

Short summary of
Baseline/KAPB
study
“Spotlight Initiative”
to End Violence
against Women and
Girls



BACKGROUND

The baseline study within the framework of the joint EU/UN "Spotlight Initiative " to eliminate violence against women and girls in Tajikistan was carried out by research company "Tahlil va mashvarat".

According to the ToR, the baseline study includes 3 components:

- Mapping government agencies and civil society organizations operating in the field of gender-based and sexual violence (SGBV) at the national level and in target areas
- Study on Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices and Beliefs (KAPB) of SGBV/Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Assessing the capacity of government agencies and civil society organizations operating in the field of SGBV/VAWG at the national level and in target areas

1.1. Goal and objectives

Goal: provide baseline data on knowledge, attitudes, practices and beliefs (KAPB) of the population and service providers, Governments, CSOs, media in the field of sexual and gender-based violence, taking into account vulnerable groups of women and girls and develop recommendations for the development and implementation of strategies and measures to changing the behavior of the population within the Spotlight Initiative in Tajikistan.

Objectives:

1. To study the opinion of members of local communities on the prevalence and significance of the problem of gender-based violence.
2. Identify key social, gender norms and harmful practices against women and girls that contribute to gender inequality and violence.
3. Determine the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of community members on various forms of gender-based violence.
4. Examine the problems of sexual relations in the context of the rights of women and girls to sexual and reproductive health and the elimination of sexual violence.
5. Examine the level of awareness, access and practice of women and girls, including those with multiple forms of discrimination, using services in the field of sexual and gender-based violence.
6. Identify potential mechanisms for local communities to influence the elimination of violence against women and girls.
7. Determine the knowledge, attitudes and practices of service providers, governments, NGOs, media in the field of sexual and gender-based violence, taking into account vulnerable groups of women and girls (people with disabilities, women living with HIV, families with low-income status, wives of labor migrants, etc.)
8. Develop recommendations for the implementation of strategies and measures to change the behavior of the population within the framework of the Spotlight Initiative in Tajikistan

Study results

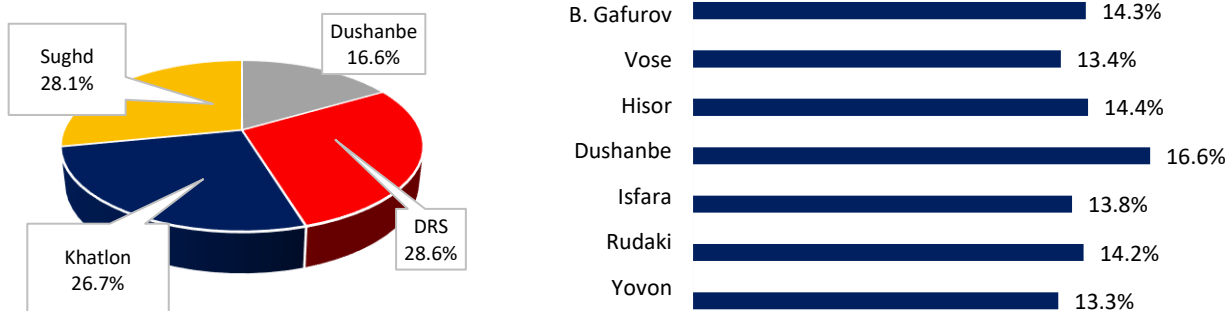
5. Socio-demographic profile of respondents

5.1 Population

The survey was conducted in the pilot districts of the "Spotlight" Initiative. A total of 1,203 respondents took part in the survey. According to the pre-defined spatial distribution, the proportion of respondents by region is as follows: DRS - 28.6%, Sughd - 28.1%, Khatlon - 26.7%, and Dushanbe - 16.6% (see Figure 1, left). Due to the fact that the sample was disproportional:

- the distribution of respondents across target districts and cities is about the same in terms of the percentage of respondents, ranging from 13.3% to 16.6% (see Figure 1, right);
- the distribution by type of settlement also does not correlate with the statistical data. Slightly more than half of the respondents (58.2%) account for rural areas, and 41.8% account for urban areas (see Figure 2, left).

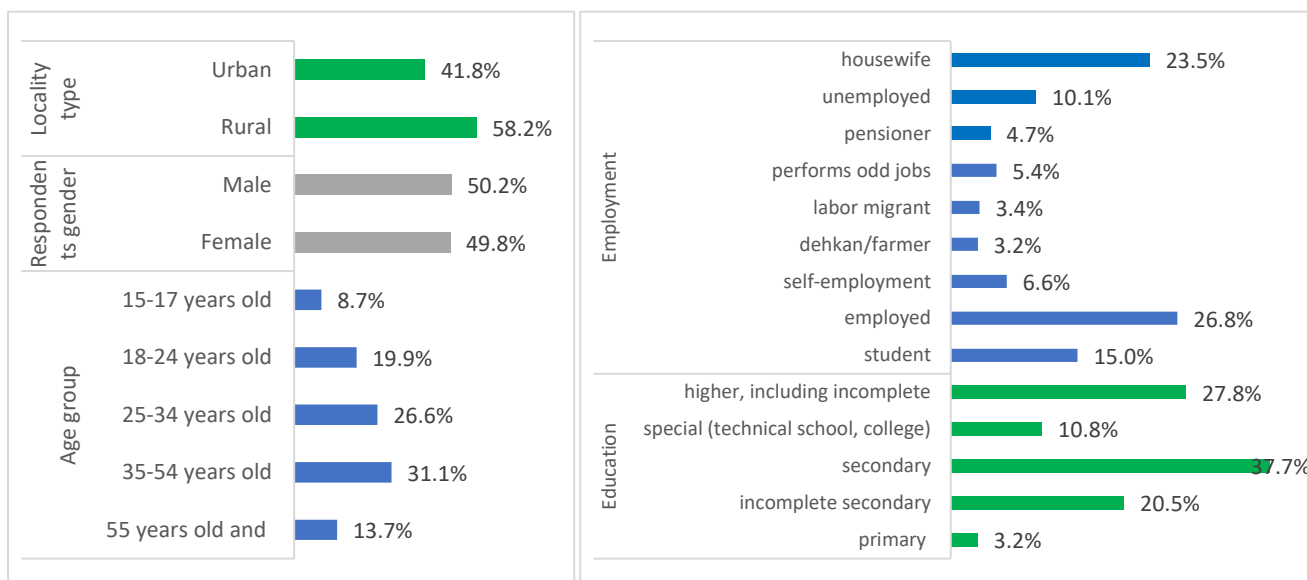
Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by region and districts/cities



The distribution of men and women corresponds to the data of the Agency on Statistics.

The survey involved 50.2% of men and 49.8% of women, a large proportion of whom were aged 35-54 years (31.1%) (see Figure 2, left). It is worth noting that a significant proportion of respondents have a complete secondary education - 37.7%. In terms of employment, the most significant share of employees - 26.8% and housewives - 23.5% (see Figure 2, right).

Figure 2: Distribution of respondents by type of location, gender, age, education, and employment



The standard of living is one of the significant social indicators. This indicator is a multidimensional category, which includes various indices, calculations, including income - calculations of gross domestic product (GDP), the proportion of the rich and the poor - calculations of income inequality, etc. Each of these calculations has its own units of measurement, advantages and disadvantages. An individual's self-perception, his self-assessment of his financial well-being is also one of the indicators, but a subjective assessment of his standard of living.

It should be noted that according to the World Bank the poverty rate in Tajikistan for 2019 was 26.3%, and the forecast for 2021 was 26.2%¹. According to the Agency on Statistics for 2018, the proportion of poor is 27.4%, the vulnerable group is 48.8%, the lower middle class is 18.2%, and the upper middle class is 5.7%².

¹ <https://www.vsemirnyjbank.org/ru/news/infographic/2020/10/15/poverty-in-tajikistan-2020>

² Poverty Assessment in Tajikistan. According to HBS (Household Budget Survey) // Agency on Statistics under the President of the Republic of Tajikistan - 2019. [https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.15/2019/mtg1/Session A. TJK.pdf](https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.15/2019/mtg1/Session_A_TJK.pdf)

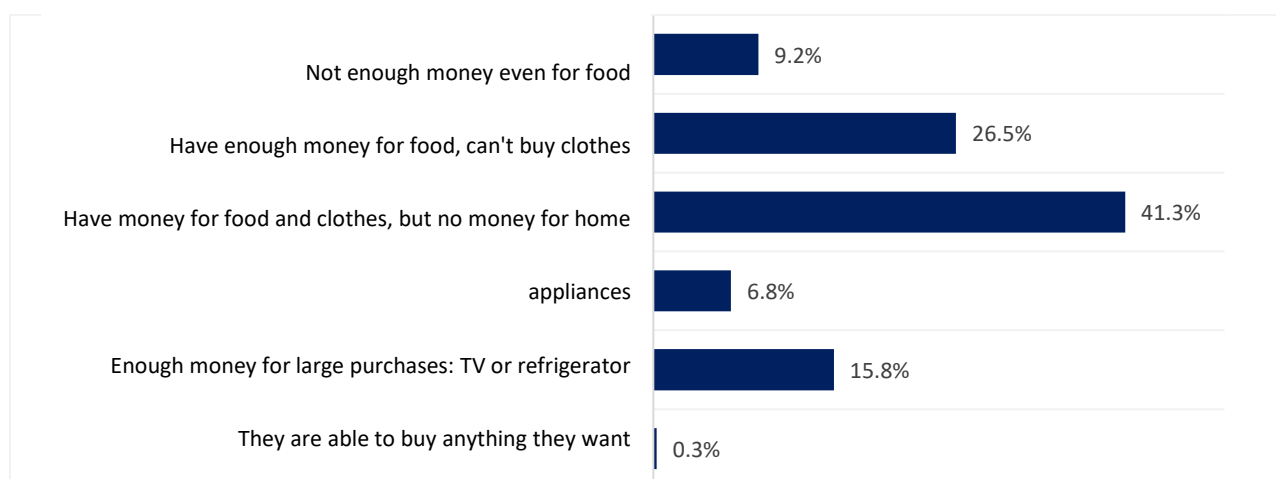


If we correlate the survey results with the data of the Agency on Statistics, we get the following picture:

- a) poor ("not enough money even for food") accounted for 9.2%;
- b) vulnerable group ("have money for food, can't buy clothes" and "have money for food and clothes, but no money for home appliances") – 67.8%;
- c) lower middle class ("enough money for large purchases") – 6.8%;
- d) upper middle class ("are able to buy anything they want") - 15.8%. (see Figure 3).

