year (Aksay).

- The media covers the activities of state bodies which are supposed to investigate corruption (Kulundu).

International organizations

- ACTED supported a group of women and elders to organize a campaign to live in peace and tranquility and invite women from across the border in Tajikistan to engage in a sports competitions and participate in fairs and handicrafts in Kyrgyzstan (Kulundu). This reinforced friendship.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE? WOMEN'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations from women of both countries can be summarized as followed:

- Finding solutions as soon as possible for the resolution of border demarcation and delimitation problems.
- Intensify the fight against corruption as a matter of people's rights and of security. Active information campaigns, in particular through the media, and the establishment of groups and campaign teams to conduct anti-corruption campaigns.
- Ensuring transparency and clarity of the activities of agencies that provide public services. Opening access to reporting on expenditures of the state budget.
- Gender sensitive education and training for officials, representatives of neighborhood committees, law enforcement, community members etc.
- Empowering women to participate in decision-making processes.
- Preventing the construction of buildings on disputed territories
- Simplification of procedures for obtaining citizenship for Tajiks residing in the territory of the Kyrgyz Republic for 10 years.
- Training for officials on reducing the risks of conflict

Recommendations by Clusters

Group 1 Vorukh (Tajikistan) and Aksay (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corruption • The infringement of human rights • Restrictions on freedom of expression and freedom of action 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Creating a joint commission for the prevention of conflicts ⇒ Lobbying decision makers to solve border delineation	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Ensuring that authorities on both side actively interact with community members, Jamoats and village authorities Working closely with border guards	Organization trainings on tolerance for young people Encouraging politicians to find ways to deal with the border problems and end the conflicts
Vorukh / Tajikistan	Naming and shaming officials who are engaged in bribe taking The state to strictly control the activities of anti-corruption bodies.	The states at the highest level to solve problems of border and conflicts Full implementation of human rights laws Working with young people towards a culture of peace and tolerance
Aksay / Kyrgyzstan	Introducing special incentives for residents of border villages: For example: exemption from land tax payment, reduction for electricity, financial resources for infrastructure development etc.	Ensuring transparency and clarity of the activities of those who provide public services

Group 2: Chorku, Ortoboz, Surkh (Tajikistan) and Samarkandek (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corruption • The infringement of human rights and restrictions on freedom of expression and freedom of action • Border problems and uncertainty of boundaries • Difficulties in crossing the borders 	
Joint activities suggested	⇒ Implementing joint activities that involve border police and customs services of the two countries	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	Strictly punishing corruption and bribe taking among officials Designing and implementing projects for border communities that could improve their living standards (roads, markets, infrastructure etc.)	Raising awareness about human rights Active involvement of community members, Mahallas and Jamoats in political decision making processes concerning borders, infrastructure etc. Ensuring the safe movement in border areas
Chorku / Tajikistan	Naming and shaming and instigating strict punishments on those who conduct corruption Implementation of programs and projects where women are trained to protect their rights. Identifying families that violated the rights of women, to work with them.	Ensuring the full implementation of international agreements about borders Raising awareness about the dangers of corruption
Samarkandek / Kyrgyzstan	Improving legislation to raise the level of literacy	Combatting corruption as entry point to all sorts of insecurities
Ortoboz / Kyrgyzstan	Increasing salaries of public servants` Building bridges of friendship across the border	Raising people's living standards Involving women in decision making processes Intensifying efforts to solve border issues
Surkh / Tajikistan	Including decent honest people in anti-corruption commissions Raising the capacity of women leaders	Implementing of all of laws protecting the rights of women. Using the media, television, conversations, meetings to inform the public about the need for legal literacy

Group 3: Histevarz, Ovchi Kalacha (Tajikistan) and Kulundu (Kyrgyzstan)		
Common problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disputes risen over land, territories, roads and water • Capture of land (creeping migration) • Involvement of border guards in local conflicts • Ignorance of rights • Corruption in customs authorities and border services 	
Joint activities suggested	<p>⇒ Development of joint work plans on the use of joint infrastructure and natural resources among border communities</p> <p>⇒ Organizing joint trainings of members of border communities, border guards and local governments on the peaceful resolution of conflicts</p>	
	<i>Practical Solutions</i>	<i>Strategic Solutions</i>
Common solutions	To simplify the procedure for obtaining citizenship for Tajiks residing in the territory of Kyrgyzstan Preventing the construction of building in disputed areas	Resolving conflict problems along border areas in a peaceful manner Avoiding conflicts and local disputes from escalating into armed clashes Improving the knowledge and skills of the border services Training border officials to communicate with people
Histevarz / Tajikistan	Enforcing strict punishment for corruption The state to discuss the official budget with the population so as to inform them of plans and how their taxes are being used	Conducting educational activities, raising women's awareness, improving self-esteem and legal literacy
<u>Ovchi Kalacha / Tajikistan</u>	Teaching the young generation the basic principles of living in peace and harmony	Encouraging women leaders to be active in decision making processes at the local level
<u>Kulundu / Kyrgyzstan</u>	Punishing those who perpetuate corruption	Reforming the education system so as to ensure critical thinking

