

# External Evaluation of the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' Families in Tajikistan

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## **About the International Consultant**

Dr. Robin N. Haarr has been working for more than 15 years with UN agencies and government entities conducting assessments, mappings, survey research, evaluations, and mid-term reviews and developing data-driven policy and programme recommendations. She has worked extensively on women and children's issues, including issues of migration and trafficking of women and children, empowerment of women, elimination of violence against women and children, improving systems of social welfare and protection for vulnerable women and children, access to justice, and women and child rights. She has worked on these issues with UN Women, UNICEF, UNDP, ILO, OSCE, USAID, SDC, and the US Department of State/US Embassies in countries throughout Asia and the Pacific, CIS/CEE, in Africa. Her dedication and leadership to address women and children's issues has led to important legislative and policy changes, program development, and resources allocation that benefits children, women, families, and communities. Contact: [robinhaarr@yahoo.com](mailto:robinhaarr@yahoo.com)

## ACRONYMS

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| AKF      | Aga Khan Foundation  |
| AWP      | Annual Work Plan   |
| CARMP    | Central Asian Regional Migration Programme (in 2014, Phase II of this Programme the title was changed to Regional Migration Programme [RMP]) |
| CRC      | Convention on the Rights of the Child  |
| CSO      | Civil society organizations  |
| DFID     | Department for International Development   |
| DRF      | Development Results Framework  |
| DTFs     | District Task Forces   |
| GDP      | Gross Domestic Production  |
| GERAAS   | UN Women Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System  |
| IMF      | International Monetary Fund  |
| IO       | International Organization   |
| IOM      | International Organization for Migration   |
| JEIs     | Joint Economic Initiatives   |
| MCO      | Multi-Country Office   |
| MFA      | Ministry of Foreign Affairs  |
| MFI      | Micro-Finance Institutions   |
| MoE      | Ministry of Education  |
| MoHSP    | Ministry of Health and Social Protection   |
| MoLEM    | Ministry of Labour, Employment and Migration   |
| MOU      | Memorandum of Understanding  |
| NGO      | Nongovernmental Organization   |
| ODIHR    | Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights  |
| OSCE     | Organization for Security and Cooperation of Europe  |
| PIBs     | Public Initiative Bodies   |
| PP       | Programme Presence   |
| ProDoc   | Project Document   |
| RP       | Responsible Party  |
| RMP      | Regional Migration Programme   |
| SASPEM   | State Agency for Social Protection, Employment and Migration   |
| SHGs     | Self-Help Groups   |
| SP       | Strategic Plan   |
| SPA      | Social Protection Agency   |
| SRO      | Sub-Regional Office  |
| TLSS     | Tajikistan Living Standards Survey   |
| TOR      | Terms of Reference   |
| WEE      | Women's Economic Empowerment   |
| UN       | United Nations   |
| UNDAF    | United Nations Development Assistance Framework  |
| UNEG     | United Nations Evaluation Group  |
| UNICEF   | United Nations Children's Fund   |
| UN Women | United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women   |

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

#### Labour Migration in Tajikistan

Since 2000, due to high levels of unemployment and poverty in the country, labour migration abroad has become a major source of income for a considerable number of Tajik citizens. In 2012, 744,360 citizens reportedly left Tajikistan in search of employment; unofficial estimates were that more than one million Tajiks migrate abroad on an annual basis for labour. While the economic sustenance brought to Tajikistan from labour migration cannot be discounted; at the same time, troubling social trends have emerged. In particular, abandoned women and children of migrants' families are often vulnerable because they are left behind to live in extreme poverty and inadequate housing conditions, often relying upon food they can cultivate themselves, and with only occasional help from relatives. In 2012, the OSCE reported the number of abandoned women from migrants' families ranged between 230,880 and 288,600, and estimated that 78% of them were women with children. In addition, it was estimated that only 1% of abandoned women were receiving any kind of assistance or benefit from projects implemented by development partners in Tajikistan.

In 2012, under the guise of the Central Asian Regional Migration Programme (CARMP), which was implemented jointly by IOM, UN Women, and the World Bank with financial support of the Government of the United Kingdom, OSCE/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and UN Women organized a National Conference on "Social and Economic Inclusion of Women from Migrant Households in Tajikistan" on 12-13 September 2012. This National Conference aimed to identify the specific challenges that abandoned women from migrants' families face, and identify the types of support services abandoned women need, and how local governments could provide these services more effectively. A number of recommendations related to required assistance to abandoned women from migrants' families and possible improvements of their situation were formulated by participants in the National Conference. The recommendations that emerged were grouped into three substantive thematic areas.

#### UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' Families in Tajikistan

In 2013, the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' Families in Tajikistan (herein after referred to as the Project) was developed to empower abandoned women from labour migrants' families and implemented in 5 districts, including 3 districts in Rasht Valley (Jirgatal Tojikobod, and Tavildara) and 2 districts in Khatlon Oblast (Kulyab and Farkhor); none were targeted by CARMP/RMP. The Project supported the Government of Tajikistan to implement recommendations that came out of the National Conference on "Social and Economic Inclusion of Women from Migrant Households in Tajikistan," and was aligned with the draft Model Action Plan. Ensuring women, especially the poorest and most excluded, are economically empowered and benefit from development is one of five thematic priorities addressed by UN Women, as identified in UN Women's Global Strategic Plan for 2014-2017 and the Development Result Framework (DRF) for Tajikistan. The Project also supported practical activities under the MCOs' Annual Work Plan thematic area of women's economic empowerment, as well as addresses the rights of women as laid out in the CEDAW, and the rights abandoned women from labour migrant families as laid out in the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; both UN Conventions were ratified by the Government of Tajikistan. The Project also contributed to national development priorities identified in the National Gender Equality Policy and the National Labour Migration Strategy, 2011-2015, and the National Action Plan for 2012-2016, as well as contributed to the implementation of the National Strategy for Strengthening Women's Role in Tajikistan for 2011-2020.

### Evaluation Purpose and Scope

The final evaluation of the Project was conducted externally by UN Women MCO Kazakhstan with substantive support from UN Women Europe and UN Women Europe Regional Evaluation Specialist who is a member of the UN Women Independent Evaluation Office. The final evaluation was designed to cover the 25-months project period of December 2013 to April 2016, and to address the criteria of project relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, inclusiveness, and sustainability. This includes validating project results in terms of achievements and/or weaknesses toward the outcomes and outputs, with a critical examination of how and to what extent the Project

supported economic, social, and legal empowerment of abandoned women from labour migrants' families, as well as supported other national partners from government and civil society to advance gender equality and women's human rights in Tajikistan.

## **Evaluation Objectives**

The objectives of this evaluation were fivefold, to:

1. Analyze the relevance of the programmatic strategy and approaches
2. Validate project results in terms of achievements and/or weaknesses toward the outcomes and outputs, with a critical examination of how/to what extent the project supported efforts and strengthened the capacities of abandoned women from labour migrants' families as well as other national partners from government and civil society to advance gender equality and women's human rights in Tajikistan
3. Assess the potential for sustainability of the results and the feasibility of ongoing, nationally-led efforts in advancing WHR and WEE of abandoned women from labour migrants' families, especially those that are most excluded, in Tajikistan
4. Document lessons, best practices, and challenges to inform future work of various stakeholders in addressing gender equality and women economic empowerment
5. Document and analyze possible areas of improvement in order to inform future project interventions in the area of women economic empowerment in Tajikistan.

## **Evaluation Methods and Processes**

To ensure the evaluation approach was as thorough and reliable as possible, different analytical and data collection methods were utilized. The evaluation methods were finalized with input from the UN Women MCO Kazakhstan and the Core Evaluation Reference Group. This includes:

- Desk review of project documents
- Consultations with UN Women and Core Evaluation Reference Group
- Site visits to project target districts
- Focus groups with project beneficiaries
- Interviews with UN Women and IOM staff, key stakeholders, and implementing partners (IPs)
- Consultation on preliminary findings, conclusions, and recommendations with UN Women and Core Evaluation Reference Group

The external evaluators used a participatory approach and triangulation to ensure not only the credibility of information and data collected, but also to allow diverse perspectives and experiences to be captured. The evaluators also applied principles of integrating human rights and gender equality into evaluations aligned with the United Nations Evaluation Group's guidelines documented in "Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation."

## **EVALUATION FINDINGS**

### **Relevance**

#### Project Goal and Objectives

In keeping with best practices, the Project was informed by substantive and tailored human rights and gender analyses that identified underlying causes and barriers to women's economic empowerment, gender equality, and women's human rights. On the one hand, lessons learned and good practices from the CARMP/RMP which was implemented in Sughd Oblast and Rasht Valley were used to inform the development and implementation of the Project. In addition, the Project was grounded in findings and recommendations from the 2014 situational analyses on the impact of migration on the socio-economic vulnerability of rural women in Tajikistan, which was conducted by UN Women as part of this Project.

In December 2013, the Project was launched with funding from the Norwegian MFA to support the social, economic, and legal empowerment of abandoned women from migrants' families. The Theory of Change that guided the Project was that by supporting abandoned women to improve their economic self-reliance and providing them with information about and access to their legal rights, abandoned women's social and economic

vulnerabilities can be minimized and their livelihoods improved in the absence of their spouses. More specifically, the goal of the Project was to improve the social, economic, and legal empowerment of abandoned women from migrant families. The objectives of the Project were threefold, including: 1) strengthen skills and provide enterprise development assistance (including credit and financial services) for women and migrants' families; 2) improve access to women to legal assistance services to protect their rights; and 3) enhance capacity of local partners (CSOs, women activists) to engage into a constructive dialogue with the local governments to address needs and priorities of abandoned women from migrants' families within the local development planning and budgeting (this objective was to be accomplished in only 2 of the 5 pilot districts).

Both key stakeholders and IP NGOs acknowledged the Project was "very timely" because the number of abandoned women is very high and their needs are significant and often overlooked and unsupported by government and development projects.

### [Aligning the Project with the National Context](#)

Since the Project's inception in December 2013, UN Women and IOM have taken steps to ensure the Project's resources are linked to and aligned with needs in the national contexts and contribute to national development priorities identified in Tajikistan's National Gender Equality Policy, the National Labour Migration Strategy for 2011-2015, the National Action Plan for 2012-2016, and the National Strategy for Strengthening Women's Role in Tajikistan for 2011-2020.

### [Promoting Women's Empowerment and Legal Rights](#)

The Project was relevant because it brought abandoned women out from behind the walls of their homes and educated them about their legal rights and provided them with access to legal consultations and advocacy that address their legal needs, as well as empowered them to establish self-help groups (SHGs) with other abandoned women in their jamoats. SHGs were trained to develop business plans to start income generating activities that had direct links to communities in which the SHGs were located and the women resided. SHGs were also provided with access to core funding to support their entrepreneurial income generating activities. Not all SHGs were provided with core funding under the guise of the Project; however, SHGs that did not receive a small grant were instructed on how to access micro-credits or apply for small loans from banks to fund their income generating activities or small businesses. The Project also succeeded at getting some SHGs, particularly those that received core funding from the Project, to register with the government as Public Initiative Bodies (PIBs).

The evaluation found that 90.0% of respondents recognized the Project was able to address the economic needs of abandoned women, including 80.0% of UN Women and IOM staff, 88.9% of key stakeholders, and 100.0% of IP NGOs. Also, 95.8% recognized the Project was able to address the legal needs of abandoned women, including 94.1% of key stakeholders and 100.0% of IP NGOs.

### [Inclusiveness](#)

#### [Supporting Vulnerable and Excluded Women](#)

The Project was clearly inclusive in terms of supporting the most vulnerable and excluded women, specifically abandoned women in remote regions of Tajikistan. Both key stakeholders and IP NGOs maintained this is one of the few projects in Tajikistan designed to specifically address abandoned women needs. As many as 3,000 benefited from social and economic empowerment activities, and more than 5,031 women benefited from the legal awareness-raising and access to justice services supported by the Project.

The Project was designed to ensure abandoned women were involved in the project's implementation, particularly as it related to their engagement in community mobilization, participation in SHGs and PIBs, and as executors of local initiatives aimed to improve the livelihoods of abandoned women. Women leaders from the target group of abandoned women were also key stakeholders in the design of awareness-raising campaigns through a peer-to-peer approach and other aspects of the Project.



## Involving Key Stakeholders

The Project successfully engaged key stakeholders, both civil society groups and government in a meaningful and productive manner at both the district and rayon levels, as well as nationally. Among 17 respondents, all reported the Project effectively involved key stakeholders and national partners. Among 30 respondents, 93.3% reported the Project supported better approaches and collaboration to address the needs of abandoned women; this included 100.0% of UN Women and IOM staff, 94.1% of key stakeholders, and 87.5% of IP NGOs.

## **Efficiency**

### Project Management

Since the Project's inception in December 2013, UN Women has been the project manager and has taken steps to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the Project. The Project was executed under the overall strategic oversight and guidance of the UN Women Multi-Country Office (MCO) Representative in Kazakhstan, the UN Women MCO Programme Specialist, and the UN Women Programme Specialist and Project Coordinator in Tajikistan. The Project Coordinator was supported by the UN Women Finance/Administrative Assistant in Tajikistan and MCO operations team. Short-term consultants were recruited as needed to provide support in specific technical areas.

UN Women's reputation, mandate, and technical expertise in the areas of gender equality and empowerment of women, and prior work on the CARMP/RMP and community mobilization to promote women's empowerment and human rights was an advantage and benefit to the Project. Key stakeholders also recognised UN Women has knowledge and understanding of best practices globally for empowering women, and a regional and national focus and presence which is of significant benefit to the Project.

IOM was a RP and IOM's mandate and technical expertise to address issues of human migration and provide legal advocacy to migrants and their families was an advantage and benefit. Thus, UN Women's partnership with IOM for the Project led to an efficient use of resources to ensure effective project implementation.

### Project Operations

Success of the Project hinged on the fact that UN Women was regularly communicating with IP NGOs in each of the project districts to ensure proper and ongoing project implementation. UN Women and IP NGOs recognized the regular communication was "very important" to ensuring partners made progress toward achieving outputs and outcomes. Other measures taken to ensure the efficient use of resources, included:

- Encouraging SHGs to develop business plans in which they were interested and had some skills, as well as believed to be marketable in the local communities
- Grant monies were dispersed directly to PIB bank accounts and all purchases were done by money transfer from one bank account to another to support transparency and teach money management and budgeting
- Relying upon committees consisting of local Hukumats (i.e., migration department/committee, state employment agencies, Women's Committees) and IP NGOs to select business plans and grant proposals that were suitable to the local communities and geographic locations
- Funding learning exchanges and study tours for SHGs, as well as participation in forums and expos where PIBs and SHGs can display and market their products.

### Project Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting

The Project's monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, as well as audit was carried out in accordance with the respective regulations, rules and procedures of UN Women. Monitoring and evaluation was undertaken by the Project team in accordance with a specific monitoring and evaluation plan. In keeping, field visits and monitoring missions were undertaken on a regular basis by the Project team. Local IP NGOs were also required to share information and progress updates in annual reports, and undertake joint visits when appropriate. The Project's implementation was assessed continuously at the level of activities and outputs. The Project team developed several reports, including annual progress reports and final reports, in accordance with the reporting procedures and format required by the donor. UN Women reported there was also annual Skype calls with the donor and regular donor monitoring.

## Effectiveness

### Strengthen Skills and Enterprise Development Assistance for Abandoned Women

In terms of strengthening skills and enterprise development assistance (including credit and financial services for women from migrants' families) there were several key activities, including: mapping of villages and communities for further selection for social mobilization of women from migrants' families to support improvement of their livelihoods; collecting baseline and endline data on household of project beneficiaries; facilitating the formation of abandoned women into SHGs; and supporting members of SHGs to access micro-credits and other resources to effectively manage their businesses.

### Mapping and Data on Households of Abandoned Women

The first project activity was to map villages and communities for selection and social mobilization of women from migrants' families to support improvement to their livelihoods. Second, in the latter half of 2014, UN Women's IPs conducted a baseline household survey of target/group beneficiaries in the 5 project districts, including the 3 districts in Rasht Valley and 2 districts in Khatlon. The baseline household survey enabled UN Women to map abandoned women in the 5 project districts and provided important baseline household data of project beneficiaries. Strategically, UN Women also conducted an endline household survey involving the same project beneficiaries in 2015. The baseline and endline household survey data collected was analyzed as part of this evaluation to document the impact of the Project on improving abandoned women's livelihoods and economic security.

### Facilitate Formation of Abandoned Women's Self-Help Groups

An important activity to strengthening the skills and enterprise development of abandoned women, and enhancing sustainable livelihoods and economic security of abandoned women was to facilitate the formation of abandoned women into SHGs. Based upon data provided by the RP NGOs, a total of 387 SHGs were established in 10 jamoats in 5 districts of 2 regions of Tajikistan. More specifically, in Rasht Valley 206 SHGs were established in 6 jamoats in 3 districts (Tavildara, Tojikobod, and Jirgatal), and in Khatlon 181 SHGs were established in 4 jamoats in 2 districts (Kulyab and Farkhor). The SHGs included a total of 3,000 abandoned women, including 1,800 women in 3 districts in Rasht Valley and 1,200 women in 2 districts in Khatlon. In Rasht Valley, 13.6% of SHGs registered as PIBs; whereas, in Khatlon, 6.6% of SHGs registered as PIBs. One of the challenges the RP NGOs and SHGs faced was that the Project was only for 25 months.

SHGs established savings schemes where they share funds collected from members of the SHG. Each SHG decides how much each member of the SHG should contribute on a monthly basis to the savings schemes. SHGs generally meet on a monthly basis to discuss the results of their work and their savings, and make collective decisions about spending money or giving loans from their savings schemes. SHGs often use money to goods and materials for their income generating activities. Some SHGs give short-term loans from their savings schemes to only members of the SHG with little to no interest; whereas, other SHGs reported giving short-term loans with interest to individuals outside of their SHG. A benefit of the SHGs is that abandoned women start working together and socially and financially support each other; they become empowered through these networks and have greater decision-making power over their resources.

There were few challenges identified with SHGs, except some SHG members recognized their knowledge and skills surpassed that of other SHG members and they wanted to work independent of the SHG. A second challenge was that in most SHGs, because the savings schemes are small, not all women can borrow money from the savings scheme at the same time; they must take turns taking loans from the savings schemes. A third challenge is that some women don't have ongoing, permanent work or income and have a difficult time contributing money to the savings scheme.

### Economic Empowerment of Abandoned Women

The Project made significant progress in a short period of time toward strengthening the skills and enterprise development abilities of abandoned women, including the ability to apply for a small grant under the guise of the Project and to apply for micro-credits or small loans from a bank or other lending sources. From 2014 to

2015 there was a significant increase in the proportion of women receiving financial support from public organizations for their business; up to 64.9% in 2015, from 34.8% in 2014. At the same time there was a significant decrease in the proportion of women reliant upon labour migrants for funding their business; down from 7.3% in 2014 to 1.7% in 2015. This finding may also relate to the finding that the proportion of project beneficiaries who reported they didn't receive remittances from family members that migrated for labour increased to 52.6% in 2015, up from 36.7% in 2014. Also, only .3% of project beneficiaries reported nobody was supporting their business in 2015, down from 7.7% in 2014.

For some of the more remote and mountainous districts, IP NGOs and SHGs found that the small grant given under the guise of the Project was not enough to start a good project because they had to spend a significant amount of money on transportation to purchase goods for their business and to bring their products to market. Timing of the grants was another issue because certain projects were seasonal and funding came late.

Numerous respondents highlighted the fact that the demeanor of the abandoned women had changed over time as a result of their participation in the Project; women had become more active, developed business plans, and were able to write a project proposal and access core funding and/or micro-credits and loans. Also, women learned marketing skills and how to go to the market and purchase and sell goods, and how to manage their household budgets.

### *Access to Micro-Credits and Other Resources for their Businesses*

In 2014, to support SHGs to access micro-credits and other resources to manage their businesses, UN Women supported a mapping of the existing micro-credit programs on business development, agricultural services, seeds programs and other services (e.g., the Agency on Labour, Employment and Migration, Adult Learning Centres, colleges, and INGOs). The mapping identified 11 MFIs and 8 banks in Khatlon and Rasht Valley, and 9 MOUs between Banks and MFIs were signed which ensured the smooth access of project beneficiaries to the MFI services and access to micro-credits for business and entrepreneurial activities.

Baseline and endline household survey data revealed that in 2015, only 2.4% of 2,926 abandoned women reported getting some form of credit; up from 2.2% of 2,938 women in 2014. Among women that were able to get some form of credit, the majority received credits from the bank, and there was a significant increase the proportion of women who receive credits from the bank from 2014 to 2015 (56.3% in 2014; 67.1% in 2015). There was also an increase in the proportion of women that were able to get credits from the Social Protection Agency; an increase from 0.0% in 2014 to 8.6% in 2015. From 2014 to 2015, there was a significant decrease in the proportion of women that received credits from the SHGs; from 14.1% in 2014, down to 2.9% in 2015. There was no change in the proportion of women access credits from MFIs.

Among women taking micro-credits the average interest rate of their loans slightly decreased from 2.7% in 2014 to 2.1% in 2015. Also, the average length of time the loan was remained nearly the same from 11.0 months in 2014 to 11.3 months in 2015. What is particularly notable is the amount of credit borrowed by project beneficiaries significantly increased from 1,548 Somoni on average in 2014 to 2,440 Somoni on average in 2015 (an increase of 892 Somoni on average).

There was also a significant change in what women were using the credits for from 2014 to 2015. In 2014, the majority of women reported using credits for "other expenses" (40.6%) and renovations or construction (21.9%). In 2014, only 15.6% of women reported using credits for their business; however, by 2015, the proportion of women that were using credits for business significantly increased to 67.1%, and the proportion of women using credits for "other expenses" significantly decreased to 17.2%. These are significant and notable shift in the way that women are using borrowed money, which may reflect that women have improved money resources for daily living expenses as a result of the Project, as well as better money management and budgeting habits.

### *Improved Livelihoods and Economic Security for Abandoned Women*

Baseline and endline data was analysed to understand how the livelihoods and economic security of project beneficiaries has improved from the beginning to the end of the project. There was a significant increase from 2014 to 2015 in the proportion of project beneficiaries that had horticulture (fruit growing) and garden plots in their households. In 2015, 86.0% of women reported they had horticulture (fruit growing) in their household

and 88.8% reported they had a garden plot in their household; up from 55.5% and 76.0% respectively in 2014. Notable is the significant increase from 2014 to 2015 in the proportion of women who reported using the harvest of fruits for their own needs; up from 32.8% in 2014 to 62.8% in 2015. Also, there was an increase in the proportion of women that used the garden plot in their household for their own needs and for sale; up from 56.2% and 19.8% respectively in 2014 to 62.5% and 26.5% in 2015.

Project beneficiaries also reported a statistically significant increase in the average number of animals in their household, particularly big cattle. The number of big cattle increase from .98 on average in 2014 to 1.17 on average in 2015; moreover, from a maximum of 10 in 2014 to 24 in 2015. There was also a slight increase in birds from 3.83 on average in 2014 to 4.03 in 2015; however, the change was not statistically significant.

Project beneficiaries' access to medical care also significantly changed from 2014 to 2015; these changes are likely tied to women's social and economic empowerment, as well as they will have the financial resources to access more formal medical care. Notable is that the portion of women who access doctor/health workers increased from 45.1% in 2014 to 78.8% in 2015. At the same time the proportion of women that did self-treatment declined from 36.4% in 2014 to 7.5% in 2015. The proportion of project beneficiaries who reported they have the means to purchase medicine and pay for health services increased from 5.5% in 2014 to 18.8% in 2015. In addition, the proportion of women that reported their families has limited means to purchase medicine and pay for health services decreased from 89.0% in 2014 to 75.5% in 2015.

There were significant changes in the financial situation of families of project beneficiaries from 2014 to 2015. In particular, there was a significant increase in the proportion of women who report they have enough money for regular necessary expenses, but not enough for big purchases and savings from 2014 to 2015 (21.4% in 2014, and 29.4% in 2015). At the same time there was a significant decrease in the proportion of women who they only have enough for food and most necessary clothing from 2014 to 2015 (75.7% in 2014 and 68.9% in 2015). Also, there was a decrease in the proportion of women who report they did not have enough money for food (2.8% in 2014 to 1.4% in 2015).

Finally, there was a significant increase in the living conditions of project beneficiaries and their children from the perspective of project beneficiaries. There was a significant increase in the proportion of women who reported their living conditions were good; an increase from 6.0% in 2014 to 35.4% in 2015.

#### [Access to a Legal Assistance and Gender Sensitive Services](#)

In terms of assisting women gain access to a broad range of legal assistance and gender sensitive services, there were several key activities, including: developing information and materials on legal issues and services; provide legal aid and informational support to the beneficiaries through local NGOs; and strengthening capacity of justice system actors to address needs of abandoned women from migrants' families on legal assistance and protection of their right.

#### [Develop and Distribute Information Materials on Legal Issues and Services](#)

IOM was responsible for developing and disseminating information and materials on legal issues and services for abandoned women from migrants' families. In the first year of the project (2014), IOM was able to produce 7,500 booklets on legal services offered by their RP NGOs, including: 3,000 booklets on legal services offered by NGO Surhob in the Rasht Valley, and 4,500 booklets on legal services. IOM also produced and disseminated 400 calendars on the rights of children from migrants' families. These booklets and calendars were distributed to NGO partners and other IOs, as well as local Hukumats, Jamoats, the Ombudsman's Offices, the Committee on Women and Family Affairs, and other relevant ministries. The calendars were well received and more calendars requested from Jamoats and schools; thus, more were printed and distributed in 2015.

IOM also produced and disseminated 11,064 booklets with 24 questions and answers regarding the most common legal problems faced by abandoned women (e.g., alimony, divorce, dividing the property, and more). The booklets contained model documents which could be used by women who wanted to pursue and access their legal rights.

In 2014, IOM also participated in 9 different events, including seminars, presentation of research, roundtable discussions organized both other IOs, NGOs, and the Government of Tajikistan in Dushanbe, Kulyab, Khujand, and Kurgan-Tube. In this way, IOM reached approximately 270 people from different backgrounds, including key stakeholders who influence policy-making at the central level and who work directly with abandoned wives and children of migrant labourers in different regions of Tajikistan. IOM also hosted a series of roundtable discussions on the rights of women and children from migrants' families in Dushanbe, Tojikobod, and Kulyab. These roundtables led to an agreement among participants that there is a need to develop new strategies of work with migrants' families and to protect the rights of abandoned women and their children.

#### *Provide Legal Aid and Information Support to Abandoned Women*

IOM was responsible for providing legal aid and information support to abandoned women through their RP NGOs in Kulyab and Rasht Valley. From April 2014 to December 2015, the two RP NGOs were able to provide legal aid and information support to a significant number of project beneficiaries. In fact, in 2014, IOM overachieved its targets set for the whole duration of the project; that is that IOM would provide 800 women with free legal assistance and 4,200 women would have access to consultative and information materials by the end of the project period. This confirms that the need for legal services for families of migrant workers is enormous, and that the problem of abandoned women is acute.

The level of legal awareness among women rural and remote areas of Tajikistan is very low, and most often women lack official marriage certificates and birth certificates for children, which makes obtaining alimony more difficult. Most cases related to the Family and Civil Codes (e.g., obtaining birth certificates, paternity recognition, obtaining alimony), as well as land and housing issues (e.g., housing disputes with the family or former husband, and unlawful evictions). This project also found that reaching women in remote areas and providing them with legal aid is not without its challenges, including transportation.

IOM also provided trainings and support to the Ombudsman's Office to improve their capacities to provide legal services to abandoned women from migrants' families. Although the centres do not advocate or take cases, they do offer consultative services and referrals to other organizations.

#### *Strengthen Capacity of Justice System Actors to Address Abandoned Women's Needs*

One of the activities of the project was to strengthen the capacities of justice system actors to address the needs of abandoned women. In July 2014, IOM conducted a one-day training for 14 lawyers on migration legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Russian Federation, Tajik laws on social protection of families of labour migrants, and methodologies for providing families of labour migrants with consultations. In August 2014, IOM conducted a two-day training for 22 lawyers, including 10 lawyers from local offices of the Ombudsman's Office, and 12 and lawyers from NGO partners of IOM and Save the Children. The training concerned legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan concerning rights of women and children from migrant families and solving of hypothetical legal cases which may be faced by abandoned women. While IOM was able to train some local lawyers and judges in one-off trainings, it is not clear what impact the trainings had on justice system actors.

#### *Enhance Capacity of NGOs to Engage Local Government on Gender-Specific Needs*

In terms of enhancing the capacity of NGOs to engage into a constructive dialogue with the local governments on incorporating gender-specific needs of abandoned women from migrants' families, there were two key activities, including: strengthening capacity of local partners for gender responsible local planning and budgeting to address needs and priorities in 2 of the 5 target districts; and strengthening the capacities of the women's committee and civil society to promote women's rights in families and society.

#### *Better Collaboration among Civil Society and Government*

UN Women has been effective at "opening the door" for NGOs and local governmental bodies to work together to address the needs of abandoned women. Each NGO IP had a MOU with the Hukumats in the districts they were working which helped to ensure the collaboration between the NGOs and local government bodies. Across each of the project districts, key partners in the local governments have often been the Women's Committees, Head of Hukumats and Head of Jamoats.

The Project also made progress toward enhancing the capacity of CSOs to engage in a constructive dialogue with the local government on incorporating gender-specific needs of abandoned women from migrants' families into local development planning. One of the most significant challenges faced was that Hukumat and Jamoat governmental bodies do not have the ability to influence policy; rather, they are simply responsible for implementing the policies, development plans, and budget provided to them by the central level state bodies. Thus, UN Women needed a more serious commitment from central level authorities if they wanted to affect greater change and address the needs of greater numbers of abandoned women in each of the project districts.

### Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting

Steps were taken to develop the capacities of local governmental bodies and CSOs in 2 of the 5 pilot districts to understand gender planning and budgeting; however, district planning and budgeting is done at the national which limits the capacities local governmental bodies to have much influence as they are simply the implementers. Without working at the central level you cannot influence local level gender responsible planning and budgeting; so this is an area that still needs a lot of work.

### **Sustainability**

#### Sustainability of Income Generating Activities

UN Women recognized that the Project has helped to build an approach/model in the pilot districts that advances women's empowerment that will remain in place even after the project ends. Similarly, 90.9% of key stakeholders and 100% of IP NGOs maintained the Project has helped to build an approach/model in the pilot districts that advances women's empowerment that will remain in place even after the project ends. Nearly all IP NGOs and key stakeholders held the belief that PIBs established under the guise of the Project will continue their income generating activities because they have the knowledge and skills needed to sustain their businesses and income generating activities. The chances of sustainability may increase in those communities where the local Jamoat and/or Hukumat have taken a more active role in supporting the projects. IP NGOs recognised not all SHGs will be able to sustain themselves and their income generating activities going forward because they were dependent upon the Project and core funding.

#### Advocacy and Awareness-Raising on the Needs of Abandoned Women

Since inception, the Project provided UN Women and IOM and its local partners with the opportunity to engage in advocacy and awareness-raising on the needs of abandoned women with policy makers and government officials, and among civil society. In each of the 5 project districts, the Project is seen as being the only project that works specifically addressing the social, economic, and legal needs of abandoned women. Local NGOs that were IP NGOs for the Project are considered key players locally.

#### Building a Community of Practice

This evaluation found that UN Women has been able to use the Project to build a "community of practice" that promotes women's economic empowerment, particularly among abandoned women from migrant families. This particular community of practice did not previously exist, but emerged as a result of the Project in the project districts and regions. The Project supported abandoned women to not only mobilize in their own jamoats to form SHGs, but to come together in learning exchanges where SHGs from each of the 5 project districts could share their ideas, experiences, and products.

Also part of the learning of practice is that other governments and development agencies, including the US Embassy, USAID, DFID, Oxfam, and Aga Khan Foundation have all expressed interest in learning more about the outcomes of the Project and visiting the project districts to learn more about the income generating activities of the SHGs and PIBs.

### **Conclusions**

This external evaluation resulted in 17 key conclusions, including:



1. It is possible to support abandoned women in remote regions of Tajikistan to come out from behind the walls of their homes and educate them about their legal rights, provide them with access to legal advocacy to address their legal problems, and develop their capacities to improve their economic self-reliance through income generating activities; minimizing women's social and economic vulnerabilities and improving their livelihoods in the absence of their spouses.
2. Encouraging abandoned women to come together and form SHGs is an effective way of encouraging and empowering abandoned women to work together to develop business plans and start income generating activities that have direct links to the communities in which they reside, and to access to core funding, micro-credits, and no or low interest loans from banks and MFIs.
3. It is important that women are involved in the project's implementation, particularly as it relates to their engagement in community mobilization, participation in SHGs and PIBs, and as executors of income generating activities.
4. The key to success is engaging key stakeholders, including civil society groups and local governmental bodies, along with project beneficiaries in a meaningful and productive manner at both the district and rayon levels, as well as nationally to ensure better approaches and collaborations are supported to address the needs of abandoned women.
5. The Project's successes were largely effected by UN Women's reputation, mandate, and technical expertise in the areas of gender equality and empowerment of women, and prior work on the CARMP/RMP and community mobilization to promote women's economic empowerment. Similarly, IOM's mandate and technical expertise to address issues of human migration and provide legal advocacy to migrants and their families was an advantage and key to the Project's success.
6. Success of the Project hinged on the fact that UN Women and IOM were regularly communicating with their IP NGOs in each of the project districts to ensure proper and ongoing project implementation, and that partners were making progress toward achieving the project's outputs and outcomes.
7. The following measures taken during project implementation helped to ensure the efficient use of resources:
  - a. Facilitating abandoned women to form SHGs was key to strengthening the skills and enterprise development of abandoned women, and enabled women to work together and socially and financially supported each other; they became empowered through these networks and learned to have greater decision-making power over their resources.
  - b. Encouraging SHGs to develop business plans and proposals in which they were interested and had some skills, and believed to be marketable in the local communities.
  - c. Encouraging SHGs to establish savings schemes that enabled women to save money and used they money saved to purchase goods and materials for their income generating activities, as well as give short-term loans to SHG members with little to no interest.
  - d. Ensuring grant monies were dispersed directly to PIB bank accounts and all purchases were done by money transfer from one bank account to another to support transparency and teach women money management and budgeting skills.
  - e. Relying upon committees consisting of local Hukumats (i.e., migration department/committee, state employment agencies, Women's Committees) and RP NGOs to select business plans and proposals that were suitable to the local communities and geographic locations for small grant funding.
  - f. Funding learning exchanges and study tours for SHGs, as well as participation in forums and expos where SHGs and PIBs could display and market their products, and talk about their businesses.
8. The Project made significant progress in a short period of time toward strengthening the skills and enterprise development abilities of abandoned women. These skills and accomplishments were significant for abandoned women in remote areas who are typically disempowered by their status as abandoned women and low levels of education.
9. The Project increased the proportion of women received credits from banks, as well as the SPA, and women who acquired credits were more likely to use the credits for their businesses versus other expenses.
10. For more remote and mountainous districts, core funding was given under the guise of the Project were not always enough to start a good project, and timing of tranches is important, particularly given many projects were seasonal and funding needed to come at the right to purchase seeds, for planting, and harvesting.
11. Women who participated in and benefited from the project demonstrated improved self-confidence and worth, this influenced their demeanor and standing in their families and communities.
12. For a women's economic empowerment project, the project period was too short at only 25 months; more time was needed for capacity building and implementation of income generating activities to improve the chances of sustainability, and to assist women in access their legal rights and resolving their legal problems.