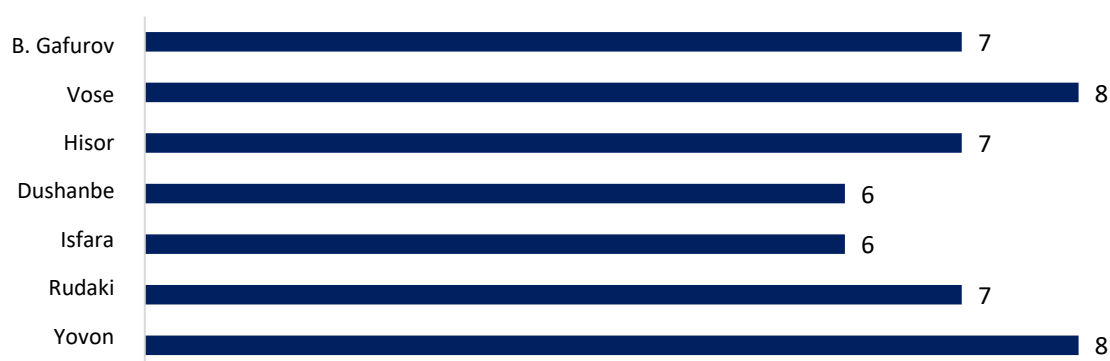
It is worth noting that the self-assessment indicators are quite logically inconsistent with the Household Budget Survey data, as they are based on different baseline data. However, it is worth noting the similarity of the trend, in which the most significant proportion is represented by the vulnerable group.

Figure 3. Distribution of respondents by economic welfare



On average, the number of people living in one household varies from 6 to 8. It is worth noting that Vose and Yovon districts recorded the highest number of people living in one household - 8 people (see Figure 4)

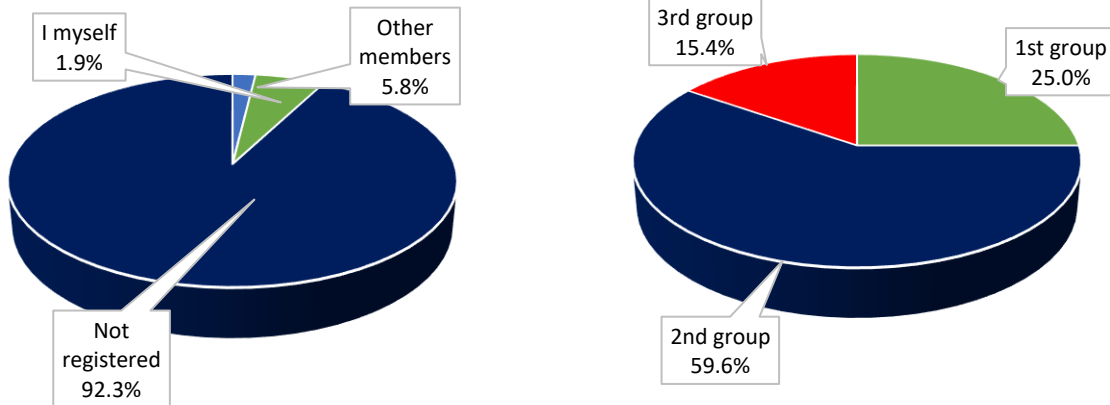
Figure 4: Average number of people per household by districts/cities



In the absolute majority of HHs, those who were registered with social protection agencies and received disability pensions were not identified - 92.3% (see Figure 5). If there is at least 1 family member with a disability in the HH, he or she is registered with the social protection agencies to receive a pension, according to the respondent. It should be reminded that the total number of HHs covered by the survey is 1,203. The total number of households with at least one disabled person is 93, which accounts for 7.7%.

A total of 104 people with disabilities, including household members, were identified, 23 of whom were respondents themselves. 2nd group disabled persons account for 59.6% of households, 1st group disabled persons account for 25.0% households and 3rd group disabled persons account for 15.4% of households (see Figure 6).

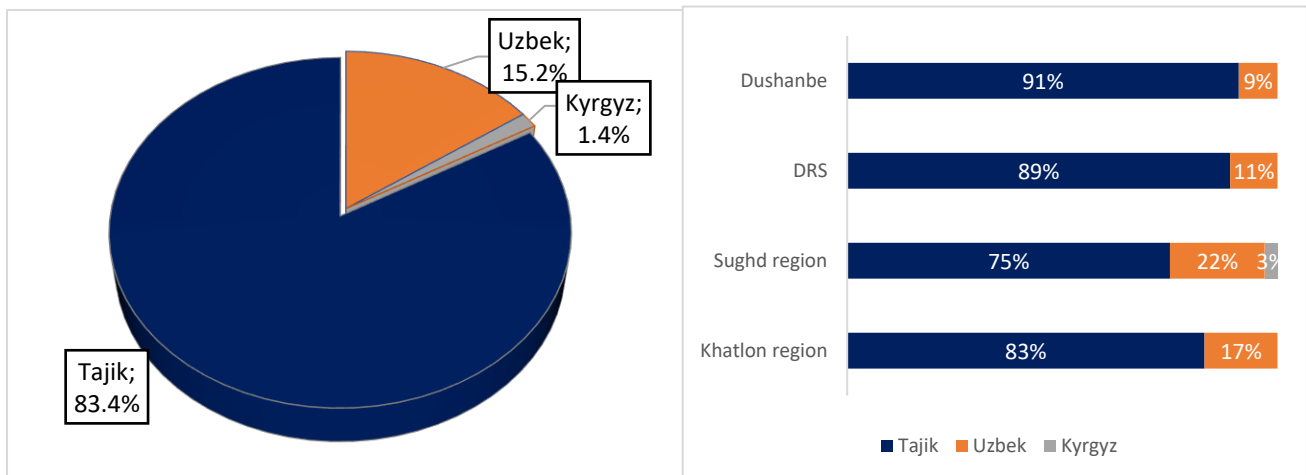
Figure 5: People registered with social security agencies and those receiving pensions
 Figure 6: HHs broken down by disability group



In general, the bulk of respondents were Tajiks (83.4%) and lesser Uzbeks (15.2%).

The ethnic composition of respondents in the distribution by regions showed that a relatively significant proportion of Uzbek respondents was in in Sughd region - 22.0% (see Figure 7). It is worth noting that 3.0% of the respondents in the same region were Kyrgyz. In other regions respondents represent two ethnic groups - representatives of the title nation and Uzbeks.

Figure 7: Ethnicity of respondents disaggregated by region



Respondents' distribution by education in the context of "gender of respondents" indicates a shift towards higher and incomplete higher education for men, while a significant proportion of women do not continue their education after 9th grade. Such a trend, with a higher average education level for men than for women, is consistent with national statistics on educational attainment in the distribution by gender³.

It is worth noting that one of the main drivers of poverty reduction in Tajikistan is income from employment, but the country still has an exceptionally low level of employment⁴. In terms of employment, men have the highest share of employees - 35.8%, and women have the highest share of housewives - 47.2%. Household activities are traditionally associated with women (housewives), so this category does not include male representatives.

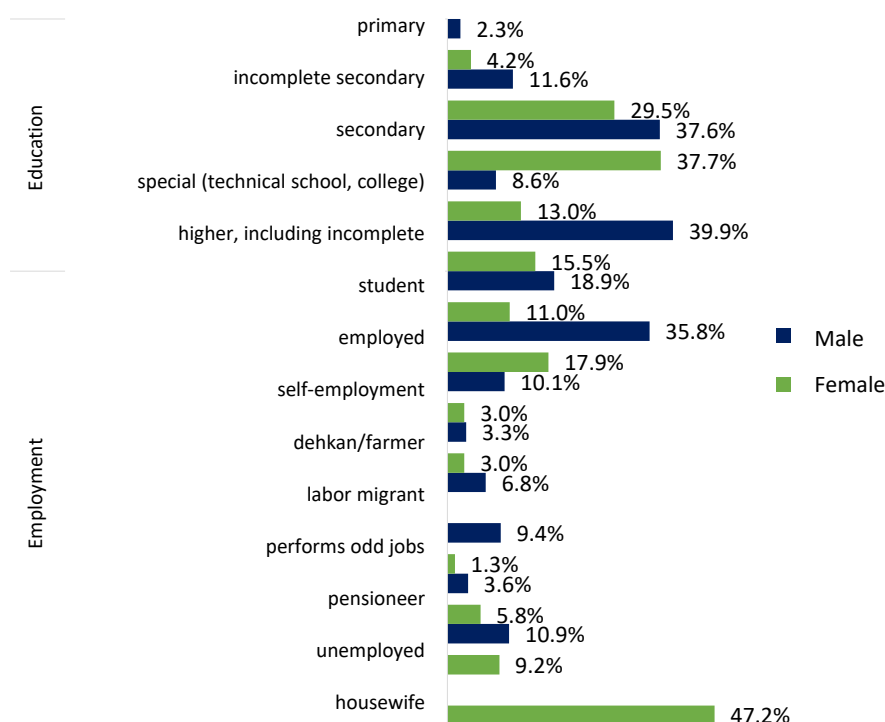
³ Women and men of the Republic of Tajikistan // Agency on Statistics under the President. Republic of Tajikistan. - 2020.