CONCLUSIONS

From consultations with the women of both sides of the borders of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan where conflicts have risen in the recent years, it would be possible to make a few conclusions:

First that the skirmishes have been caused by disagreements over land encroachment, water distribution and economic competition in the markets and have not had their source in ethnicity. This said, competition over natural resources, in a region where these are rare and dwindling and are poorly managed by authorities with agreements disregarded when they exist, has had consequences on mistrust and dislike among ethnic groups. If they are left to simmer they could potentially lead to more durable inter-ethnic conflicts that would engulf more than issues related to everyday use of natural resources.

Second, The solution to the conflicts should be sought at their source: the problems of water and land distribution need to be reviewed by local and national authorities on both sides. While training, awareness raising, advocacy and education on conflict management and conflict resolution is laudable for community, the real underlying issues need to be solved and dealt with. And these have to do with

genuine hardware problems that require investment into infrastructures and education for rational use of natural resources.

Third, while it is clear that local authorities have the primary responsibility for providing these goods, and international organizations can support them in this endeavor, women themselves too have a role to play in solving some of the common problems. It became clear through these consultations that women have in themselves and as a group a wide gamut of resources, material and moral, to roll their sleeves and join hands. It is for this reason that women were highly encouraged throughout the project to come up with their own solutions on what they could do together. A number of initiatives were proposed, listed below, which would require high levels of commitment, which seems to exist among women activists, and a minimal degree of organization by those in the power to support them: local governments, international organizations (UNDP, UN Women, UNICEF) etc.

It is therefore with this in mind that the following recommendations made by women are picked up here as a basis for a plan of Action that would require sustained follow up by the UN and its partners.