13. SHGs need to be prepared to respond to market changes, and need more capacity building to improve the quality of their products, as well as packaging, labelling, marketing, and distribution of their products.
14. Other notable improvements in the livelihoods of abandoned women who were socially, economically, and legally empowered as a result of the Project were:
  - a. Women increased their production of horticulture (fruit growing) and garden plots in their households, and were using the fruits and vegetables for their own needs, and selling what they did not need.
  - b. Women increased the average number of animals in their household, particularly big cattle, but also birds.
  - c. Women increased their access to formal medical care and were purchasing medicines and paying for health services; at the same time, they reduced their reliance upon self-treatment.
  - d. Women were more likely to report they had enough money for regular necessary expenses, and that their living conditions were good; at the same time as there was a decrease in the proportion of women who reported their living conditions were bad and/or average.
15. The need for legal services for families of migrant workers is enormous, and the legal problems of abandoned women are acute.
16. There is space in communities where civil society groups and local governmental bodies can engage in constructive dialogue and work together to address the needs of abandoned women, and to incorporate gender-specific needs into local development planning and budgeting.
17. This Project serves as an example of “best practices” for helping to build an approach/model that advances women’s empowerment and can remain in place even after the project ends. The chances of sustainability may increase in those communities where local Jamoats and/or Hukumats have taken a more active role in supporting the Project and the SHGs, PIBs and their income generating activities.

## Lessons Learned

This external evaluation also identified 11 key lessons learned, including:

1. It is possible to bring abandoned women out from behind the walls of their homes and socially, economically, and legally empower them to engage in income generating activities that will improve their livelihoods and economic security, as well as those of their children.
2. Given the low levels of education of many abandoned women in Tajikistan, more time and resources should be devoted to developing the knowledge and skills women need to organize and sustain SHGs.
3. SHGs need more support financially and in terms of capacity building to start and sustain their income generating activities, and more SHGs should be encouraged to formally register as PIBs and access micro-credits and/or loans to establish and support their businesses and income generating activities. The support provided to SHGs through the project should be phased out in a scale down manner over a longer project period; this will help to improve sustainability.
4. More resources should be committed to helping women access their legal rights, and an MOU should be established with the government to support women in getting their marriages registered and obtaining passports and birth certificates for women and their children.
5. Increasing women’s self-efficiency and financial independence, including women’s ability to manage their household budget and make decisions over the money they earn, is crucial to empowering women socially and economically within families and communities.
6. If you can improve abandoned women’s livelihoods, you can help to increase the livelihoods of their children and other family members as well (secondary beneficiaries).
7. It is important for SHGs to participate in communities of practice and learning exchanges that help to support their continued knowledge and capacity building, social and economic empowerment, and the sustainability of their income generating activities.
8. Commit more time and resources to improving national and local government officials understanding of the needs of abandoned women and their children, and support local and central level authorities to develop improved gender responsive planning and budgeting.
9. Projects that support abandoned women to be socially, economically, and legally empowered should be more long-term, at least 36 months, if not longer in length.
10. Women’s empowerment projects should be coupled with efforts to eliminate violence against women, particularly given the fact that development research and data from the evaluation revealed as you socially, economically, and legally empower vulnerable women, they are often at increased risk of violence within the home and community.



11. From the beginning, proper mapping of villages and communities for selection and social mobilization of abandoned women from migrants' families, coupled with collection of quantitative data from household surveys at the baselined and endline of the Project enabled UN Women to quantitatively document the impact of the Project on improving abandoned women's lives and economic security.

## Recommendations

The strategic recommendations that follow are guided by the aforementioned conclusions and lessons learned which are grounded in the findings presented in the previous section. These recommendations were developed with input from UN Women and IOM staff, key stakeholders, and IP NGOs.

1. The Project implementation period should be extended to at least 36 months, if not longer, and the Project should be expanded to more jamoats and/or districts to improve sustainability and expand impact.
2. The Project should commit more time and resources to developing the knowledge and skills women need to form SHGs and develop and sustain income generating activities.
3. More advanced SHGs with existing capacities should be encouraged to formally register as PIBs and provided with increased access to core funding and capacity building to access micro-credits and/or loans to establish and support their income generating activities.
4. The amount money and timing of grant funding to SHGs should be more timely, in keeping with the projects, particularly projects that are influenced by growing and seasonal production.
5. More focus should be given by UN Women, IOM, and the Government to help women access their legal rights, including getting their marriages registered and obtaining passports and birth certificates for women and their children.
6. Invest more time and resources into increasing women's self-efficiency and financial independence by empowering women to manage their business and household budgets, and to have agency in decision-making, and to control resources and earnings from their income generating activities.
7. Women's empowerment projects should be coupled with efforts to EVAW.
8. Increase support for learning exchanges and "communities of practice" that help to support women's continued economic empowerment, decision-making powers, and sustainability of their economic empowerment.
9. UN Women and IOM would benefit from committing more time and resources to improving national and local government officials understanding of the needs of abandoned women and their children, and support local and central level authorities to develop improved gender responsive planning and budgeting.
10. Measures of women's economic empowerment should be improved in the household surveys.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background

### 1.1.1. Labour Migration in Tajikistan

Tajikistan is the poorest country in Central Asia, due largely to the fact that it has faced serious development challenges in the aftermath of the 1992-1997 civil war, inefficient economic reforms, and highly decentralized power with a lack of political and economic plurality. Tajikistan also has a poorly functioning social welfare system and reduced institutional and governmental capacities. In 2009, experts estimated the level of unemployment in Tajikistan varied between 30% and 45% among the working age population. In fact, the 2009 Tajikistan Living Standards Survey (TLSS) revealed 47% of the population was living below the poverty line and 17% in extreme poverty. Among those living below the poverty line, 75% were living in rural areas of the country. Most households vulnerable to poverty were identified as either households with large numbers of children, women-headed households, and/or households with uneducated heads of household (oftentimes, women). By, 2013, the World Bank, Global Poverty Working Group reported a reduction to 34.3% of the population was living below the poverty line; and in 2014, 32.0% of the population was living below the poverty line.<sup>1</sup>

Since 2000, due to high levels of unemployment and poverty in the country, labour migration abroad has become a major source of income for a considerable number of Tajik citizens.<sup>2,3</sup> In 2012, 744,360 citizens reportedly left Tajikistan in search of employment; unofficial estimates were that more than one million Tajiks migrate abroad on an annual basis for labour. Government reports estimate that labour migration abroad has helped to reduce the level of unemployment threefold, and increase the rate of employment among the working age population by 15%. Over past 15 years, labour migration has reportedly become a major survival strategy for Tajiks, with an estimated 90% of labour migrants travelling to Russia.<sup>4</sup> In 2013, money transfers from Russia to Tajikistan were 4,173 billion USD, which equates to over half the country's Gross Domestic Production (GDP).<sup>5</sup> In 2014, remittance constituted 42.7% of the GDP. By 2015, however, economic decline in Russia resulted in Tajik migrants losing their jobs and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecasted that dollar remittances flows to Tajikistan declined by approximately 30% from 2015 to 2014.<sup>6</sup> The depreciation of the Russian Ruble (and with it the Tajik Somoni) has also reduced the migrants' real income and the actual value of remittances.<sup>7</sup>

While the economic sustenance brought to Tajikistan from labour migration cannot be discounted; at the same time, troubling social trends emerged. Human Rights Watch maintains many Tajik labour migrants fall victim to exploitation in Russia due to their undocumented legal status, low-levels of vocational education and skills, poor knowledge of the Russian language, and lack of awareness about their rights and legislation in their destination

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<sup>1</sup> Retrieved from on May 29, 2016 from: <http://data.worldbank.org/country/tajikistan>

<sup>2</sup> Quddusov, J. (May 2009). "Impact of Global Financial Crisis on Labour Migrants from Tajikistan: Opinions of Migrants (Rapid assessment). Information Research Center "SocServis." Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

<sup>3</sup> Malyuchenko, I (February 2015). Labour Migration from Central Asia to Russia: Economic and Social Impact on the Societies of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Central Asia Security Policy Briefs #21. OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Retrieved March 20, 2016 from: [http://www.osce-academy.net/upload/file/Policy\\_Brief\\_21.pdf](http://www.osce-academy.net/upload/file/Policy_Brief_21.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Report of the Centre for Strategic Research under the President of Tajikistan (2012). "Impact of Labour Migration on Way of Life and Behaviour of the Population of Tajikistan.

<sup>5</sup> Malyuchenko, I (February 2015). Labour Migration from Central Asia to Russia: Economic and Social Impact on the Societies of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Central Asia Security Policy Briefs #21. OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Retrieved March 20, 2016 from: [http://www.osce-academy.net/upload/file/Policy\\_Brief\\_21.pdf](http://www.osce-academy.net/upload/file/Policy_Brief_21.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> According to data from the National Bank of Tajikistan (NBT), a total volume of remittances sent to Tajikistan last year amounted to 3.9 billion U.S. dollars, which was 8.3 percent fewer than in 2013. Retrieved May 29, 2016 from: <http://www.news.tj/en/news/imf-forecasts-sharp-decline-remittance-flows-tajikistan-2015>

<sup>7</sup> Malyuchenko, I (February 2015). Labour Migration from Central Asia to Russia: Economic and Social Impact on the Societies of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Central Asia Security Policy Briefs #21. OSCE Academy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Retrieved March 20, 2016 from: [http://www.osce-academy.net/upload/file/Policy\\_Brief\\_21.pdf](http://www.osce-academy.net/upload/file/Policy_Brief_21.pdf)

country.<sup>8</sup> Another troubling social trend is that abandoned women and children of migrants' families are often vulnerable because they are left behind to live in extreme poverty and inadequate housing conditions, often relying upon food they can cultivate themselves, and with only occasional help from relatives.<sup>9</sup>

In 2009, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) conducted a study on the socio-economic characteristics of abandoned wives of Tajik labour migrants and their survival capabilities.<sup>10</sup> This study documented labour migration trends and characteristics of labour migrants in Tajikistan; among 800,000 labour migrants, 95.3% were male, 77.9% were married and had three to four children, and 72% were from rural areas. In 2008, at the time of the study, the IMF estimated that 58% of Tajikistan's national GDP comes from remittances from labour migrants. IOM's study also surveyed 77 abandoned wives in five regions of Tajikistan, and documented the difficulties faced by abandoned wives of labour migrants. In particular, 91% of the 77 abandoned wives surveyed reported they had not received any remittances within the last year and less than 3% received an amount above the poverty line. The frequency of remittances received varied from one time to once a year and all respondents said the amount of money received was not enough to cover living expenses. Because of the lack of sufficient remittances, abandoned women had to find other ways to earn a living and in many cases had to move in with their parents or in-laws to afford housing and feed their children (14.3% lived with in-laws and 31.2% living with their parents). Although 54.3% of abandoned women lived on their own with their children, the conditions they lived in were often primitive and deplorable. Almost half the women surveyed were not employed because they either had small children, were sick, or employment was not available where they lived; whereas, the majority of women who were employed work seasonally in the agriculture sector, followed by selling food items in bazaars.

Most all abandoned wives surveyed in the 2009 IOM study considered themselves still married, even though they no communication or information from their husbands for one or more years; the majority of abandoned wives did not even know the whereabouts of their husbands. Because of the socio-economic situation abandoned wives faced after their husbands left, many women were at-risk of depression, suicide, physical health problems, famine, and prostitution. Many women were also in unregistered marriages and were at-risk of entering into polygamous marriages. In addition, nearly all women were unaware of their legal rights and were unable to obtain information for assistance.<sup>11</sup> IOM's study was important because it was one of the first studies to document the social and economic vulnerabilities faced by abandoned wives, and highlighted the need to support abandoned families of migrants' families to develop coping mechanisms to sustain their families. In response to this study, IOM designed a project to increase legal rights awareness among women heads of households, especially abandoned women from migrants' families. IOM was involved in the pilot of this project in Khatlon where they administered information campaigns, legal consultations and seminars, and local capacity building initiatives in cooperation with the Migration Support Centre.

In 2012, despite the lack of national statistics on the number of women abandoned by migrant labourers, there were worrying observations among international organizations (IOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) that labour migration was having a negative social and economic impact on the wives and children left behind. In fact, the Organization for Security and Cooperation of Europe (OSCE) reported the number of abandoned women from migrants' families ranged between 230,880 and 288,600, and estimated that 78% were women with children. In addition, it was estimated that only 1% of abandoned women were receiving any kind of assistance or benefit from projects/programmes implemented by development partners in Tajikistan.<sup>12</sup> While some labour migrants provide financial and emotional support to their wives, children, and other relatives by sending remittances and/or visiting home, others migrants either do not find it possible to support their families

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<sup>8</sup> Human Rights Watch (2011). "Race to the Bottom: Exploitation of Migrant Workers Ahead of Russia's 2014 Winter Olympic Games in Sochi", Report of the FIDH "Tajikistan: Export of Labour Force – at What Cost?", 2011; Report by HRW "Exploitation of Labour Migrants in Russian Construction Sector", 2008

<sup>9</sup> IOM (2009). "Abandoned Women of Tajik Labour Migrants." IOM: Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Retrieved from: <http://www.iom.tj/index.php/research/130-abandoned-wives-of-tajik-labor-migrants-august-2009>

<sup>10</sup> IOM (2009). "Abandoned Women of Tajik Labour Migrants." IOM: Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Retrieved from: <http://www.iom.tj/index.php/research/130-abandoned-wives-of-tajik-labor-migrants-august-2009>

<sup>11</sup> IOM (2009). "Abandoned Women of Tajik Labour Migrants." IOM: Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Retrieved from: <http://www.iom.tj/index.php/research/130-abandoned-wives-of-tajik-labor-migrants-august-2009>

<sup>12</sup> OSCE report on social and economic inclusion of women from migrant's families in Tajikistan, 2012

or deliberately choose not to send remittance and/or visit home. Some migrant labourers also establish new families abroad and invest their resources in their new families. As a result, Tajikistan faces challenges integrating abandoned women of migrants' families into the socio-economic life of society. Current legislative and policy frameworks do not effectively address specific situations and needs of the most vulnerable groups in Tajikistan, so as to ensure the protection of abandoned women from migrants' families.

In recent years, mass media has actively used terms such as “missing men” and “a country of abandoned women” to describe and discuss the labour migration situation in Tajikistan, and the economic and social status of women left behind by migrating men.<sup>13,14</sup> For Tajik women, abandonment is further exacerbated by traditional social norms and attitudes related to women's status and roles in the family, which can discourage many abandoned women from seeking formal employment or accessing resources. On the other hand, women who become heads of households and are the only breadwinners in families may be encouraged or feel pressure to seek opportunities to raise income for their households; however, their efforts are not always positive due to a lack of knowledge and skills needed to ensure productive income generation activities.

**Box 1. Recommendations from the National Conference on “Social and Economic Inclusion of Women from Migrant Households in Tajikistan”**

Thematic Area 1: To replicate good practices of local government to support women from migrant households:

- Strengthen protection of the rights of abandoned women from migrant households and children in these families, with a focus on issues of child support (alimony) and access of children to child care and education facilities;
- Improve vocational skills of women from migrant households in order to facilitate access to the labour market;
- Support self-employment and entrepreneurship activities of women from migrant households;
- Enhance social protection of women from migrant households;
- Provide women from migrant households with proper access to medical and psychological support; and
- Provide free legal assistance to abandoned women from migrant households.

Thematic Area 2: To prevent exploitation of and violence against women from migrant households:

- Raise awareness of women from migrant households about their rights, ensuring information campaigns by special associations, NGOs and mass media;
- Build the capacity of the state and NGOs to provide psychological assistance to women from migrant households;
- Improve access to information on safe labour migration to Tajik migrant workers abroad and their families; and
- Improve the system of data collection on migration, disaggregated by sex.

Thematic Area 3: To support socio-economic inclusion of women from migrant households:

- Build the capacity of the state executive and legislative bodies on issues of women from migrant households;
- Improve the state financial support system for abandoned women from migrant households;
- Enhance access of women from migrant households to state-financed education by introducing a special quota system; and
- Establish financial and tax incentives for women from migrant households for business start-up purposes.

<sup>13</sup> M. Boboeva “Tajikistan is a country of abandoned wives”, 11 September 2013, [www.centrasia.ru](http://www.centrasia.ru)

<sup>14</sup> Al Jazeera. 101 East: Tajikistan's Missing Men. August 2013, Retrieved March 20, 2016 from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lgDBk2jWNEM>

In 2012, under the guise of the Central Asian Regional Migration Programme (CARMP), which was implemented jointly by IOM, UN Women, and the World Bank with financial support of the Government of the United Kingdom's Department of International Development (DFID), OSCE/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and UN Women organized a National Conference on "Social and Economic Inclusion of Women from Migrant Households in Tajikistan" on 12-13 September 2012. This National Conference aimed to identify the specific challenges that abandoned women from migrants' families face, including those that stem from gender discrimination and stereotypes, and the human rights abuses that predominantly affect women in Tajikistan. The National Conference also focused on identifying the types of support services abandoned women need, and how local governments could provide these services more effectively. A number of recommendations related to required assistance to abandoned women from migrants' families and possible improvements of their situation were formulated by participants in the National Conference. The recommendations that emerged were grouped into three substantive thematic areas (see Box 1).

Recommendations from the National Conference served as the basis for the development of a draft Model Action Plan for use at the local level to plan and budget priorities of abandoned women from migrant families.<sup>15</sup> The draft Model Action Plan offered objectives, targets, and activities that could be implemented by local stakeholders (i.e., government, experts, and civil society groups) to support the socio-economic inclusion of women from migrant families. The majority of proposed activities in the draft Model Action Plan targeted the work of local government departments as the executive power which deals directly with abandoned women from migrant households on a daily basis. The UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' Families (herein referred to as the "Project") was developed taking into account recommendations that emerged from the National Conference and priority actions included into the draft Model Action Plan.

### **1.1.2. UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' Families in Tajikistan**

In 2013, the Project was developed to empower abandoned women from labour migrants' families and women at-risk of abandonment. For project purposes, the *abandoned woman* was defined as "a woman who has not received remittances from her husband for six months, including cases where a woman does not have any information about her husband's whereabouts and/or when she has does not have contact with him for six months." This definition also applied to women whose official marital status in civil records was left unclear, who were in the process of divorce, or who were mislabeled as "divorced" when in reality they had been abandoned without dissolution of their marriage.

The Project supported the Government of Tajikistan to implement recommendations that came out of the National Conference on "Social and Economic Inclusion of Women from Migrant Households in Tajikistan," and was aligned with the draft Model Action Plan. Ensuring women, especially the poorest and most excluded, are economically empowered and benefit from development is one of five thematic priorities addressed by UN Women, as identified in UN Women's Global Strategic Plan (SP) for 2014-2017 and the Development Result Framework (DRF) for Tajikistan. This includes DRF Outcome 2.2 that addresses gender-responsive services (transport, utilities, markets, water, energy, etc.) enhance women's sustainable livelihoods, and Output 2.2.2 that addresses strengthened skills/opportunities an enterprise development assistance for women to enhance their sustainable livelihoods and resilience. Moreover, contributing to improving women's access to sustainable livelihoods, productive assets, and decent work, as well as increasing their participation in decision-making directly corresponds with the priorities identified within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), 2010-2015, for Tajikistan. In particular, Pillar 1 of the UNDAF addresses poverty reduction and governance, and related outcomes address enhancing good governance and economic and social growth to reduce poverty, unlock human potential, protect rights, and improve core public functions. The Project also addresses UNDAF Output 1.3, that low-income households (also including Tajik labour migrants and their families, and refugees) and women are provided with access to a broad range of micro-credit/financing, legal,

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<sup>15</sup> A situational analyses was undertaken at the design stage of the WEE Project by a local NGO that conducted semi-structured interviews with abandoned women from migrant households, local authorities, and civil society actors. This enabled UN Women to refine their intervention strategy by identifying the specific target districts and communities in Rasht Valley and Khatlon Region where the WEE Project should be implemented. Rasht Valley and Khatlon were selected due to the high levels of male migration from those areas and economic crisis, poor legal awareness, and a high need for services to protect women's rights.

and income generation services. Output indicators include the number of low-income households, including women, long staying refugees, and migrants' families that are provided with access to micro-credit and grants, and legal and business support services.

The Project also supported practical activities under the UN Women Multi-Country Office's (MCOs) Annual Work Plan (AWP) thematic area of women's economic empowerment (WEE), as well as addresses the rights of women as laid out in the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the rights of abandoned women from labour migrant families as laid out in the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; both UN Conventions were ratified by the Government of Tajikistan. The Project also contributed to national development priorities identified in the National Gender Equality Policy and the National Labour Migration Strategy, 2011-2015 (approved by Government Decree № 460 dated 4 November 2012), and the National Action Plan, 2012-2016, for implementation of the National Strategy for Strengthening Women's Role in Tajikistan for 2011-2020 (approved by Government Decree № 259 as of 29 May 2010). In each of these national policies, the need to improve WEE (i.e., female migrants and women from migrants' families) and strengthen women's roles and relations in the family are prioritized.<sup>16</sup> The Project also supported the National Committee for Women and Family Affairs under the Government of Tajikistan to draft the 2014 Work Plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for Strengthening Women's Role in Tajikistan for 2011-2020, including developing practice measures to support abandoned women from labour migrants' families.

In Tajikistan, UN Women has a strong record of working with rural women using a social mobilization approach aimed at enhancing their skills and knowledge to improve livelihoods. In fact, since 2010, UN Women and IOM successfully partnered under the Central Asian Regional Migration Programme (CARMP) to implement activities that target abandoned women from migrant families, with a particular focus on improving their skills and ensuring access to affordable financial and other services that contribute to improvement to their livelihoods, including micro-finance and assets to start their own businesses. UN Women and IOM intended to use the Project to replicate their experiences and practices that were successfully tested with their Joint Regional Migration Programme (RMP) in Tajikistan that was implemented over a five-year period from 2010 to August 2015. This RMP included social mobilization of the most vulnerable families of migrants into self-help groups (SHGs) in 3 districts of Sughd Oblast in an effort to reduce poverty and improve their income generation opportunities.

UN Women managed and implemented the Project, and headed up the component regarding women's economic empowerment and livelihood support, particularly through social mobilization and support to joint economic initiatives (JEIs), provision of information and services on access to land and other resources, improving women's knowledge of alternative energy use for household purposes, development of women's businesses, prevention of violence against women, and support to elaborate and budget local actions for socio-economic inclusion of women from migrants' families.<sup>17</sup> IOM acted as a Responsible Party (RP) and was responsible for the legal support component of the programme given their experience providing services aimed to improve the legal awareness of men and women on their social and economic rights (Output 2). IOM was also responsible for developing and distributing information materials to beneficiaries through diverse channels, and providing legal assistance to solve concrete cases for abandoned women and children from migrants' families. IOM was also able to involve the Ombudsman's Office of the Republic of Tajikistan, and provide their staff with on-the-job coaching and trainings on how to work on cases and complaints of labour migrants and members of their families. UN Women and IOM also contracted local NGOs, to support them with project implementation in the 5 project districts.

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<sup>16</sup> The National Labour Migrant Strategy, 2011-2015, focuses on: 1) involving labour migrants and members of their families into the process of national and local development; 2) developing and implementing of initiatives (including social and microfinance projects) that support labour migrants and members of their families in improving living standards and reducing poverty; 3) developing practical measures to increase economic opportunities and activities for members of labour migrant families; 4) developing mechanisms for supporting abandoned families (women and children) of labour migrants; and 5) increasing economic activities of labour migrants and members of their families through vocational training, business training, micro-financing, and attraction to legal self-employment.

<sup>17</sup> Engendering local development plans was planned to occur in only two pilot districts.



Ultimately, the Project was designed to empower abandoned wives to see themselves as “rights holders” and to assist the government as “duty bearers” to develop their capacities to address the needs and priorities of abandoned women from migrants’ families to claim and realize their social, economic, and legal rights.<sup>18</sup> The Project also supported civil society groups, including NGOs, to develop the knowledge and skills needed to provide services and address the needs and priorities of abandoned women from migrants’ families. Project documents recognize that in Tajikistan the structural causes of female poverty and exclusion cannot be addressed without addressing gender discrimination and stereotypes, and providing women with voice and space to participate in decision-making that affects their lives and livelihoods. Ultimately, supporting women to contribute to local development planning and budgeting from perspectives that integrate women’s needs as priorities.

Accordingly, the Project Document (ProDoc) outlined the goal/long-term result as “to support economic, social and legal empowerment of women from labour migrants’ families.” Similarly, the Project’s Results and Resource Framework defined the goal as to “increase the economic self-reliance and legal protection of women heads of migrant households to reduce their vulnerabilities in the absence of their spouse or when abandoned” and the Memorandum of Understand (MOU) between UN Women and the Norwegian MFA for the Project stated the goal was to “support abandoned women from labour migrants’ families to enhance skills and knowledge to reduce social and economic consequence of their vulnerability and to improve their livelihoods.” In keeping with the Project’s goal, the objectives were to:

- Strengthen skills and provide enterprise development assistance (including credit and financial services) for women and migrants’ families
- Improve access to women to legal assistance services to protect their rights<sup>19</sup>
- Enhance capacity of local partners (CSOs, women activists) to engage into a constructive dialogue with the local governments to address needs and priorities of abandoned women from migrants’ families within the local development planning and budgeting (this objective was to be accomplished in 2 of the 5 pilot districts)

At the time of inception, the Project’s outcomes, outputs, and activities were directly aligned with UN Women MCO’s Strategic Priority Outcomes.

- Outcome 1: To enhance sustainability livelihoods and economic security of women labour migrants and abandoned women from migrants’ families from pilot provinces of Tajikistan
  - Output 1.1: Strengthened skills and enterprise development assistance (including credit and financial services for women from migrants’ families.
    - Activity 1.1.1: Mapping villages and communities for further selection for social mobilization of women from migrants’ families to support improvement of their livelihoods
    - Activity 1.1.2: Facilitate formation of labour migrants’ families’ SHGs<sup>20</sup>
    - Activity 1.1.3: Support members of SHGs to access micro-credits and other resources to effectively manage their businesses
    - Activity 1.1.4: Policy and technical advice and programme implementation support
  - Output 1.2: Targeted women gain access to a broad range of legal assistance and gender sensitive services
    - Activity 1.2.1: Develop information and materials on legal issues and services
    - Activity 1.2.2: Provide legal aid and informational support to the beneficiaries through local NGOs
    - Activity 1.2.3: Strengthen capacity of justice system actors to address needs of abandoned women from migrants’ families on legal assistance and protection of their right

<sup>18</sup> As duty bearers, the state has obligations to respect, guarantee, protect, and fulfill women’s human rights.

<sup>19</sup> With regards to access to justice, the WEE Project addressed problems faced by wives of migrant workers, particularly those which fall under the civil and family law (alimony, lack of marriage and/or divorce certification, birth certificates, recognition of paternity, inheritance, division of joint property), the criminal law (rape, incitement to suicide, domestic violence), land or housing issues (acquisition, obtaining land use permit, housing disputes, residency registration, unlawful evictions), the social benefits issues (obtaining pensions, disability, unemployment benefits). Women in rural areas are largely unaware of their rights or lack the means to obtain the necessary documentation to claim their rights. During a pilot project in Vose District, Khatlon Oblast in 2011, IOM found a tremendous need and willingness of abandoned women to remedy many of these legal situations; however, women were faced with a variety of societal and economic barriers to fulfilling their desires.

<sup>20</sup> UN Women has expertise on social mobilization gained from the CARMP in 2010-2012 and was applied through exchange of experience and coaching.

| Table 1. Data for the five project districts |                                |                              |                   |  |                                |  |   |  |
|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Region/District                              | Total Population<br>(end 2012) | % Women in<br>the Population | No.<br>Households | No. Labour<br>Migrants<br>(Officially<br>Registered) | % Female<br>Labour<br>Migrants | No. Officially<br>Employed Persons<br>(2010) | Average Monthly<br>Salary in Somoni<br>(2010) | Annual Population<br>Increase<br>(per 1,000 persons) |
| <u>Rasht Valley</u>                          |                                |                              |                   |  |                                |  |   |  |
| Jirgatal District                            | 58,300                         | 49.2                         | 7,448             | 7,198  | 17.0                           | 2,300  | 279,04 (\$63.3)                               | 25   |
| Tojikobod District                           | 39,500                         | 49.1                         | 5,078             | 5,960  | 15.4                           | 2,100  | 160.21 (\$36.3)                               | 30   |
| Tavildara District                           | 20,400                         | 49.0                         | 2,625             | 2,391  | 22.4                           | 1,600  | 241,42 (\$54.7)                               | 21   |
| <u>Khatlon Region</u>                        |                                |                              |                   |  |                                |  |   |  |
| Kulyab District                              | 92,100                         | 49.9                         | 11,432            | 10,556   | 9.8                            | 19,300                                       | 296,34 (\$67.2)                               | 30   |
| Farkhor District                             | 144,900                        | 49.7                         | 14,045            | 8,863  | 12.3                           | 45,100                                       | 145,15 (\$32.1)                               | 29   |



- Activity 1.2.4: Monitoring and evaluation of legal support and outreach
- Outcome 2: Abandoned women from migrants' families in Tajikistan enjoy greater equality and economic empowerment as a result of locally driven gender responsive development planning.
  - Output 2.1: Enhanced capacity of GE CSOs to engage into a constructive dialogue with the local governments on incorporating gender-specific needs of abandoned women from migrants' families into local development planning in 2 pilot districts of Tajikistan.
    - Activity 2.1.1: Strengthening capacity of local partners for gender responsible local planning and budgeting to address needs and priorities of the target groups
    - Activity 2.1.2: Strengthening the capacities of the women's committee and civil society to promote women's rights in families and society
    - Activity 2.1.3: Policy and technical advice and programme implementation support.

Based upon findings from a situational analyses that was conducted at the start of the project, and consultations with partners, including the National Committee for Women and Family Affairs under the Government of Tajikistan, the Project was implemented in Rasht Valley and Khatlon Oblast, two regions not covered by the CARMP/RMP. More specifically, the Project was implemented in 5 districts, including 3 districts in Rasht Valley (Jirgatal Tojikobod, and Tavildara) and 2 districts in Khatlon Oblast (Kulyab and Farkhor). The development of the ProDoc was based upon data from the 5 project districts (see Table 1).

## 1.2. Evaluation Purpose and Scope

The final evaluation of the Project was conducted externally by UN Women MCO Kazakhstan with substantive support from UN Women Europe and UN Women Europe Regional Evaluation Specialist who is a member of the UN Women Independent Evaluation Office.<sup>21</sup> The final evaluation was designed to cover the 25-months project period of December 2013 to April 2016, and to address the criteria of project relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, inclusiveness, and sustainability.<sup>22</sup> This included validating project results in terms of achievements and/or weaknesses toward the outcomes and outputs, with a critical examination of how and to what extent the Project supported economic, social, and legal empowerment of abandoned women from labour migrants' families, as well as supported other national partners from government and civil society to advance gender equality and women's human rights in Tajikistan.

## 1.3. Evaluation Objectives

The objectives of this evaluation were fivefold:

6. Analyze the relevance of the programmatic strategy and approaches
7. Validate project results in terms of achievements and/or weaknesses toward the outcomes and outputs, with a critical examination of how/to what extent the project supported efforts and strengthened the capacities of abandoned women from labour migrants' families as well as other national partners from government and civil society to advance gender equality and women's human rights in Tajikistan
8. Assess the potential for sustainability of the results and the feasibility of ongoing, nationally-led efforts in advancing WHR and WEE of abandoned women from labour migrants' families, especially those that are most excluded, in Tajikistan
9. Document lessons, best practices, and challenges to inform future work of various stakeholders in addressing gender equality and women economic empowerment
10. Document and analyze possible areas of improvement in order to inform future project interventions in the area of women economic empowerment in Tajikistan.

In keeping with the main objectives, the methods applied in this evaluation were applied to assess questions related to relevance, inclusiveness, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of the Project.

- Relevance: Did the objectives of the Project address identified rights and needs of target groups/beneficiaries in the project districts? To what extent the Project was informed by substantive and

<sup>21</sup> The evaluation was commissioned, planned in consultation with the Norwegian MFA.

<sup>22</sup> The evaluation is mandatory, undertaken as agreed upon with the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway at the time project proposal was submitted and awarded in 2013.

tailored human rights and gender analyses that identified underlying causes and barriers to women's economic empowerment, gender equality, and women's human rights? To what extent key stakeholders participated in the Project?

- **Inclusiveness:** How inclusive was the Project in supporting marginalised and vulnerable abandoned women from migrants' families? How inclusive was the Project in involving key stakeholders in implementation of the Project?
- **Effectiveness:** What were the strengths of the Project's strategy and approaches? What progress was made toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes? To what extent human rights-based and gender responsive approaches were incorporated into the design and implementation of the Project? What was the quality of Project key outputs and activities? How well did the Project address the needs of abandoned women from migrants' families? Did the Project have effective monitoring mechanisms in place to measure progress towards results?
- **Efficiency:** What measures were taken during planning and implementation to ensure that resources were efficiently used? Did UN Women's organizational structure, managerial support, and coordination mechanisms effectively support the delivery of the Project?
- **Sustainability:** What operational capacities of national partners have been strengthened? What technical capacity of national partners, such as those related to implementing stronger human rights-based and gender responsive approaches related to WEE have been supported and strengthened? What is the sustainability of results with grant target groups/beneficiaries?

## **1.4. Evaluation Team**

This evaluation was led by two external evaluators. Dr. Robin Haarr (United States) was the international consultant/evaluation team leader, and Ms. Sayora Nazarova was the national evaluation team member. The evaluation was developed by Dr. Robin Haarr and carried out in Tajikistan by the two external evaluators between 30<sup>th</sup> March and 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016. It is important to note that the evaluation was carried out in Dushanbe and each of the 5 pilot districts, including 3 districts Rasht Valley (Tojikobod, Jirgatal and Tavildara Districts) and 2 districts in Khatlon Region (Kulyab and Farkhor Districts) of Tajikistan.

## **1.5. Evaluation Methods and Processes**

To ensure the evaluation approach was as thorough and reliable as possible, different analytical and data collection methods were utilized. The evaluation methods were in keeping with the TOR and were finalized with input from the UN Women MCO in Kazakhstan and the Core Evaluation Reference Group. This included (each of these are described in more detailed in the sections that follow):

- Desk review of project documents
- Consultations with UN Women and Core Evaluation Reference Group
- Sample of UN Women and IOM staff, key stakeholders, and IP NGOs
- Site visits to project target districts
- Focus groups with project beneficiaries
- Interviews with UN Women and IOM staff
- Interviews with key stakeholders
- Interviews with IP NGOs
- Consultation on preliminary findings, conclusions, and recommendations with UN Women and Core Evaluation Reference Group

The external evaluators used a participatory approach that recognizes key stakeholders, IP NGOs, and project beneficiaries as important and active participants who contribute to the production of knowledge and understanding. Triangulation was also an important part of the evaluation approach to ensure not only the credibility of information and data collected, but also to allow diverse perspectives and experiences to be captured. The evaluators undertook analyses and interpretation of data collected in the field as an opportunity

to allow the diverse perspectives and experiences captured through triangulation to come to the forefront and reveal the full influence or impact, and reach of the Project on target populations.