⁴ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/ru/europeandcentralasia/what-s-behind-slowing-pace-poverty-reduction-tajikistan>



It is noteworthy that there were no female migrant workers, and male migrant workers accounted for 6.8% (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Distribution of respondents by education disaggregated by gender



5.2. Victims of SGBV

A total of 100 women victims of violence were interviewed. Of these, 50 were women with disabilities and 50 were from other vulnerable groups of women. Of the 100 women interviewed, 39 lived in the city and 61 lived in rural areas. The vast majority of women who participated in the study were 20 years of age or older, 90.0%, and only 10.0% were between the ages of 15 and 19. They all represent the seven target study districts (see Table 6).

Table 6: Number of respondents to qualitative interviews by type of vulnerable groups

No.	Groups of women	Number of respondents	Urban residents	Rural residents
1	Women with disabilities	50	18	32
2	15-17 year old girls	8	3	5
3	Women of different ages	22	8	14
4	Wives of migrant workers	6	2	4
5	Women living with HIV	10	4	6
6	Sex workers	4	4	0
Total respondents		100	39	61

Table 7. Number of respondents to qualitative interviews by target districts/cities and ethnicity

No.	Target districts/cities	N	Tajik	Uzbek	Kyrgyz
1	Dushanbe	39	38	0	1
2	Rudaki	11	8	2	0
3	Hisor	11	10	0	1
4	Isfara	10	9	1	0
5	B.Gafurov	10	9	1	0



6	Vose	10	7	3	0
7	Yovon	10	9	0	1
Total respondents		100	90	7	3

In terms of education, the majority of respondents have secondary (48.0%) and incomplete secondary (21.0%) education, with incomplete higher education (2%) and with higher education 10.0%. At the same time, 7.0% have no education at all, and 6.0% of respondents have primary and secondary - vocational education.

In terms of occupation, 42.0% of women are housewives and unemployed, a small proportion (16.0%) work in offices or at school, in a beauty salon or as a nanny in a kindergarten, the remaining respondents (42.0%) work temporarily, where they are hired.

5.3. Representatives of government authorities

A total of 97 respondents were interviewed, of whom 44.3% were men and 55.7% were women.

The study covered government agencies whose mandates and activities are related to the promotion of gender equality and the eradication of violence against women and girls (see Table 8).

Table 8: Distribution of respondents by ministries and agencies

	N	%
Committee of Women and Family Affairs	15	15.5%
Office of the Prosecutor General	4	4.1%
Ministry of Justice	4	4.1%
Ministry of Health and Social Protection	20	20.6%
Ministry of Education and Science	13	13.4%
Agency on Statistics	8	8.2%
Ministry of the Interior	10	10.3%
Committee on Religious Affairs	10	10.3%
Supreme Court	3	3.1%
Ministry of Justice Legal Aid Center	2	2.1%
Union of Attorneys	2	2.1%
Other (please specify)	6	6.2%
TOTAL	97	100.0%

The highest proportion of respondents is in the capital city - 38.2% (see Table 9) and structural divisions at the local level (see Table 10).

Table 9: Distribution by region

	N	%
Dushanbe	37	38.2%
Khatlon region	17	17.5%
Sughd region	22	22.7%
DRS	21	21.6%
TOTAL	97	100.0%

Table 10: Distribution by structural divisions

	N	%
In central office	17	17.5%
In structural subdivision at the national level	10	10.3%
In structural subdivision at the local level	70	72.2%
TOTAL	97	100.0%

Among the representatives of state authorities most respondents are aged 35-54 years - 60.8%. The least significant is the proportion of the age group of 18-24 years - 3.1%.



Logically consistent with the age distribution and work experience of respondents, with more than five years working in these structures 57.7%, while work experience of less than one year was revealed in 9.3% of those covered by the study.

Table 11. Distribution by age

Age groups	N	%
18-24	3	3.1%
25-34	24	24.7%
35-54	59	60.8%
55 years old and over	11	11.3%
TOTAL	97	100

Table 12. Distribution by work experience

Work experience	N	%
Less than 1 year	9	9.3%
1-3 years	15	15.5%
4-5 years	17	17.5%
More than 5 years	56	57.7%
TOTAL	97	100.0%

6. Knowledge, Attitude and Perception

According to the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On the Prevention of Domestic Violence," the following types of domestic violence are distinguished:

- ⇒ physical,
- ⇒ mental,
- ⇒ sexual,
- ⇒ economic.

Physical violence in the family is considered to be an intentional illegal act of one family member against another family member, as a result of the use of physical force, which causes physical pain or harm to his or her health.

Mental violence in the family - intentional mental influence, humiliation of the honor and dignity of one family member by another family member by threatening, insulting, blackmailing or forcing to commit offenses or acts dangerous to life and health, as well as leading to a violation of mental, physical or personal development.

Sexual violence in the family - an intentional illegal act of one family member against another family member, which infringes on the sexual inviolability and sexual freedom of a person, as well as acts of a sexual nature committed against a minor family member.

Economic violence in the family is an unlawful act by one family member against another family member with the intent to deprive him of housing, food, clothing, property or funds to which the victim has a right under the legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan, and this act may cause physical or mental health problems or entail other unfavorable conditions.⁵ It is worth noting that violence other than within the family is not considered at the statutory level of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Knowledge: identification of violence. One of the tasks of the study aims to identify the population's understanding of various forms of violence. Do the behaviors associated with intentional, unlawful behavior identify with violence? Which type of violence is universally perceived as violence?

One hypothesis is that if respondents identify violent behavior as such, it indicates that there are social norms that negatively view such behavior. Accordingly, if violent behavior is not identified as such, it means that in society as a whole such behavior is non-condemnable. And thus, presumably, widely practiced.

⁵ Law of the Republic of Tajikistan on the Prevention of Domestic Violence, Chapter 1, Article 1// March 19, 2013 No.954



For each type of violence, statements similar to the Tajikistan Demographic and Health Survey (TDHS) were formulated and respondents were asked - does the behavior identify with violence?

According to the survey results, in general, the absolute majority of respondents associated "physical actions" with "violence"— 95.9%⁶.

To identify what socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent may be influencing the level of understanding/misunderstanding, the responses by type of violence were considered through intersection with such indicators as: gender, type of settlement, level of education, and age.

The analysis of the data in the distribution by "type of locality" and by gender shows an almost identical picture. In other words, there is no difference between rural and urban residents in the understanding of "violence," with the majority of respondents associating violence primarily with physical. Just as there is no distinction between men and women, with a larger proportion of respondents noting physical and a smaller proportion noting economic. Just as there is no distinction between men and women, with a larger proportion of respondents noting physical and a smaller proportion noting economic⁷:

- physical: women - 96.9%, men – 95.0%;
- sexual: women - 90.2%, men – 86.6%;
- mental: women - 87.6%, men – 80.5%;
- economic: women 66.1%, men 50.1%.

Only half of the men surveyed perceive actions "with the purpose of depriving the victim of housing, food, clothing, property or the means to which the victim has a right under the laws of the Republic of Tajikistan" as violence, economic violence - 50.1% (see Table 13). In other words, presumably this type of violence could hypothetically be practiced quite widely, since it is not a type of violence as understood by society, and is therefore socially non-condemnable behavior.

Table 13. Average percentage of respondents who agree with violence by type of violence, gender, and age

Types of domestic violence	Consider violence (average)	Respondent's gender		Age group				
		Male	Female	15-17 years old	18-24 years old	25-34 years old	35-54 years old	55 years old and over
Physical	95.9%	95.0%	96.9%	95.6%	95.7%	94.7%	96.2%	98.2%
Sexual	88.4%	86.6%	90.2%	81.0%	87.9%	87.7%	88.5%	94.7%
Mental	84.1%	80.5%	87.6%	87.4%	82.8%	82.4%	84.8%	85.5%
Economic	58.1%	50.1%	66.1%	55.4%	57.8%	54.1%	59.9%	63.5%
Respondents (n)	1203	604	599	105	239	320	374	165

The results of the study showed an unexpected finding - on average, respondents with higher or incomplete higher education attach the least importance to economic violence - 51.5%. In other words, the lower the level of education, the higher the proportion of respondents classifying violence as economic. It is worth noting that, on average, respondents assigned almost equal importance to other types of violence, regardless of education (see Table 14).