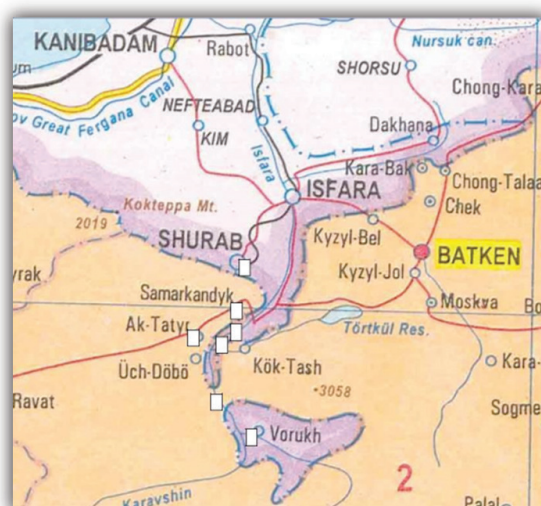
SOME JOINT ACTIVITIES PROPOSED

Economic security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of joint workshops on processing of vegetables; • Learning skills from each other; • Promoting free access to cross-border markets; • Creating workshops for carpet weaving, production of national-satin fabrics Adras (cotton and silk) for women across borders; • Opening of more kindergartens in each other's community • Vocational courses and skills training such as crafts for women (cooking, sewing) and men (welding, carpentry etc.). • Implementation of joint small scale economic projects • Opening of mini workshops on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ processing of dairy products, crops, dried fruits, ⇒ canning, ⇒ handicraft • Organization of courses on financial literacy and business planning • Introduction of innovative technologies • Creating favorable conditions for entrepreneurs
Environment Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a joint propaganda teams to conduct explanatory work on the collection and disposal of waste; • Joint projects to provide drinking and irrigation water; • Joint Subbotniks to clean canals, ditches etc. • Joint agreements on the use of the water systems • Joint agreements on the release of debris. • Creation of joint education campaigns on the need to protect the environment, collect and disposal waste and rational use of water • Joint projects to provide drinking and irrigation water • Organization of joint information campaigns on waste collection • Conducting joint activities for the chlorination and purification of water in the reservoirs and irrigation ditches • Installation of waste containers • Joint collection of garbage
Health security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization of joint information campaigns (including on the purification of water) • Medical services of Tajikistan made more user friendly for Kyrgyz citizens • Exchange of know how between medical personnel • Access to a lawyer and psychologist consultations to Kyrgyz citizens • Joint health projects among medical personnel on both sides of the borders • Organization of joint information campaigns for preventive measures • Organizing regular Open Health Days to extend diagnosis facilities to citizens of Kyrgyzstan in Tajikistan • Organizing bilateral Subbotniks • Supporting clinics that admit foreign patients
Food security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing joint workshops for processing of milk and milk products • Exchanges of experiences on nutrition, preservation of quality of food, food safety, etc. between households in both communities • Organizing joint cooking courses • Organizing joint workshops for processing milk • Involving experts from Kyrgyzstan in processing of food products • Launching joint initiatives for the use of the land for growing crops • Organizing joint trainings on new farming techniques • Creating joint storage spaces
Personal security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educating youth in families for tolerance and respect for women and ethnic groups • Joint training on legal literacy; • Seminars, round tables for youth, men, women's rights and the ethics of dialogue, so as not to interfere with each other; • Advocacy for disclosing criminal incidents in communities • Organizing groups of household members to patrol with the police • Joint seminars and round tables for youth, women, men about rights • Organization of contests, competitions, evenings against violence and crime

Community security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint trainings on ethics of dialogue and mutual respect for different communities in schools • Joint activities to strengthen friendship and good neighborliness • Joint training for Jamoat employees to decrease the risk of conflicts • Joint discussions, meetings on tolerance among young people • Creating a group of activists in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to hold joint meetings to address ethnic discrimination • Joint discussions, meetings on tolerance among young people • Organizing a variety of events on the negative consequences of extremism by the Jamoat, Mahalla Committees and law enforcement agencies on both sides of borders • Implementing joint measures to combat terrorism • Strengthening the role of women's committee in conducting conflict prevention • Establishment of an early response teams to prevent conflicts • Better control of drug trafficking on the border • Creation of joint work plans and exchanges of experiences on prevention of conflicts among communities • Joint education programs to fight extremism and raise awareness about its consequences • Dialogue in communities • Joint initiatives between local governments and law enforcement agencies of border communities • Organization of joint cultural events
Political security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a joint commission for the prevention of conflicts • Lobbying decision makers to solve border delineation • Implementing joint activities that involve border police and customs services of the two countries • Development of joint work plans on the use of joint infrastructure and natural resources among border communities • Organizing joint trainings of members of border communities, border guards and local governments on the peaceful resolution of conflicts

ANNEX 1

BRIEF PROFILE OF THE REGION: JAMOATS AND VILLAGES



THE TAJIK SIDE

Vorukh

Vorukh - the uppermost village in Isfara Valley – is situated at an altitude of 1400 m and is one of the two exclaves of Tajikistan, located in the Batken region of the Kyrgyz Republic. The population consists of 31 000 people, of whom 99.99% are Tajiks and 0.01% Kyrgyz.

Chorku

The village is located in the southern part of the Isfara district of Sughd region, 20 km from the district center. It has a population of about 35 thousand people.

Khistevarz

Histevarz is the largest Jamoat in the Sughd region and is home to 60,000 people. The population is mainly engaged in agriculture, trade and animal husbandry. A significant part of the economy consists of processing agricultural products - cotton and canned food.

Ovchi Kalacha

The Jamoat of Ovchi Kalacha has a population of 22,657, half of which (11,849) are women. Of this population, 861 people are Kyrgyz. Other statistics

include 112 officially unemployed (57 women), 685 poor households (of which 103 are female-headed), 1712 pensioners (of which 861 are women) and 513 disabled (of which 258 women). Ovchi Kalacha has 15 shops that employ a total of 100 people.

THE KYRGYZ SIDE

Aksay

The village of Aksay in Kyrgyzstan is very small in comparison with the neighboring Jamoat of Vorukh. It is home to less than 6,000 people, all of them ethnically Kyrgyz. The most relevant thematic areas of human insecurity recognized by representatives of the Aksay community were: economic insecurity, environmental insecurity, personal, and political insecurity.

Kulundu

The village (aimag) of Kulundu is located in Leilek district of Batken region, 50 km from the district center of Isfara and 185 km away from the regional center of Batken. It is home to 24,067 people, with a population that is largely mono-ethnic: 92% - Kyrgyz, 6.7% - Uzbeks, 0.8% - Tajiks.



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