In addition, the evaluators applied principles of integrating human rights and gender equality into evaluations, such as recognizing project beneficiaries as ‘rights holders’ and the State and other actors to act as ‘duty-bearers’ to fulfil obligations and responsibilities, to strengthen accountability mechanisms, and to support protection of international standards on human rights and gender equality. These principles are aligned with the United Nations Evaluation Group’s (UNEG) guidelines documented in “Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation.”<sup>23</sup> The guidelines describe how to prepare for, implement, and oversee an evaluation in a manner consistent with the UN’s approach to human rights and gender equality in programme evaluations.<sup>24</sup>

### **1.5.1. Desk Review**

The evaluation began with a preliminary desk review of Project documents, including operational documents, results performance monitoring frameworks, assessment and mapping reports, mission reports, RP and donor reports, and other project-related materials. The desk review also included other relevant documents and existing data sources (secondary data) identified by the Management Group, such as documents from IOM, and the Joint IOM/UN Women/World Bank CARMP. The desk review also included secondary data sources such as the baseline and endline household survey data; this data was analysed by the international evaluation and is presented in the findings section of this report. Early consultations with UN Women staff/personnel (MCO and Programme Presence, PP) and the Management Group helped to ensure all documents were properly understood, both in terms of their merit and use in the evaluation.

The preliminary desk review served to inform the design of the evaluation approach and data collection tools to ensure evaluation criteria and measures focused on issues of relevance, inclusiveness, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability, as well as the defined project goal, outcomes, and outputs. This evaluation was also guided by international evaluation materials that reflect lessons learned as to the role of the evaluation in strengthening project results, and on maximising the positive impact of evaluation on project performance. This includes utilizing the UN Women Global Evaluation Reports Assessment and Analysis System (GERAAS, 2013) that defines report quality.

A more thorough and in-depth review and analyses of desk review materials and documents was carried out after the evaluation was conducted in the field. Content analyses of desk review materials was used to compliment interview data collected during the field assessment, such an approach ensured a summative evaluation of the activities, strategies, and outcomes of the Project. Desk review materials were also used to inform the findings and draw conclusions.

### **1.5.2. Consultations with UN Women and Core Evaluation Reference Group**

Evaluations are typically characterized by extensive team engagement throughout the evaluation period, coupled with independent field assessments by the evaluation team to ensure independence and open discussion. Nevertheless, the UN Women Tajikistan PP team was especially important to the evaluation as they managed the day-to-day aspects of the Project, as well as provided the support needed for this evaluation. This included: development of the TOR for the evaluation; managing the selection and recruitment of the evaluation team; managing the contractual arrangements; budget and personnel involved in the evaluation; providing the evaluators with administrative support and coordination where needed; providing the evaluators with required information, documents, and data; connecting the evaluation team with key stakeholders and IP NGOs in each of the Project regions; and, reviewing all reports and final approval of the final report.

In March 2016, prior to beginning data collection in the field, a series of consultations with UN Women MCO and PP staff occurred, as well as consultations with the Management Group and Core Evaluation Reference Group. These consultations focused on the implementation of the Project, which helped to inform the development of the Inception Report, including the evaluation approach and data collection tools.

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<sup>23</sup> UNEG (2011). *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation*.

<sup>24</sup> UNEG, 2011, p. 11.

### 1.5.3. Evaluation and Project Site Visits

The evaluation was conducted in Dushanbe and the 3 districts Rasht Valley (Tojikobod, Jirgatal and Tavildara Districts) and 2 districts in Khatlon Region (Kulyab and Farkhor Districts) where the Project was implemented. Site visits allowed for evaluation and data collection in the field, including interviews with UN Women and IOM staff, key stakeholders, and IP NGOs, as well as focus group discussions with project beneficiaries.

### 1.5.4. Sample of UN Women, Key Stakeholders, and IP NGOs

The evaluation included a sample of UN Women MCO Kazakhstan staff, UN Women Tajikistan PP personnel, key stakeholders, and IP NGOs. The sample of UN Women staff/personnel (MCO and PP) included those specifically involved in the implementation and oversight of the Project. The list of UN Women staff/personnel interviewed included:

- UN Women MCO Programme Specialist
- UN Women MCO Operations Manager
- UN Women Tajikistan Programme Specialist (PP)
- UN Women Project Coordinator (PP)
- UN Women Finance/Administrative Assistant (PP)

The sample also included the Project's RP, IOM, including IOM's former Chief of Missions, Project Coordinator, and National Legal Expert.

The sample of key stakeholders included those "interested parties and/or actors" (persons or organizations) with a vested interest in the Project, including representatives from IOs, NGOs, and government organizations/agencies. In Dushanbe, this included representatives from:

- Gender Theme Group and Migration Coordination Group (DFID Programme Manager, UNDP Programme Analyst, and Oxfam Gender Coordinator)
- Committee on Women and Family Affairs under the Government of Tajikistan (Deputy Head, Head of Gender Department, Gender Specialist)
- Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment (Deputy Minister)
- Ministry of Health and Social Protection (Head of Social Protection Department)
- Ombudsman's Office (Ombudsman and staff)
- Local experts

In each of the two regions and five pilot districts this included:

- Heads of Hukumats
- Heads of Jamoats
- Department of Women's Committees

The sample of IP NGOs included those NGOs that were subcontracted to implement a component of the Project. This included project directors, coordinators, and mobilisers from the RP NGOs subcontracted by UN Women (i.e., NGO Fidokor and NGO Nisojon) and IOM (i.e., NGO Maryam and NGO Suhrob).

Key stakeholders and IP NGOs were identified during the desk review and verified by UN Women. Since resources, time, and finances for the evaluation were limited, the list of key stakeholders and IP NGOs interviewed was prioritized in cooperation with UN Women PP personnel and the MCO Operations Manager.

Table 2 provides the final sample of UN Women and IOM staff, key stakeholders, and IP NGOs, including the number of interviews conducted and persons interviewed. Bear in mind, a total of 52 persons were interviewed, but only 36 interviews were conducted because some interviews included more than one person. Notes taken during small group interviews were recorded as one interview; thus, the data presented in Table 2 is based upon the number of interviews conducted by country/region/district and type of respondent. This will be the case throughout the findings section as well.

**Table 2. Sample of UN Women, key stakeholders, and IP NGOs**

| Country/Region/District | Number of Interviews Conducted = 37 |      |                          |      |                 |      |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|------|--------------------------|------|-----------------|------|
|                         | Number of Persons Interviewed = 53  |      |                          |      |                 |      |
|                         | UN Women<br>N=6                     |      | Key Stakeholders<br>N=22 |      | IP NGOs<br>N=25 |      |
|                         | n                                   | %    | n                        | %    | n               | %    |
| <u>Kazakhstan</u>       | 2                                   | 33.3 | 0                        | 0.0  | 0               | 0.0  |
| <u>Tajikistan</u>       |                                     |      |                          |      |                 |      |
| Dushanbe                | 4                                   | 66.7 | 9                        | 40.9 | 10              | 40.0 |
| Rasht Valley            |                                     |      |                          |      |                 |      |
| Jirgatal District       | 0                                   | 0.0  | 2                        | 9.1  | 3               | 12.0 |
| Tojikobod District      | 0                                   | 0.0  | 3                        | 13.6 | 4               | 16.0 |
| Tavildara District      | 0                                   | 0.0  | 4                        | 18.2 | 2               | 8.0  |
| Khatlon Region          | 0                                   | 0.0  |                          |      |                 |      |
| Kulyab District         | 0                                   | 0.0  | 2                        | 9.1  | 3               | 12.0 |
| Farkhor District        | 0                                   | 0.0  | 2                        | 9.1  | 3               | 12.0 |

Separate structured interview questionnaires were developed to guide interviews with UN Women and IOM staff, key stakeholders, and IP NGOs. There was overlap between the different interview questionnaires; however, they were not exactly the same. The benefits of asking similar questions to each of the different types of respondents allows for diverse perspectives to emerge based upon place and relationship with the Project. This allows for triangulation in information, as well as for diverse perspectives to emerge from each of the three different types of respondents.

#### **1.5.5. Structured Interviews with UN Women and IOM Staff, Key Stakeholders, and IPs**

One-on-one and small group interviews were conducted with UN Women and IOM staff, key stakeholders, and IP NGOs. One-on-one interviews were conducted in those situations where there was one person in the organization/agency that needed to be interviewed and where a senior level representative (e.g., director or deputy director) needed to be interviewed. One-on-one interviews were also used in situations where individuals had an area of specialization or expertise that required a one-on-one interview, such as a project manager. Otherwise, small group (2-3 persons) interviews were conducted when possible to ensure an efficient use of time, but also to allow for some degree of synergy in the discussions and information sharing which would allow for more depth and perspective about the Project from key stakeholders and IP NGOs.

Structured interview questionnaires were developed to guide the interviews with the UN Women and IOM staff (see Annex C), key stakeholders (see Annex D), and IP NGOs (see Annex E). The interview questionnaires focused on obtaining specific perspectives related to relevance, inclusiveness, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability, as well as management and administration of the Project. The interview questionnaires also focused on lessons learned and best practices, challenges encountered and actions taken to overcome challenges, and areas where improvements could be made to inform future Projects and interventions in Tajikistan. The interview questionnaires were developed specifically to collect a combination of both quantitative and qualitative data, and obtain perspectives related to the defined goal, outcomes, and outputs of the Project.

#### **1.5.6. Focus Group Discussions with Project Beneficiaries**

Given the geographic coverage of the Project and the large number of project beneficiaries in each project district, coupled with the limited time available for data collection in the field, focus group discussions were conducted with one group of beneficiaries in each project district. Focus group discussions include 7 to 10 beneficiaries that were organized by the IP NGOs. Focus group discussions were unstructured but focused on beneficiaries' experiences with the Project, perceptions of project activities, and impact of project activities on their lives and families.

### **1.5.7. Consultations on Preliminary Findings and Conclusions**

Following completion of data collection in the field, the external evaluators generated preliminary findings and conclusions that were presented jointly to UN Women PP in Tajikistan, and via Skype to UN Women MCO in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The consultation provided a forum to openly discuss some of the preliminary findings and emerging conclusions and recommendations.

### **1.6. Data Management and Analysis**

All data was coded and analysed using grounded theory.<sup>25</sup> Grounded theory allows data collection and analyses to occur simultaneously, strengthening both the quality of data and analysis. As data collection and analyses progresses and preliminary findings begin to emerge, the evaluators were able to identify and explore emerging themes, such as results achieved, lessons learned, challenges encountered, and adjustments made.

Standardized coding procedures were developed by the international consultant/evaluation team leader, Dr. Robin Haarr, for use in SPSS. Close-ended questions from interviews were coded and input into one SPSS data management system. Close-ended questions were then analysed in SPSS in terms of frequencies, as well as to make comparisons between the type of respondents when relevant. The international consultant/evaluation team leader was responsible for inputting and analysing all data in SPSS.

Data from open-ended questions were saved in Word files that could then be coded based upon themes, and analysed for patterns. The international consultant/evaluation team leader was responsible for coding and analysing all qualitative data.

Data from the baseline and endline household surveys was also obtained and analyzed by the international consultant/evaluation team leader in SPSS to evaluate the impact of the Project on women's livelihoods.

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<sup>25</sup> Glaser, B.G. & A.L. Strauss (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago, IL: Aldine Publishing Company.

## 2. EVALUATION FINDINGS

This external evaluation focused on evaluating the Project, assessing programmatic progress (and challenges) at the outcome level and measurement of output level achievements and gaps. Findings from this evaluation contribute to results-based evaluation and management through a participatory approach that documents results achieved, challenges to progress, and contributions to support the social, economic, and legal empowerment of abandoned women from labour migrants' families. Findings are presented by evaluation criteria, including relevance, inclusiveness, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability, and key themes that arose during the evaluation.

### 2.1. Relevance

The focus on relevance is the extent to which the Project's objectives are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements and country-needs. Findings related to relevance are grouped into three sections: 1) Project goal and objectives; 2) aligning the Project with the national context; and 3) promoting women's economic empowerment and legal rights.

#### 2.1.1. Project Goal and Objectives

It is well documented that labour migration has become a major survival strategy for hundreds of thousands Tajiks over the past 15 years. Although labour migration has helped to significantly increase the rate of employment among the working age population, numerous troubling social trends related to labour migration have emerged. One troubling social trend that has been well documented in situational analyses conducted by IOM in 2009 and UN Women in 2014, and reported on by other IOs and mass media, is the existence of hundreds of thousands abandoned households, the majority being abandoned wives with children.

In keeping with best practices, the Project was informed by substantive and tailored human rights and gender analyses that identified underlying causes and barriers to gender equality and empowerment of women. On the one hand, lessons learned and good practices from the CARMP/RMP which were implemented in Sughd and Rasht Regions were used to inform the development and implementation of the Project. In addition, the Project was grounded in findings and recommendations from UN Women's 2014 situational analyses on the impact of migration on the socio-economic vulnerability of rural women in Tajikistan. Conducted as part of the Project in select districts in Rasht Valley (Rasht, Nurabad, Tojikobod, Jirgatal, and Tavildara Districts), Khatlon Oblast (Kulyab and Farkhor Districts), and Sughd Oblast (Isfara, Bobojon, Gafurov, Ghonchi, Asht, and Konibodom Districts), the situational analyses revealed the characteristics of vulnerable rural households and abandoned women in the context of labour migration. Findings from this situational analyses, along with consultations with partners (including the National Committee for Women and Family Affairs), led UN Women to select 5 remote districts, including 3 districts in Rasht Valley (Tojikobod, Jirgatal, and Tavildara Districts) and 2 districts in Khatlon Oblast (Kulyab and Farkhor Districts) for implementation of the Project. Recommendations from the situational analyses also informed project design and implementation, including: increasing abandoned women's accessibility to services focused on socio-economic support, such as capacity building and assistance that supports self-employment and entrepreneurship development, and vocational training in specialized areas taking into account regional particularities and women's capabilities; expanding microfinance institutions' services for low-income groups of women and households; improving the capacity of farms and families of migrant workers to increase the yield from their land; taking measures to increase awareness and responsibility of migrant labourers to support their families; and expanding services for abandoned wives of migrants' families.

In December 2013, the Project was launched with funding from the Norwegian MFA to support the social, economic, and legal empowerment of abandoned women from migrants' families. The theory of change that guided the Project, although not specifically stated in project documents, was that by supporting abandoned women to improve their economic self-reliance and providing them with information about and access to their legal rights, abandoned women's social and economic vulnerabilities can be minimized and their livelihoods improved in the absence of their spouses. More specifically, the goal of the Project was to improve the social, economic, and legal empowerment of abandoned women from migrant families, and the objectives of the Project were threefold:



1. Strengthen skills and provide enterprise development assistance (including credit and financial services) for women and migrants' families
2. Improve access to women to legal assistance services to protect their rights
3. Enhance capacity of local partners (CSOs, women activists) to engage into a constructive dialogue with the local governments to address needs and priorities of abandoned women from migrants' families within the local development planning and budgeting (this objective was to be accomplished in only 2 of the 5 pilot districts)

Both key stakeholders and IP NGOs acknowledged the Project was “very timely” because the number of abandoned women is very high and their needs are significant and often overlooked and unsupported by government and development projects. Moreover, the Project’s objectives were consistent with beneficiaries’ needs because they were informed by lessons learned and good practices from the CARMP/RMP and findings and recommendations from the 2014 situational analyses on the impact of migration on the socio-economic vulnerability of rural women in Tajikistan.

The Project also represents an effective model whereby UN Women and IOM established a partnership to provide complementary, but not overlapping resources and services to abandoned women to support their social, economic and legal empowerment. Both UN Women and IOM were

able to effectively mobilize resources and establish partnerships with civil society and the government, as well as to foster partnership among NGOs and government to implement the Project and address the needs of abandoned women. Interview data revealed key stakeholders and IP NGOs recognized the significance of the Project and UN Women’s ability to apply innovative approaches and to facilitate community mobilization to address abandoned women’s social, economic and legal problems.

*“UN Women is famous here with their special approaches when doing their community mobilization. When I was in Sughd they were doing the same thing. When they train they do the needs assessment, train them, give priority in the mini-grants, link with local services, and try to strength different services – legal and social services. In the past, women worked individually, and now they work collectively and know how to. UN Women does not just take best practices from other areas, but they know how to adapt them to the Tajik mentality . . . This is important because there is no one else doing it. The state should do it, but they don’t have the grants. The women need someone to hold their hands in this because they don’t know how.” (5, Key Stakeholder, IO)*

### 2.1.2. Aligning the Project with the National Context

Since the Project’s inception in December 2013, UN Women and IOM have taken steps to ensure the Project’s resources are linked to and aligned with needs in the national contexts and contribute to national development priorities. As previously mentioned, ensuring women, especially the most vulnerable and excluded, are economically empowered and benefit from development is one of thematic priorities addressed by UN Women, as identified in UN Women’s Global SP for 2014-2017 and the UNDAF, 2010-2015, for Tajikistan (see Section 1.1.2 for a more detailed analyses).

The Project was also designed to support practical activities that address women’s rights as laid out in CEDAW and the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; both of which were ratified by the Government of Tajikistan. The Project also supports the Government

of Tajikistan to implement recommendations from the National Conference on “Social and Economic Inclusion of Women from Migrant Households in Tajikistan,” and recommendations from the Assessment Report. The Project is also aligned with the draft model Action Plan for local governments on direct assistance to women

*“It is a problem, but many didn’t want to even acknowledge and recognize this as a problem. When they started to learn more about the WEE Project and issues they [abandoned women] are facing, it came out that it is not just a problem, but a huge social problem indeed. In the beginning, not even the state structures payed much attention to this as a problem . . . We have to continue to work on these issues. The most important thing is in these 5 pilot districts this problem has been made visible and they [UN Women] brought the issue up. (4, Key Stakeholder, Government)*



from labour migrants' families, and national priorities identified in the country's National Gender Equality Policy and the National Labour Migration Strategy 2011-2015 (approved by Government Decree № 460 dated 4 November 2012), as well as the National Action Plan 2012-2016 for implementation of the National Strategy for Strengthening Women's Role in Tajikistan for 2011-2020 (approved by Government Decree № 259 as of 29 May 2010).

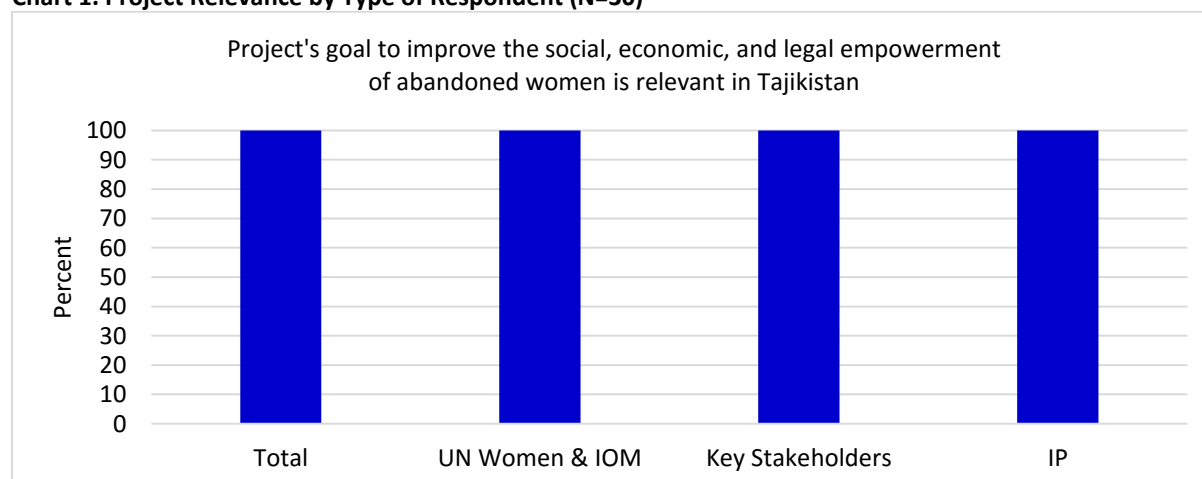
Because of the Project, abandoned women have been included in the list of "vulnerable groups" of the population of Tajikistan by Government Decree № 448 dated 2 July 2015, and "because of this decree abandoned wives are receiving benefits, and the government should be more responsive to the situation of abandoned wives" (36, UN Women). In addition, provision of free services to abandoned women from migrant families has been integrated into the work plans of governmental bodies.

Finally, the Project supported the National Committee for Women and Family Affairs under the Government of Tajikistan to implement the Work Plan activities drafted for 2014, matched with Project objectives to ensure the implementation of the National Strategy for Strengthening Women's Role in Tajikistan for 2011-2020, including developing practice measures to support abandoned women from labour migrants' families.

*"The government has been faced with this 'big army' of abandoned wives of migrants; it is a big burden for the country . . . I think the government is very interested in supporting these groups of women so they don't depend so much on remittances. And due to the financial crisis all over the world, including in Russia, the amount of remittances is decreasing. For the government, this project was much needed." (35, UN Women)*

Chart 1 reveals that all UN Women and IOM staff, as well as IP NGOs and key stakeholders recognized the Project's goal – to improve the social, economic, and legal empowerment of abandoned women from migrant families – is relevant in Tajikistan. In fact, key stakeholders and IP NGOs repeatedly stated the Project was "very timely" and important, and recognized the Project was clearly aligned with national priorities to improve women's economic opportunities and to strengthen women's roles and relations in the family. The Project's relevance is evident in the recognition that "it is the right time because women's empowerment is high on the agenda and needed. In Rasht and Khatlon Regions, migration is high" (1, Key Stakeholder, IO).

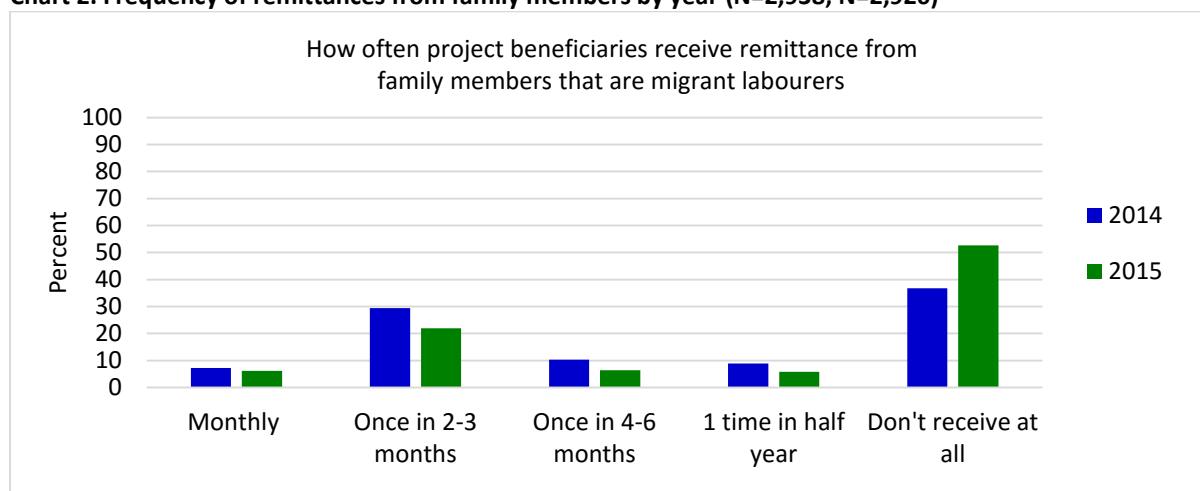
**Chart 1. Project Relevance by Type of Respondent (N=30)**



In keeping with the quotes above, data from the baseline and endline household surveys revealed that among project beneficiaries there was a statistically significant increase in the number of women who reported they didn't receive any remittances from family members that migrated for labour (see Chart 2). In fact, in 2015, 52.6% of abandoned women reported they didn't receive remittance from family members that migrated for labour; up from 36.7% in 2014. There was also a significant decrease in the proportion of women who reported they received remittance once in 2-3 months and 4-6 months. In 2015, 21.9% reported receiving remittances

once in 2-3 months, down from 29.4% in 2014. In addition, in 2015, only 6.4% reported receiving remittances once in 4-6 months, down from 10.3% in 2014.

**Chart 2. Frequency of remittances from family members by year (N=2,938; N=2,926)**



Note: Data from 2014 to 2015 is statistically significant at .000

Given the Project's relevance to the national context, most key stakeholders and IP NGOs maintained the Project should be continued and expanded in the districts and the regions.

### 2.1.3. Promoting Women's Empowerment and Legal Rights

The Project was relevant because it supported bringing abandoned women out from behind the walls of their homes and educating them about their legal rights, and empowered them to establish SHGs with other abandoned women in their jamoats, and building their capacities to develop business plans and work together to generate income. The Project also provided abandoned women with access to legal consultations and advocacy that addressed their legal needs.

The desk review and data collection in the field revealed UN Women and IOM have successfully worked together to identify and empower abandoned women by supporting women's social and economic empowerment and ability to pursue their legal rights. Data collection in the field revealed an important component of the Project was that UN Women and IOM ensured the Project was embedded in local communities by effectively engaging and mobilizing civil society, including local NGOs, and local governmental bodies to work together to support SHGs and the Project, in general. This resulted in ownership of the Project and development of income generating activities at the local level.

Several key stakeholders and IP NGOs recognized that this Project *"was the first step that awakened a lot of these women [abandoned women]."* This same respondent went on to explain,

*"The women didn't know where they could get a birth certificate; their children were school age and they didn't know where to get the birth certificate document. There were many women with 4-5 children and they were divorced with their husband by phone, so they took their children to their parents' house, but they didn't know they could go to court and get alimony. There is also a law that these women have a right to a share of the in-law's house to a piece of property because they have children. They were afraid to go to the court or to demand alimony and there was pressure from the husband's family not to go to the court."* (20, IP)

Similarly, another respondent explained,

*"Most of the legal issues related to the family are divorce issues and unregistered marriages . . . some of the marriages are only religious and not registered so there is the issues of fatherhood with the children. Also, there are lots of issues related to property where they are living, and sharing of the*

*property and alimony issues . . . In general, this group of people are the vulnerable and poor, they need such free legal services and support because they cannot afford it.” (4, Key Stakeholder, Government)*

An important component of the Project was the trainings conducted for abandoned women and information booklets that were prepared and distributed to raise awareness and encourage women to access their legal rights. Two NGOs – NGO Mayram in Kulyab and NGO Surhob in Tojikobod – were contracted by IOM to support abandoned women to access their legal rights and, if necessary, to take their cases to the court. One of these NGOs explained, “We also did a lot of mediation to get the women to receive their alimony for the children. There are some women without any care and they went back to their parents’ home with children” (20, IP).

In each of the pilot districts, governmental authorities in Hukumats and Jamoats often referred clients to NGOs Mayram and Surhob. At the end of the Project, NGO Mayram had to refer unfinished cases back to the Hukumat for support because funds to support abandoned women to acquire passports and birth certificates for their children dried up at the end of the Project.

*“The project objectives were very consistent with the needs of the women. Many of the women lack passports and documents for their children and the project helped them to obtain documents. As without documents you are nobody and can’t also do much. Most of them needed jobs and the project helped them with jobs and now they are employed and can earn money for their families. (33, IP)*

*“The Project ended, but we had 7 cases to continue so we referred the 7 cases to Hukumat. We could not fund the final 7 cases, we prepared all of the documents. The price has increased for taking passports and birth certificates so these women cannot afford it; the Project paid for the birth certificates and the passports. It has been 4 months since the Project ended, people keep coming to us and we refer them to the Hukumat.” (20, IP)*

To promote women’s social and economic empowerment, the Project contracted two other NGOs – NGO Fidokor in Rasht Valley and NGO Nisojon in Kulyab – that provided abandoned women with capacity building trainings to establish SHGs. SHGs were trained to develop business plans to start income generating activities that had direct links to communities in which the SHGs were located and the women resided. As one respondent explained,

*“These women had no education, no jobs and when they were left on their own they had to do something to improve their lives. The Project was working through community mobilization to help them start small businesses. Another positive thing is they created self-help groups among women so they worked together, helping each other in groups . . . Also UN Women provided trainings for them before starting their projects . . . The biggest challenge is women are not well educated. They are also very passive. After their husband had left the, they all had some kind of apathy. They also had very low self-esteem. The Project needed to give them some confidence to believe in themselves, that they can do something to change their lives for better.” (31, IP)*

Another important component of the Project was that SHGs were provided with access to core funding to support their entrepreneurial income generating activities. The core funding component of the project was established by UN Women, but the core funding was competitively awarded and disbursed by NGO Fidokor and NGO Nisojon.<sup>26</sup> For instance, one IP explained how the women in SHGs “got involved in the small activities and they were keeping records of how much they make themselves, and from the profits of selling milk they started to use one area of land that had not been used for years and they started to plant their garlic and harvested the garlic and got a profit. They saved some of the seeds for the next year. So, we taught women how to use money effectively and to use the land.” (13, IP)

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<sup>26</sup> Selection of the JEIs to grant co-financing from the Project was done by the local selection committees in consultations with UN Women. Selection was done against the criteria agreed for JEIs; these criteria are presented in the guide developed for this purpose with RMP.

Not all SHGs were awarded core funding under the guise of the Project; however, SHGs that *did not* receive a small grant were instructed on how to access micro-credits or apply for small loans from banks to fund their income generating activities or small businesses (see Section 2.4 for an evaluation of SHGs). The Project also succeeded at getting some SHGs, particularly those that received core funding from the Project, to register with the government as Public Initiative Bodies (PIBs, i.e., local community-based organizations created in line with the law of the Republic of Tajikistan on “Public Initiative Bodies”). Within the framework of the law, PIBs are *“public organizations with a registered, legal status and bank account, which provides them with particular tax breaks. While PIBs are not NGOs, they don’t have to report everything in detail as an NGO because the money is used to solve their needs”* (9, IP).

In each district, committees made up of local Hukumats (i.e., migration departments/committees, state employment agencies, and Women’s Committees) were engaged in the process of reviewing and selecting grant proposals to be funded under the guise of the Project. This approach of involving governmental officials in the process helped to ensure the grants awarded to SHGs supported income generating activities or small businesses that were relevant to the communities in which they were to be implemented. From the perspective of IP NGOs, key stakeholders, and beneficiaries, the core funding were extremely important because they provided SHGs with the much needed resources to start their small businesses, but also the SHGs did not have to pay back the grant monies. In addition, the grants were awarded not just to one woman or family, but to 10 women that made up the SHG.

*“We had 10 projects we proposed, but 6 were supported with grants. It did give support to the migrant wives. It was good from one side; it was grants that they did not have to pay back. It was also good that this grant was not given to one woman but a group of women. So, if the grant was 10,000 USD it was not given to one woman to improve the life of the family, but 10 because there were 10 women in the group. We are very happy with the program, even if it was just 6 projects that means that 60 families benefited from this project. When we did a survey analyses of the situation of abandoned women in this region there was more than 600 abandoned women. The Project I think gave good results.”* (22, Key Stakeholder, Government)

It is clearly documented in project documents and revealed during data collection in the field that the Project achieved its goal and objectives. One key stakeholder explained, *“Lots of issues and challenges faced by abandoned women have been addressed by the work of this Project.”* For example, this same respondent went on to explain,

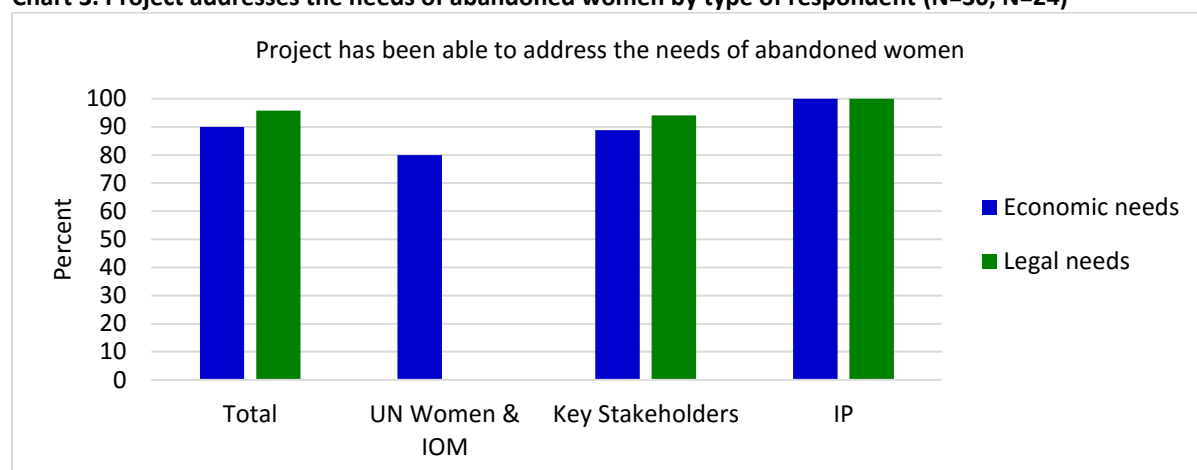
*“Until the Project started we had very few women that could run their own business or be involved in businesses. We had very women doing business in this region and because of the Project they established groups – bee keeping, green house, and in one of the villages turkey raising. I think their livelihoods have improved because they produced something . . . Before they didn’t exist the public initiative bodies, and the head of the groups are women.”* (26, Key Stakeholder, Government)

The Project also promoted women’s empowerment through learning exchanges that were organized and supported by the Project, but also by women’s invitation to participate in other Expos that occurred in Khujand and Dushanbe. The learning exchanges helped to support a community of practice among SHGs, and build abandoned women’s capacities and perspectives as to what is possible. As one IP explained, *“There was a forum of SHGs in Sughd, and all these women could meet with other groups and exchange their experiences; they learned from each other that can do different things to improve their situation”* (31, IP). The Project’s approach of establishing networks and links among abandoned women and SHGs, as well as between civil society and local governmental bodies furthered efforts to address the social, economic and legal needs of abandoned women.

*“When women got trained in the framework of the Project, they learned how important it is to utilise local services on social protection, and they started to know about their rights. They learned that when their husband leaves them and doesn’t support them anymore they can get alimony; they didn’t know about it before and didn’t know where to go. The Project created an enabling environment for these women. They learned where to go for help and how to take credits; on the legal side, they know their rights that as a human they do have rights. It is very important both for the country and for women.”* (35, UN Women)

Chart 3 shows that 90.0% of respondents recognized the Project was able to address the economic needs of abandoned women, including 80.0% of UN Women and IOM staff, 88.9% of key stakeholders, and 100.0% of IP NGOs. Also, 95.8% recognized the Project was able to address the legal needs of abandoned women, including 94.1% of key stakeholders and 100.0% of IP NGOs. It is important to note that no UN Women and IOM staff were asked about the Project's ability to address the legal needs of abandoned women because this question was added later in the interview process.

**Chart 3. Project addresses the needs of abandoned women by type of respondent (N=30; N=24)**



Note: 3 respondents did not know if the Project addressed the economic needs of abandoned women

## 2.2. Inclusiveness

The issue of inclusiveness is the extent to which the most vulnerable and excluded women are included as stakeholders in the Project. Findings related to inclusiveness are grouped into two categories: 1) supporting vulnerable and excluded women; and 2) involving key stakeholders.