⁶ statements: a) slapping a woman or throwing objects at her that could hurt her; b) pushing a woman or pulling her hair; c) hitting her with a fist or with any object that could hurt her; d) kicking, dragging, or beating a woman; e) strangling or intentionally causing burns; f) threatening her or actually using a weapon or knife against a woman.

⁷ statements: a) refusal to give his wife enough money for household expenses, even if he has it; b) withholding income from his wife; c) refusal to give his wife money for groceries and necessities; d) not giving his wife money for necessary expenses for the children; e) not giving his wife money for personal expenses (clothes, shoes, hygiene items).



Table 14. On average, the proportion of respondents agreeing with violence disaggregated by level of education

Types of domestic violence	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Complete secondary	Special (technical school, college)	Higher, including incomplete
Physical	94,4%	93,3%	95,9%	97,4%	97,5%
Sexual	88,0%	88,5%	87,8%	89,0%	88,8%
Mental	80,8%	83,4%	83,3%	86,5%	85,1%
Economic	57,4%	63,8%	59,1%	60,6%	51,5%
Respondents (n)	39	247	453	130	334

Analysis by the survey results shows that on average migrant workers and the self-employed attach the least importance to economic violence - 41.0% and 46.8%, respectively, and to mental and sexual violence, those who perform odd jobs - 73.8% and 81.0%. On average, all respondents, regardless of their occupation, attach great importance to physical violence almost equally (see Table 15).

Table 15. On average, the proportion of respondents who agree with violence disaggregated by employment

Types of domestic violence	Employment								
	Students	Employed	Self-employed	Dehkan/farmer	Labor migrant	Performs odd jobs	Pensioner	Unemployed	Housewife
Physical	95.6%	98.0%	97.9%	92.5%	89.8%	91.5%	96.2%	95.2%	95.6%
Sexual	84.8%	90.1%	86.5%	86.0%	86.2%	81.0%	90.6%	90.1%	90.1%
Mental	85.3%	85.3%	77.8%	82.9%	76.2%	73.8%	85.5%	85.5%	86.2%
Economic	54.0%	54.9%	46.8%	62.1%	41.0%	57.2%	68.4%	64.0%	66.1%
Respondents (n)	180	323	79	38	41	65	57	121	283

The study shows that, on average, only 48.8% of respondents who can afford large purchases associate violence with economic violence. On average, respondents who do not have enough money even for food attach the least importance to mental violence - 73.0% (see Table 16).

Table 16. On average, the proportion of respondents, who agree with violence disaggregated by wealth level

Types of domestic violence	Economic welfare				
	Not even enough money for food	Enough money for food, but can't buy clothes	Enough money for groceries and clothes, can't buy household appliances	Enough money for large purchases: a TV or a refrigerator	They are able to buy anything they want
Physical	91.4%	95.1%	96.7%	97.2%	97.2%
Sexual	89.2%	86.9%	89.6%	89.4%	86.5%
Mental	73.0%	83.6%	86.0%	85.4%	86.7%
Economic	54.2%	61.8%	59.3%	48.8%	55.4%
Respondents (n)	111	319	497	82	190



7. Perception of the prevalence of violence

7.1 Population

Violence against women and girls is the most common form of gender-based violence. Perception of the prevalence of gender-based and sexual violence is an indicator that demonstrates the extent and understanding of the problem by the population as a whole and at the community level.

According to the study, just over three-quarters of respondents agreed with the statement that **VAW⁸ is prevalent in society** - 77.3%. At the same time, **only 45.6% agreed with the statement about the prevalence of violence in their communities**. Women agree more with the statement about the prevalence of VAW in society - 61.8%, but not in the community in which they live. Those who agree are twice as few - 29.4%.

It is interesting that there are relatively more men than women who noted the prevalence of violence at the local level - 31.3%. There are also relatively more rural residents compared to urban residents - 53.3%.

Overall, the results show that there is a differentiation in the understanding of the prevalence of violence. If it is about VAW in the community, that is, somewhere far away, it is readily agreed. If we are talking about a particular community, in the area where the respondent lives, there are far fewer people who agree (see Table 17).

Table 17. Percentage of respondents, who agree with the statements about the prevalence of violence against women by gender and type of location

Statement	Share of those, who agree, %	Respondent gender		Type of locality	
		Male	Female	Urban	Rural
VAW is prevalent in our society	77.3%	53.3%	61.8%	58.3%	57.0%
VAW is prevalent in your community	45.6%	31.3%	29.4%	28.4%	31.7%
Respondents (n)	1203	604	599	503	700

Analysis of the survey results shows that respondents aged 15-17 are less likely to agree with statements regarding the prevalence of violence against women in society and in their communities - 48.6% and 12.4%, respectively. It is worth noting that respondents with increasing age group more often agreed with the prevalence of violence against women both in society and in their communities (see Table 18).

Table 18. Percentage of respondents, who agree with the statements about the prevalence of violence against women by age group

Statement	Age group				
	15-17 years old	18-24 years old	25-34 years old	35-54 years old	55 years old and over
VAW is prevalent in our society	48.6%	56.5%	58.1%	58.3%	61.8%
VAW is prevalent in your community	12.4%	27.2%	34.7%	30.5%	37.6%
Respondents (n)	105	239	320	374	165

The results of the analysis broken down by "districts/cities" show that respondents from Isfara agree the least about the prevalence of violence in society and in their communities - 40.4% and 18.7%, respectively. The definition of "violence" is a connotation of unacceptable, inappropriate behavior. It is possible that neighborhood violence is a widely practiced form of behavior, and therefore is not identified as unacceptable behavior.

In contrast, respondents from Vose and Hisor most often acknowledge the prevalence of violence against women in society - 65.2% and 64.7%. Among other things, respondents from Hisor more often agree about the prevalence of violence against women in their communities - 45.7% (see Table 19).

⁸ Violence Against Women



Table 19. Percentage of respondents who agree with the statements about the prevalence of violence against women disaggregated by district/city

Statement	Districts/Cities						
	B. Gafurov	Vose	Hisor	Dushanbe	Isfara	Rudaki	Yovon
VAW is prevalent in our society	57.6%	65.2%	64.7%	56.0%	40.4%	62.6%	56.3%
VAW is prevalent in your community	25.6%	30.4%	45.7%	26.5%	18.7%	34.5%	31.3%
Respondents (n)	172	161	173	200	166	171	160

The study shows that respondents with higher or incomplete higher education are more likely to believe that violence against women in society and in their communities is common - 65.3% and 38.9%, respectively. It is worth noting that respondents with incomplete and complete secondary education agreed the least about the prevalence of violence in their communities - 23.9% and 26.3%, respectively (see Table 20).

Table 20. Percentage of respondents who agree with statements about the prevalence of violence against women disaggregated by level of education

Statement	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Complete secondary	Special (technical school, college)	Higher, including incomplete
VAW is prevalent in our society	56.4%	56.7%	53.2%	54.6%	65.3%
VAW is prevalent in your community	33.3%	23.9%	26.3%	33.9%	38.9%
Respondents (n)	39	247	453	130	334

Analysis broken down by "employment" shows that dehqan and farmers agreed the least about the prevalence of violence against women in the society - 34.2%, and pupils and students to a lesser extent about the prevalence of violence against women in their communities - 20.0%. It is worth noting that employees were most likely to report the prevalence of violence against women in the society and in their communities - 62.5% and 38.7%, respectively (see Table 21).

Table 21. Percentage of respondents who agree with the statements about the prevalence of violence against women disaggregated by employment

Statement	Employment								
	Students	Employed	Self-employed	Dehqan/Farmer	Labor migrant	Performs odd jobs	Pensioner	Unemployed	Housewife
VAW is prevalent in our society	51.1%	62.5%	58.2%	34.2%	48.8%	43.1%	56.1%	60.3%	61.8%
VAW is prevalent in your community	20.0%	38.7%	27.8%	31.6%	29.3%	30.8%	33.3%	30.6%	26.5%
Respondents (n)	180	323	79	38	41	65	57	121	283



Analysis in terms of "economic welfare" shows that respondents who claimed they could afford to buy whatever they wanted were more likely to agree about the prevalence of violence against women, both in society and in their communities - 65.3% and 38.9%. It is worth noting that respondents who had enough money for food but not enough to buy clothes were the least likely to agree about the prevalence of violence against women in their communities (see Table 22).

Table 22. Percentage of respondents who agree with the statements about the prevalence of violence against women, broken down by economic welfare

Statement	Level of economic welfare				
	Not even enough money for food	Have enough money for food, but can't buy clothes	Have enough money for groceries and clothes, can't buy household appliances	Enough money for large purchases: a TV or a refrigerator	They are able to buy anything they want
VAW is prevalent in our society	56.4%	56.7%	53.2%	54.6%	65.3%
VAW is prevalent in your community	33.3%	23.9%	26.3%	33.9%	38.9%

7.2 Victims of SGBV

All persons with disabilities (PWDs) are at increased risk of violence, and this is associated with dependence on others and depriving them of necessary opportunities and rights. Many of these factors also lead to impunity.

Women with disabilities face double discrimination in all aspects of their lives. Compared to men with disabilities, **women are more likely to experience poverty and isolation** and tend to receive lower wages.