### 2.2.1. Supporting Vulnerable and Excluded Women

The Project was clearly inclusive in terms of supporting the most vulnerable and excluded women, specifically abandoned women in remote regions of Tajikistan. Both key stakeholders and IP NGOs maintained this was one of the few projects in Tajikistan designed to specifically address abandoned women needs. One respondent explained,

*“There were no other organizations to have such activities in our jamoat . . . There are a lot of organizations, but this is the first time a project is working with abandoned women. There was a project working with migrants and migrants’ families, but a project working with abandoned women I had not heard of” (21, IP).*

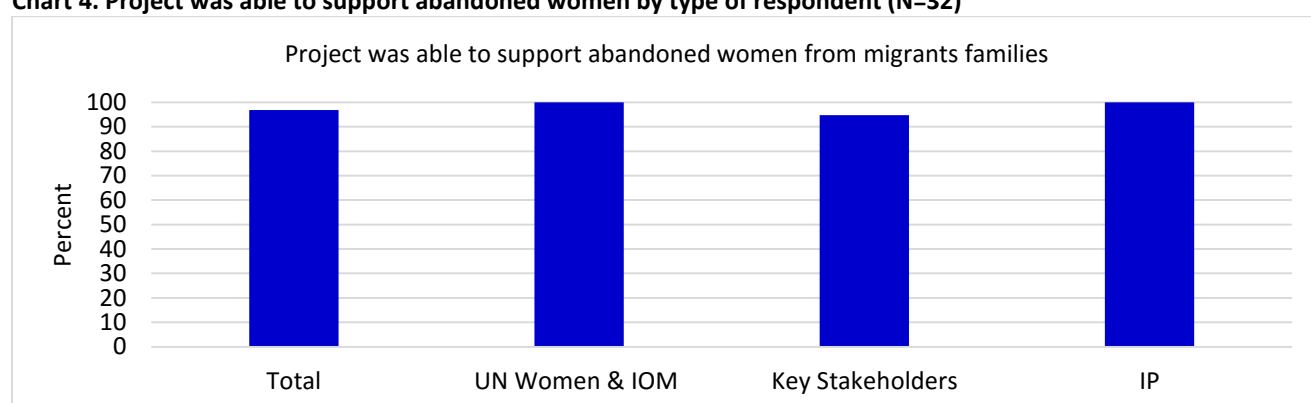
One of the challenges was identifying abandoned wives in the project districts and assessing their needs prior to project implementation. Thus, in each of the project districts, abandoned women were invited to participate in focus group discussions, local meetings, and other consultations that were carried out as part of the baseline needs assessment which was conducted by local partner NGOs (some were UN Women partners and others were IOM partners) responsible for implementing the Project in the 5 districts. The baseline needs assessment was designed to gather data on women’s housing and living and economic situation, to understand women’s needs, and to support community mobilization to bring abandoned women out from behind the walls of their homes and to participate in the Project.

The Project was designed to ensure abandoned women were involved in the project’s implementation, particularly as it related to their engagement in community mobilization, participation in SHGs and PIBs, and as executors of local initiatives aimed to improve the livelihoods of abandoned women. Women leaders from the target group of abandoned women were also key stakeholders in the design of awareness-raising campaigns through a peer-to-peer approach and other aspects of the Project. One respondent explained, *“The Project used*

*a very complex approach by addressing different kinds of needs of the beneficiaries” (33, IP). Several other respondents maintained the Project filled a service gap in the district and “women learned lots of skills they did not have before.” (27, IP)*

A review of project documents reveals as many as 3,000 abandoned women benefited from social and economic empowerment activities, and more than 5,031 women benefited from the legal awareness raising activities and access to justice services supported by the Project. Chart 4 reveals that 96.9% of respondents, including all UN Women and IOM staff, and IP NGOs, and 94.7% of key stakeholders recognized the Project was able to support abandoned women from migrant families in the 5 pilot districts. From the perspective of some key stakeholders, they recognized the support provided to abandoned women by the Project actually *“helped the women to realize they are not totally abandoned and are needed in the community, and that the community is thinking about and caring for the them. I think it was a good project . . . It was a project that showed abandoned wives are part of our society and can contribute. I think the Project achieved its goal by involving the women in the Project activities” (17, Key Stakeholder, Government).*

**Chart 4. Project was able to support abandoned women by type of respondent (N=32)**



Note: One respondent reported they did not know.

### 2.2.2. Involving Key Stakeholders

The desk review and data collection in the field revealed the Project successfully engaged key stakeholders in a meaningful and productive manner at both the district and rayon levels, as well as at the national level. In fact, an important component of the Project was to *“strengthen the collaboration between governmental, nongovernmental, and civil society organizations” (34, Key Stakeholder, Government).* Both key stakeholders and IP NGOs recognized that *“partnerships were formed during the Project, and public initiatives were an advantage of this project” (27, IP).*

Key stakeholders included both civil society groups and governmental organizations. In terms of engagement of civil society groups, both UN Women and IOM contracted NGOs as IP NGOs. UN Women’s partners included NGO Fidokor and NGO Nisojon which were contracted to implement the WEE components of the Project in the two regions. NGO Fidokor also subcontracted NGO NiLob in Tojikibod, NGO Musharaf in Jirgatal, and NGO Khingob in Tavildara to implement the women’s economic empowerment components of the Project in Rasht Valley. IOM contracted NGO Mayram in Kulyab and NGO Surhob in Tojikibod to provide legal support to abandoned women in the 5 project districts. In each of the districts, SHGs and PIBs were not only project beneficiaries, but became key stakeholders in the Project.

Among government bodies, at the national level, UN Women engaged key stakeholders, including: National Committee for Women and Family Affairs; Ministry of Labour, Employment and Migration (MoLEM); Ministry of Health and Social Protection (MoHSP); and State Migration Service. Project status was regularly reported on to members of the Public Council under the State Migration Service, and project findings were shared through already established media channels. IOM also had a MOU with the Ombudsman’s Office.

At the district level, key stakeholders included local Hukumat authorities, including the Heads of Hukumat, the Women’s Committees, and the State Agency for Social Protection, Employment and Migration (SASPEM). NGOs



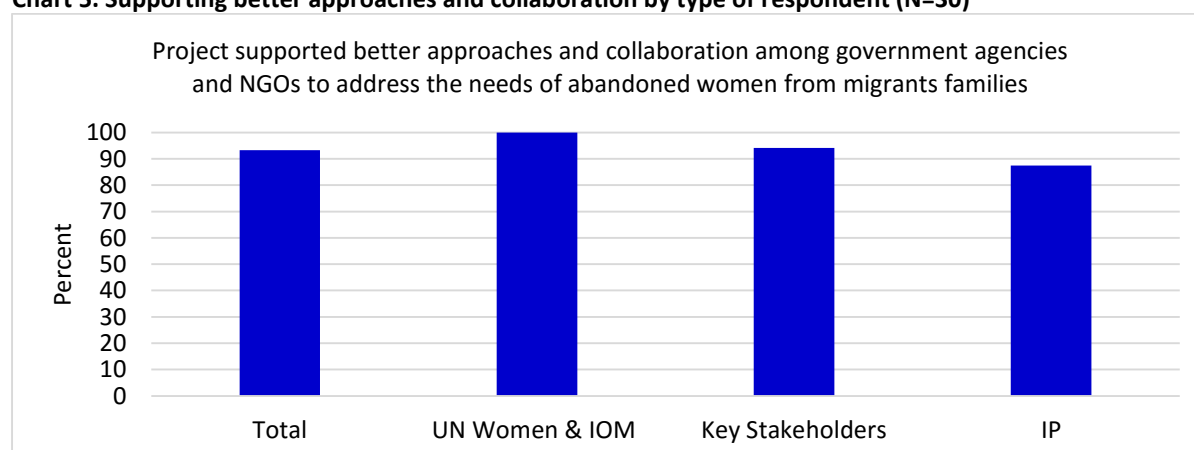
had a MOU with District Hukumats as it related to the implementation of the Project. At the rayon levels, key stakeholders included the Heads of Jamoats and Women's Committees. NGOs engaged and cooperated very closely with Jamoat authorities, as well as Heads of Mahallahs in each of the 5 project districts. For instance, in Tavildara, the Women's Committee at the Hukumat level explained how they were able to support two SHGs in the district, with assistance from NGO Khingob, to acquire grants from the National Women's Committee to support their business plans.

*"With the help of the NGO, two beneficiaries [SHGs] got 40,000 Somoni grants [5,083 USD] from the Women's Committee for their activities . . . We requested [to the National Women's Committee] that the grants can also be sent from the vulnerable groups of women . . . We sent the letter to the National Women's Committee to request them to support abandoned women with grants. We worked closely with the Women's Committee in the local Hukumat and they realized it was a priority and they should support the abandoned women. Maybe the Women's Committee doesn't know which 15 projects have been proposed from our district, but because we wrote a special request to support abandoned women, two SHGs got grants." (Key Stakeholder, Government)*

These partnerships were very important to the success of the project and contributed to a sense of ownership of the Project at the local levels, among both civil society groups and local governmental authorities. One IP explained, *"It is not possible to separate government from project"* (33).

In fact, among 17 respondents, all reported the Project effectively involved key stakeholders and national partners. Chart 5 demonstrates that among 30 respondents, 93.3% reported the Project supported better approaches and collaboration to address the needs of abandoned women; this included 100.0% of UN Women and IOM staff, 94.1% of key stakeholders, and 87.5% of IP NGOs.

**Chart 5. Supporting better approaches and collaboration by type of respondent (N=30)**



Note: Only 1 IP reported "no."

## 2.3. Efficiency

This evaluation also evaluated the Project's efficiency in terms of measuring how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted into results. Findings related to efficiency are grouped into three sections: 1) Project management; 2) Project operations; and 3) Project monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.

### 2.3.1. Project Management

Since the Project's inception in December 2013, UN Women has been the project manager. UN Women sought to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the Project through the following arrangements. The Project was executed under the overall strategic oversight and guidance of the UN Women MCO Representative in Kazakhstan, the UN Women MCO Programme Specialist, and the UN Women PP Programme Specialist and Project Coordinator in Tajikistan.

The UN Women MCO Representative provided strategic guidance, including through engaging in dialogue with governments, NGOs, the UN system, and multilateral and bilateral donors to ensure the Project was integrated in a coherent way into the larger UN Women work in Tajikistan. The MCO Representative was supported by the MCO Programme Specialist who provided the PP Project team with day-to-day technical assistance and necessary programme-related support in synergy and necessary complements with other ongoing projects and initiatives in this thematic area. Also, technical assistance was provided to ensure that Project implementation and monitoring and reporting was undertaken using a results-based monitoring approach and knowledge generated within the Project was documented and regularly shared with partners at the country level, as well as broader levels.

The Project was managed by the PP Project Coordinator who was responsible for all execution aspects of the Project, including day-to-day planning and management of project-related activities, coordination and liaison with partners, direct execution of several project components, and overall monitoring, reporting and accountability with technical assistance from the MCO. The Project Coordinator was supported by the UN Women PP Finance/Administrative Assistant in Tajikistan and the MCO operations team. Short-term consultants were recruited as needed to provide support in specific technical areas. UN Women recognized that in terms of *“organizational structure, as well as partners, worked well in order to get effective results. For the UN Women Office, however, it would have been good to have additional hands . . . It would have been easier if there was a Project Assistant for the Project Coordinator.”* (38, UN Women)

When asked about the advantages and benefits of having UN Women manage the Project, key stakeholders and IP NGOs identified UN Women’s mandate and technical expertise in the areas of gender equality and women’s empowerment, including community mobilization to promote women’s empowerment and human rights. In addition, key stakeholders recognised that UN Women has knowledge and understanding of best practices globally for empowering women, as well as a regional and national focus and presence which is of significant benefit to the Project. Key stakeholders and IP NGOs also recognised UN Women’s reputation as a credible organisation was also very important to the management and administration of the Project, including the significant work they played in managing and implementing the CARMP/RMP.

UN Women also has a solid reputation for managing and implementing projects because they have a *“Programme Operations Manual (POM) for all projects”* (36, UN Women). In keeping with the POM, tranches paid to IP NGOs was tied to delivery of results; this required NGOs to act more efficiently and effectively when implementing the project. Another UN Women staff explained, *“The UN Procedures were key for ensuring effective use of resources. I think the vision and regulations of UN Women have been used well for effective use of resources.”* (38, UN Women)

*“UN Procedures were key for ensuring effective use of resources. I think the vision and regulations of UN Women have been used well for effective use of resources; they were also well targeted.”* (38, UN Women)

IOM was a responsible party in the Project, and key stakeholders and IP NGOs recognized IOM’s mandate and technical expertise to address issues of human migration and provide legal advocacy and support to migrants and their families. Thus, UN Women’s partnership with IOM for the Project led to an efficient use of resources to ensure effective project implementation. In general, the partnership worked smoothly as UN Women and IOM were both used to working on joint projects and working with each other; however, a few challenges did occur early in the Project. For one, *“UN Women and IOM have their own rules, and sometimes we [IOM and UN Women] had misunderstandings of the NGOs reports. But, I think it is normal with a new project and new donors; there is a time for adaption. At one point, it was hard to implement the Project, but in the end the impact of the Project was huge.”* Two, UN Women and IOM faced challenges early on in getting IP NGOs to collaborate and work together to achieve the Project’s goal and outcomes. To address and minimize these challenges, in the early stages of project implementation, UN Women and IOM started holding joint project coordination meetings with IP NGOs in Rasht Valley and Khatlon in order to improve coordination and collaboration among NGOs to ensure effective and efficient project management and implementation.



### 2.3.2. Project Operations

Success of the Project hinged on the fact that UN Women was regularly communicating with IP NGOs in each of the project districts to ensure proper and ongoing project implementation. UN Women and IP NGOs recognized this regular communication was “*very important*” to ensuring IP NGOs made progress toward achieving outputs and outcomes. Given the time demands placed on UN Women project staff in Tajikistan to manage and implement the Project, UN Women MCO in Kazakhstan recognized that “*we need more funding and staff to efficiently implement the Project, and to support daily management*” (36, UN Women). Nevertheless, UN Women recognized,

*“The organizational structures starting from Program Specialist and Coordinators in local levels helped in implementation of the Project. The Manager of Project was receiving NGOs reports and then they were sending them to the MCO office. Organizational structures, as well as partners worked well in order to get effective results. For the UN Women Office, it would have been good to have additional hands . . . it would have been easier if there was an assistant for the Project Coordinator.” (38, UN Women)*

Other measures taken during project implementation to ensure the efficient use of resources, included:

- Encouraging SHGs to develop business plans in which they were interested and had some skills, as well as believed to be marketable in the local communities.
- Grant monies were dispersed directly to the bank accounts of PIBs, and all purchases were done by money transfer from one bank account to another. Money transfer guidelines supported transparency and taught women to manage money and budgets.
- Relying upon committees consisting of local Hukumats (i.e., migration department/committee, state employment agencies, Women’s Committees) and IP NGOs to select business plans and grant proposals that were suitable to the local communities and geographic locations.
- Funding learning exchanges and study tours for SHGs, as well as participation in forums and expos where PIBs and SHGs can display and market their products. These learning exchanges helped to establish communities of practice among abandoned women and SHGs so that they could share and learn from each other, and empower each other to improve the products and income generating activities

It was evident from the desk review and data collection in the field that operational and technical capacities of national partners were strengthened over the 25-month project period.

*“When UN Women selected the two partner NGOs then we did the orientation training for them, sharing UN Women’s approach and how they are to do economic empowerment. We invited others working on our project as well. It was not just training, but a real practical workshop. Then, we also shared our experiences and provided opportunities for networking . . . It was constant coaching and field visits . . . and capacity building of our partners . . . What we did not do very often was communication with IOM partners, but with our partners it was very often. And they approached us very often, especially in the first year, because they didn’t realize it would be a very serious bureaucracy that would help to manage efficiency of the project.” (36, UN Women)*

*“I was often in communication with partners. They needed finance advice and support. They always called and ask about different legal issues, procedures, contract forms, and agreements. For IOM, when they hired NGOs we also recommended what kind of legal and financial agreements are required. Also we give advice to partners on tax issues. Even hiring drivers as they needed to hire driver with license, so they will not have any issues later. They would also ask us when organizing some events.” (38, UN Women)*

This evaluation revealed that IP NGOs generally reported it was the first time they worked on such a project to empower abandoned women and that they also learned new skills related to mobilising women, collaborating with state structures, and business planning and marketing. Both IP NGOs and SHGs reported they learned how to write business plans and grant proposals, and SHGs that received core funding reported they learned how to apply for a grant and manage a budget and grant implementation. Also, IP NGOs and SHGs recognized that being affiliated with the Project, and for SHGs receiving a grant increased their reputation among governmental structures and donors.

*“UN Women worked well at all levels . . . They also kept expanding the circle of stakeholders and partners during the project.” (33, IP)*

*“The reputation of our NGO increased because of working with UN Women. People know more about us and we have a better reputation. More people are coming to us. We got collaboration with more government institutions.” (27, IP)*

Some IP NGOs and SHGs maintained the being affiliated with the Project increased their confidence in their ability to pursue funding from other donors to expand the income generating activities and small business they established under the guise of the Project.

*“[Since the Project ended] I spent the last 4 months in Dushanbe going to different agencies, including the US Embassy. I explained that we were funded by a UN Women Project and organized 72 women’s groups . . . Telling people I had a UN Women grant gives me more credibility. The US Embassy was more responsive and happy to hear about this project. They gave me the application and told me to start a plan. I sent proposal to the US Embassy and met with Japan, and shared about the groups and the project.” (13, IP)*

IP NGOs were asked about the technical assistance and guidance provided by UN Women, and nearly all IP NGOs reported UN Women regularly communicated with them via phone and email, and provided the support and guidance needed to effectively implement the Project. In fact, all IP NGOs recognized UN Women was “very important” to ensuring implementation of the Project and achieving expected outcomes. One IP explained, “It is helpful we always ask them for advice and guidance we don’t have a lot of projects” (27, IP).

UN Women also conducted periodic monitoring visits that enabled them to provide partners with onsite capacity building and guidance that enabled them to improve project implementation. UN Women maintained IP NGOs were generally “very response” to their input and feedback, but partners required quite a bit of follow-up and “hand holding” to effectively implement the Project. IP NGOs greatly appreciated the hands on approach that UN Women has taken with the Project. One respondent explained, “We didn’t work with this type of approach before; UN Women had a good approach” (21, IP). Another respondent added,

*“Every 2 to 3 days they [UN Women] would communicate with us. They [UN Women] also came to conduct conferences and meetings, they came to do monitoring; they used to come a lot. Before writing of the project proposal, they would visit us and talk, and talk with the local authorities . . . This is the first time I have seen such organization and work; it is different from all the projects I have worked on before . . . Although UN Women has a lot of requirements and reporting compared to other organizations, all these requirements are good because it is all for the benefit of the work. They motivate us and push us.” (15, IP)*

Despite some management and operations challenges<sup>27</sup>, this evaluation revealed there was significant progress made toward the Project goal and an “awakening” among abandoned women, civil society groups, and government officials that abandoned women can be empowered to be active members of the community and entrepreneurs, make decisions about their lives, and financially support themselves and their children.

<sup>27</sup> There was not alot of discussion of management and operations challenges; however, it was appearant that UN Women would have benefited from having more UN Women personnel in Tajikistan to support the Project, and the demands and need of NGO IPs to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the Project)

### 2.3.3. Project Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting

The Project's monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, as well as auditing was carried out in accordance with the respective regulations, rules, and procedures of UN Women. In particular, the Project was monitored and evaluated in accordance with UN Women AWP for Central Asia, and monitoring and evaluation was undertaken by the UN Women Project team in accordance with a specific monitoring and evaluation plan. In keeping, field visits and monitoring missions were undertaken on a regular basis by the Project team. Local IP NGOs were also required to share information and progress updates in annual reports, and undertake joint visits when appropriate.

*"For our monitoring we plan, go, see, and offer advice. We tell them to just call us and we never ignore their calls. We tell them to call us day or night and we will help . . . It is nice to go to the field and see, and then write a report. We find information and write recommendations. I saw the improvements. For example, we went in the middle and asked the Hukumat, jamoat, and the women how the project is going well; we didn't see resistance." (32, UN Women)*

IP NGOs also reported that *"UN Women kept very close contact with both project partners in districts, as well as with all other partners . . . Regular monitoring visits were also carried out to all project districts"* (33, IP). According to UN Women,

*"Monitoring was effective and was carried out in the beginning of the project when the baseline was conducted to see what are the needs of these women. Monitoring was conducted when NGOs were selected and involved in the work in Jamoats (in the beginning of their work), and then when SHGs were established. I think that monitoring was well planned and took place step-by-step, and the results were positive. Unfortunately, we were unable to conduct monitoring at the very end of the project, but the evaluation team was involved and they will see the final results of the project." (38, UN Women)*

When asked about the challenges faced as it related to monitoring and reporting, UN Women explained,

*"With monitoring we did not have any challenges. NGOs in districts and Project Coordinators in all districts were reporting not only to NGOs, but also to the Project Coordinator at the main office. Anytime when there was a need to get some kind of information, we could always call Project Coordinators and get that information. All the information that they provided during our monitoring visits was proved to be accurate. NGOs were submitting their reports on monitoring results and implementing activities according to their contracts, as their deliverables. They also provided reports after each training conducted and all events. There was some editing of these reports by Project Coordinators of course, but just to give them a better structure and so on. All supporting documents, such as training schedules, photos, video clips were also always submitted by the NGOs. Reports were open and we could get any information that we needed from there." (38, UN Women)*

The Project's implementation was regularly assessed at the level of activities and outputs, and outputs were measured against clearly defined indicators. Specific programme activities served as benchmarks indicating progress achieved with project implementation. UN Women and IOM recognized they faced some problems in the first phase of project implementation in terms of getting their IP NGOs to report on results and progress versus just describing activities, but after working with their IP NGOs they were able to improve reporting. UN Women recognized that results-based monitoring *"is usually a problem for local partners, that is why we started explaining the reporting process, not just explaining activities, but we were more focused on results. We explained how they should report on different indicators"* (36, UN Women).

The Project team developed several reports, including annual progress reports and final reports in accordance with the reporting procedures and format required by the donor.<sup>28</sup> UN Women reported there was also annual Skype calls with the donor and regular donor monitoring visits. As UN Women explained, *"they came very*

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<sup>28</sup> Para 3, Article VI of the agreement between UN Women and the Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway signed on 3 December 2013

regularly. We didn't expect such frequent monitoring visits from the donors . . . The donor was serious in the implementation and how they partner." (36, UN Women).

## **2.4. Effectiveness**

In terms of effectiveness, this evaluation focused on the extent to which Project objectives were achieved. Findings related to effectiveness are grouped into four sections, including: 1) strengthen skills and enterprise development assistance for abandoned women; 2) access to legal assistance and gender sensitive services for abandoned women; and 3) enhance capacity of NGOs to engage local government on gender specific needs.

### **2.4.1. Strengthen Skills and Enterprise Development Assistance for Abandoned Women**

In terms of effectiveness in achieving Output 1.1, strengthened skills and enterprise development assistance (including credit and financial services for women from migrants' families), there were five key activities, including: 1) mapping and data collection of abandoned women households; 2) facilitate formation of abandoned women into SHGs; 3) economic empowerment of abandoned women; 4) supporting members of SHGs to access micro-credits and other resources to effectively manage their businesses; and 5) improved livelihoods and economic security of abandoned women. Each of these key activities are evaluated in the sections that follow in terms of effectiveness and impact.

#### **2.4.1.1. Mapping and Data Collection of Abandoned Women Households**

One of the first project activities was to map villages and communities for selection and social mobilization of women from migrants' families to support improvement to their livelihoods. The mapping of villages and communities was carried out in two parts. First, a situational analyses was conducted in early 2014 in select districts in Rasht Valley (Rasht, Nurabad, Tojikobod, Jirgatal, and Tavildara Districts), Khatlon Oblast (Kulyab and Farkhor Districts), and Sughd Oblast (Isfara, Bobojon, Gafurov, Ghonchi, Asht, and Konibodom Districts). The situational analyses revealed the characteristics of vulnerable rural households and abandoned women in the context of labour migration. Findings from the situational analyses, along with consultations with partners, led UN Women to select 5 remote districts for project implementation, including 3 districts in Rasht Valley (Tojikobod, Jirgatal, and Tavildara Districts) and 2 districts in Khatlon Oblast (Kulyab and Farkhor Districts).

Second, in the latter half of 2014, UN Women's IP NGOs conducted a baseline household survey of target/group beneficiaries in the 5 project districts, including the 3 districts in Rasht Valley (Tojikobod, Jirgatal, and Tavildara Districts) and 2 districts in Khatlon Oblast (Kulyab and Farkhor Districts). The baseline household survey enabled UN women to map abandoned women in the 5 project districts, but also allowed for the collection of baseline household data for each of the project beneficiaries.

One of the challenges data collectors faced when conducting the baseline household surveys was identifying abandoned women in the project districts. To overcome this challenge, IP NGOs requested information on abandoned women from the Heads of Jamoats. They also involved Heads of Mahallahs to assist in identifying abandoned women in each of the villages and communities. The other challenge was that abandoned women and their families often did not want the women be identified or known as abandoned women. Thus, data collectors and community mobilizers had to spend a lot of time talking with the Heads of Mahallahs and with the women's families and/or in-laws to help them understand the Project.

*"There were challenges in the beginning, we didn't know exactly where to find the information about abandoned women of migrants' families. The Heads of Mahallahs and the midwives in the Mahallahs spoke with us and they identify many abandoned women. There were many abandoned women that were scared to talk with us. There were many mothers-in-laws that didn't want us to talk with the women. In their own homes, women were more likely to be controlled by their brothers to not go out on the street with their children. We worked closely with Heads of Mahallahs and mothers-in-law's and we created profiles of abandoned women." (21, IP)*

Once abandoned women were identified and willing to participate in the Project, the baseline survey of the abandoned women's household was conducted. Strategically, UN Women also conducted an endline household survey in 2015 involving the same project beneficiaries and using the same household survey. The value of the

baseline and endline household survey was that UN Women was able to “collect information that didn’t even exist in the jamoat before.” (30, IP). The baseline and endline household data collected was analyzed as part of this evaluation to document the impact of the Project on improving abandoned women’s livelihoods and economic security.

#### **2.4.1.2. Facilitate Formation of Abandoned Women into SHGs**

An important activity to strengthening the skills and enterprise development of abandoned women, and to enhancing sustainable livelihoods and economic security of abandoned women is to facilitate the formation of abandoned women into SHGs. Abandoned women that were identified and participated in the baseline household survey were invited to participate in formal training that focused on 7 topics area, including:

- Institutional development of SHGs, including leadership and management of SHGs
- Gender relations, women’s rights, and prevention of violence in the family
- Planning and effective management of the family budget
- Business planning and taxation
- Saving accounting and usage of internal savings schemes
- Development of entrepreneurial activities with a special focus on the development of women entrepreneurship (i.e., start-up business and GET AHEAD)
- Writing project proposals to raise funds to support JEIs, writing reports etc.

At these trainings, IP NGOs explained the Project including its goals and objectives. Although some women were suspicious as to how the Project worked, women began to form SHGs, develop business plans, write project proposals, and manage their household budgets. It is important to note that many abandoned women have low levels of education and knowledge; thus, developing their capacities was a challenge and required a lot of ongoing capacity building and technical assistance from IP NGOs and UN Women. From the perspective of some IP NGOs, one of the challenges was that the number of training days and subjects covered was limited. One IP reported it would have been useful to have additional trainings related to agricultural activities and access to land, particularly since most of the agricultural work is done by women.

*“We knew that one-day training was not enough. The whole package of trainings we provided was not possible to give to this target group with a low level of education and many could not sign their name. We distributed handouts and booklets and used visual . . . Because the budget was very limited we could not afford to do a 2 to 3-day training . . . but, we knew in one day that the knowledge level of women is low and not very high. It was very difficult to cover all the material in one day” (9, IP).*

Moreover, IP NGOs revealed that despite the training, they had to help the SHGs to write the business plan and project proposals, as a one-day training was not enough to build their capacities. Although they were given coaching and teaching along the way, and there were some women that could write a business plan and project proposal, a large number of women needed help from the IP NGOs.

*“We supported them and connected them with the market, and took the ideas of the women when they made the Project proposals. They helped the women to write the Project proposals . . . Some of the women in rural areas had 5-7 years schooling and cannot read or write. First thing we did was get them together and start talking together to get them to explain their world view outlook. There was also interpersonal pressure and conflict with the relative of the husband, and they didn’t have knowledge of their rights and step by step with the help of the Project they proposed their projects. They helped to write the Projects to send the Projects forward to Fidokor for support. Even before the Project, they helped some of them within the home, but didn’t know they could market it and make an income. This project taught them they could market what they have and make some income. Even one of the benefits the woman got was like producing the milk, even though not able to sell it all they were able to use the milk for their own use and to make other dairy products. They also arranged and prepare the products for us to see.” (13, NGO, IP)*

Based upon data provided by the IP NGOs, Table 3 reveals a total of 387 SHGs were established in 10 jamoats in 5 districts of 2 regions of Tajikistan. More specifically, in Rasht Valley 206 SHGs were established in 6 jamoats in 3 districts (Tavildara, Tojikobod, and Jirgato), and in Khatlon 181 SHGs were established in 4 jamoats in 2 districts

(Kulyab and Farkhor). The SHGs included a total of 3,000 abandoned women, including 1,800 women in 3 districts in Rasht Valley and 1,200 women in 2 districts in Khatlon. In Rasht Valley, 13.6% of SHGs were registered as PIBs; whereas, in Khatlon, 6.6% of SHGs were registered as PIBs.

| <b>Table 3. SHGs by Region (July 2014 – December 2015)</b> |                     |                       |              |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
|  | <u>Rasht Valley</u> | <u>Khatlon Oblast</u> | <u>Total</u> |
| Number of Jamoats  | 6                   | 4                     | 10           |
| <u>Number of SHGs</u>                                      | 206                 | 181                   | 387          |
| Kulyab   | ---                 | 91                    | 91           |
| Farkhor  | ---                 | 90                    | 90           |
| Tavildara  | 69                  | ---                   | 69           |
| Tojikibod  | 63                  | ---                   | 63           |
| Jirgatal   | 77                  | ---                   | 77           |
| <u>Number of abandoned women</u>                           | 1,800               | 1,200                 | 3,000        |
| <u>Number PIBs Registered</u>                              | 28                  | 12                    | 40           |
| Kulyab   | ---                 | 6                     | 6            |
| Farkhor  | ---                 | 6                     | 6            |
| Tavildara  | 10                  | ---                   | 10           |
| Tojikibod  | 7                   | ---                   | 7            |
| Jirgatal   | 11                  | ---                   | 11           |
| <u>Number SHGs with Savings Schemes</u>                    | 179                 | 67                    | 246          |
| Account total in Somoni                                    | 134,216             | 14,949                | 149,165      |

Note: Data was obtained from NGOs Fidokor and Nisojon's final project reports (2016)

One of the challenges the IP NGOs and SHGs faced was that the Project period was only 25 months. The project started in July 2014, at which time the IP NGOs conducted a lot of meetings and established SHGs. In some districts, IP NGOs faced transportation challenges as the villages were far from each other and difficult to reach at different times of year.

SHGs were typically made up of 5 to 10 women that live in the same jamoat. SHG members were taught to understand their roles and responsibilities, and most SHGs were led by a head of group, secretary, and accountant. Through encouraging women to establish SHGs, women began to understand why they should not work individually, but rather in a group, and the benefits of SHGs. This is something that SHG members spoke about during the evaluation.

When asked how SHGs work, IP NGOs explained that SHGs establish savings schemes where they are able to share funds that they collect from members of the SHG. Each SHG decides how much each member of the SHG should contribute on a monthly basis to the savings schemes; the amount varies from SHG to SHG. SHGs generally meet on a monthly basis to discuss the results of their work and their savings, and make collective decisions about spending money or giving loans from their savings schemes. Everyone in the SHG is reportedly equal; thus, SHGs make collective decisions about giving loans.

*"They are all different. Some groups collect 1 Somoni from all women, some 3 Somoni, 5 Somoni [.64 USD]. It is not big money. Some women involved in different activities maybe contribute a bit more. There are differences between groups. But, within a group they contribute the same amount, they agree on the amount; there is a reason for this. If someone from the group can afford to put 100 Somoni and the rest can contribute only 1 Somoni they would feel uncomfortable."* (27, IP)

SHGs frequently use money from their saving schemes to buy seeds and materials for their income generating activities. For example, if one SHG buys potato seeds for 500 Somoni and they plant them in the fields, in 3 to 4 months they can harvest 3 to 4 tons of potatoes and sell them. This approach has proven good financially for women. Some SHGs give short-term loans from their savings schemes to members of the SHG with little to no interest; whereas, other SHGs reported giving short-term loans with interest to individuals outside of their SHG. Some SHGs reported taking some form of collateral from their borrowers, particularly if they are not a member of the SHG.



*"The accountant keeps record from the savings scheme, so they record who took how much money and what would be the interest and the timing period this money should be returned. So, they are in agreement with all the group members and give the loan . . . For the sake of moving money and not keeping it in their savings account. It does happen that people cannot pay back their loan on time, but they don't never pay it back; they will pay it back. If they cannot sell their products on time it is deleted in their payments, but they try to pay on time. It is a good opportunity for women because first if they go to the bank for a credit it takes a longer time. They spend a lot of time. It also might affect them negatively." (27, IP)*

*"When they have their meeting if you need money, you say you need money for a certain problem or for bringing materials. They look also at the share you have contributed to the group account. When they give loans they take into account how much the woman has shared. For example, if she wants 300 Somoni and they see she has only given 200 Somoni. One person cannot keep taking loans on a regular basis; I cannot take a loan for another 2-3 month [after taking a loan once]." (15, IP)*

*"It is the advantage of the saving scheme, if I am a member of the group and take a loan, if I go to the bank I have to give collateral, but the savings scheme to take a loan I don't need collateral and pay a small interest rate of maybe 1 Somoni. The other advantage of the saving schemes, if I make a contribution of 10 Somoni a month, after 12 months I left 120 Somoni in the account. In a one-year period I can take my money, not only 120 Somoni. If they give a loan and they pay back, I get a bit of interest." (22, Key Stakeholder, Government)*

Another benefit of the SHGs was that abandoned women started working together and socially and financially supporting each other. In fact, sometimes women use money from the savings scheme to buy a birthday cake for a SHG member or to support a SHG member to buy medicines or pay medical bills. Before women were working alone in their homes (e.g., sewing or knitting); but now with the SHGs women become more motivated and socially and financially connected. They become empowered through these networks and have greater decision-making power over their resources.

*"When they are in a group they get more motivated. They look at each other and learn from each other. They all have the same responsibilities; it is not possible that only one will benefit more than the rest of the group. When they get together they all make decisions, even for giving the loans." (27, IP)*

*"Women benefit significantly from being a member of a SHG. One of the most significant benefits has been that abandoned women came to "realize and learn that they are needed in the community. One of the beneficiaries at the jamoat meetings stood up and said until now I didn't think that I was needed in this community at all. This project did not only include the abandoned women of migrants, some had 3 to 4 children that benefited." (30, IP)*

There were few challenges identified with SHGs, except some SHG members recognized that their knowledge and skills surpassed that of other SHG members and they wanted to work independent of the SHG. A second challenge was that in most SHGs, because the savings schemes are small, not all women can borrow money from the savings scheme at the same time; they must take turns taking loans from the savings scheme. Finally, a third challenge was that some women didn't have ongoing, permanent work or income and had a difficult time contributing money to the savings scheme. Also, when a woman falls ill she may have a difficult time contributing to the savings scheme. So, *"usually if women cannot contribute 1-2 months, by the 3<sup>rd</sup> months they will sell something and have something to contribute"* (27, IP). Although some of the SHGs having schemes, they are not a priority or requirement of the SHGs under the Project.

#### **2.4.1.3. Economic Empowerment of Abandoned Women**

This evaluation revealed the Project has made significant progress in a short period of time toward strengthening the skills and enterprise development abilities of abandoned women. This occurred, in part, through capacity building and technical assistance provided by the Project, including the ability to apply for a small grant under the guise of the Project and capacity building to apply for micro-credits or small loans from a bank or other

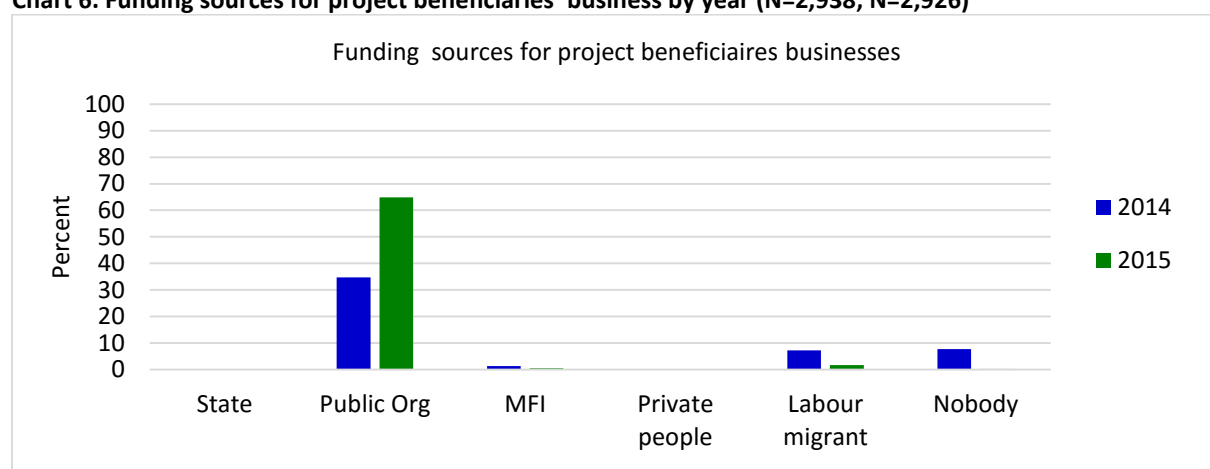


lending sources. This is significant for small groups of rural women who are typically disempowered and did not have experience going through official procedures to register as a PIB.

*“They were shy to go to the markets in the beginning. . . Village women have never been to the market; now they go and they do everything. One goes to the market, one is a secretary, and everyone does something. . . . These women now go to the bank . . . We taught them how to take the credit, to take the loan.” (21, IP)*

Chart 6 reveals that from 2014 to 2015 there was a significant increase in the proportion of women receiving financial support from public organizations for their business; up to 64.9% in 2015, from 34.8% in 2014. At the same time, there was a significant decrease in the proportion of women reliant upon labour migrants for funding their business; down from 7.3% in 2014 to 1.7% in 2015. This finding may also relate to the finding in Chart 2 that the proportion of project beneficiaries who reported they didn’t receive remittances from family members that migrated for labour increased to 52.6% in 2015, up from 36.7% in 2014. Chart 6 also reveals fewer project beneficiaries reported nobody was supporting their business in 2015 (.3%), down from 7.7% in 2014.

**Chart 6. Funding sources for project beneficiaries’ business by year (N=2,938; N=2,926)**



Note: Data from 2014 to 2015 is statistically significant at .010

Through a MOU with local Hukumats, IP NGOs were able to connect abandoned women to local state employment agencies and help them to receive vocational training.

*“Because of our contract and agreement with local employment agencies. In each district 40-60 women were educated on sewing skills and probably 46 women were trained on the bakery. Knitting and carpet. The project improved the strengths in the women’s skills. There are also associations in the place, like association of bee keepers, they also share their experience. One example, in all the projects we financed when we worked in the budgeting of the project, we asked them when making the project proposal if they want to have the beekeeping they should have a mentor that has experience in this area. For example, the beekeeping business the women collected money themselves and they invite the specialist to come and do the bee keeping business.” (9, IP)*

*“Women also learned that they can access the state employment agencies in the districts, and the adult centres in the rayon. The adult learning centres that exist the women didn’t know about the services and they started to come to the centre and to learn skills. The women that came and got training and skills they got a certificate.” (13, IP)*

*“I think the first thing the women learned was how to deal with money. Second, they understood they have the right to take micro-credits from banks . . . We taught them new skills and gave them knowledge, now they think they are able to do a lot . . . They [women] were forgetting their skills and not using them a long time, and this Project has helped to restore the traditions. We sold their products in several exhibitions and connected them with markets. Now they know where to go and how to continue their work.” (27, IP)*

It is also important to note that several of the SHGs income generating activities received awards from the local Hukumats for best women entrepreneurs. During the evaluation, SHGs were eager to show off their awards and certificates of recognition as evidence of their success and empowerment.

The challenge UN Women found is that when they started to implement the Project in the 5 project districts they motivated abandoned women to form SHGs which started income generating activities, and some SHGs registered as PIBs and received core funding, micro-credits, and/or loans; however, other women saw the results and became interested and motivated to join the project. UN Women recognized they could not invite additional women into the Project or provide additional trainings to these women; this was a challenge to some extent for UN Women.

For some of the more remote and mountainous districts, IP NGOs and SHGs found that the core funding given under the guise of the Project was not enough to start a good project. This is because SHGs in remote mountainous districts often had to spend a significant amount of money travelling back and forth to the Oblast center and/or Dushanbe to purchase goods for their business. For example, for SHGs in Tavildara, they had to spend at least 200 to 300 Somoni to travel back and forth to Dushanbe and pay to have their goods and materials transported to their districts. For the beekeeping project, a lot of the boxes were purchased from Dushanbe so they had to spend a lot of money going back and forth to Dushanbe.

*“The transportation is not available. One woman has 4 huge containers of honey, they face challenges to bring their honey to the district centre to the store, to bring their goods to the centre. This is one of the problems they face. In spite of the challenges they face they try hard to make the businesses work. They try to come to the store to market their products.” (27, IP)*

Timing of the grants was another issue. Some IP NGOs and SHGs advised that in the future, if there is a continuation or extension of the Project, the grants should be given in December or January because in the middle of the year it is not possible to start certain seasonal projects (e.g., beekeeping).

Numerous respondents highlighted the fact that when abandoned women were recruited to participate in the Project, many had very low self-esteem and lacked confidence to even talk or to look you in the face. Moreover, many had not spent much time outside of their homes and had not been to the district centres. Also, many did not have experience going to bazaars or purchasing items for the home, and they did not know how to go to a bank and take a loan or to apply for micro-credits from a financial service agency. Then, they spoke about how much the demeanor of the women had change over time as a result of their participation in the Project. In particular, they maintained the women became more active and developed business plans, and were able to write a project proposal and access core funding and/or micro-credits and loans. Also, women learned marketing skills and how to go to the market and purchase and sell goods, as well as how to manage their household budgets.

*“I myself went to the field and participated in monitoring and saw how these women were in the beginning of the Project and how they change at the end of project; their eyes are happier and they are active. Before the Project, when NGOs started to work with these women and during trainings these women were not talking much, they were not confident at all, they were not sure to talk or not to talk at all. When Zarina and I went to field last year in October, we could see how active and talkative they were, they had many ideas about their businesses. (38, UN Women)*

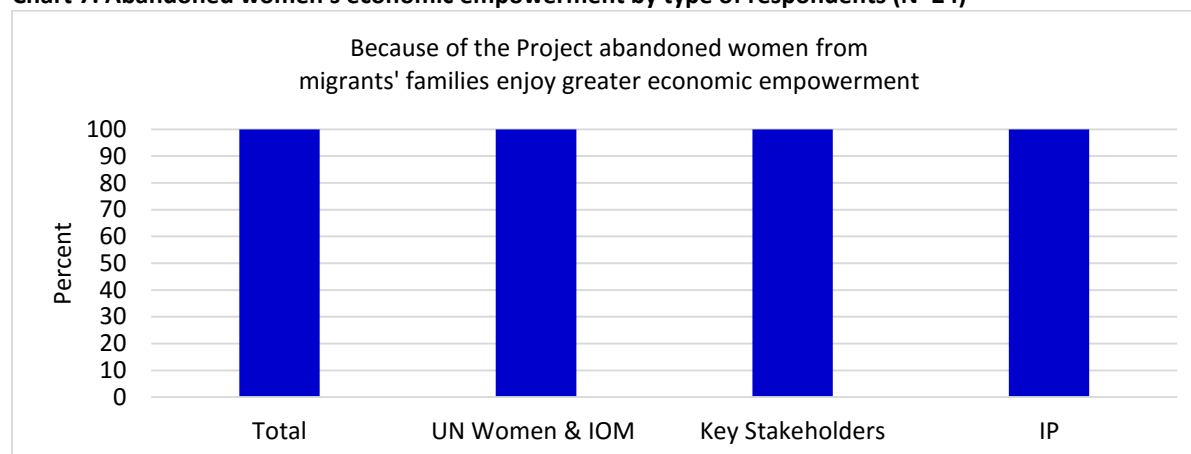
Some women didn't even know where the bank was and the community mobilisers needed to accompany them to the bank. However, once women took the micro-credits twice, they would help other women to access the bank loans. UN Women and IP NGOs repeatedly stated, *“I can say they are much better . . . I observed them and they are different from the first time we met them, the way they dress and communicate.” (21, IP)*

UN Women recognized *“we achieved, but . . . more should be done because they need to develop their business further” (36, UN Women)* because the situation in the markets can change and SHGs need to be prepared to respond to market changes. Also, UN Women felt SHGs needed more capacity building to improve their products and further develop their businesses. As UN Women explained, *“the project was short, if there was one more year we could see more easily progress and impact” (38, UN Women)*. IP NGOs also expressed their belief that *“the project should be continued as women need more support. There also other women who live in same villages*

or nearby and were not covered by project. In order to have long and sustainable results, I think that the project should continue working and support these women” (33, IP).

Chart 7 reveals that 100% of all respondents (N=24) believed that because of the Project abandoned women from migrants' families enjoy greater economic empowerment. This include 100% of UN Women and IOM staff, as well as 100% of key stakeholders and IP NGOs.

**Chart 7. Abandoned women's economic empowerment by type of respondents (N=24)**



Before, many of the abandoned women were sitting at home and doing nothing more than housework and childrearing. Now they are abandoned women are working, earning money, providing for their children, and many have acquired legal documents for themselves and their children because of the Project.

#### **2.4.1.4. Access to Micro-Credits and Other Resources for their Businesses**

In 2014, to support SHGs to access micro-credits and other resources to manage their businesses, UN Women supported a mapping of the micro-credit programmes on business development, agricultural services, seeds programs and other services (e.g., the Agency on Labour, Employment and Migration, Adult Learning Centres, colleges, and INGOs). The mapping identified 11 Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) and 8 banks in Khatlon and Rasht Valley; this information was disseminated to members of the SHGs.

As a result of the mapping exercise, 9 MOUs between Banks and MFIs were signed which ensured the smooth access of project beneficiaries to MFI services. In Khatlon, MOUs were signed with Tojik Sodiro Bank of Kulyab District, AgroInvestBank of Farkhor District, and Micro-credit organization “Imdodi Khutal.” In Rasht Valley, MOUs were signed with Micro-Credit Fund ‘Borshud’ in all 3 target districts, Development Bank of Tajikistan and Joint-Stock Commercial Bank of Reconstruction and Development “TajPromBank” in Tojikobod, Amonatbank in Jirgatal, MFI “Kiropl express” in Tavildara, and the Center of Employment under the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Migration. Based upon the signed MOUs, parties cooperated to provide abandoned women with access to micro-credits for business and entrepreneurial activities. Based upon data provided by IP NGOs, Table 4 reveals the number of project beneficiaries that were able to access micro-credits and loans to support their businesses as a result of the Project.

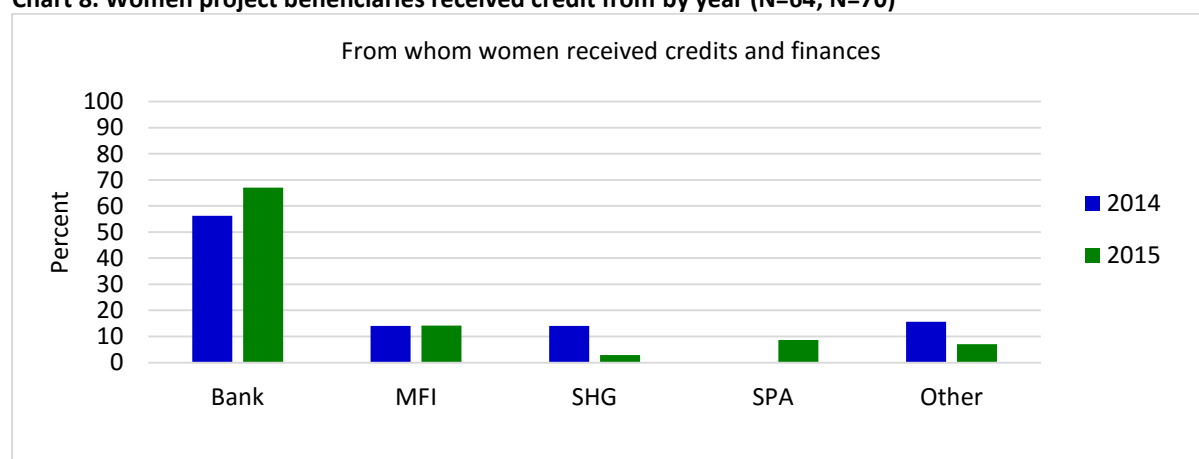
| <b>Table 4. Access to micro-credits and loans by project beneficiaries (April 2014 – December 2015)</b> |  |                  |                              |                      |
|---|--|------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| <u>Region/District</u>  | <u>Bank</u>                                | <u>No. Women</u> | <u>Credit Amount</u>         | <u>Interest Rate</u> |
| Khatlon Oblast  | MFO “Khumo” and local banks                | 12               | 31,480 Somoni<br>(5,724 USD) | 1.5% - 2.0%          |
| Farkhor   | MFI Imdodi Kutal                           | 6                | 16,860 Somoni<br>(3,065 USD) | 2.0% - 2.5%          |
| Rasht Valley  | Agency on Labour, Employment and Migration | 5                | 19,000 Somoni<br>(3,800 USD) | Interest Free        |
|   | Amonatbank                                 | 3                | 15,000 Somoni<br>(3,000 USD) | < 3.0%               |

In October 2014, the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), which was actively working in Rasht valley, approached the coordinator of Tojikobod District to provide the list of 10 active women/project beneficiaries to provide assistance for bee keeping. Two SHGs engaged in beekeeping were recommended and the AKF organized a one-week training course for these 10 women to develop this type of business. After the training, AKF provided the women with 2 bee hives and 8 kg of sugar, required clothing, and inventory. Monitoring revealed the women successfully engaged in this activity and AKF decided to give them an additional 30 bee hives and four additional days of training on the skills of bee hive development.

*"The women did not know anything. They only heard about the bank, but they had not been to the banks before. They trainers of the training were able to help the women a lot, they helped the women to go to the bank and get the micro-credits, when other women saw this they started to go to the banks and get the micro-loan." (21, RP)*

Chart 8 shows that data from the baseline and endline household survey reveals that in 2015, only 70 (2.4%) out of 2,926 abandoned women reported getting some form of credit; up from 64 (2.2%) out of 2,938 women in 2014 (the change was not statistically significant). Among women who were able to get some form of credit, the majority received credits from the bank; there was a significant increase the proportion of women who received credits from the bank from 2014 to 2015 (56.3% in 2014; 67.1% in 2015). There was also an increase in the proportion of women who were able to get credits from the Social Protection Agency (SPA); an increase from 0.0% in 2014, to 8.6% in 2015. From 2014 to 2015, there was a significant decrease in the proportion of women who received credits from the SHGs; from 14.1% in 2014, down to 2.9% in 2015. There was no change in the proportion of women who accessed credits from MFIs. The average yearly interest rate on micro-credits was .06 in 2014 and .05 in 2015.

**Chart 8. Women project beneficiaries received credit from by year (N=64; N=70)**



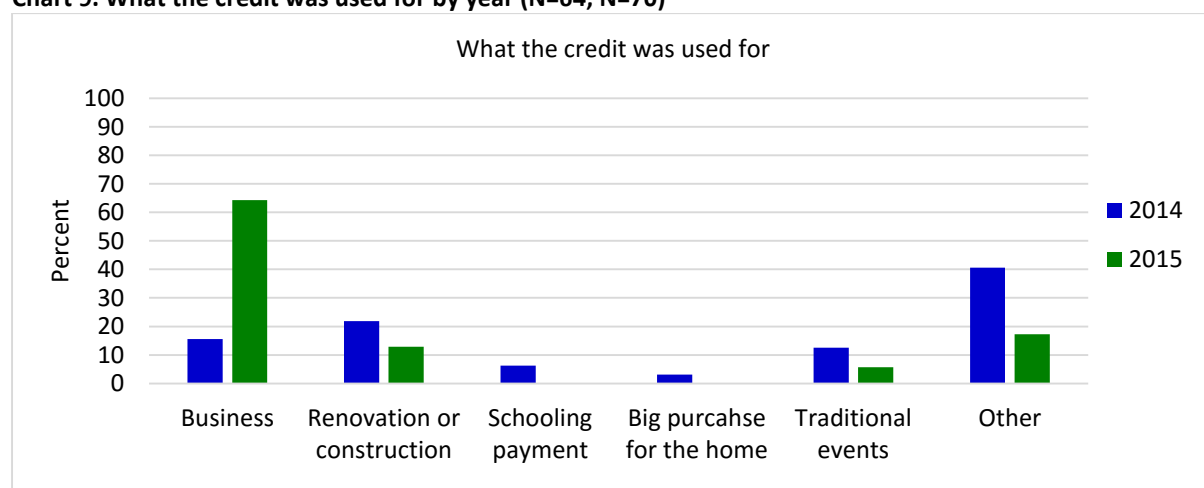
Note: Data from 2014 to 2015 is statistically significant at .010

Table 5 reveals that among women taking micro-credits the average loan interest rates slightly decreased from 2.7% in 2014 to 2.1% in 2015. Also, the average length of time the loan was taken for remained nearly the same from 11.0 months in 2014 to 11.3 months in 2015. What is particularly notable is the amount of credit borrowed by project beneficiaries significantly increased from 1,548 Somoni on average in 2014 to 2,440 Somoni on average in 2015 (an increase of 892 Somoni on average)

| Table 5. Credit/loan information by year |   |   |
|--|---|---|
|  | 2014<br>N=64  | 2015<br>N=70  |
| Yearly interest on credit/loan           | Average: 2.7%<br>Low: 0% / High:36%                                   | Average: 2.1%<br>Low: 0% / High: 3%                                   |
| Length of time of the credit/loan        | Average: 11.0 months<br>Minimum: 1 month<br>Maximum: 30 months        | Average: 11.3 months<br>Minimum: 1 month<br>Maximum: 30 months        |
| Amount of money borrowed (in Somoni)     | Average: 1,548 Somoni<br>Minimum: 100 Somoni<br>Maximum: 5,000 Somoni | Average: 2,440 Somoni<br>Minimum: 300 Somoni<br>Maximum: 5,000 Somoni |

Chart 9 reveals there was also a significant change in what women were using credits for from 2014 to 2015. In 2014, the majority of women reported using credits for “other expenses” (40.6%) and renovations or construction (21.9%); in 2015, this decreased to 17.2% for “other expenses” and 12.9% for renovations and construction. In 2014, only 15.6% of women reported using credits for their business; however, by 2015, the proportion of women that were using credits for business significantly increased to 67.1%. In addition, no women reported using credit for schooling payments or big purchases for the home in 2015. These are significant and notable shifts in the way women are using borrowed money, which may reflect the fact that women have improved money resources for daily living expenses as a result of the Project, as well as better budgeting and money management habits.

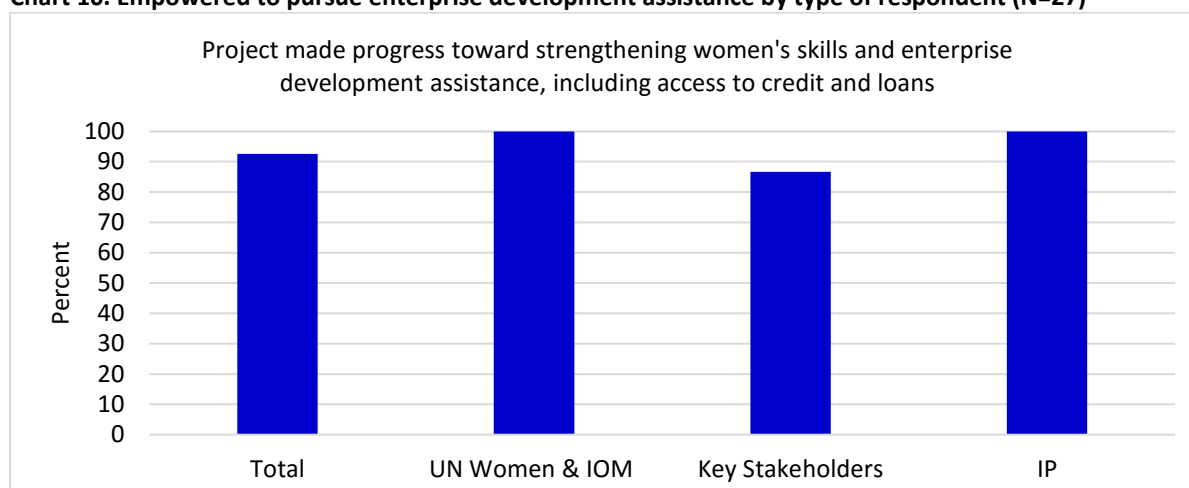
**Chart 9. What the credit was used for by year (N=64; N=70)**



Note: Data from 2014 to 2015 is statistically significant at .000

During the evaluation, respondents were asked if the Project made progress toward strengthening women’s skills and enterprise development assistance, including access to credits and loans. Chart 10 reveals 92.6% of all respondents reported the Project strengthened women’s skills and ability to access micro-credits and loans. In particular, all UN Women and IOM staff, all IP NGOs, and 86.7% of key stakeholders reported that the Project made such progress.

**Chart 10. Empowered to pursue enterprise development assistance by type of respondent (N=27)**



Note: Two key stakeholders reported they don't know

One respondent explained, “Now our women know where to go, what kind of credit they can take, how to use the credits” (13, IP). The trainings provided to women also resulted in some women learning that they can take loans that will enable them to start to use their land that has not been used for many years. They took credits or loans and used the land plots to harvest fruits and vegetables for their own consumption, and the rest they were able to sell in the market.

*“They took a risk to rent a land the women. Many women they did not use their land before and they started to use their land and to plant potatoes and greens and because of this their nutrition has improved. Before if they sold all their fruit they would buy cooking, and now they sell some and keep some for winter for their own consumption. Lot of examples where women learned to do canning for their own consumption and sell in Dushanbe for their own. The Tajikistan mountain onions. Some of the women participated in writing the proposal to get the Presidential grant.” (9, IP NGOs)*

Although not all SHGs were able to access micro-credits or loans, not all SHGs were well organized. IP NGOs also reported some women and SHGs were unable to access micro-credits because there was simply not enough money in the banks to pay for all the needs of the population. For instance, in Tavildara, some banks shut down in 2015; in fact, the first AKF bank closed their branch in Tavildara in 2015.

When asked if SHGs ever faced challenges managing their money and paying back their micro-credits and loans, IP NGOs generally maintained the SHGs didn't typically face such problems because they get low or no interest loans and used the money to purchase goods they needed for their income generating activities, and then repaid the loan once they earned money on the sale of their goods. Many SHGs also paid back their loans on a monthly basis in small payments. Still, however, some SHGs did face challenges paying back their loans, particularly early on, because they didn't know how to manage money; however, their money management reportedly improved after one or two months.

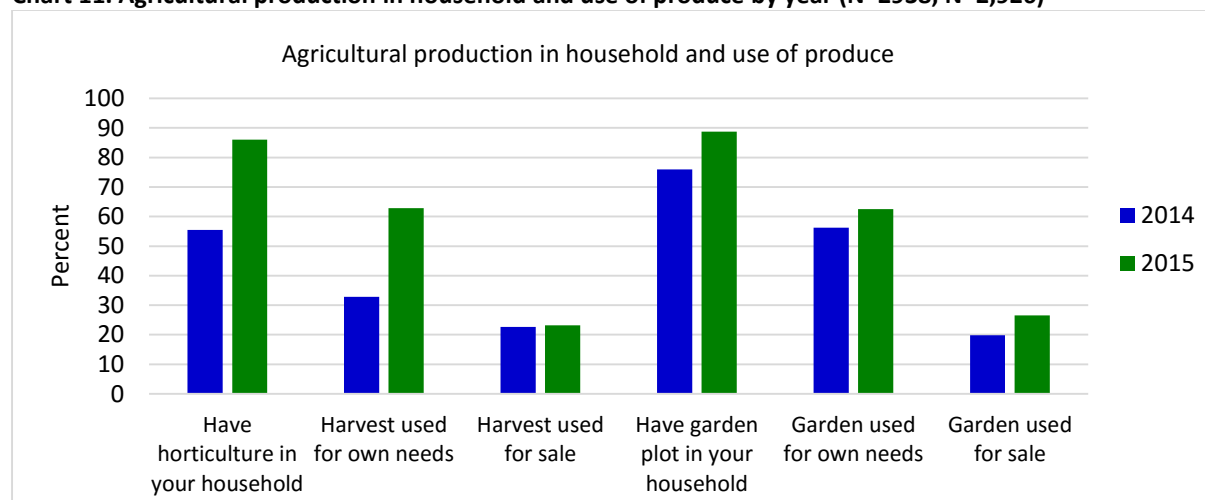
*“When we started the milk processing business, people when they started bringing the milk, they were all keeping the price 3 Somoni per liter. We kept buy the milk for 3 Somoni and welling it for 3 Somoni, we just kept washing the plate and cleaning. That is the way we kept going in the beginning. But when they see we got lots of milk and supply they realized we need to bring the price down. So we made negotiation to get the price down by .50 Somoni. We collect every day 50-60 litres.” (15, IP)*

#### **2.4.1.5. Improved Livelihoods and Economic Security for Abandoned Women**

Baseline and endline data was analysed to understand how the livelihoods and economic security of project beneficiaries improved from the beginning to the end of the project; findings are presented in Charts 11 to 15 and Table 6. Chart 11 demonstrates there was a significant increase from 2014 to 2015 in the proportion of project beneficiaries that had horticulture (fruit growing) and garden plots in their households. In particular, in 2015, 86.0% of women reported they had horticulture (fruit growing) in their household and 88.8% reported

they had a garden plot in their household; up from 55.5% and 76.0% respectively in 2014. What is also notable is the significant increase from 2014 to 2015 in the proportion of women who reported using the harvest of fruits for their own needs; up from 32.8% in 2014 to 62.8% in 2015. Also, there was an increase in the proportion of women that used the garden plot in their household for their own needs and for sale; up from 56.2% and 19.8% respectively in 2014, to 62.5% and 26.5% in 2015.

**Chart 11. Agricultural production in household and use of produce by year (N=2938; N=2,926)**



Note: Data from 2014 to 2015 is statistically significant at .000; except portion of harvest use for sale .480.

Project beneficiaries also reported a statistically significant increase in the average number of animals in their household, particularly big cattle. Table 6 reveals the number of big cattle increased from .98 on average in 2014, to 1.17 on average in 2015; from a maximum of 10 in 2014, to 24 in 2015. This finding may reflect the fact that some SHGs became involved in cattle breeding and milk processing. There was also a slight increase in the average number of birds in households from 3.83 on average in 2014, to 4.03 in 2015; however, the change was not statistically significant.

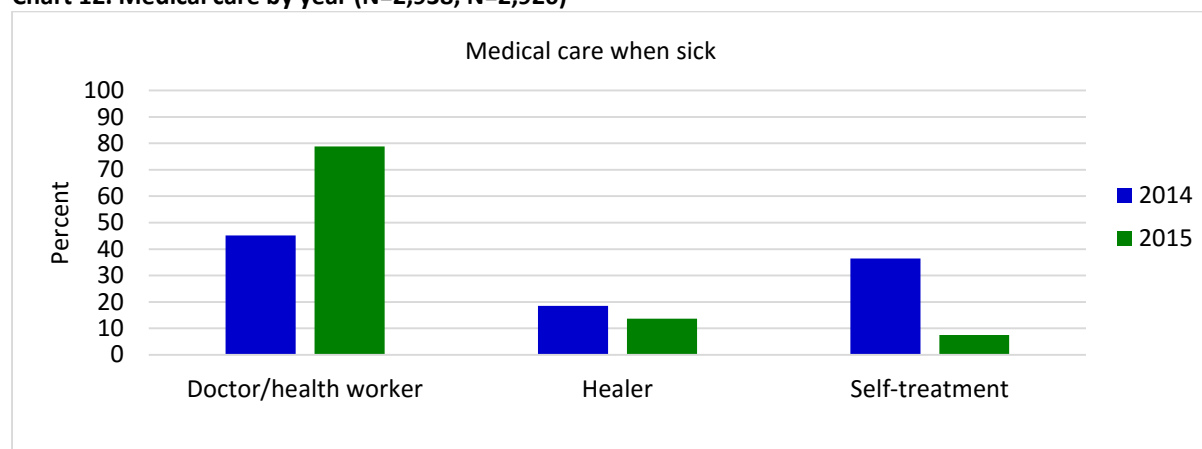
| Table 6. Animals in the household by year |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|   | 2014<br>N=2,938                             | 2015<br>N=2,926                             |
| Big cattle                                | Average: .98<br>Minimum: 0<br>Maximum: 10   | Average: 1.17<br>Minimum: 0<br>Maximum: 24  |
| Small cattle                              | Average: 1.09<br>Minimum: 0<br>Maximum: 25  | Average: 1.17<br>Minimum: 0<br>Maximum: 25  |
| Donkey, horse                             | Average: .17<br>Minimum: 0<br>Maximum: 15   | Average: .18<br>Minimum: 0<br>Maximum: 20   |
| Birds                                     | Average: 3.83<br>Minimum: 0<br>Maximum: 110 | Average: 4.03<br>Minimum: 0<br>Maximum: 115 |

Chart 12 reveals project beneficiaries use of medical care when sick significantly changed from 2014 to 2015; these changes are likely tied to women's social and economic empowerment, and having the financial resources to access more formal medical care (see Chart 13). This can include having access to financial resources through saving schemes of SHGs. Women's use of medical care may also be tied to women's legal empowerment, including having the necessary passports and birth certificates for themselves and their children to access the formal medical care system. What is particularly notable is that the portion of women who access doctor/health workers increased from 45.1% in 2014, to 78.8% in 2015 (see Chart 12). At the same time the proportion of women that did self-treatment declined from 36.4% in 2014, to 7.5% in 2015. These changes are



significant and important in terms of demonstrating women's livelihoods have improved as a result of the Project.

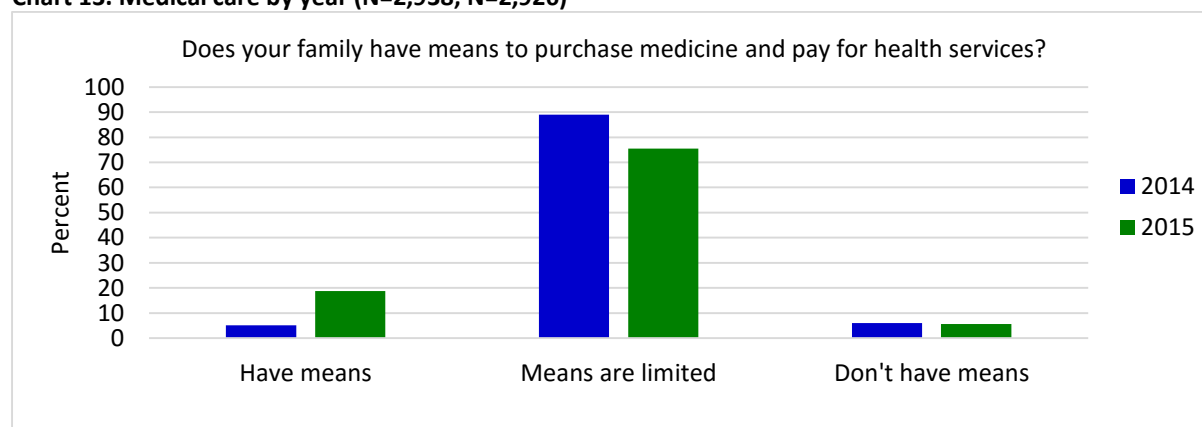
**Chart 12. Medical care by year (N=2,938; N=2,926)**



Note: Data from 2014 to 2015 is statistically significant at .000

Related to Chart 12, Chart 13 demonstrates that the proportion of project beneficiaries who reported they have the means to purchase medicine and pay for health services increased from 5.5% in 2014, to 18.8% in 2015. In addition, the proportion of women who reported their families had limited means to purchase medicine and pay for health services decreased from 89.0% in 2014, to 75.5% in 2015. Interviews with project beneficiaries during the evaluation revealed women take loans sometimes from the SHGs savings schemes to pay for health care and medicines.

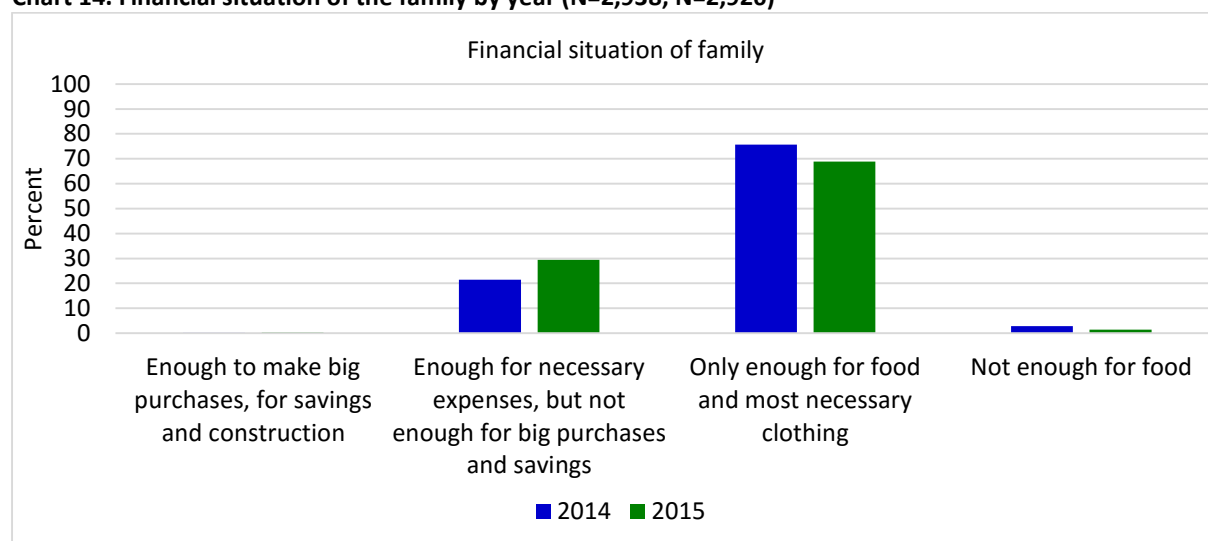
**Chart 13. Medical care by year (N=2,938; N=2,926)**



Note: Data from 2014 to 2015 is statistically significant at .000

Chart 14 shows there were significant changes in the financial situation of families of project beneficiaries from 2014 to 2015. In particular, there was a significant increase in the proportion of women who reported they have enough money for necessary expenses, but not enough for big purchases and savings from 2014 to 2015 (21.4% in 2014, and 29.4% in 2015). At the same time there was a significant decrease in the proportion of women who reported they only have enough for food and most necessary clothing from 2014 to 2015 (75.7% in 2014 and 68.9% in 2015). In addition, there was a decrease in the proportion of women who reported they did not have enough money for food (2.8% in 2014 to 1.4% in 2015).