Analysis of transcripts from in-depth qualitative research interviews showed that almost all respondents recognized the widespread prevalence of violence against women and considered it a serious problem for our society. When asked to assess the severity of the problem in their home districts and villages, the number of respondents admitting that the problem is very acute is slightly lower. Several respondents noted that they had neither seen nor heard of such cases in their places of residence. A more detailed analysis revealed that **these respondents are not let out of the house by their husbands or other relatives**; they do not communicate with anyone they know or neighbors, and if they do go out, they are only accompanied by their husbands or other relatives.

The study found that **physical violence was particularly severe at the hands of husbands** who drink and use drugs and do not work anywhere. Economic and psychological types of violence were listed next in terms of frequency of use. **Women are not allowed to work.** If they do work, husbands keep an eye on their clothes, check their phone calls, don't allow them to call their parents, siblings.

Sexual violence was mentioned very rarely; this is due to the fact that **sexual issues are not discussed so openly in Tajik society.**

Most women believe that **girls 15-17 years old are already psychologically abused in their homes.** In this situation, **not only the fathers and brothers, but also the mothers of these girls are the abusers.** So, for example, they try to marry them off quickly, and do not support their idea of continuing their studies at the university. They are elementary not allowed to go out of the house excessively, or visit their girlfriends, etc. Rural respondents note that this is common practice in the districts where they live.

Women themselves see **the root causes of violence in their lack of education and decent work**, and their economic dependence on other family members. A group of women living with HIV noted that, among other reasons, they are subjected to violence because of their positive HIV status. A group of 15-17 year old girls and



respondents from rural areas cited the banning of girls from going to college and early marriage⁹ as the most important causes of violence to which they were exposed. Respondents from the city noted such an important reason as women's ignorance of their legal rights.

The **attitudes of those around them toward women who are abused** are disturbing. **They are not supported** by their husband's relatives, their siblings, or even the people closest to them - their mothers and fathers. They don't help them economically; they don't support them morally. "You have to live at your husband's house and be patient. Everybody puts up with it, not just you." Of the 100 interviews we conducted, in only a few cases do parents understand their daughters' difficult living situation, but cannot accept them at home because of their family's economic situation. They would love to help her, but they can't support their daughter and her children yet. And only in 3 cases did the parents give their daughters their own place to live, take them and their children back, and help them now. All 3 of these cases are from a group of women of different ages and various vulnerable groups.

As for their neighbors and fellow villagers, they try not to interfere at all. Only a few victims of violence noted that neighbors support them economically, help them with food and groceries, give their own and their children's clothes, etc.

Women with disabilities who had experienced violence did not express radically opposing views on attitudes toward violence and its prevalence in society. They all agree that there is a problem and that it is very acute where they live. Moreover, **all women with disabilities have experienced violence themselves at least once**. Rural women in particular stress the urgency of this problem.

All women in this cohort, without exception, believe that women with disabilities are much more frequently subjected to various types of violence compared to other women.

All women with disabilities, first and foremost, face violence on the part of family members where they live.

In addition to domestic violence, **women with disabilities face violence on the street by neighbors and strangers.**

Among the most common types of violence, physical violence ranks first, followed by psychological violence and then economic violence. Sexual violence was also noted among respondents with disabilities, which was not mentioned by respondents from other examined groups. We believe that this fact clearly confirms the greater vulnerability of women with disabilities compared to other groups.

Women with disabilities cited a number of reasons for violence against them. These can be divided into the following groups. The most frequently cited group of reasons is that women have disabilities.

The next reason has to do with existing attitudes in society toward people with disabilities, but unfortunately, this doesn't just apply to neighbors and strangers. Even parents and family members are not adequately treated by their family members who have disabilities. They take their pensions from them for their own needs, they think that people with disabilities do not have the right to work and study.

Another reason refers to themselves - **the complete ignorance of women with disabilities of their rights and benefits provided by the government**. This reason was mentioned by respondents from Dushanbe and Sughd regions.

Further noted is the lack of education (even secondary education) and employment for women with disabilities.

⁹ The definition of "early" marriage is considered for girls who have not reached the marriageable age, which is set by the legislation of the Republic of Tajikistan (RT) at the age limit of 18 years. There is an amendment to the marriageable age limit *"in exceptional cases the court may lower the marriageable age at the request of persons wishing to marry, set by this article for men and women, by not more than one year"* – Art. 13 "Marriage Age" of the Family Code of the Republic of Tajikistan; Article 35 "Application for marriage" of the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan On State Registration of Acts of Civil Status.



The study revealed that **the violence committed leads to low self-esteem of women with disabilities**, which in turn becomes the cause of follow-up violence against them. Women put up with the situation and do not even consider the opportunities to change it.

7.3 Representatives of state authorities

State authorities' understanding of the prevalence of violence is a significant indicator. It should be taken into account that they are part of society and their understanding of the situation may be the same as that of the respondents from the population.

The results of the analysis of respondents' answers from among government employees show that, in general, the answers to almost all questions are consistent with the answers of respondents from the general population.

Thus almost three fourths of state employees agree that violence is widespread in our society - 72.1%, and 77.3% of the population agree with this statement (see subsection 7.1). When the question touched upon the prevalence of violence in the populated area, the proportion of those who agree went down both among government workers - 45.3% and among the general population - 45.6% (see Subsection 7.1).

The trends in the comparison of responses among men and women are also identical. Women are more inclined with the idea of what is common among the population¹⁰.

Table 23. Percentage of respondents who agree with the statements about the prevalence of violence against women, by economic welfare

Statement	Share of those, who agree %	Respondent gender	
		Male	Female
VAW is prevalent in our society	72.1%	41.2%	55.6%
VAW is prevalent in your community	45.3%	17.5%	27.8%

8. Knowledge and attitudes toward violence

8.1 Population

Understanding that VAW exists as a problem in society is, on the one hand, an acknowledgement of it as such. Survey respondents were asked a series of questions in a cascade fashion: first, a general question was asked:

- 1) Is there this problem in the community?
- 2) Is there this problem in a particular settlement?

In constructing the questions in this way, the following assumption was made if:

- A. the response rate to the first question and the response rate to the second question are equal, then the problem is fully recognized because respondents are aware that their community is part of the society. And, if the problem is significant and prevalent to society, then it is also a problem for the area where the respondent lives;
- B. the response rate to the first question is higher than the response rate to the second question. In this case, for the respondents this problem exists at the declarative level, as they talk about it from high tribunes, publish materials in mass media, etc. However, this problem is not identified as actually present in the everyday life of the community;
- C. the response rate to the first question is lower than the response rate to the second question. In this case, it can be argued that respondents are really and fully aware of the problem and that there may be factors that they believe are reinforcing VAW in their community.

¹⁰ Since the results of the responses of both the population and representatives of government agencies are almost identical, then the responses of representatives of government agencies are not given separately.



According to the survey results, the majority of respondents agreed with the statement that violence against women is a serious problem in society (75.2%). However, only less than half of respondents (40.6%) regard violence against women as a serious problem in their communities. And that fact demonstrates the perception of the problem on a declarative level.

Women perceive violence against women in the community as a serious problem (76.6%) more than men (73.8%). In contrast, women are less likely to consider violence against women in their communities as a serious problem (37.7%) than men (43.7%). The analysis in the section "type of locality" shows an almost identical situation of the proportion of those who agree on both statements (see Table 24).

Table 24. Percentage of respondents who consider violence against women a serious problem by gender and type of location

Statement	Share of those, who agree %	Respondent gender		Type of locality	
		Male	Female	Urban	Rural
VAW is prevalent in our society	75.2%	73.8%	76.6%	76.7%	74.1%
VAW is prevalent in your community	40.7%	43.7%	37.7%	42.3%	39.6%
Respondents (n)	1203	604	599	503	700

Analysis of the results of the study broken down by "age group" shows that respondents aged 15-17 years are less likely to agree about the severity of the problem of violence against women in society and in their communities - 65.7% and 30.5%, respectively. It is worth noting that respondents with increasing age group more often agreed with the severity of the problem of violence against women both in society and in their communities (see Table 25).

Table 25. Percentage of respondents who consider violence against women a serious problem, by age group

Statement	Age group				
	15-17 years old	18-24 years old	25-34 years old	35-54 years old	55 years old and over
VAW is prevalent in our society	65.7%	72.8%	74.1%	77.5%	81.8%
VAW is prevalent in your community	30.5%	35.1%	43.8%	42.0%	46.7%
Respondents (n)	105	239	320	374	165

The results of the analysis broken down by districts/cities" show that respondents from Yovon, Isfara, Rudaki, and Vose agree the least about the severity of the problem of violence in society - 69.4%, 70.5%, 72.5%, and 73.3%, respectively. In contrast, however, respondents from Hisor, Dushanbe, and B. Gafurov most often acknowledge the severity of the problem of violence against women in society - 80.9%, 80.0% and 78.5%. Despite the fact that the majority of B. Gafurov's respondents agreed about the seriousness of the problem of violence against women in our society, they were the least likely to agree at the level of their settlements - 29.7% (see Table 26).

Table 26. Percentage of respondents who believe that violence against women is a serious problem, disaggregated by district/city

Statement	Districts/cities						
	B. Gafurov	Vose	Hisor	Dushanbe	Isfara	Rudaki	Yovon
VAW is prevalent in our society	78.5%	73.3%	80.9%	80.0%	70.5%	72.5%	69.4%
VAW is prevalent in your community	29.7%	42.9%	55.5%	44.5%	40.4%	38.6%	32.5%
Respondents (n)	172	161	173	200	166	171	160

Analysis by the survey results shows that respondents with higher or incomplete higher education are more likely to agree about the gravity of the problem of violence against women, both in society and in their



communities - 83.8% and 54.2%, respectively. It is worth noting that respondents with incomplete secondary education agreed the least about the gravity of the problem of violence in society and in their localities - 67.6% and 32.8% respectively (see Table 27).