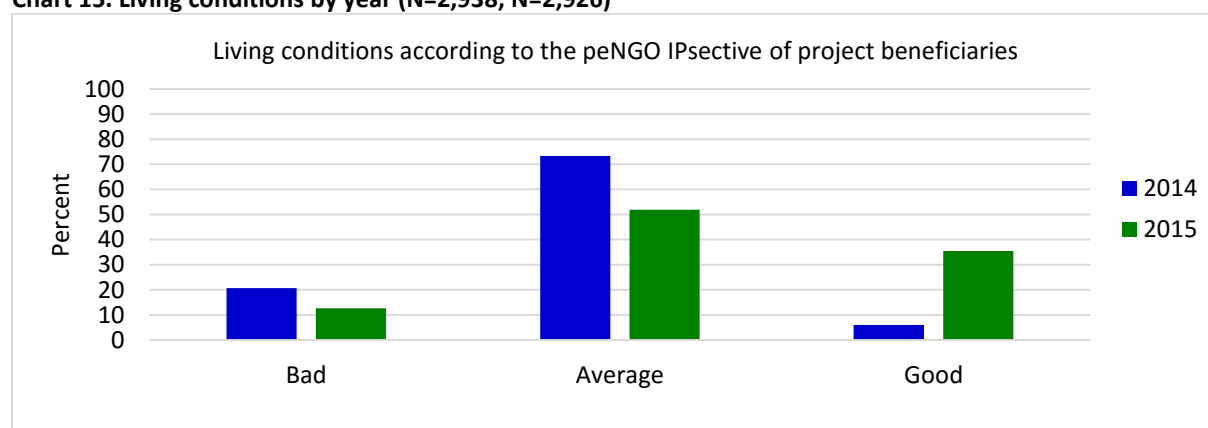
**Chart 14. Financial situation of the family by year (N=2,938; N=2,926)**



Note: Data from 2014 to 2015 is statistically significant at .000

Finally, Chart 15 shows there was a significant increase in the living conditions of project beneficiaries and their children from the perspective of project beneficiaries themselves. In particular, there was a significant increase in the proportion of women who reported their living conditions were good; an increase from 6.0% in 2014, to 35.4% in 2015. At the same time, there was a significant decrease in the proportion of women who reported their living conditions were bad; a decrease from 20.7% in 2014, to 12.7% in 2015. The proportion of women who reported their living conditions were average also decreased from 2014 to 2015; from 73.3% in 2014, to 51.9% in 2015.

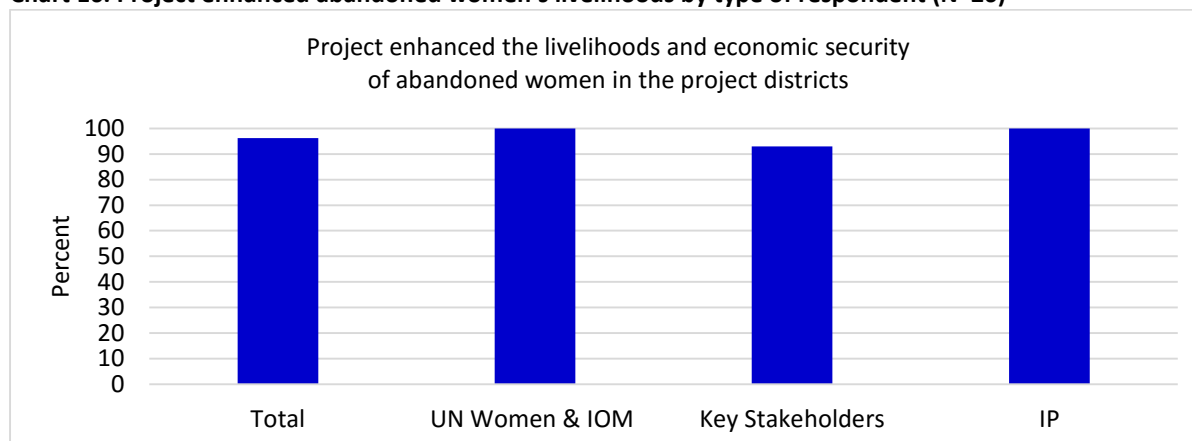
**Chart 15. Living conditions by year (N=2,938; N=2,926)**



Note: Data from 2014 to 2015 is statistically significant at .000

When asked if the Project enhanced sustainability livelihoods and economic security of abandoned women from migrants' families in the pilot provinces, Chart 16 reveals 96.2% of all respondents, including 100% of UN Women and IOM staff, 100% of IP NGOs, and 92.9% of key stakeholders reported the Project enhanced the livelihoods and economic security of abandoned women in the project districts.

**Chart 16. Project enhanced abandoned women's livelihoods by type of respondent (N=26)**



Note: One key stakeholder reported they "don't know"

## 2.4.2. Access to Legal Assistance and Gender Sensitive Services

In terms of effectiveness in achieving Output 1.2, targeted women gain access to a broad range of legal assistance and gender sensitive services, there were three key activities, including: 1) developing and distributing information materials on legal issues and services; 2) providing legal aid and informational support to abandoned women through IP NGOs; and 3) strengthening capacity of justice system actors to address needs of abandoned women from migrants' families on legal assistance and protection of their right. Each of these will be evaluated in the sections that follow in terms of effectiveness and impact.

### 2.4.2.1. Develop and Distribute Information Materials on Legal Issues and Services

IOM was responsible for Output 1.2 and developing and disseminating information and materials on legal issues and services for abandoned women from migrants' families. In the first year of the project (2014), IOM was able to produce 7,500 booklets on legal services offered by their IP NGOs, including: 3,000 booklets on legal services offered by NGO Surhob in the Rasht Valley, and 4,500 booklets on legal services offered by NGO Mayram in Kulyab and Farkhor. These booklets were distributed to local offices of the Ombudsman in Kulyab and Gharm (Rasht Valley), as well as the local Hukumats, Jamoats, and other NGO partners of IOM and UN Women.

IOM also produced and disseminated 400 calendars on the rights of children from migrants' families which were distributed to NGO partners and other IOs, as well as local Hukumats, Jamoats, the Ombudsman's Offices, the Committee on Women and Family Affairs, and other relevant ministries (i.e., MoLEM, MoHSP, and Ministry of Education, MoE). The calendars were popular because they illustrated the rights of children from migrants' families based upon the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the National Law about the Responsibility of Parents. The calendars were well received and more calendars requested from Jamoats and schools; thus, more were printed and distributed in 2015.

IOM also produced and disseminated 11,064 booklets with 24 questions and answers regarding the most common legal problems faced by abandoned women (e.g., alimony, divorce, dividing the property, and more). The booklets also contained model documents which could be used by women who wanted to pursue and access their legal rights.

In addition to developing and disseminating information materials on legal issues and services for women and children from migrants' families, in 2014, IOM participated in 9 different events, including seminars, presentations of research, roundtable discussions organized both other IOs, NGOs, and the Government of Tajikistan in Dushanbe, Kulyab, Khujand, and Kurgan-Tube. The objectives of IOM's participation were to raise awareness to the problems of abandoned wives and children from migrants' families, to share IOM's experiences in addressing legal cases of abandoned women, and to present the laws protecting families of migrant workers. In this way, IOM was able to reach approximately 270 people from different backgrounds, including key stakeholders who influence policy-making at the central level and who work directly with abandoned wives and

children of migrant labourers in different regions of Tajikistan. IOM was able to advocate for the need to provide abandoned women with institutional legal support.

IOM also hosted a series of roundtable discussions on the rights of women and children from migrants' families in Dushanbe, Tojikobod, and Kulyab. The roundtables gathered together a range of actors who work on a daily basis with women and children left behind by labour migrants, including: central and local branches of the office of the Human Rights' Ombudsman, Migration Service, Committee on Women and Family Affairs, Child Rights' Centres, employees of Hukumats and Jamoats, IOs and NGOs, and the media. Participants shared knowledge and experiences of working with families of labour migrants and learned about services provided by others in order to strengthen referral mechanisms. These roundtables led to an agreement among participants that there is a need to develop new strategies of work with migrants' families and to protect the rights of abandoned women and their children. They maintained that "good practices" from other Central Asian countries should be identified and adapted to the Tajikistan context, including strategies such as: promoting female education; raising legal awareness among women, men and children; making the marriage contract obligatory; promoting organized recruitment of labour migrants; and, to promote family mediation and the institution of mediators that would train professional mediators who would help former spouses to reach a peaceful agreement concerning such issues as alimony without having to go through a long court processes.

#### **2.4.2.2. Provide Legal Aid and Informational Support to Abandoned Women**

In addition to developing and distributing informational materials on legal issues and services for abandoned women and children of migrants, IOM was responsible for providing legal aid and informational support to project beneficiaries (abandoned women) through their IP NGOs - NGO Mayram in Kulyab and NGO Surhob in Rasht Valley.

After IOM trained all employees from the two IP NGOs in July 2014 on how to provide legal counseling to vulnerable groups of the population, specifically abandoned women, the MoHSP conducted a session on available national mechanisms of social protection of families of labour migrants. IOM also used monitoring and evaluation visits to strengthen capacities of the IP NGOs by guiding them on how to proceed with legal cases and which national laws and mechanisms can be used. IOM also provided the two IP NGOs with capacity building on how to conduct in-office, phone, and mobile consultations, as well as reviewed Tajikistan legislation, particularly legislation relevant to abandoned women and children.

##### NGO Mayram (Kulyab and Farkhor)

Prior experience implementing projects related to women, particularly reducing threats of human trafficking among vulnerable women, assistance to victims of domestic violence, and agricultural projects with women from migrants' households.

##### NGO Surob (Tojikobod, Jirgital, and Tavildara)

Implemented several projects aimed at providing assistance to future or returned migrants, as well as to victims of human trafficking and labour exploitation abroad.

During the period of April 2014 to December 2015, the two IP NGOs were able to provide legal aid and information support to a significant number of abandoned women. Table 7 reveals the number of legal consultations conducted by the two IP NGOs, as well as legal cases represented and the number of women provided with direct legal assistance and psychological support. Table 7 also reveals the number of information campaigns and media outreach activities conducted that focused on the legal services offered by the IP NGOs.

Table 7 also demonstrates there was a high demand for the legal services provided by the Project. In fact, in 2014, IOM overachieved its targets set for the whole duration of the project; that is that IOM would provide 800 women with free legal assistance and 4,200 women would have access to consultations and informational materials by the end of the project period (December 2015). This confirms that the need for legal services for families of migrant workers is enormous; and that the problem of abandoned women is acute. The level of legal awareness among women in rural and remote areas of Tajikistan is very low, and most women lack official marriage certificates and birth certificates for children, which makes obtaining alimony more difficult.

*“This type of project was the first. Women were very afraid first they were not able to express themselves well. When they talk we introduced them with NGO Maryam and they continued to work with them on the legal issues. Women had no passports or birth certificates. Husbands who left their wives never paid alimony. They also had the land and cotton and didn’t know how to market their goods. Lots of women during the training on gender issues started to understand their rights.” (27, IP)*

| Table 7. Legal Aid and Information Support to Project Beneficiaries |                   |                   |                                  |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
|   | Rasht Valley      | Khatlon Oblast    | Total                            |
| Phone consultations   | 99                | 128               | 227                              |
| In-Office consultations   | 162               | 209               | 371                              |
| Mobile consultations  | 15 / 163 women    | 37 / 405 women    | 52 / 568 women                   |
| Legal cases requiring representation                                | ---               | ---               | 96                               |
| No. women provided direct legal assistance <sup>1</sup>             | 58                | 59                | 117                              |
| Birth certificates for children                                     | ---               | ---               | 74                               |
| Obtaining passports   | ---               | ---               | 22                               |
| Allowance for single mothers  | ---               | ---               | 10                               |
| Other legal document (e.g., medical certificates)                   | ---               | ---               | 11                               |
| Psychological support <sup>2</sup>                                  | ---               | ---               | 74                               |
| Information campaigns <sup>3</sup>                                  | 29 / 5,354 people | 30 / 1,773 people | 49 / 7,127 people<br>4,798 women |
| Media outreach <sup>4</sup>   |                   |                   | 132,328                          |

<sup>1</sup> IP NGOs covered the costs of obtaining documents for women

<sup>2</sup> IP NGOs periodically involved a psychologist to provide psychological support to abandoned wives

<sup>3</sup> Information campaigns were focused on legal services offered by the IP NGOs as well as on rights of abandoned women to obtain alimony, divide common property, and more for women from migrant families and local authorities

<sup>4</sup> Calculated based upon the number print copies and estimated audience of TV Safina, TV Kulyab, Asia Plus and more)

IOM found that most women who turned to their IP NGOs for help were between 25 and 36 years of age, unemployed, and with more than one children. Most cases related to the Family and Civil Codes (e.g., obtaining birth certificates, paternity recognition, obtaining alimony), as well as land and housing issues (e.g., housing disputes with the family or former husband, and unlawful evictions). The IOM lawyer in Dushanbe was often in touch with the lawyers from the IP NGOs, guiding them on how to proceed with specific legal cases of abandoned women from migrant families, as well as on the Family and Civil Codes of the Republic of Tajikistan.<sup>29</sup>

In addition, NGO Surhob occasionally collaborated with two lawyers in Tavildara and Jirgatal to follow-up on legal cases of women living in those regions.

*“Many of them had unregistered marriages with their husbands. For these women with unregistered marriages when they were abandoned they could not claim any property so they had nowhere to go when kicked out of the house. During seminars they got advice and consultations. So they got some experience to know the experiences of unregistered marriage, such as claiming the property.” (21, IP)*

*“It is not only that these women received their passports, they understand that women, as a man, can speak up for and defend their rights. When Surhob came the first time, 84 women gathered to meet them. This is how the work has been started with NGO Surhob. First women were afraid to express their issues and problems; they were worried they may get problems from their families . . . First they came, they had information campaigns, how to attract and involved women and they had a mobile consultation.” (15, IP)*

This project also found that reaching women in rural and mountainous areas, and providing them with legal aid is not without its challenges. In particular, women in remote regions often face transportation difficulties and in winter months they may have limited access to the district centres due to weather conditions and road closures. For some women, they have to travel by donkey or walk several kilometres to the district centre due to the lack

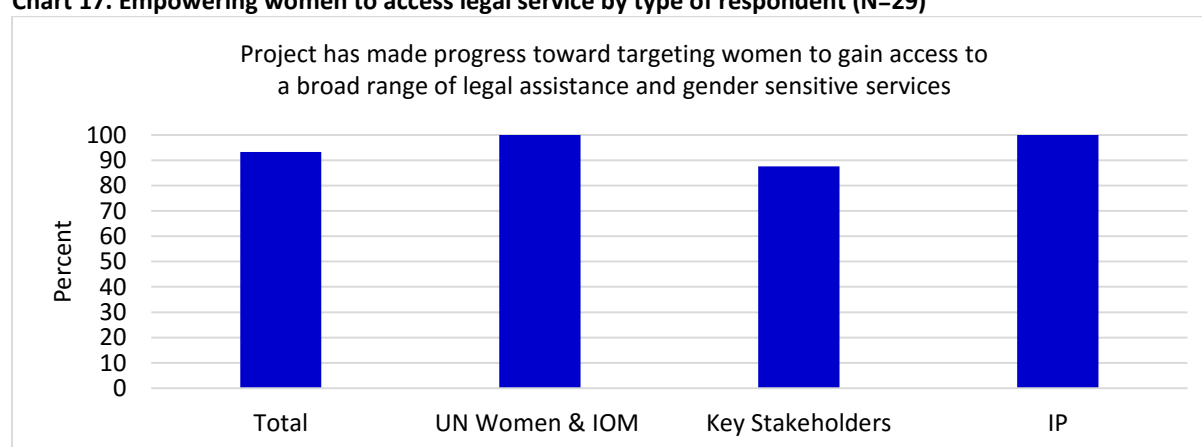
<sup>29</sup> IOM sent their IP NGOs to trainings and seminars to further strengthen their capacities.

of mass transportation. So, while abandoned women reportedly know a little bit more about their rights, accessing legal services still remains a challenge.

*“I should say the legal awareness/knowledge level is very low especially in rural areas. It is my personal opinion that there is still a lot of work that needs to be done with legal education and awareness-raising. I think compared to other districts and regions the women here, the main important thing is getting them more active. Women also learned a lot of other things by participating in this project, they kept asking a lot of different questions.” (27, IP)*

Despite the challenges, Chart 17 reveals 93.3% of all respondents reported the Project, with the support of IOM, has made progress toward targeting women to gain access to a broad range of legal assistance and gender sensitive services. In fact, all UN Women and IOM staff, all IP NGOs, and 87.5% of key stakeholders reported the Project succeeded in targeting women to gain access to legal assistance and gender sensitive services; two key stakeholders did not know.

**Chart 17. Empowering women to access legal service by type of respondent (N=29)**



Note: Two key stakeholders reported they “don’t know.”

It is important to note that IOM provided trainings and support to the Ombudsman’s Office to improve their capacities to understand the legal needs of and provide legal consultations to abandoned women from migrants’ families. The Ombudsman’s Office has 11 centres around Tajikistan, including centres in Khatlon and Gharm where their representatives have been indirectly involved in the Project. Although the centres do not provide legal advocacy or take on legal cases, they do offer consultative services and referrals to other organizations that can provide women with the legal advocacy the need.

#### **2.4.2.3. Strengthen Capacity of Justice System Actors to Address Abandoned Women’s Needs**

One of the activities of the project was to strengthen the capacities of justice system actors to address the needs of abandoned women. In keeping, in July 2014, IOM conducted a one-day training for the two IP NGOs, as well as lawyers from other local NGOs which work with families of labour migrants (i.e., NGO Ranjbar from Kulyab, NGO Muhojirat from Kurgan-Tube, NGO Women and Society from Khujand, NGO Hayrandesh from Ani, and NGO Hamroz from Hissar). In total, 14 lawyers were trained on migration legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Russian Federation (Russia is the host country of 95% of Tajik migrants), Tajik laws on social protection of families of labour migrants, and methodologies for providing families of labour migrants with legal consultations. In August 2014, IOM conducted a two-day training for 22 lawyers, including 10 lawyers from local offices of the Ombudsman’s Office and 12 lawyers from NGO partners of IOM and Save the Children. The training concerned legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan, including rights of women and children from migrant families and solving hypothetical legal cases which may be faced by abandoned women.

While IOM was able to train some local lawyers and judges in one-off trainings, it is not clear what impact the trainings had on justice system actors. Nevertheless, these trainings were an important first step in a 25-month Project that focused more specifically on developing and distributing informational materials on legal issues and

services for abandoned women and children of migrants, and providing legal aid and advocacy to abandoned women.

### 2.4.3. Enhance Capacity of NGOs to Engage Local Government on Gender-Specific Needs

In terms of effectiveness in achieving Output 2.1, enhanced capacity of NGOs to engage into a constructive dialogue with the local governments on incorporating gender-specific needs of abandoned women from migrants' families, there were two key activities, including: 1) better collaboration among civil society and government; and 2) strengthening capacity of local partners for gender responsive planning and budgeting to address the needs of abandoned women (implemented in only 2 of the 5 target districts). Each of these will be evaluated in the sections that follow in terms of effectiveness and impact.

#### 2.4.3.1. Better Collaboration among Civil Society and Government

This evaluation found that the Project introduced better approaches and supported collaboration among civil society groups, including NGOs, and the government to address the needs of abandoned women. The Project's strategy was particularly effective and successful, particularly given it was the first project working with the needs of abandoned women from migrant families and all partners; and it was the first time the IP NGOs and the government to be actively involved in a such a Project on the social, economic, and legal empowerment of abandoned women. Some local government officials became much more involved than others; however, all were invited to participate in different seminars, roundtables, conferences, and events related to the Projects.

The Project has been quite effective at "opening the door" for civil society groups and local governmental bodies to work together to address the needs of abandoned women. The IP NGOs had an MOU with the Hukumats in the district they were working which was an important component of the Project. The MOUs

helped to ensure collaboration between the IP NGOs and local governmental bodies, including participation of local government officials at different Project events. In each project district, key partnerships were with Women's Committees, Heads of Hukumats, and Heads of Jamoats.

*"I think the collaboration with the support of this project has given good results. If this programme had not been working in this region we would not be aware of how many abandoned women were in the region; that was something good for us."*  
(22, Key Stakeholder, Government)

*"I think project did the good job to enhance the dialogue and close partnership between local government agencies and other partners. The positive thing is local jamoats also got well connected with abandoned wives of migrants. There were MOUs signed with local government agencies in all districts. The local governments were involved in the project from the beginning to the end."* (33, IP)

Local governments recognized they have "limited resources and possibilities to provide such help; we are ready to collaborate with NGOs that are working [on the issue]. We want to collaborate very closely with them, and to support their activities. It is about improving the livelihoods of the village people and living standards of women" (25, Key Stakeholder, Government). Despite having limited economic resources, sometimes local governments were able to support abandoned women's income generating activities in other ways. For instance, in Jirgatol, there was a SHG that wanted to open a hair salon and they could not find a place for the salon. Eventually, the local government helped to give the SHG space in a hotel, and the SHG didn't have to pay rent for several months. Government officials recognized that "until the project started, we didn't have these conversations at all. Women didn't have these ideas of working on these projects at all" (26, Key Stakeholder, Government).

For UN Women's IP NGOs, the JEIs were something new, and by being involved in these economic activities the IP NGOs learned new information, approaches, models and skills. For the JEIs there was also established commissions at the local Hukumat level, including representatives of Hukumats, Jamoats, Women's Committee and they selected economic initiatives that were needed in the jamoats and provided them with core funding. This was an important part of the collaboration between governmental and nongovernmental structures which had a significant impact on the implementation of the Project, and was a significant benefit for the income generating activities developed by the SHGs and PIBs.



This evaluation revealed that across each of the 5 districts and in the jamoats, most government officials interviewed reported “the collaboration between the government and the NGOs have been very good” and observations revealed the local government’s willingness to collaborate with and support the NGOs and SHGs to the best of their ability. One local government official stated,

*“We talk more now than before [NGOs and government] . . . This project also awakened the government to give more attention to this group of women [abandoned women from migrant families]. Both public and local government were awakened to pay more attention to the needs of abandoned women.” (28, Key Stakeholder, Government)*

*“They [UN Women] worked well in close partnerships with several key stakeholders, with local authorities, and different institutions. They kept extending the circle of partners during the project by involving different partners.” (33, RP)*

### 2.4.3.2. Gender Responsive Planning and Budgeting

Steps were taken to develop the capacities of local governmental bodies and CSOs in 2 of the 5 pilot districts to understand gender planning and budgeting; however, district planning and budgeting is done at the national which limits the capacities local governmental bodies to have much influence as they are simply the implementers. Without working at the central level you cannot influence local level gender responsible planning and budgeting; so this is an area that still needs a lot of work.

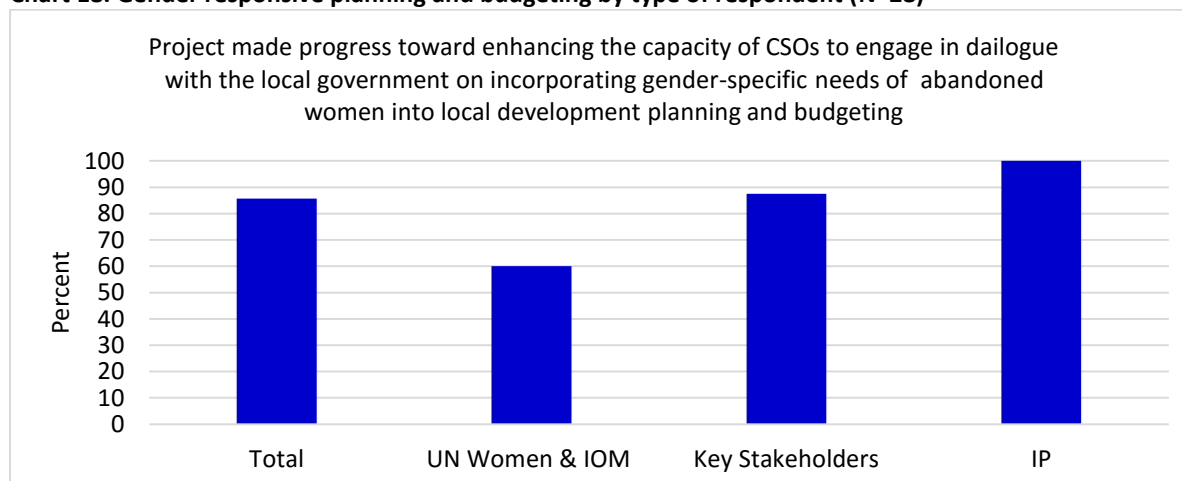
This evaluation revealed the Project made progress toward enhancing the capacity of NGOs to engage in a constructive dialogue with local governments on incorporating gender-specific needs of abandoned women from migrants’ families into local development planning, which is developed every two years. Right now the local development plans are for 2015-2017; thus, UN Women was unable to have much of an impact on local development planning or budgeting despite their efforts. One of the most significant challenges faced was that Hukumat and Jamoat governmental bodies do not have the ability to influence policy; rather, they are simply responsible for implementing the policies, development plans, and budgets that are developed by central level state bodies.

*“For legal things it is easier, we have NGOs we can involve them, but for gender issues it is more challenging because state structures are very weak, especially in the districts. In the districts, they are most involved in the arrangement of events, but not the policy changes. The state could affect policy and implementation at the economic level, but they don’t do it because they are not allowed. This is a capacity building weakness for UN Women.” (5, Key Stakeholder, IO)*

So, although UN Women conducted several trainings in 2015 on gender responsive planning and budgeting for their IP NGOs and local governmental bodies in 2 of the 5 project districts (Jirgatol in Rasht Valley and Farkhor in Kulyab), the impact was minimal since local authorities have limited input as to the local development plans or budget which are developed at by central level authorities. Also, data collection in the field revealed not all participants in the gender responsive planning and budgeting trainings fully understood the concepts of gender responsive planning and budgeting. One respondent explained, “I personally participated [in the trainings], but some of the issues were not clear to me. I did benefit; I got something personally from the training . . . I use it in my work, but I cannot say about the others. (17, Key Stakeholder, Government)

Chart 18 reveals 85.7% of all respondents felt the Project made progress toward enhancing the capacity of NGOs to engage in dialogue with the local government on incorporating gender-specific needs of abandoned women into local development planning and budgeting; however, only 60.0% of UN Women and IOM staff reported the Project has been able to promote gender responsive planning and budgeting. In addition, 87.5% of key stakeholders and 100.0% of IP NGOs reported the Project has been able to promote gender responsive planning and budgeting.

**Chart 18. Gender responsive planning and budgeting by type of respondent (N=28)**



Note: One UN Women and IOM staff reported “no” and one reported they “don’t know”. Also, two key stakeholders reported they “don’t know.”

Given these findings, UN Women needs a more serious commitment from central level authorities if they want to affect greater change and address the needs of a greater numbers of abandoned women in each of the project districts. In fact, UN Women recognized, *“When doing the project, we needed more serious commitment from the State, like the Women’s Committee. The Women’s Committee has a budget for women’s grants . . . they provide grants, but no trainings; they assume women will be successful. Our strategy was good, but we need more commitment from the State.”* (36, UN Women)

## 2.5. Sustainability

This evaluation revealed that the Project has effectively trained and built the capacities of both NGOs and the government bodies to understand the impacts of labour migration on women and children, the needs to support abandoned women and provide them with services that will empower them socially, economically, and legally and reduce their vulnerabilities. Through the work of IOM and UN Women the Project has also been able to build the capacities of the National Committee of Women and Family affairs on migration law and issues, as well as domestic violence against women.

In terms of *sustainability*, this evaluation focused on the probability of continued long-term benefits from the Project. Although it is too early to identify tangible results in terms of *sustainability* of the Project, this evaluation focuses on the probability of continued long-term benefits from the Project. Findings related to sustainability are grouped into three sections, including: 1) sustainability of income generating activities; 2) lobbying, advocacy, and awareness raising on the needs of abandoned women; and 3) building a community of practice.

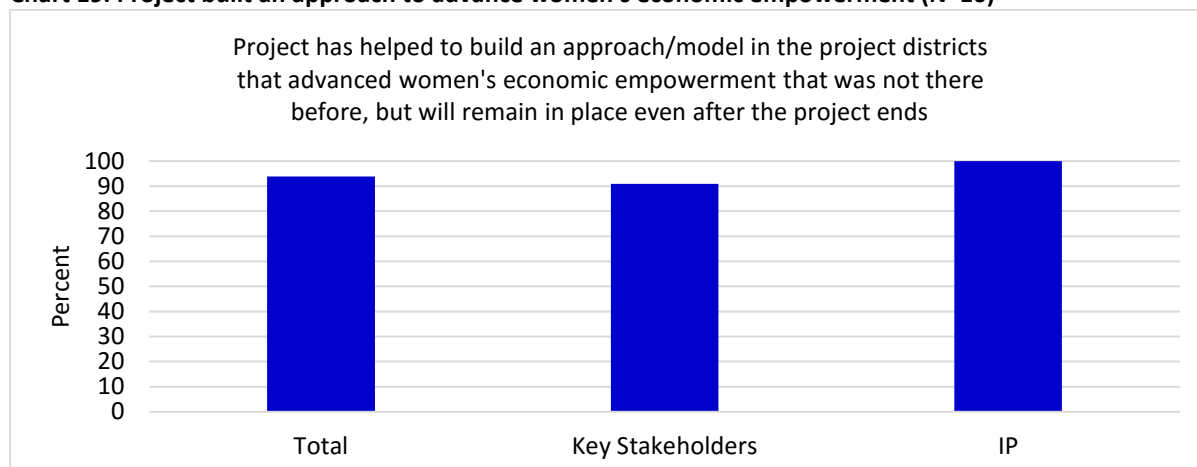
### 2.5.1. Sustainability of Income Generating Activities

The desk review and data collection in the field revealed the Project remains a relevant and important initiative to support abandoned women from labour migrant families to enhance their skills and knowledge to reduce the social and economic consequences of their vulnerability and to improve their livelihoods. The various components of the Project were presented in previous sections, but it is important to remind the reader that Project activities such as empowering abandoned women to mobilise and form SHGs and PIBs, and providing SHGs and PIBs with core funding to support them in implementing their business plans and income generating activities were project components that contributed to sustainability. Also, SHGs that were not awarded core funding under the guise of the Project were assisted in accessing small loans and micro-credits that could support their business plans and income generating activities.

UN Women recognized the Project helped to build an approach/model in the pilot districts that advanced women’s empowerment and will remain in place even after the project ends. Similarly, 90.9% of key stakeholders and 100% of IP NGOs maintained the Project helped to build an approach/model in the pilot

districts that advanced women's empowerment that will remain in place even after the project ends (see Chart 19).

**Chart 19. Project built an approach to advance women's economic empowerment (N=16)**



Note: One key stakeholder reported they "don't know."

Nearly all IP NGOs and key stakeholders held the belief that SHGs and PIBs established under the guise of the Project will continue their income generating activities because they have the knowledge and skills needed to sustain their businesses and income generating activities. One respondent explained, *"It will be sustainable, in each project I have some women that are a little bit older with some experience and skills. The older women they can train the younger ones and keep the project going"* (15, IP).

It also appears that the chances of sustainability may increase in those communities where the local Jamoat and/or Hukumat have taken a more active role and interest in supporting the SHGs and PIBs. In some cases, local authorities have taken a more active role in monitoring the SHGs and PIBs income generating activities, and giving advice in regards to production and marketing (i.e., using their expertise to support the women's income generating activities).

*"I think they will continue. For example, we have a greenhouse now, every year they plant their tomatoes, cucumbers and greens. Every year they get two harvests. And the beekeeping project, they have 10 families with beehives and every year they increase the number of beehives."* (22, Key Stakeholder, Government)

From the perspective of local governments, the Project was a success because the abandoned women quit coming to the local Hukumats and Jamoats complaining about their economic and legal problems. Thus, local Hukumats and Jamoats wanted the Project to be sustainable and asked for UN Women to support more WEE activities and projects in their districts.

IP NGOs maintained the majority of businesses and income generating activities established under the guise of the Project will be sustainable because the Project taught women how to write business plans and project proposals, enabled women to register their SHGs as a PIBs, and taught women how to access small loans and micro-credits. Thus, they believed abandoned women are better positioned to secure other funding in the future. Also, most SHGs that were met during the evaluation reported they had their own saving schemes, which led women to believe they would be able to sustain their businesses and income generating activities over time.

*"I think the activities will be sustainable even though no one will support them [SHGs]. Now the project is almost ended and they don't come to me often, but they continue their activities by themselves. I think the project results are sustainable because they didn't have jobs and now they have jobs and they also want to increase their activities and to expand. They can now write the project proposals and business plans on their own. I think in the future they also want to try to do different projects and continue. They have their own stamp and their registration."* (21, IP)

UN Women explained that they had sustainability in mind when they awarded core funding to SHGs; in other words, “we tried to support those initiatives that could be sustainable and had future; that could develop further without additional financing” (38, UN women). Still, however, UN women recognized that to remain sustainable SHGs will need to keep their income generating activities going by learning to market their goods better and reach out to local markets to generate more clients, and to improve and produce quality products. To date, UN Women felt such activities as bakeries, the sewing factory, the macaroni business, and the kindergarten project would be sustainable.

*“Yes, they will continue. They already have the basis and they have learned how to work. I think it will continue. The women are able to run the activities on their own even when the project ends. But, I think the businesses will continue to need more help, they are not making enough money to sustain themselves. If they can market the products on a regular basis they would be able to run it on their own, but if not they would not be able to keep it going.” (17, Key Stakeholder, Government)*

Some IP NGOs and SHGs reported the Project built their capacities to the extent that they feel more confident to pursue funding from other donors. Moreover, they perceived the Project validated their work and that they can use the UN Women Project and small grant as a reference for future funding.

At the same time, IP NGOs recognised not all SHGs will be able to sustain themselves and their income generating activities going forward because they were dependent upon the Project and the core funding. Also, key stakeholders and IP NGOs recognised the capacity building and technical assistance provided by the Project was unique (not something offered by other donors) and very much needed by abandoned women in their districts, but what was provided was not necessarily enough to ensure sustainability.

*“We need to come back to this, we need time because these groups didn’t have any attention before and they are new to the activities they are implementing. We empowered them to work together, but you cannot stop, it should be longer interventions. That is why we are trying to figure out how to better work with the Women’s Committees.” (36, UN Women)*

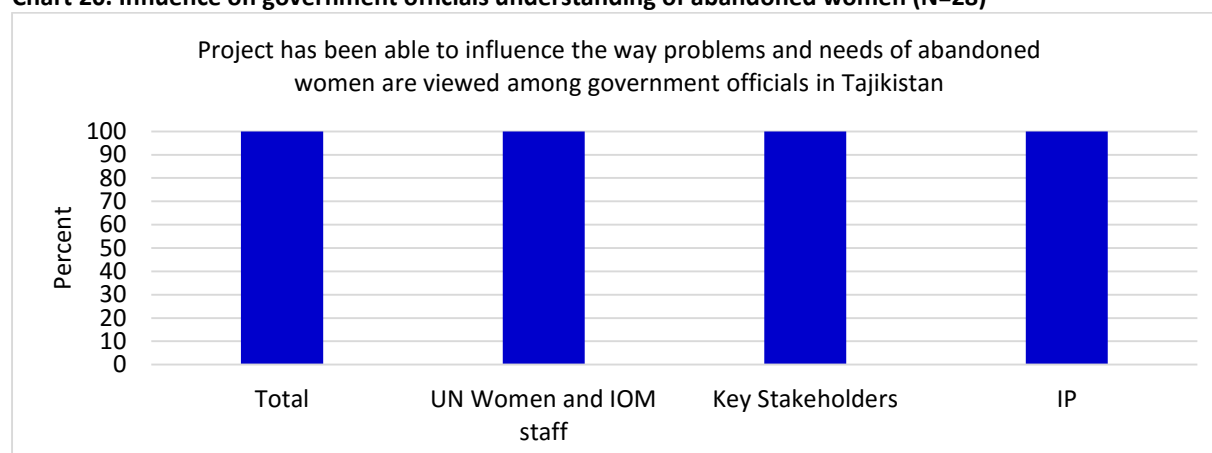
## **2.5.2. Advocacy and Awareness-Raising on the Needs of Abandoned Women**

Since inception, the Project provided UN Women and IOM and its local partners with the opportunity to engage in advocacy and awareness-raising on the needs of abandoned women with policy makers and government officials, and among civil society groups. UN Women and IOM provided their IP NGOs with a great deal of capacity building and support to undertake such advocacy and awareness-raising initiatives in each of the 5 project districts. Advocacy and awareness-raising were part of the Project’s initial design and implementation strategy, although not specifically stated in the ProDoc, and has been crucial to promoting Project activities and the income generating activities of SHGs and PIBs. In each of the 5 project districts, the Project is seen as being the only project that works specifically addressing the social, economic, and legal needs of abandoned women. IP NGOs were considered key players locally.

Chart 20 reveals that all 28 respondents, including UN Women and IOM staff, key stakeholders, and IP NGOs reported the Project has been able to influence the way problems and needs of abandoned women are viewed among government officials in Tajikistan. As UN Women explained,

*“In districts you one can see how local Hukumats are supportive of these initiatives, and trying to help these initiatives. They give land to these women, if needed, and it is indicating they are also involved in supporting these groups. May be it is not at a national level, but at a district and Jamoat level one can see it. Showing to local Hukumats that women can work and improve their economic situation, helped the Hukumats to see them [abandoned women] differently; not as only very needy and poor women, but as women who can be empowered and improve their lives. The Project showed to the local Hukumats that if you support these women economically, then these women can achieve a lot in their own.” (38, UN Women)*

**Chart 20. Influence on government officials understanding of abandoned women (N=28)**



Note: Two key stakeholder reported they “don’t know.”

Similarly, IP NGOs explained that local government officials have come to recognize that the Project has been able to address the needs of abandoned women from migrant families. Something the government has not been able to do because of lack of resources and capacities.

*I think government authorities/agencies got really surprised to see what these women can do. The deputy head we met was surprised how the women got active and doing these things and was asking to do the project activities in other places. Both the Hukumats in Farkhor and Kulyab said they are very open to project activities because their problems are big, they have a lot of problems because funding from the government side is very weak right now. I think this Project is a big support for the Hukumat . . . These women [abandoned women] will drive them crazy everyday going and telling them they need a job; now they don’t need a job. . . I think the difficult part is that the government gets really sad that they are not able to address their needs, that they are not able to support them. The big help is that the women got employed. (21, IP)*

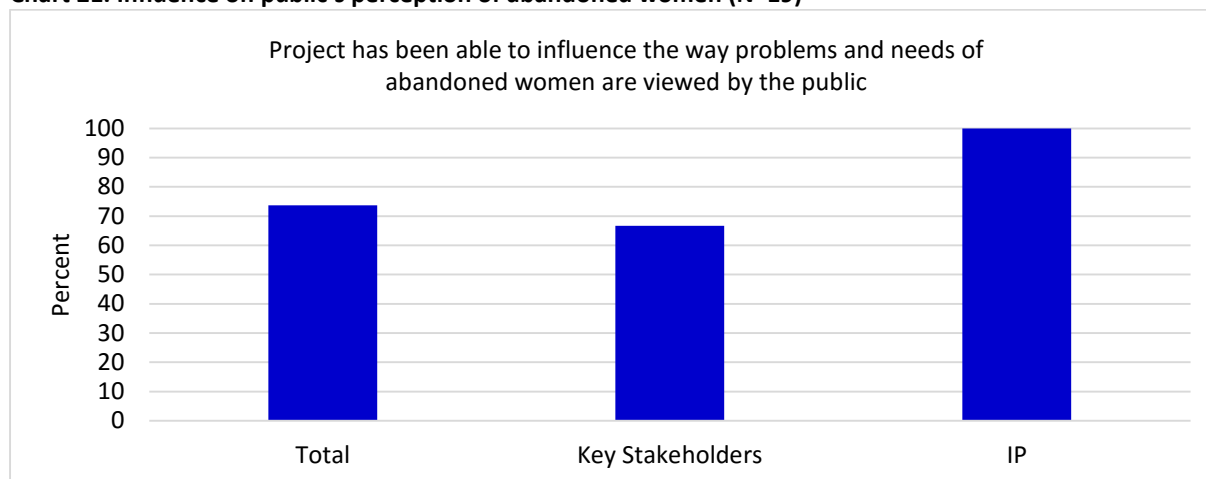
*“The Project did influence the way the needs of the abandoned women are viewed among government agencies. In this project, people who make decisions were involved. They also could see that women are able to do and achieve a lot if given necessary support. Some of these women opened small factories, such as macaroni production. They opened beauty salons that they did not have before in those areas. The man’s opinion about women has also been changed, they can see that women also can make changes; they are capable to improve their lives. (32, IP)*

In addition, 7 key stakeholders and 2 IP NGOs in Dushanbe reported the Project has been able to influence the way problems and needs of abandoned women are viewed among policy makers and political leaders in Tajikistan.

*“State agencies in the beginning were making funny stories . . . they were not taking it seriously. When I was in the training, the Ombudsman was there, and during his speech he stated this problem was growing . . . Because the problem is huge, I know a lot of state officials have this problem within their own families. We also began to raise the issue with the journalists; UN Women included the journalist. We had public service announcements. A lot of media, including Facebook and You Tube, did media stories on the family and children.” (2, IOM)*

Some respondents were also asked if the Project has been able to influence the way problems and needs of abandoned women are viewed by the public. Chart 21 reveals 73.7% of 19 respondents felt the Project has been able to influence the public’s perception of abandoned women. All IP NGOs reported they were more likely to recognize the Project’s influence on public perceptions, compared to key stakeholders (66.7%).

**Chart 21. Influence on public's perception of abandoned women (N=19)**



Note: Two key stakeholder reported “no” and three “don’t know.”

What was particularly notable during data collection in the field was that key stakeholders and IP NGOs maintained the Project helped to improve the standing of some abandoned women in the community. As key stakeholders and IP NGOs explained,

*“I think it did influence because . . . women themselves in this situation, when their husbands leave, they have no other way to make a living and care for their children, they don’t feel good about themselves, and they don’t have a good social status in their communities. But now, now because of the project they have more confidence and skills and are running these business. I think they have a better standing in the community. (28, Key Stakeholder, Government)*

*“I think the public view of the women has improved. I think the other women in the community got motivated by the women in the project, these women got more involved in getting out of the house and to starting the business. They got motivated . . . it would not have happened if not for the project and all the people involved in the project; it would not happen naturally. (21, IP)*

*“They were bullied before, if you had been good your husband would not abandon you. When they became a part of the Project, by being part of the Project they could show to other community women they are able to do something to improve their lives.” (17, Key Stakeholder, Government)*

*“There is one young woman she was not viewed well in the village because her husband abandoned her, now she has managed this business and has trained 30-40 women and now the people in the village bring their daughters to her to receive training for her. She didn’t have any proper clothing. . . she could not afford to dress like everyone else in the village, she was wearing old clothing.” (15, IP)*

IP NGOs frequently stated that women who are not abandoned wives have been asked to get involved in the project when they see how the Project improved the livelihoods of abandoned women. As one respondent explained, *“They feel like an envy or jealous because they want to be part of the project. They say, ‘why only abandoned women and not about us, we also want to be part of the project activities’” (21, IP).*

### **2.5.3. Building a Community of Practice**

This evaluation found that UN Women has been able to use the Project to build a “community of practice” that promotes WEE, particularly among abandoned women from migrant families. This community of practice did not previously exist, but emerged as a result of the Project. Of course, there are other communities of practice that exist around WEE in Tajikistan, but the community of practice that evolved out of this Project is different and significant in that it has supported abandoned women from migrant families to build relationships that has enabled them to engage in income generating activities, to share skills and information, to learn from each other, and to help each other. The community of practice has resulted in abandoned women collaborating with each other and with other SHGs to promote better approaches to their income generating activities.

*“After they start getting the grant and producing the handicrafts, we tried to get them involved in republican city events such as forums. Last year was the women’s forum on entrepreneurship for women with the US Embassy we invited the AW so they could display their projects. Also, last year we involved the women and they were invited to participate in a week forum that took place here on women and water.” (23, Key Stakeholder, Government)*

The Project also supported abandoned women to not only mobilize in their own jamoats to form SHGs and to register as PIBs, but to come together in learning exchanges with SHGs from each of the other project districts and share their ideas, experiences, and products. SHGs were also invited to participate in a learning exchange with SHGs from the CARMP/RMP in Khatlon, Sughd Oblast. SHGs were also supported to participate in an economic forum organized by the US Embassy and other organizations where the SHGs and PIBs came to exhibit their products and talk with customers about their product and the benefits of the Projects. The community mobilisation and learning exchanges helped to build a community of practice that helped to empower the abandoned women that participated in the Project.

*“It was good model to have them work in SHGs through community mobilization. Also, UN Women provided trainings for them before starting their projects. One big issue was all these women had a very low self-esteem before the project started to work. They didn’t know they could do something to change their lives, that they were able to make changes. Trainings helped women to raise their self-esteem and get more confident to do something about their situation. I also want to note that there was an exchange practice, for example, there was a forum of SHGs in Sughd, and all these women could meet with other SHGs and exchange their experiences. They learned from each other that can do different things to improve their situation.” (33, IP)*

*I think that the Project fulfilled its mission and would be good to more such projects for supporting women and be good to expend activities to other districts, or even in the same districts to cover new jamoats. I think that the project played a big role in development of these women” (38, UN Women).*

Finally, part of the community of practice and learning processes are that other governments and development agencies, including the US Embassy, USAID, DFID, Oxfam, and AKF have all expressed interest in learning more about the outcomes of the Project, and have expressed interest in visit the project districts to learn more about the income generating activities of the SHGs and PIBs.



## 3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 3.1. Conclusions

This external evaluation resulted in 17 key conclusions, each of which are briefly presented below:

1. This Project demonstrated it is possible to support abandoned women in remote regions of Tajikistan to come out from behind the walls of their homes and educate them about their legal rights, provide them with access to legal advocacy to address their legal problems (e.g., unregistered marriages, divorce, alimony, right to land/property, acquiring passports and birth certificates), and develop their capacities to improve their economic self-reliance through income generating activities; ultimately, minimizing women's social and economic vulnerabilities and improving their livelihoods in the absence of their spouses.
2. This Project demonstrated that encouraging abandoned women to come together and form SHGs in the jamoats where they live is an effective way of encouraging and empowering abandoned women to work together to register their SHGs as PIBs, to develop business plans and start income generating activities that have direct links to the communities in which they reside, and to access core funding, micro-credits, and no or low interest loans from banks and MFIs.
3. This Project demonstrated it is important that women are involved in the project's implementation, particularly as it relates to their engagement in community mobilization, participation in SHGs and PIBs, and as executors of income generating activities aimed. The success of this project stems from the fact that abandoned women were active participants and passive recipients in the project, and the project was focused on improving the knowledge and skills of abandoned women, while changing their attitudes and practices.
4. This Project demonstrated the key to success is engaging key stakeholders, including civil society groups and local governmental bodies, along with project beneficiaries in a meaningful and productive manner at both the district and rayon levels, as well as nationally to ensure better approaches and collaborations are supported to address the needs of abandoned women.
5. The Project's successes are largely effected by UN Women's reputation, mandate, and technical expertise in the areas of gender equality and empowerment of women, and prior work on the CARMP/RMP and community mobilization to promote women's economic empowerment. Similarly, IOM's mandate and technical expertise to address issues of human migration and provide legal advocacy to migrants and their families was an advantage and key to the Project's success. Thus, UN Women's partnership with IOM for the Project led to an efficient use of resources to ensure effective project implementation.
6. Success of this Project hinged on the fact that UN Women and IOM were regularly communicating with their IP NGOs in each of the project districts to ensure proper and ongoing project implementation, and that partners were making progress toward achieving the project's outputs and outcomes.
7. The following measures taken during project implementation helped to ensure the efficient use of resources:
  - g. Facilitating abandoned women to form SHGs was key to strengthening the skills and enterprise development of abandoned women, and enabled women to work together and socially and financially supported each other; they became empowered through these networks and learned to have greater decision-making power over their resources.
  - h. Encouraging SHGs to develop business plans and proposals in which they were interested and had some skills, and believed to be marketable in the local communities.
  - i. Encouraging SHGs to establish savings schemes that enabled women to save money and used they money saved to purchase goods and materials for their income generating activities, as well as give short-term loans to SHG members with little to no interest. A challenge, however, was that in most SHGs, because the savings schemes were small, not all women could borrow money from the savings scheme at the same time; they had to take turns taking loans from the savings schemes.

- j. Ensuring grant monies were dispersed directly to PIB bank accounts and all purchases were done by money transfer from one bank account to another to support transparency and teach women money management and budgeting skills.
  - k. Relying upon committees consisting of local Hukumats (i.e., migration department/committee, state employment agencies, Women's Committees) and IP NGOs to select business plans and proposals that were suitable to the local communities and geographic locations for small grant funding.
  - l. Funding learning exchanges and study tours for SHGs, as well as participation in forums and expos where SHGs and PIBs could display and market their products, and talk about their businesses.
8. The Project made significant progress in a short period of time toward strengthening the skills and enterprise development abilities of abandoned women, including the ability to go through official procedures to register their SHGs and PIBs, as well as apply for a small grant under the guise of the Project and/or apply for micro-credits or small loans from banks and MFIs. These skills and accomplishments were significant for abandoned women in remote areas who are typically disempowered by their status as abandoned women and low levels of education.
  9. By supporting abandoned women to access micro-credits and loans, the Project increased the proportion of women received credits from banks, as well as the SPA. Women who acquired credits were more likely to use the credits for their businesses versus other expenses. These are significant and notable shifts in the way women are using borrowed money, which may reflect that women have improved money resources for daily living expenses as a result of their income generating activities, and better money management and budgeting skills.
  10. For more remote and mountainous districts, core funding given under the guise of the Project were not always enough to start a good project because SHGs had to spend a significant amount of money travelling back and forth to the Oblast center and/or Dushanbe to purchase goods and materials for their business, as well as transporting those good and materials to the region. Also, timing of tranches is important, particularly given many projects were seasonal and funding needed to come at the right to purchase seeds, for planting, and harvesting.
  11. Women who participated in and benefited from the project demonstrated improved self-confidence and worth, this influenced their demeanor and standing in their families and communities. Women become more active, developed business plans, were able to write a project proposal and access core funding and/or micro-credits and loans, learned marketing skills (including how to go to the market and purchase and sell goods), and household budgeting skills.
  12. For a women's economic empowerment project, the project period was too short at only 25 months; more time was needed for capacity building and implementation of income generating activities to improve the chances of sustainability. Also, more time was needed to assist women in access their legal rights and resolving their legal problems.
  13. Despite progress made, it is important to remember that the situation in markets can change and SHGs need to be prepared to respond to market changes. Also, SHGs need to more capacity building to improve the quality of their products, packaging and labelling of their products, and marketing and distribution of their products.
  14. This Project demonstrated other notable improvements in the livelihoods of abandoned women who were socially, economically, and legally empowered as a result of the Project. In particular,
    - a. Women increased their production of horticulture (fruit growing) and garden plots in their households, and were using the fruits and vegetables for their own needs, and selling what they did not need.
    - b. Women increased the average number of animals in their household, particularly big cattle, but also birds.
    - c. Women increased their access to formal medical care and were purchasing medicines and paying for health services; at the same time, they reduced their reliance upon self-treatment.
    - d. Women were more likely to report they had enough money for regular necessary expenses, and that their living conditions were good; at the same time as there was a decrease in the proportion of women who reported their living conditions were bad and/or average.

15. This Project demonstrated the need for legal services for families of migrant workers is enormous, and that the legal problems of abandoned women are acute. The level of legal awareness among women rural and remote areas of Tajikistan is very low, and most often women lack official marriage certificates and birth certificates for children, which makes obtaining alimony more difficult. Reaching women in remote areas and providing them with legal aid is not without its challenges, including transportation.
16. This Project demonstrated that there is space in communities where civil society groups and local governmental bodies can engage in constructive dialogue and work together to address the needs of abandoned women, and to incorporate gender-specific needs into local development planning and budgeting. Despite having limited resources, local governments can support abandoned women's income generating activities through allocation of land and buildings, promotion of their products in the community, and supporting them with supporting a community of practice and participation in learning exchanges.
17. This Project serves as an example of "best practices" for helping to build an approach/model that advances women's empowerment and can remain in place even after the project ends. The chances of sustainability may increase in those communities where local Jamoats and/or Hukumats have taken a more active role in supporting the Project and the SHGs, PIBs and their income generating activities. At the same time, however, not all SHGs will be able to sustain themselves and their income generating activities going forward because they were dependent upon the Project and the core funding.

### 3.2. Lessons Learned

This external evaluation also identified 11 key lessons learned, including:

1. It is possible to bring abandoned women out from behind the walls of their homes and socially, economically, and legally empower them to engage in income generating activities that will improve their livelihoods and economic security, as well as those of their children.
2. Given the low levels of education of many abandoned women in Tajikistan, more time and resources should be devoted to developing the knowledge and skills women need to organize and sustain SHGs, including how to start and manage a business, how to register a SHG as a PIB, how to write business plans and project proposals, budget management, taxation, production and marketing of goods, labelling of goods, quality control and hygiene in product production, accessing safe markets for their goods and products and bargaining buyers and sellers of their products, as well sellers of the goods and materials they need for producing their goods/products.
3. SHGs need more support financially and in terms of capacity building to start and sustain their income generating activities, and more SHGs should be encouraged to formally register as PIBs and access micro-credits and/or loans to establish and support their businesses and income generating activities. The support provided to SHGs through the project should be phased out in a scale down manner over a longer project period; this will help to improve sustainability.
4. More resources should be committed to helping women access their legal rights, and an MOU should be established with the government to support women in getting their marriages registered and obtaining passports and birth certificates for women and their children. For the Government of Tajikistan, ensuring women and children are registered as citizens is important to improving the development of its citizens, communities, and society at large.
5. Increasing women's self-efficiency and financial independence, including women's ability to manage their household budget and make decisions over the money they earn, is crucial to empowering women socially and economically within families and communities. Economic empowerment also contributes to increases in women's self-esteem, self-confidence, and bargaining power in the family and communities.
6. If you can improve abandoned women's livelihoods, you can help to increase the livelihoods of their children and other family members as well (secondary beneficiaries).

7. It is important for SHGs to participate in communities of practice and learning exchanges that help to support their continued knowledge and capacity building, social and economic empowerment, and the sustainability of their income generating activities.
8. Commit more time and resources to improving national and local government officials understanding of the needs of abandoned women and their children, and support local and central level authorities to develop improved gender responsive planning and budgeting. Work on gender responsive planning and budgeting should begin at the central level where planning and budgeting decisions are made, while gender-responsive planning should simultaneously occur at the local levels.
9. Projects that support abandoned women to be socially, economically, and legally empowered should be more long-term, at least 36 months, if not longer in length. If the project were more long-term it would increase the chances for sustainability.
10. Women's empowerment projects should be coupled with efforts to eliminate violence against women, particularly given the fact that development research and data from the evaluation revealed as you socially, economically, and legally empower vulnerable women, they are often at increased risk of violence within the home and community.
11. From the beginning, proper mapping of villages and communities for selection and social mobilization of abandoned women from migrants' families, coupled with collection of quantitative data from household surveys at the baselined and endline of the Project enabled UN Women to quantitatively document the impact of the Project on improving abandoned women's lives and economic security.

### 3.3. Recommendations

The strategic recommendations that follow are guided by the aforementioned key conclusions and lessons learned which are grounded in the findings presented in the previous section. These recommendations were developed specifically to support UN Women going forward with input from UN Women and IOM staff, key stakeholders, and IP NGOs. In fact, there were specific questions included in the interview questionnaires asking for their input as to changes and/or improvements to the project, particularly if it were to be scaled up. It is important to note that the recommendations that follow only cover areas of additional need; so, if no changes or improvements were identified as required, no recommendations are offered.

The recommendations that follow are aligned with UN Women's DRF for Tajikistan, 2016-2020, particularly Impact Area 2: Women and girls in Tajikistan, especially the poorest and most excluded are economically empowered to act as agents for change.

**Recommendation 1: The Project implementation period should be extended to at least 36 months, if not longer, and the Project should be expanded to more jamoats and/or districts to improve sustainability and expand impact.**

This was a recommendation that came from UN Women staff, key stakeholders, and IP NGOs. Respondents recognized the project implementation period should be longer because more time is needed for capacity building of abandoned women to form SHGs and develop and implement income generating activities. In addition, more time is needed to assist women in understanding and accessing their legal rights and resolving their legal problems; many of women's legal problems are complex and involve their children as well.

Key stakeholders and IP NGOs also maintained that a longer project period should be coupled with supporting more SHGs and expanding Project activities to more jamoats and/or districts. There was a request of local government officials, IP NGOs, and abandoned women; in fact, many SHGs that were formed under the guise of the Project were still hopeful that they would receive a grant to support their business plans. This recommendation should be considered by UN Women with future women's economic empowerment projects, and should be raised with donors when developing future projects.

**Recommendation 2: The Project should commit more time and resources to developing the knowledge and skills women need to form SHGs and develop and sustain income generating activities.**

The evaluation found that SHGs need more capacity building and financial support to not only start, but also sustain their income generating activities. During the evaluation, UN Women staff and their IP NGOs reported the low levels of education of most abandoned women meant more time and resources were required to develop women's knowledge and skills to organize and sustain SHGs and their income generating activities. In fact, UN Women and IP NGOs maintained abandoned women needed a lot of "hand-holding" which meant supporting SHGs to develop and sustain income generating activities was labour intensive.

Some abandoned women may need basic literacy, numeracy, and financial literacy skills before other WEE activities. Others may be ready for helping to set up a small business or learning a skill, and how to manage money and connect with suppliers, sellers, and business associations. All WEE activities also need to have a component that addresses life skills, including her rights, gender and power, health relationships, decision-making, problem-solving, and more.

UN Women should continue to apply the ILO adult learning models for capacity buildings which includes: SHG formation; how to start and manage a business; how to register a SHG as a PIB; how to write business plans and project proposals; and managing business and household budgets. However, UN Women should consider areas where capacity building can be enhanced, including in the areas of: taxation; production and marketing of products; labelling of products; quality control and hygiene in product production; accessing safe markets and bargaining with buyers and sellers of their products, and sellers of goods and materials needed for producing their goods/products; bank accounts and banking; accessing micro-credits and loans; managing savings schemes; and more. To accomplish this enhanced training.

Capacity building should be delivered using adult learning models as many women's reading and comprehension levels are very low, and training should be offered in stages, including basic/entry level trainings and more advanced training for women who have an interest in furthering their learning to advance their income generating activities further. Women should also be provided with training and skills building related their particular income generating activities (e.g., sewing, cattle breeding, milk processing, fruit process, weaving, and more) so that they can expand and enhance their production knowledge and skills and learn from others with technical expertise in the area they are working.

This recommendation is aligned with and supportive of UN Women's DRF for Tajikistan, 2016-2020, particularly Outcome 2.1, that rural women, especially excluded and most vulnerable women, have improved livelihoods due to sustainable generation. Also, related is Output 2.1.1 which focuses on enhancing rural women's knowledge and skill to develop and run income generation activities.

**Recommendation 3: More advanced SHGs with existing capacities should be encouraged to formally register as PIBs and provided with increased access to core funding and capacity building to access micro-credits and/or loans to establish and support their income generating activities.**

The Project was proven successful at supporting some SHGs to access core funding; however, not all SHGs were awarded core funding. In the future, it would be beneficial if UN Women can increase the number of SHGs that can be provided with core funding under the guise of their women's economic empowerment projects. Also, it would good to develop a core funding process that includes scaling down and phasing out the core funding over a longer period of time versus core funding coming to a sudden end; this will help to improve sustainability of income generating activities. It would also be coupled with capacity building of SHGs to access micro-credits and/or loans as grant funding phases out.

With future projects, it is important that UN Women and implementing partners ensure that only those SHGs that have received capacity building and more advanced should be encouraged to formally register as PIBs, and provided with increased access to core funding. This recommendation is aligned with Output 2.1.2 of UN Women's DRF for Tajikistan, 2016-2020, that rural vulnerable women have their property and/or businesses registered. It would also be beneficial if more focus was paid to selecting appropriate product and service sector for women by conducting a gender market assessment and value chain analyses. This recommendation is particularly relevant to UN Women and it's implementing partners.

**Recommendation 4: The amount money and timing of core funding to SHGs should be more timely, in keeping with the projects, particularly projects that are influenced by growing and seasonal production.**

This recommendation is particularly relevant to UN Women when it comes to future projects and for consideration by donors and implementing partners. This evaluation found that core funding given under the guise of the Project were very important to SHGs as they supported SHGs to start and carry out their income generating activities. Because this was core funding, not micro-credits or loans, women did not have to pay the money back. This core funding was very important for SHGs; however, IP NGOs and SHGs reported the amount of money provided was not always enough to start a good project because SHGs had to spend a significant amount of money travelling back and forth to the Oblast center and/or Dushanbe to purchase goods and materials for their businesses, as well as transporting the goods and materials.

Another important issue that UN Women should consider is the timing of tranches. Timing of tranches was important given the fact that many projects were seasonal and core funding did not come at the right time to purchase seeds, for planting, and harvesting. It is important that UN Women and implementing partners work with each of the SHGs to develop a timeline for tranches that coincide with their income generating activities, particularly when the projects are tied to growing and seasonal production.

**Recommendation 5: More focus should be given by UN Women, IOM and the government to help women access their legal rights, including getting their marriages registered and obtaining passports and birth certificates for women and their children.**

An important component of the Project was providing abandoned women with knowledge and understanding of their legal rights and supporting women to access their legal rights, as well as those of their children. In fact, to socially and economically empower abandoned women you must address their legal problems. In the future, more focus should be given by UN Women, IOM and the government to help women access their legal rights. Thus, it would be good if UN Women can find way to ensure coverage and provision of services to vulnerable and excluded women. For the Government of Tajikistan, ensuring women and children are registered as citizens is important to improving the development of its citizens, communities, and society at large.

Improving women's abilities to address their legal rights requires additional capacity building of Ombudsman Office staff by IOM, particularly capacity building of staff who work in the district centres and are responsible for providing consultations and referrals to abandoned women from migrants' families, as well as lawyers and legal advocates that provide legal support and advocacy to abandoned women from migrants' families. This work has just begun under the guise of the Project and should be continued by IOM.

This recommendation relates to Output 3.2.2, that women and girls from vulnerable groups are equipped with knowledge on civil registration for protection of their rights in marriage, as outlined in the DRF for Tajikistan, 2016-2020.

**Recommendation 6: Invest more time and resources into increasing women's self-efficiency and financial independence by empowering women to manage their business and household budgets, and to have agency in decision-making, and to control resources and earnings from their income generating activities.**

Crucial to social and economic women's empowerment is increasing women's self-efficiency and financial independence, including women's ability to manage their business and household budget and make decisions over the money they earn. While women may participate in SHGs and income generating activities, they may not have control over the resources they acquire. UN Women, in partnership with IP NGOs, should explore ways to support safe markets for women and safe places for women to save; this can be done with enhanced financial literacy so that women can maintain control over the resources they earn. This requires more capacity building for women to manage their business and household budgets, as well as in problem-solving and decision-making. This also requires building women's bargaining and negotiation skills so that they can utilize them in the community when buying good/materials and selling their own products. The ILO trainings that UN Women relied upon in this Project can be further enhanced to increase women's self-efficiency and financial independence through better money management skills.



UN Women should partner with IOM and other partners to enhance trainings and support should also be provided to women on issues related to land, particularly given land is a key source of income in rural areas where many of the project beneficiaries live. Thus, enhancing women's access to land will lead to women's self-efficiency and financial independence.

**Recommendation 7: Women's empowerment projects should be coupled with efforts to ERAW.**

Given the fact that development research and data from the evaluation revealed women are often at increased risk of violence within the home and community. Thus, it is important to tie ERAW activities to WEE activities in project's such as this. This includes awareness-raising, prevention, and protection activities, as needed, related to VAW and ERAW. ERAW follows under UN Women's Impact Area 3, women and girls in Tajikistan live a life free from violence, in the DRFT for Tajikistan, 2016-2020.

In the future, UN Women can partner with multi-sectoral service providers to support women and girls to have improved knowledge and understanding of VAW and to have improved knowledge to exercise their rights to the essential services. This recommendation is aligned with Outcomes 3.1, that women and girls who experience violence using the multi-sectoral quality services to recover from violence, and Outcome 3.2, to change women's attitudes and behaviours toward unacceptability of violence.

In the future, it may also be beneficial to consider conducting a safety mapping exercise that looks at the varied perceptions of risks to abandoned women who are empowered and earning a living. The safety mapping can be combined with qualitative and quantitative data collection to identify specific profiles of women that are particularly vulnerable of violence within their marital and/or natal families, and strengthen effective strategies that communities employ to protect abandoned women who are participating in WEE activities.

**Recommendation 8: Increase support for learning exchanges and "communities of practice" that help to support women's continued economic empowerment, decision-making powers, and sustainability of their economic empowerment.**

It is important for SHGs to participate in communities of practice and learning exchanges that help to support their continued knowledge and capacity building, social and economic empowerment, and the sustainability of their income generating activities; however, to increase support for learning exchanges and communities of practice will require increased investment from donors.

Learning exchanges and communities of practice can include bringing the technical experts to the SHGs, as well as bringing the SHGs to the technical experts. For instance, women operating greenhouses and other agricultural project can be brought together to learn from horticulturalists, and at the same time horticulturalists can visits the greenhouses to provide onsite trainings and capacity building. In this Project, UN Women supported one SHGs to travel to Switzerland to learn about cheese production; while such opportunities are few and far between they are beneficial when they can occur. Other IOs, INGOs, and development agencies can be particularly beneficial in partnering with it provide capacity building related to particular income generating activities. For instance, AKF provided SHGs with training on bee keeping and even provided SHGs with the materials needed for bee keeping and honey production activities. UN Women would benefit from more collaboration like this should be established where possible.

**Recommendation 9: UN Women and IOM would benefit from committing more time and resources to improving national and local government officials understanding of the needs of abandoned women and their children, and support local and central level authorities to develop improved gender responsive planning and budgeting.**

Work on gender responsive planning and budgeting should begin at the central level where planning and budgeting decisions are made, while gender-responsive planning should simultaneously occur at the local levels. These capacity buildings should be more than one-off trainings, and they should involve more specific mappings and surveys of areas where gender responsive planning and budgeting would be beneficial in rayons and districts.



This recommendation is aligned with UN Women's DRF for Tajikistan, 2016-2020, including Outcome 2.2 and Output 2.2.1 which focus on supporting line ministries and local governance to have improved capacity to influence economic policies addressing women's needs at the national and local levels. Also, Output 2.2.3 which involves promoting a national dialogue mechanism to enable gender advocates to promote gender responsive economic policy and processes at the national and local levels in compliance with gender quality related SDGs.

**Recommendation 10: Measures of women's economic empowerment should be improved in the household surveys.**

While the collection of quantitative data from household surveys at the baselined and endline of the Project enabled UN Women to quantitatively document the impact of the Project on improving abandoned women's lives and economic security, there were problems with the data collection tools that limited the ability to measure the effectiveness of the project. UN Women would benefit significantly from improving the household survey and the measures of women's economic empowerment, livelihoods, and economic security. This includes incorporating in the survey specific questions related to the women's SHG and involved in an SHG, actual income generating activities, and SHG savings schemes to name a few areas where the survey can be improved.

In addition, tools should be developed that would enable UN Women and IP NGOs to monitor and evaluation the WEE approaches to assess the levels of women's empowerment, and any changes violence against women connected to WEE activities or results. It is also beneficial to develop self-reporting tools that allow project beneficiaries to report on the impact of interventions, and track and map their road to social and economic empowerment.