Table 27. Percentage of respondents who believe violence against women is a serious problem, broken down by level of education

Statement	Education				
	Primary	Incomplete secondary	Complete secondary	Special (technical school/college)	Higher, including incomplete
VAW is prevalent in our society	74.4%	67.6%	72.4%	77.7%	83.8%
VAW is prevalent in your community	35.9%	32.8%	35.5%	40.8%	54.2%
Respondents (n)	39	247	453	130	334

Analysis in terms of "employment" shows that dekhkan/farmers doing odd jobs and migrant workers were least likely to perceive violence against women in society as a serious problem - 65.8%, 66.2%, and 68.3%. In contrast, however, employed respondents were most likely to agree about the severity of violence against women in society - 80.8%. It should be noted that violence against women at the level of their settlements was perceived as a serious problem by the majority of respondents doing odd jobs (53.8%). Housewives and migrant workers agreed the least at the settlement level - 33.6% and 34.1%, respectively (see Table 28).

Table 28. Percentage of respondents who believe violence against women is a serious problem, broken down by employment

Statement	Employment								
	Students	Employed	Self-employed	Dehkan/Farmer	Labor migrant	Performs odd jobs	Pensioner	Unemployed	Housewife
VAW is prevalent in our society	70.6%	80.8%	78.5%	65.8%	68.3%	66.2%	77.2%	71.1%	75.6%
VAW is prevalent in your community	35.6%	48.6%	46.8%	36.8%	34.1%	53.8%	42.1%	35.5%	33.6%
Respondents (n)	108	323	79	38	41	65	57	121	283

Analysis by "Economic welfare" shows that respondents who said they did not have enough money for clothing and respondents who could not afford large purchases, were more likely to admit that violence against women was a serious problem in society - 80.8% and 78.5% respectively, and in their own communities - 48.6% and 46.8% respectively (see Table 29).

Table 29. Percentage of respondents who consider violence against women a serious problem, broken down by economic welfare

	Percentage of those who justify, %
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Is it possible to justify beating your partner if:	Not even enough money for food	Have enough money for food, but can't buy clothes	Have enough money for groceries and clothes, can't buy household appliances	Enough money for large purchases: a TV or a refrigerator	They are able to buy anything they want
Refuses to obey	70.6%	80.8%	78.5%	65.8%	68.3%
Argues	35.6%	48.6%	46.8%	36.8%	34.1%
Total respondents (n)	111	319	497	85	190

8.2. Representatives of state authorities

An absolute majority of respondents agreed with the statement that violence against women is a serious problem in society - 96.9%. And the proportion of respondents who believe that this problem exists in their community decreases by a third - 61.8% (see Table 30).

Table 30. Percentage of respondents who consider violence a serious problem

Statement	Percentage of those who agree, %	Respondent gender	
		Male	Female
VAW is prevalent in our society	96.9%	93.0%	100.0%
VAW is prevalent in your community	61.8%	62.7%	61.1%

The distribution of answers of respondents who agree that VAW is a problem in society and in the community shows that representatives of the Prosecutor's Office and the Supreme Court, as well as the Committee on Women's Affairs, are most aware of the problem (see Table 31).

It is of serious concern that not all representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, even at the community level, are concerned about VAW.

Table 31: Percentage of respondents who consider violence a serious problem broken down by agencies

Agencies	VAW is a problem in society	VAW is a problem in the settlement
Committee on Women and Family Affairs	100.0%	86.7%
Office of the Prosecutor General	100.0%	100.0%
Ministry of Justice	100.0%	50.0%
Ministry of Health and Social Protection	100.0%	70.0%
Ministry of Education and Science	100.0%	61.5%
Agency on Statistics	100.0%	37.5%
Ministry of the Interior	90.0%	80.0%
Committee on Religious Affairs	90.0%	50.0%
Supreme Court	100.0%	100.0%
Legal Aid Center of the Ministry of Justice	100.0%	0.0%
Union of Attorneys	100.0%	0.0%

Analysis of the data revealed that a possible reason why VAW is not seen as a problem could be the fact that for almost half of the respondents the violence is seen as a private family matter (see Table 32).

Table 32. Percentage of respondents who agree with the statement

Statement	Respondent gender
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	Percentage of those who agree, %	Male	Female
Domestic violence is a private matter for each family. No one should interfere.	47.4%	55.8%	40.7%

9. Baseline indicators

9.1 Population

Indicator 3.1. Percentage of people who think it is justified for a man/woman to beat his/her partner

On average, 41.2% of the respondents admit the possibility of violence against their partner. The majority of respondents believe that cheating is justified for beating their partner (79.8%). Refusal to have sex was the least significant reason for beating one's partner (22.0%). Analysis by "gender of respondents" shows that, on average, women are more likely to justify beating their partner (43.5%) than men (38.9%). It is worth noting that the survey results broken down by "type of locality" show that on average 43.4% of respondents from urban areas and 39.6% from rural areas justify beating their partner (see Table 33).

Table 33. Percentage of respondents who think it is justified to beat their partner, broken down by gender of respondents and type of location

Is it possible to justify beating your partner if:	All respondents	Respondent gender		Type of locality	
		Male	Female	Urban	Rural
Refuses to obey	34.3%	34.1%	34.6%	38.4%	31.4%
Argues	40.7%	40.7%	40.7%	44.3%	38.1%
Doesn't handle household chores	28.2%	23.3%	33.1%	29.8%	27.0%
Refuses to have sex	22.0%	20.7%	23.4%	22.3%	21.9%
Cheats	79.8%	73%	86.6%	81.3%	78.7%
Does not do what his or her parents and/or relatives tell him or her to do	42.1%	41.7%	42.6%	44.3%	40.6%
In average	41.2%	38.9%	43.5%	43.4%	39.6%
Total respondents (n)	1203	604	599	503	700

Analysis by "age" shows that, on average, a significant proportion of respondents aged 18-24 and 25-34 justify beating their partner - 44.2% and 45.8%, respectively (see Table 34).

Table 34. Percentage of respondents who think it is justified to beat their partner, disaggregated by age group

Is it possible to justify beating your partner if:	Percentage of those who justify, %				
	15-17 years old	18-24 years old	25-34 years old	35-54 years old	55 years old and over
Refuses to obey	22.9%	35.1%	42.8%	31.8%	29.7%
Argues	31.4%	46.4%	45.9%	37.7%	35.2%
Doesn't handle household chores	21.0%	30.5%	28.8%	28.1%	28.5%
Refuses to have sex	11.4%	25.1%	22.8%	22.2%	22.4%
Cheats	73.3%	81.6%	85.0%	78.6%	73.9%
Does not do what his or her parents and/or relatives tell him or her to do	35.2%	46.9%	44.7%	39.3%	41.2%
In average	32.5%	44.3%	45.0%	39.6%	38.5%
Total respondents (n)	168	176	162	158	121



Analysis by "districts/cities" shows that, on average, almost half of the Vose respondents (49.7%) justify beating their partner. It is worth noting that, on average, respondents from Rudaki district were the least likely not to justify beating their partner - 32.5% (see Table 35).

Table 35. Percentage of respondents who think it is justified to beat their partner broken down by districts/cities

Is it possible to justify beating your partner if:	Percentage of those who justify, %						
	B. Gafurov	Vose	Hisor	Dushanbe	Isfara	Rudaki	Yovon
Refuses to obey	42.4%	39.8%	35.3%	41.5%	27.7%	19.9%	32.5%
Argues	48.3%	46.6%	43.9%	45.0%	41.6%	24.6%	34.4%
Doesn't handle household chores	26.7%	37.3%	33.5%	32.0%	19.9%	19.9%	27.5%
Refuses to have sex	20.9%	32.9%	26.0%	21.5%	19.9%	15.2%	18.1%
Cheats	78.5%	83.9%	86.7%	77.5%	70.5%	84.8%	76.9%
Does not do what his or her parents and/or relatives tell him or her to do	37.2%	57.8%	44.5%	47.5%	37.3%	30.4%	40.0%
In average	42.3%	49.7%	45.0%	44.2%	36.1%	32.5%	38.2%
Total respondents (n)	172	161	173	200	166	171	160

Analysis in terms of "level of welfare" shows that, on average, the majority of respondents who do not have enough money even for food justify beating their partner (51.7%). It is worth noting that, on average, respondents who can afford large purchases, such as a TV set or a refrigerator, and those respondents who can afford almost anything they want are less likely to justify beating their partner - 30.3% and 34.6%, respectively (see Table 36). Analysis shows a high inverse relationship between the level of welfare and attitudes toward violence; the higher the welfare, the less likely (91.6%) respondents were to justify violence.

Table 36. Percentage of respondents who think it is justified to beat their partner broken down by economic welfare

Is it possible to justify beating your partner if:	Percentage of those who justify, %				
	Not even enough money for food	Have enough money for food, but can't buy clothes	Have enough money for groceries and clothes, can't buy household appliances	Enough money for large purchases: a TV or a refrigerator	They are able to buy anything they want
Refuses to obey	49.5%	35.4%	35.4%	23.2%	25.8%
Argues	54.1%	43.3%	41.0%	29.3%	33.2%
Doesn't handle household chores	42.3%	35.7%	25.6%	14.6%	20.0%
Refuses to have sex	36.9%	26.0%	19.5%	11.0%	17.9%
Cheats	76.6%	82.1%	80.1%	73.2%	80.0%
Does not do what his or her parents and/or relatives tell him or her to do	50.5%	47.6%	43.1 %	30.5%	30.5%
In average	51.7%	45.0%	40.8%	30.3%	34.6%
Total respondents (n)	111	319	497	82	190

Analysis shows that, on average, 52.2% of respondents with disabilities and 41.0% of respondents without disabilities justify beating their partner. It is worth noting that the comparison of these groups is not statistically significant because of the large difference in the samples (see Table 37).

Table 37. Percentage of respondents with and without disabilities who think it is justified to beat their partner

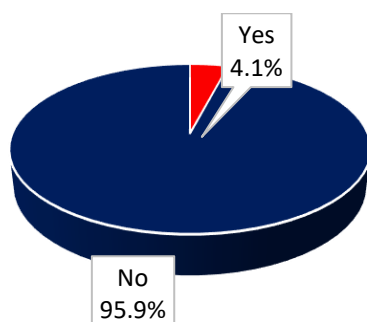
Is it possible to justify beating your partner if:	Percentage of those who justify, %	
	Respondents with a disability	Respondents without disability
Refuses to obey	39.1%	34.2%
Argues	52.2%	40.5%
Doesn't handle household chores	34.8%	28.1%
Refuses to have sex	34.8%	21.8%
Cheats	91.3%	79.6%
Does not do what his or her parents and/or relatives tell him or her to do	60.9%	41.8%
In average	52.2%	41.0%
Total respondents (n)	23	1180

Indicator 3.2 (b) Percentage of people who think it is justified to subject girls to child marriage

The definition of "child marriage" describes a marriage in which the girl is under the age of 18. According to global standards, marriage before the age of 18 equates to the category of "early or child marriage" and is defined as a "harmful practice" because it can lead to negative consequences "including physical, psychological, economic and social harm and/or violence and limitation of their opportunities to participate fully in society or to develop and realize their potential". It is believed that a party (bride or groom) who marries before the age of 18 can suffer a number of negative consequences, including increased risks of maternal and child mortality, limited access to education, and, consequently, potentially narrowing the opportunities of the individual in the labor market¹¹.

Current survey data show that 4.1% of all respondents believe it is justified to subject girls to child marriage (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Percentage of respondents who believe it is justified to subject girls to child marriage



Analysis in terms of "districts/cities" shows that respondents from Vose (8.7%) most often allow the possibility of subjecting girls to child marriage. It is noteworthy that respondents in Dushanbe are also inclined to accept the possibility of such a marriage. It is generally believed that urban residents, especially those living in the capital, are more progressive. However, it should be taken into account that, since the 1990s, the process of migration, in which the place of departing urban residents is replaced by rural ones, has not stopped. In this

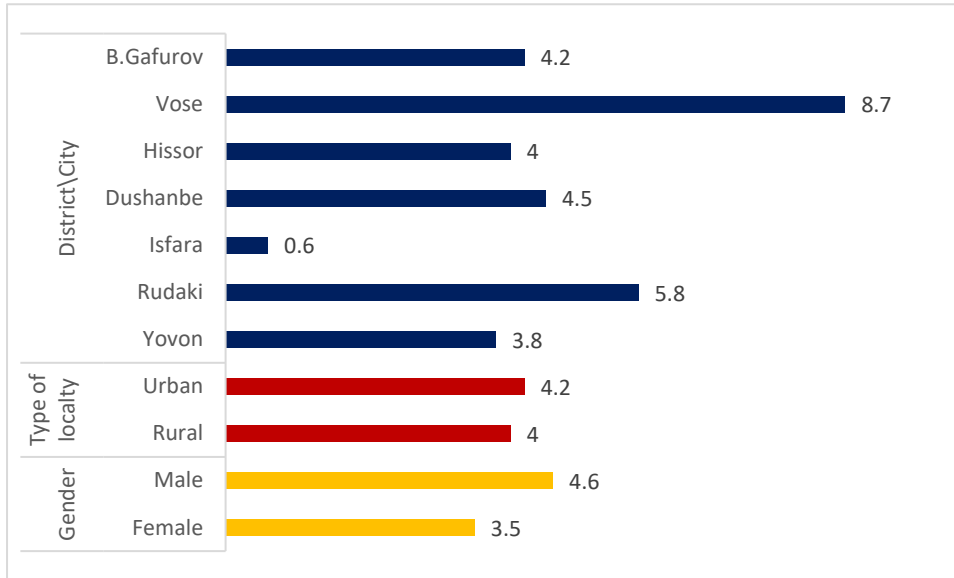
¹¹ Analysis of judicial formulations permitting the registration of early marriages // MoJ of Tajikistan, UN Women. - Dushanbe, 2019.



case, it is difficult to use the term "urban" in relation to Dushanbe, as we are talking more about rural-urban residents.

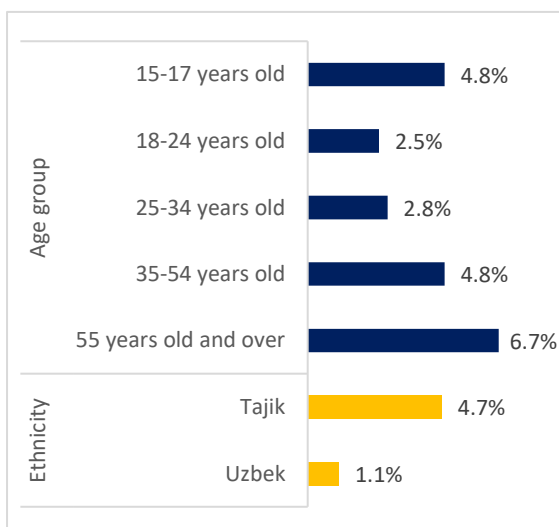
It is worth noting that in the context of "type of locality", the situation is almost identical: urban - 4.2%, rural - 4.0%. It should be noted that "men" (4.6%) are more inclined to justify child marriage than "women" (3.5%) (see Figure 10).

Figure 10. Percentage of respondents who think it is justified to subject girls to child marriage broken down by district/city, locality type, and gender



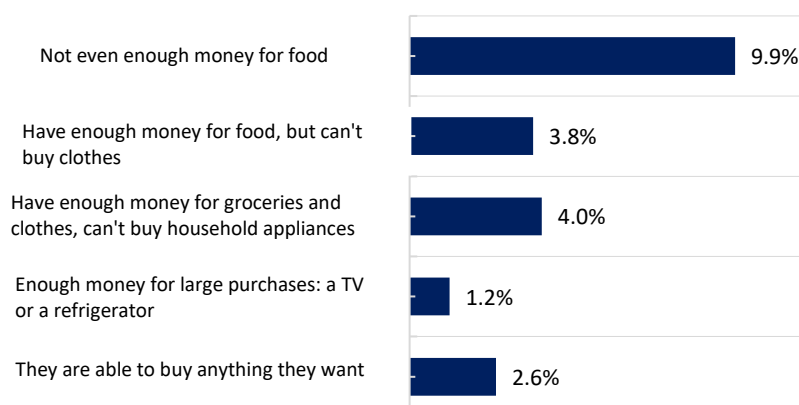
According to the survey results, respondents age 50 and older (7.4%) were more likely to think it was justified to subject girls to child marriage. It is worth noting that "Uzbeks" (1.1%) are less inclined to justify child marriage than "Tajiks" (4.7%), but given the large difference between the surveyed "Uzbeks" and "Tajiks," this result is not statistically significant (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. Percentage of respondents who think it is justified to subject girls to child marriage broken down by age and ethnicity



early marriage justified (9.9%) (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. Percentage of respondents who think it is justified to subject girls to child marriage broken down by economic welfare



9.2 Representatives of state authorities

Indicator 3.1. Percentage of people who think it is justified for a man/woman to beat his/her partner

On average, 16.8% of all respondents believe it is possible to explain why a partner physically abuses the other partner and possibly justify these actions (see Table 38).

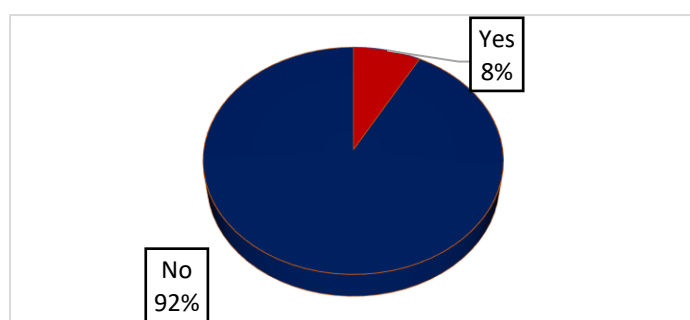
Table 38. Percentage of respondents who agree with the statements

Is it possible to justify beating your partner if:	All respondents	Respondent age	
		Male	Female
Refuses to obey	13.4%	11.6%	14.8%
Argues	14.4%	14.0%	14.8%
Doesn't handle household chores	10.3%	9.3%	11.1%
Refuses to have sex	8.2%	9.3%	7.4%
Cheats	43.3%	44.2%	42.6%
Does not do what his or her parents and/or relatives tell him or her to do	11.3%	11.6%	11.1%
In average	16.8%	16.7%	17.0%

Indicator 3.2 (b) Percentage of people who think it is justified to subject girls to child marriage

On average 8.0% of the total number of respondents think child marriage is possible. We should recall that according to the law, the age of marriage is 18 years old.