## ANNEX A

### Final Evaluation Work Plan

| Activity   | Time-work                  | Responsibility   | Key Deliverables  |
|--|----------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Stage 1-Preparatory Work</b>  | <b>15 March</b>            |  |   |
| Core project materials shared  | 15 March                   | Evaluation Task Manager and Tajikistan Team  |   |
| Review of project documents and materials  | 15-21 March                | International and National Consultants   |   |
| Draft Inception Report and evaluation design instruments   | 23 March                   | International and National Consultants   |   |
| Feedback   | 24-30 March                | Evaluation Reference Group   |   |
| Final Inception report   | 30 March                   | International Consultant   | <b>Inception Report</b>                                     |
| Programme and Schedule of meetings and focus groups in Dushanbe and 2 regions  | 29 March                   | Tajikistan Team and National Consultant  |   |
| <b>Stage 2 - Field Mission</b>   | <b>30 March – 13 April</b> |  |   |
| Data collection: Stakeholder meetings, interviews, and focus groups  | 30 March – 13 April        | International and National Consultants   |   |
| Work on draft <b>Outline and a Power Point presentation and Progress Report</b> of field mission   | 30 March – 13 April        | International and National Consultants   | <b>Progress Report</b>                                      |
| <b>Outline and a PowerPoint presentation</b> on preliminary findings, lessons learned, and recommendations shared UN Women MCO, Tajikistan team and key stakeholders | 12 April                   | International and National Consultants   | <b>PowerPoint presentation of key findings</b>              |
| Feedback provided  | 13 - 15 April              | Key programme stakeholders (arranged via Tajikistan Project team) and Evaluation Reference Group |   |
| <b>Stage 3 - Data Analysis and Reporting</b>   | <b>20 April – 10 May</b>   |  |   |
| Data Analysis<br><b>Draft Full Evaluation Report</b>   | 10 May                     | International Consultant   | <b>Draft Evaluation Report</b>                              |
| Comments on Draft Report   | 11-24 May                  | Evaluation Reference group   |   |
| Finalization of <b>Evaluation Report and 5-page Executive Summary</b>  | 30 May                     | International and National Consultants   | <b>Final Evaluation Report and 5-page Executive Summary</b> |

## Annex B

### Evaluation Matrix

| Evaluation Questions   | Evaluation Approach  | Data Collection Tools  | Key Informants/Agencies   | Data Analysis Methods  |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Objective 1: Relevance is the extent to which the Project's objectives are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements and country-needs.</b>   |  |  |   |  |
| Are the objectives of the Project addressing identified rights and needs of target groups/beneficiaries in the pilot districts?  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with target groups/beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussion Instrument</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> <li>• Target Group Beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |
| To what extent are the objectives of the Project consistent with beneficiaries' needs?   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with target groups/beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussion Instrument</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> <li>• Target Group Beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |
| To what extent is the Project informed by substantive and tailored human rights and gender analyses that identify underlying causes and barriers to women's economic empowerment (WEE), gender equality, and women's human rights? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |

| Evaluation Questions   | Evaluation Approach  | Data Collection Tools  | Key Informants/Agencies   | Data Analysis Methods  |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| To what extent is the Project informed by substantive and tailored human rights and gender analyses that identify underlying causes and barriers to women's economic empowerment (WEE), gender equality, and women's human rights? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff and IOM</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>•</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>•</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul>   |
| To what extent have key stakeholders participated in the Project?  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with target groups/beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussion Instrument</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> <li>• Target Group Beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |
| <b>Objective 2: Effectiveness, the evaluation focuses on the extent to which the Project objectives were achieved or are expected to be achieved</b>   |  |  |   |  |
| What were the strengths of the programmatic strategy and approaches?   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> <li>• Focus group discussion with target groups/beneficiaries</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussion Instrument</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> <li>• Target Group Beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |

| Evaluation Questions   | Evaluation Approach  | Data Collection Tools  | Key Informants/Agencies   | Data Analysis Methods  |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| What has been the progress made toward achievement of the expected outputs and outcomes?   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with target groups/beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussion Instrument</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> <li>• Target Group Beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |
| Did the Project have clear and realistic outputs and outcomes, and goal?   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |
| To what extent have human rights-based and gender responsive approaches been incorporated into the design and implementation of the Project? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• </li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• </li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul>   |
| What is the quality of the Project key outputs and activities?   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with target groups/beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussion Instrument</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> <li>• Target Group Beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |

| Evaluation Questions  | Evaluation Approach  | Data Collection Tools  | Key Informants/Agencies   | Data Analysis Methods  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| How well has the Project addressed the needs of abandoned women from migrants' families?  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with target groups/beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussion Instrument</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> <li>• Target Group Beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |
| Did the Project have effective monitoring mechanisms in place to measure progress towards results?  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>•</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>•</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Objective 3: Efficiency in terms of measuring how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted into results.</b> |  |  |   |  |
| What measures have been taken during planning and implementation to ensure that resources are efficiently used?                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul>   |
| Has UN Women's organizational structure, managerial support, and coordination mechanisms effectively supported the delivery of the Project?       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> <li>•</li> </ul>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> <li>•</li> </ul>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |

| Evaluation Questions   | Evaluation Approach  | Data Collection Tools  | Key Informants/Agencies   | Data Analysis Methods  |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Objective 4: Sustainability in terms of the probability of continued long-term benefits from the Pacific Fund, including resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.</b>                       |  |  |   |  |
| What operational capacity of national partners, also known as capacity resources, have been strengthened?  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |
| What technical capacity of national partners, such as those related to implementing stronger human rights-based and gender responsive approaches related to WEE have been supported and strengthened?        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |
| What is the feasibility of ongoing, nationally led efforts to advance women's human rights and WEE of abandoned women from labour migrants' families, especially those that are most excluded in Tajikistan? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with target groups/beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussion Instrument</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> <li>• Target Group Beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |
| What is the sustainability of results with grant target groups/beneficiaries?  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with target groups/beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussion Instrument</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> <li>• Target Group Beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |



| Evaluation Questions   | Evaluation Approach  | Data Collection Tools  | Key Informants/Agencies   | Data Analysis Methods  |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| <b>Objective 5: Inclusiveness in terms of the extent to which diverse groups are included as stakeholders in the Pacific Fund.</b> |  |  |   |  |
| How inclusive is the Project in supporting marginalised and vulnerable abandoned women and children from migrants' families?       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with target groups/beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> <li>• Focus Group Discussion Instrument</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> <li>• Target Group Beneficiaries</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |
| How inclusive is the Project in involving key stakeholders in governance and management of the Project?                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review to of Project documents</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Women MCO and PP staff, responsible partner, key stakeholders and national IP NGOs</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Desk review</li> <li>• UN Women and IOM Questionnaire</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder Questionnaire</li> <li>• National IP Questionnaire</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN Women MCO and PP Team</li> <li>• IOM</li> <li>• Key Stakeholder</li> <li>• IP NGOs</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of desk review materials</li> <li>• SPSS data analysis of quantitative data from close-ended interview questions</li> <li>• Qualitative data analysis of interview and focus group data</li> </ul> |

## ANNEX C

### Evaluation of the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' Families in Tajikistan

#### UN Women and IOM Interview Questionnaire

| Interview Information            |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Interviewer's name(s)            |  |
| Date                             |  |
| Number of interviewees           |  |
| Names and titles of interviewees |  |

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm with the team conducting an external evaluation of the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' Families in Tajikistan. I am particularly focused on the Project's approach, results achieved, lessons learned, and challenges encountered.

As part of the external evaluation we will interview UN Women and IOM staff, as well as key stakeholders and IP NGOs who are familiar with and/or have been engaged in the Project. We also intend to conduct focus groups with beneficiaries of the Project.

I anticipate the interview will take approximately 1 to 1.5 hours. The purpose of the interview is to gather information about your experience and work related to the Project. I have attempted to frame the questions to be relevant to your organization; however, there may be some questions that you are unable to answer, in which case we can simply skip those question.

Everyone we interview is guaranteed confidentiality, and no specific comments in the final report will be attributed to a particular person. In the final report, quotes will be used, but will be anonymous; however, maybe attributed to an agency/organization as long as a particular person cannot be identified. To maintain confidentiality, each individual will be assigned an ID number and that ID number will be used in the report to differentiate between respondents. Only I will know the ID numbers attached to each organization.

Evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations will be shared in a report with UN Women, IOM, and donors. Do you have any questions before we proceed?

| Project Relevance and Inclusiveness  |   |
|--|---|
| <i>I want to begin by asking you some questions about the relevance the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' families in Tajikistan.</i> |   |
| 1  | When thinking about the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' families in Tajikistan, in what way has this Project been able to address the needs of abandoned women from migrants' families?  |
| 3  | <p>Do you feel like the UN Women Project has been able to support marginalised and vulnerable women from migrants' families?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>Can you tell me about the type of women reached by the Project? / If no, what challenges has the Project faced in providing support to marginalised and vulnerable women from migrants' families?</p> |
| 4  | <p>Has the UN Women Project been able to address the different needs of abandoned women (e.g., poverty, HIV AIDS)?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain what different needs abandoned women have and that the Project has been able to address? / If no, what have been the challenges in addressing women's different needs?</p>              |
| 5  | <p>To what extent do you think the objectives of the UN Women Project are consistent with beneficiaries' needs?</p> <p>With country needs?</p>  |
| 6  | <p>Do you think the Project's goal to improve the economic, social and legal empowerment of abandoned women from migrants' families is relevant in Tajikistan?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain why? If no, why not?</p>  |
| 7  | <p>Do you think the UN Women Project has been/is informed by analyses that identify underlying situations, problems, and barriers faced by abandoned women from migrants' families?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>How has this analyses guided the development and implementation of the Project?</p>  |
| 8  | <p>Has the UN Women Project effectively involved key stakeholders and national partners?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, what stakeholder and national partners have been key players in the Project? In what ways?</p> <p>If no, why not? In what ways could UN Women improve the involvement of key stakeholders and national partners?</p>              |
| Project Effectiveness  |   |
| 9  | What capacity building has UN Women and/or IOM provided to partners to help them understand the Project? And their responsibilities related to the Project?   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  |   |
| 10   | <p>What sort of direction/support has UN Women and/or IOM provided to partners to ensure effective implementation of the Project in pilot districts?</p> <p>How can this process be improved?</p>   |
| 11   | <p>How often do you communicate with partners in each of the pilot districts?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Very often</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Often</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not very often</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not at all</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>What type of support or guidance do you provide to partners?</p> <p>How responsive are partners to your support or guidance?</p> <p>What sort of challenges, if any, do you face in getting partners to apply your advice?</p> |
| 12   | <p>How important is UN Women and/or IOM to ensuring partners make progress toward achieving expected outputs and outcomes?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Very important</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat important</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not very important</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If important, can you explain?</p>  |
| 13   | <p>Do you think the Project's strategy and approaches have been relevant to achieving the planned outcomes of the Project?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, what were the strengths of the Project's strategy and approaches? If no, what have been the weaknesses or problems with the Project's strategy and approaches</p>   |
| 14   | <p>Has human rights-based and gender responsive approaches been incorporated into the design and implementation of the Project?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you tell me what human rights-based and gender responsive approaches have guided the Project? If no, why not?</p>  |
| <i>I want to ask you about the progress made toward achievement of the expected outputs and outcomes of the Project.</i> |   |
| 15   | <p>Has the Project made progress toward targeting women to gain access to a broad range of legal assistance and gender sensitive services?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you tell me about the progress that has been made toward this output? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers?</p>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 16   | <p>Has the Project made progress toward strengthening women's skills and enterprise development assistance, including access to credit and financial services from migrants' families?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you tell me about the progress that has been made toward this output? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers?</p>  |
| 17   | <p>Do you think the Project has enhanced the livelihoods and economic security of abandoned women from migrants' families in the pilot provinces?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, in what ways? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers?</p>   |
| 18   | <p>Has the Project made progress toward enhancing the capacity of CSOs to engage in dialogue with the local government on incorporating gender-specific needs of abandoned women from migrants' families into local development planning?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you tell me about the progress that has been made toward this output? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers?</p> |
| 19   | <p>Because of the UN Women Project, do you think abandoned women from migrants' families enjoy economic empowerment?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, in what ways? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers?</p>  |
| 20   | How well has the UN Women Project addressed the needs of abandoned women from migrants' families?   |
| 21   | Do you think the results of the Project will be sustainable over time among target group/beneficiaries?   |
| <i>Next, I want to you some questions about the monitoring, evaluation, and reporting on project activities.</i> |   |
| 22   | <p>Did the UN Women Project have effective monitoring mechanisms in place to measure progress towards results?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain? / If no, can you tell me what are the problems with the monitoring mechanisms?</p>   |
| 23   | What challenges have existed with monitoring and reporting?   |
| <b>Project Sustainability and Effectiveness</b>  |   |
| 24   | <p>Do you think the UN Women Project has been able to influence the way the problems and needs of abandoned women of migrants' families are viewed among government agencies/officials in Tajikistan?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain? / If no, what has been the challenge?</p>   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <i>I would like to ask you some questions about how the Project has contributed to collaboration between NGOs and with government to address the needs of abandoned women from migrants' families.</i> |  |
| 25   | As a result of the Project, what capacities have been developed among national partners, both governmental and nongovernmental?  |
| 26   | <p>Do you think the UN Women Project has supported better approaches and collaboration among government agencies and NGOs to address the needs of women from migrants' families?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> No<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain how the Project has supported better approaches and collaboration among government agencies and NGOs? If no, what have been the challenges to improving collaboration?</p> |
| 27   | Do you think the Project has helped to build systems in the pilot districts that advance women's economic empowerment that were not there before and that will remain in place even after the Project has ended?   |
| <b>Project Efficiency</b>  |  |
| 28   | Do you know what measures have been taken during planning and implementation of the Project to ensure that resources are efficiently used?   |
| 29   | <p>Has UN Women's organizational structure, managerial support, and coordination mechanisms effectively supported the delivery of the UN Women Project?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> No<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain? / If no, what has been the challenge?</p>  |
| <i>I have a few final questions.</i>   |  |
| 31   | What do you think are the lessons learned and good practices that came out of this Project?  |
| 32   | Are there any particular success stories that you can share with me?   |
| 33   | What do you think are the most significant challenges faced by this Project? How could these be addressed or avoided in the future?  |
| 34   | What areas of improvement would you like to see if the Project were scaled up?   |

## ANNEX D

### Evaluation of the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' Families in Tajikistan

#### Key Stakeholders Interview Questionnaire

| Interview Information            |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Interviewer's name(s)            |  |
| Date                             |  |
| Number of interviewees           |  |
| Names and titles of interviewees |  |

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm with the team conducting an external evaluation of the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' families in Tajikistan. I am particularly focused on the Project's approach, results achieved, lessons learned, and challenges encountered.

As part of the external evaluation we will interview UN Women and IOM staff, as well as key stakeholders and IP NGOs who are familiar with and/or have been engaged in the Project. We also intend to conduct focus groups with beneficiaries of the Project.

I anticipate the interview will take approximately 1 to 1.5 hours. The purpose of the interview is to gather information about your experience and work related to the Project. I have attempted to frame the questions to be relevant to your organization; however, there may be some questions that you are unable to answer, in which case we can simply skip those question.

Everyone we interview is guaranteed confidentiality, and no specific comments in the final report will be attributed to a particular person. In the final report, quotes will be used, but will be anonymous; however, maybe attributed to an agency/organization as long as a particular person cannot be identified. To maintain confidentiality, each individual will be assigned an ID number and that ID number will be used in the report to differentiate between respondents. Only I will know the ID numbers attached to each organization.

Evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations will be shared in a report with UN Women, IOM, and donors. Do you have any questions before we proceed?



| Project Relevance and Inclusiveness  |  |
|--|--|
|  | Can you tell me about the activities your organization (you) have been responsible for in the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' Families in Tajikistan?   |
| <i>I want to begin by asking you some questions about the relevance the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' families in Tajikistan.</i> |  |
| 1  | When thinking about the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' families in Tajikistan, in what way has this Project been able to address the needs of abandoned women from migrants' families?   |
| 3  | <p>Do you feel the UN Women Project has been able to support marginalised and vulnerable women from migrants' families?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>Can you tell me about the type of women reached by the Project? / If no, what challenges has the Project faced in providing support to marginalised and vulnerable women from migrants' families?</p> |
| 4  | <p>Has the UN Women Project been able to address the economic needs of abandoned women?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain what economic needs abandoned women have and that the Project has been able to address? / If no, what have been the challenges in addressing women's different needs?</p>                                     |
| 4a   | <p>Has the UN Women Project been able to address the legal needs of abandoned women?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain what legal needs abandoned women have and that the Project has been able to address? / If no, what have been the challenges in addressing women's different needs?</p>   |
| 5  | <p>To what extent do you think the objectives of the UN Women Project are consistent with beneficiaries' needs?</p> <p>With country needs?</p>   |
| 6  | <p>Do you think the Project's goal to improve the economic, social and legal empowerment of abandoned women from migrants' families is relevant in Tajikistan?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain why? If no, why not?</p>   |
| 7  | <p>Do you think the UN Women Project has been/is informed by analyses that identify underlying situations, problems, and barriers faced by abandoned women from migrants' families?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>How has this analyses guided the development and implementation of the Project?</p>   |
| 8  | <p>Has the UN Women Project effectively involved key stakeholders and national partners?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p>   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, what stakeholder and national partners have been key players in the Project? In what ways?<br><br>If no, why not? In what ways could UN Women improve the involvement of key stakeholders and national partners?   |
| <b>Project Effectiveness</b>   |  |
| <i>I want to ask you about the progress made toward achievement of the expected outputs and outcomes of the Project.</i> |  |
| 15   | Has the Project made progress toward targeting women to gain access to a broad range of legal assistance and gender sensitive services?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, can you tell me about the progress that has been made toward this output? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers?  |
| 16   | Has the Project made progress toward strengthening women's skills and enterprise development assistance, including access to credit and financial services from migrants' families?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, can you tell me about the progress that has been made toward this output? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers?  |
| 17   | Do you think the Project has enhanced the livelihoods and economic security of abandoned women from migrants' families in the pilot provinces?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, in what ways? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers?   |
| 18   | Has the Project made progress toward enhancing the capacity of CSOs to engage in dialogue with the local government on incorporating gender-specific needs of abandoned women from migrants' families into local development planning?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, can you tell me about the progress that has been made toward this output? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers? |
| 19   | Because of the UN Women Project, do you think abandoned women from migrants' families enjoy economic empowerment?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, in what ways? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers?  |
| 21   | Do you think the results of the Project will be sustainable over time among target group/beneficiaries?  |
| <b>Project Sustainability and Effectiveness</b>  |  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 24a   | <p>Do you think the UN Women Project has been able to influence the way problems and needs of abandoned women of migrants' families are viewed among policy makers and political leaders in Tajikistan?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> No<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain? / If no, what has been the challenge?</p>  |
| 24  | <p>Do you think the UN Women Project has been able to influence the way problems and needs of abandoned women of migrants' families are viewed among government agencies/officials in Tajikistan?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> No<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain? / If no, what has been the challenge?</p>  |
| 24b   | <p>Do you think the UN Women Project has been able to have an influence on the way problems and needs of abandoned women are viewed by community leaders and the public in the pilot districts?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> No<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain? / If no, what has been the challenge?</p>  |
| 24c   | <p>Do you know how the UN Women Project has supported better approaches and collaborations to address the needs of abandoned women and improve their economic livelihoods?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> No<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain? / If no, what have been the challenges to addressing the needs of abandoned women and to improve their economic livelihoods?</p>  |
| 24d   | <p>Has the legal assistance provided by IOM in this Project strengthened the capacity of justice system actors (lawyers and judges) to address legal needs of abandoned women from migrants' families?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> No<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain? / If no, what have been the challenges?</p>   |
| <p><i>I would like to ask you some questions about how the Project has contributed to collaboration between NGOs and with government to address the needs of abandoned women from migrants' families.</i></p> |  |
| 25  | <p>As a result of the Project, what capacities have been developed among governmental partners? Among nongovernmental partners?</p>  |
| 26  | <p>Do you think the UN Women Project has supported better approaches and collaboration among government agencies and NGOs to address the needs of women from migrants' families?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> No<br/> <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain how the Project has supported better approaches and collaboration among government agencies and NGOs? If no, what have been the challenges to improving collaboration?</p> |
| 27  | <p>Do you think the Project has helped to build systems in the pilot districts that advance women's economic empowerment that were not there before and that will remain in place even after the Project has ended?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p>  |

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
|                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br>If yes, can you explain? If no, what have been the challenges? |
| <b>Project Efficiency</b>            |  |
| <i>I have a few final questions.</i> |  |
| 31                                   | What do you think are the lessons learned and good practices that came out of this Project?  |
| 33                                   | What do you think are the most significant challenges faced by this Project? How could these be addressed or avoided in the future?  |
| 34                                   | What areas of improvement would you like to see if the Project were scaled up?   |

## ANNEX E

### Evaluation of the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' Families in Tajikistan

#### Responsible Party Interview Questionnaire

| Interview Information            |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Interviewer's name(s)            |  |
| Date                             |  |
| Number of interviewees           |  |
| Names and titles of interviewees |  |

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm with the team conducting an external evaluation of the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' families in Tajikistan. I am particularly focused on the Project's approach, results achieved, lessons learned, and challenges encountered.

As part of the external evaluation we will interview UN Women and IOM staff, as well as key stakeholders and IP NGOs who are familiar with and/or have been engaged in the Project. We also intend to conduct focus groups with beneficiaries of the Project.

I anticipate the interview will take approximately 1 to 1.5 hours. The purpose of the interview is to gather information about your experience and work related to the Project. I have attempted to frame the questions to be relevant to your organization; however, there may be some questions that you are unable to answer, in which case we can simply skip those question.

Everyone we interview is guaranteed confidentiality, and no specific comments in the final report will be attributed to a particular person. In the final report, quotes will be used, but will be anonymous; however, maybe attributed to an agency/organization as long as a particular person cannot be identified. To maintain confidentiality, each individual will be assigned an ID number and that ID number will be used in the report to differentiate between respondents. Only I will know the ID numbers attached to each organization.

Evaluation findings, conclusions, and recommendations will be shared in a report with UN Women, IOM, and donors. Do you have any questions before we proceed?

| Project Relevance and Inclusiveness  |  |
|--|--|
|  | Can you tell me about the activities your organization (you) have been responsible for in the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrants' Families in Tajikistan?   |
| 1  | When thinking about the UN Women Project, in what way has this Project been able to address the needs of abandoned women from migrants' families?  |
| 3  | <p>Do you feel the UN Women Project has been able to support marginalised and vulnerable women from migrants' families?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>Can you tell me about the type of women reached by the Project? / If no, what challenges has the Project faced in providing support to marginalised and vulnerable women from migrants' families?</p> |
| 4  | <p>Has the UN Women Project been able to address the economic needs of abandoned women?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain what economic needs abandoned women have and that the Project has been able to address? / If no, what have been the challenges in addressing women's different needs?</p>                                     |
| 4a   | <p>Has the UN Women Project been able to address the legal needs of abandoned women?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain what legal needs abandoned women have and that the Project has been able to address? / If no, what have been the challenges in addressing women's different needs?</p>   |
| 5  | <p>To what extent do you think the objectives of the UN Women Project are consistent with beneficiaries' needs?</p> <p>With country needs?</p>   |
| 6  | <p>Do you think the Project's goal to improve the economic, social and legal empowerment of abandoned women from migrants' families is relevant in Tajikistan?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you explain why? If no, why not?</p>   |
| Project Effectiveness  |  |
| <i>I want to ask you about the progress made toward achievement of the expected outputs and outcomes of the Project related to providing legal services for abandoned women.</i> |  |
| 15   | <p>Has the Project made progress toward targeting women to gain access to a broad range of legal assistance and gender sensitive services?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you tell me about the progress that has been made toward this output? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers?</p>                                   |
| 40   | Can you tell me, have women targeted by the UN Women Project been able to get legal assistance for their problems?   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>What type of legal assistance has been provided to the women in the Project?<br><br>What have the legal consultants been able to accomplish? What have been the benefits of these legal services for abandoned women?  |
| 41  | Were women getting these legal services before the UN Women Project?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>How have legal services improved since the UN Women Project started in this district?<br><br>What challenges still exist for women in gaining access to legal services and solving their legal problems?   |
| 42  | As part of the UN Women Project, can you tell me about the information and materials on legal issues and services that have been developed and distributed to women in the district?   |
| <i>I want to ask you about the progress made toward achievement of the expected outputs and outcomes of the Project related to strengthening women's skills and enterprise development.</i> |  |
| 16  | Has the Project made progress toward strengthening abandoned women's skills and enterprise development, including improving their ability to access credit or financial resources?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, can you tell me about the progress that has been made toward this output? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers? |
| 17  | Do you think the Project has enhanced the livelihoods and economic security of abandoned women from migrants' families in the pilot provinces?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, in what ways? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers?   |
| 43  | Can you tell me about the mobilization of women from migrants' families that was done for the UN Women Project? How were women identified?<br><br>How were women invited to engage in the UN Women Project? And when they were invited were they interested?   |
| 44  | Did you do an assessment of the training needs of abandoned women?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, what sort of assessment do you do of training needs for abandoned women?<br><br>How do you use the needs assessment to inform the training that women received?  |
| 45  | Thinking of the UN Women Project, what type of trainings have been provided to abandoned women to improve their economic situation and livelihoods?  |



|    |  |
|----|--|
|    | <p>Has the UN Women Project strengthened the skills of abandoned women from migrants' families? If yes, what skills are those?</p> <p>What skill do women possess now as a result of the Project, that they did not possess before the Project?</p>  |
| 46 | <p>One objective of the UN Women Project is to establish self-help groups of women. Can you tell me how self-help groups formed?</p> <p>How do self-help groups work?</p> <p>How are self-help groups managed?</p> <p>How are decisions made to ensure self-help group members needs are taken into consideration?</p> <p>For women, what are the benefits of being a member of a self-help group?</p> <p>Do all women benefit from the self-help groups, or just some?</p> <p>What have been the challenges with self-help groups?</p> <p>Were steps taken to address these challenges? Were they successful, if so how? If not, why not?</p> |
| 47 | <p>Do self-help groups have a saving scheme?</p> <p>How does the saving scheme work?</p> <p>Where do women get the money to contribute to the savings scheme?</p> <p>How much does each member contribute? How is that agreed upon?</p> <p>How do abandoned women access and benefit from the savings scheme?</p> <p>What are the challenges or problems with the savings scheme?</p>  |
| 48 | <p>How many women gained business skills as a result of the UN Women Project?</p> <p>What training subjects contributed to women business development skills?</p> <p>What training subjects were not so useful to women?</p>   |
| 49 | <p>Was support provided to women to develop business plans and to access micro-credits or other financial resources to start a business?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, what type of support was given to women to develop business plans and to access micro-credits or other financial resources to start a business?</p> <p>How did women manage to develop business plans after one day of training? What challenges did women face developing a business plan? How did you help them solve it?</p>                                      |
| 50 | <p>Have you provided support to women to help them to effectively manage their business? If yes, can you tell me about this.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, what type of support have you provided to women to help them to effectively manage their business?</p>   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>How did they manage to run their businesses?</p> <p>What challenges do they face when it comes to running their businesses? How did they overcome those challenges?</p> <p>Were there any failed businesses?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, which ones failed? Why?</p> <p>What business approaches have been most successful?</p>   |
| 51   | <p>Among women that were able to get micro-credits or other financial resource to start a business, were these women able to pay back their micro-credits?</p> <p>Do women ever face challenges managing their money and paying back their micro-credits?</p>   |
| 52   | <p>Why were some self-help groups unable to access micro-credit and other financial resources to start a business?</p>  |
| 53   | <p>How are the women who participated in the UN Women Project viewed by the community?</p> <p>Did their participation in the UN Women Project improve their standing in the community? If yes, how?</p>   |
| 18   | <p>Has the Project made progress toward enhancing the capacity of CSOs to engage in dialogue with the local government on incorporating gender-specific needs of abandoned women from migrants' families into local development planning?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, can you tell me about the progress that has been made toward this output? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers?</p> |
| 19   | <p>Because of the UN Women Project, do you think abandoned women from migrants' families have better lives and greater economic empowerment?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, in what ways? If no, why not? What have been the challenges or barriers?</p>  |
| 21   | <p>Do you think the results of the Project will be sustainable over time among target group/beneficiaries?</p>  |
| <i>I would like to ask you some questions about gender planning and budgeting in the district.</i> |   |
| 54   | <p>As part of the UN Women Project, have local government and NGOs been trained on gender responsible planning and budgeting?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know</p> <p>If yes, what has been the outcomes of those trainings?</p>   |
| 55   | <p>Has your district adopted a local development plan that addresses the needs of abandoned women from migrants' families?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, can you tell me about it. Is it being implemented?<br><br>What are the benefits of the local development plan for women? How has the local development plan improved the response to abandoned women?<br><br>What have been the challenges in implementing your local development plan that addresses the needs of abandoned women? |
| 56   | Is there a District Task Force that works to address the needs of abandoned women?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, how has the UN Women Project supported or improved the work of the District Task Force?   |
| 57   | Has the UN Women Project supported the district Women's Committee to address the needs of abandoned women?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, how has the UN Women Project supported or improved the work of the district Women's Committee?  |
| 58   | Because of the UN Women Project, are the local state authorities, members of the Women's Committee, and NGOs/civil society, including beneficiaries, talking more about the problems and needs of abandoned women and their children in the district?   |
| <i>I would like to ask you some questions about the support you have received from UN Women to understand and implement the UN Women Project for Empowering Abandoned Women from Migrant Families.</i> |   |
| 59   | Since your NGO became involved in the UN Women Project, has the UN Women Project Coordinator regularly communicated with you and provided you with the support and guidance you need?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br>If yes, what type of support or guidance have you received from [name]? / If no, what has been the challenge?          |
| 60   | How helpful is the support and guidance you have received from [name]?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Very helpful<br><input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat helpful<br><input type="checkbox"/> Not helpful<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br>If helpful, what was helpful? / If not helpful, why wasn't it helpful? Did you ask for further clarification?  |
| 61   | When you do communicate with a member of the UN Women Pacific Fund team is the communication clear?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br>If no, what sort of communication problems do you face?  |
| 62   | How has the UN Women Project Coordinator helped your organization make progress toward implementing your expected outcomes?<br><br>Are there any outcomes results you feel you have achieved thus far?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes  |

|  |   |
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|  | <input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br>If yes, can you tell me what about those results?   |
| <b>Project Sustainability and Effectiveness</b>  |   |
| 24   | Do you think the UN Women Project has been able to influence the way problems and needs of abandoned women of migrants' families are viewed among government agencies/officials in Tajikistan?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, can you explain? / If no, what has been the challenge?  |
| 24b  | Do you think the UN Women Project has been able to have an influence on the way problems and needs of abandoned women are viewed by community leaders and the public in the pilot districts?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, can you explain? / If no, what has been the challenge?  |
| 24d  | Has the legal assistance provided by IOM in this Project strengthened the capacity of justice system actors (lawyers and judges) to address legal needs of abandoned women from migrants' families?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, can you explain? / If no, what have been the challenges?   |
| <i>I would like to ask you some questions about how the Project has contributed to collaboration between NGOs and with government to address the needs of abandoned women from migrants' families.</i> |   |
| 26   | Do you think the UN Women Project has supported better approaches and collaboration among government agencies and NGOs to address the needs of women from migrants' families?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br><br>If yes, can you explain how the Project has supported better approaches and collaboration among government agencies and NGOs? If no, what have been the challenges to improving collaboration? |
| 27   | Do you think the Project has helped build systems in the pilot districts that advance women's economic empowerment that were not there before and that will remain in place even after the Project has ended?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No<br><input type="checkbox"/> Don't know<br>If yes, can you explain? If no, what have been the challenges?   |
| <b>Project Efficiency</b>  |   |
| <i>I have a few final questions.</i>   |   |
| 63   | To what degree did the UN Women Project allow your organization to fill a service gap in the community?   |
| 64   | If you didn't have the funding from the UN Women Project to do the work you are doing with abandoned women, what other group or organizations would be abandoned women with similar services?   |
| 31   | What do you think are the lessons learned and good practices that came out of this Project?   |
| 33   | What do you think are the most significant challenges faced by this Project? How could these be addressed or avoided in the future?   |

|    |   |
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|    |   |
| 34 | What areas of improvement would you like to see if the Project were scaled up?      |
| 65 | For your organization, what have been benefits of working on this UN Women Project? |

## ANNEX F

### List of Interviews Conducted

| Location  | Name                    | Title                                      | Organization                                 |
|-----------|-------------------------|--|--|
| Dushanbe  | Zarina Urakova          | Project Coordinator                        | UN Women                                     |
|           | Gulnora Kamolova        | Project Coordinator                        | IOM  |
|           | Malika Yarbabaeva       | Former Project Coordinator                 | IOM  |
|           | Simov Fayzullo          | Local Expert, Lawyer                       | IOM  |
|           | Iana Ismailova          | Gender Coordinator                         | Oxfam  |
|           | Mahvash Kalandarova     | Program Manager                            | DFID   |
|           | Aziza Kataeva           | Project Coordinator                        | DFID   |
|           | Naima Normatova         | Local Expert                               | UN Women                                     |
|           | Tatyana Bozrikova       | Local Expert                               | UN Women                                     |
|           | Mavzuna Karimova        | Local Expert                               | UN Women                                     |
|           | Jalilova Zebo           | Local Expert                               | UNDP   |
|           | Sohiba Rahimova         | Coordinator                                | NGO Fidokor                                  |
|           | Shahlo Juraeva          | Local Expert                               | UN Women                                     |
|           | Mahmadulozoda Nurullo   | Deputy Minister                            | Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment |
|           | Zarif Alizoda           | Ombudsman                                  | Ombudsman's Office                           |
|           | Javohir Akobirovna      | Head of Gender Department                  | Committee on Women and Family Affairs        |
|           | Kurbonov Kudratullo     | Head of Social Protection Department       | Ministry of Health and Social Protection     |
|           | Lailo Zamirova          | Finance and Administrative Assistant       | UN Women                                     |
|           | Natalia Galat           | Operations Manager                         | UN Women, Multi-Country Office               |
|           | Zaytuna Naimova         | National Program Specialist                | UN Women                                     |
| Tojikobod | Dilbar Nazrieva         | Director                                   | NGO "Nilob"                                  |
|           | Alizoda Husein Khojamir | Chairperson                                | Hukumat of Tojikobod District                |
|           | Saidaminov Husnidin     | Head of department of economic development | Hukumat of Tojikobod District                |
|           | Gadoeva Mehriniso       | Head of Department of Women's Committee    | Hukumat of Tojikobod district                |
|           | Toshev Nazrvali         | Head of jamoat                             | Jamoat Shogadoev                             |
|           | Mehriniso Bahromova     | Project Mobilizer                          | Jamoa Shogadoev                              |
|           | Nasimjon Sharipov       | Project Mobilizer                          | Jamoat Kalai labi ob                         |
|           | Saidali Rahmonov        | Director                                   | NGO "Suhrob"                                 |

| Location  | Name                 | Title                                       | Organization                     |
|-----------|----------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Jirgital  | Ausulu Jenaliev      | Director                                    | NGO Muharaf                      |
|           | Umedkhoei Zoir       | Chairperson                                 | Hukumat of Jirgatal district     |
|           | Mahmadieva Tillokhon | Head of the Department of Women's Committee | Hukumat of Jirgatal district     |
|           | Isomudinov Salohidin | Head of jamoat                              | Jamoat Vahdat                    |
|           | Keldieva Sharofat    | Project Mobilizer                           | Jamoat Jirgatal                  |
|           | Kambarova Nilufar    | Project Mobilizer                           | Jamoat Vahdat                    |
|           |                      |   |                                  |
| Tavildara | Davlatbi Olimova     | Director                                    | NGO "Khingob"                    |
|           | Hikmatl Gayrat       | Chairperson                                 | Hukumat of Tavildara district    |
|           | Gulchehra Rahimova   | puty head of district                       | Hukumat of Tavildara district    |
|           | Talbonov lbrohim     | Head of jamoat                              | Jamoat Tavildara                 |
|           | Tulaev Jannati       | Project Mobiliser                           | Jamoat Sangvor                   |
| Kulyab    | Parvina Saidamirova  | Project coordinator                         | NGO "Nisojon"                    |
|           |                      |   |                                  |
|           | Majidova Kenjamo     | Deputy of Chairperson                       | Hukumat of Kulyab district       |
|           | Nurlaminova Saida    | Head of the department of Women's committee | Hukumat of Kulyab district       |
|           | Khurshed Ashurmadv   | Head of jamoat                              | Jamoat Kulyab                    |
|           | Kurbonova Gulbahor   | Project Mobiliser                           | Jamoat Kulyab                    |
| Farkhor   | Sharipova Mahbuba    | Director                                    | NGO "Mayram"                     |
|           | Ismonali Safarov     | District Coordinator                        | NGO "Nisojon"                    |
|           | Rustam Bobokhonzoda  | Deputy of Chairperson                       | Hukumat of Farkhor district      |
|           | Talbova Dilbar       | Head of the Department of Women's Committee | Hukumat of Farhor district       |
|           | Hasidov Sherafgan    | Head of jamoat                              | Jamoat Farhor                    |
|           | Latipova Sabzamoh    | Project Mobiliser                           | Jamoat Farhor                    |
|           | Safarova Kurbonul    | Project Mobiliser                           | Jamoat "20 solagii istikloliyat" |