Figure 13. Consent to child marriage





10. Findings and recommendations

10.1 Findings

The results of the study and data analysis allow us to formulate the following findings:

- ⇒ In general, the absolute majority of respondents associated "violence" with "physical violence" - 95.9%;
- ⇒ Hypothetically, economic violence can be quite widely practiced, because in the opinion of respondents does not correlate with violence. Presumably, this type of violence can be categorized as socially non-judgmental behavior - 58.1%;
- ⇒ Analysis of the results on the perception of respondents on the significance of the problem of VAWG and its prevalence suggests that the recognition of this problem as such is declarative in nature:

Population

- for instance, according to 77.3% of respondents, VAWG is widespread in society. At the same time, only 45.6% agree with the statement about the prevalence of violence in their communities;
- three fourths of the respondents believe that VAWG is a serious problem -75.2%. At the same time, only 40.6% believe that this is also the situation in their communities;

Representatives of state authorities

- Almost all respondents agree that VAW is a serious problem in society - 96.9%. 61.8% agree that it is a problem in their community;
 - They agree that VAW is widespread in the community - 72.1%, in the respondent's locality - 45.3%;
 - Understanding that VAW is a problem in society and in the community is revealed in representatives of the Prosecutor's Office and the Supreme Court, as well as the Committee on Women's Affairs;
 - It is of serious concern that not all representatives of the Ministry of Interior, even at the societal level, are concerned about VAW;
 - A possible explanation is that 47.4% of respondents believe that "violence is a private family matter and no one should interfere".
- ⇒ The study found that women with disabilities face double discrimination in all aspects of their lives. This group is most often classified as poor. There is stigmatization and social exclusion. They are under fairly strict control, as they are most often not allowed out of the house by their husbands or other relatives. They are usually not allowed to work, even if the opportunity is there;
- ⇒ Physical violence is particularly severe at the hands of husbands who abuse alcohol, use drugs, and have no job;
- ⇒ Sex issues are not discussed so openly in Tajik society. Girls with disabilities are already psychologically abused in their homes. And the abusers in this case are not only the fathers and brothers, but also the mothers of these girls;
- ⇒ According to people with disabilities themselves, the reasons for VAW are the lack of independence of women, as they have no professional education (and often no secondary education) and decent work. In addition, it was noted that women with disabilities are completely unaware of their rights and the benefits provided by the state;
- ⇒ Alarming are the attitudes towards women who are subjected to violence in the community. According to people with disabilities themselves, "they are indifferent," since the most practiced principle is *"all what happens at home should stay at home"*. All women with disabilities have experienced violence at least once;



- ⇒ Women with disabilities, first and foremost, face violence from members of the family in which they live. Along with this, they also face violence in the street from neighbors and strangers. Violence inside and outside the home gradually causes/increases low self-esteem, which subsequently leads to a vicious circle in which violence low self-esteem leads to taking violence for granted and in turn causes subsequent acts of violence against them;
- ⇒ Calculation results for baseline indicators:

Indicator 3.1. Percentage of people who think it is justified for a man/woman to beat his/her partner

- **Population:** On average 41.2% of respondents justify physical violence. One of the most powerful reasons, according to respondents "justifying violence" is cheating 79.8%;
- **Government agencies:** an average of 16.8% justified physical violence. Cheating was also identified as the most important reason - 43.3%.

Indicator 3.2 (b) Percentage of people who think it is justified to subject girls to child marriage

- **Population:** 4.1% justify "child marriage";
- **Governmental agencies:** from the total number of respondents of this target group 8.0% believe that child marriage is possible.

10.2 Recommendations

Global Long Term Initiative the "Spotlight " aims to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls, to promote zero tolerance for violence.

One of the basic foundations that contribute to the reproduction of violence is social norms. It seems that the most significant activities aimed at changing norms from "justification of violence" to "condemnation of violence" should be communication activities.

The review of the study results allows us to conclude that an understanding of VAW as a problem has not yet been formed, which allows us to formulate the following recommendations:

- ⇒ Develop a Communication Strategy aimed at promoting "zero tolerance";
- ⇒ The topic of VAW should be presented to the public in a more comprehensible language, so that there would be an understanding of what VAW is;
- ⇒ More systematic solutions are needed to conduct training activities for representatives of government agencies on the issue of VAW.

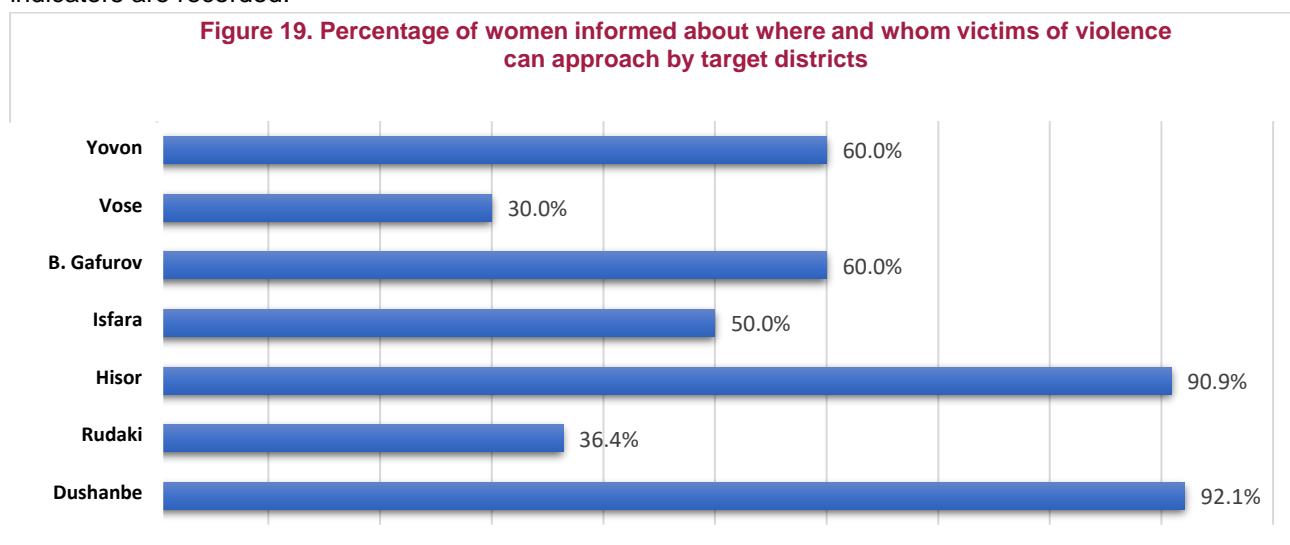


Capacity assessment of the government agencies and civil society organizations to promote gender equality and eradicate gender-based and sexual violence

Based on the results of the baseline study

THE LEVEL OF BENEFICIARY SATISFACTION WITH ACCESS AND QUALITY OF BASIC SERVICES

Access to services for victims of violence depends in many respects on the level of awareness among the general population, and among women and girls, of the providers and services available to support victims of violence. According to the information received, out of 100 respondents, 66 people know where and whom they can approach if they are a survivor of violence. When interpreting these data, it should be taken into account that the selection of respondents was carried out through service organizations as well. That is why such high indicators are recorded.



VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE SEEKING HELP FROM VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS.

The study found that only two out of five respondents had sought help from various organizations after the violence. Half of all women who sought help went to only one institution. The most common type of institution in this group is a community-based organization. One in four respondents went to two institutions, the most common being health care facilities and the police.

Women with disabilities who are victims of violence.

There is a significant difference in the frequency of seeking help between groups of women with disabilities compared to the other groups of victims of violence under study. Women with disabilities are less likely to seek help from various organizations: of the four victims of violence who sought help, only one was a woman with a disability. Among the reasons for not approaching, in addition to the lack of information about such



organizations, is the fear of family members. *"I don't want to create more problems for myself, everything hurts anyway. Someone else will come to their house for a showdown, my situation will get worse. I know her (mother-in-law -ed.), less noise is better» (SS No.22, Dushanbe, Women with disabilities).*

The number of institutions to which victims of violence with disabilities apply for the majority of women with disabilities does not exceed one.

Women with disabilities, when confronted with violence, most often go to health care facilities. The percentage of these women who turned to public organizations and social services is extremely low, and the percentage of those who turned to the police for legal assistance is not high.

Table 4: Victims of violence seek help from various organizations.

	Sectors	Women with disabilities	The rest of the study groups
1	Police	4,0%	26%
2	Health facilities	10,0%	34%
3	Legal Aid	6,0%	20%
4	Social services	2,0%	16%
5	Educational institutions	---	4%
6	Public organizations	2,0%	42%
7	Other (local governments, land committee, etc.)	8,0%	2%

The qualitative study revealed that the level of satisfaction with the services of these organizations varied for different sectors. Of all the women with disabilities who applied to the police, prosecutors, and courts, not one was satisfied with the actions taken by these organizations. The main reason for dissatisfaction is that the respondents were never helped to solve their problem. As the women themselves pointed out, in their cases, the police simply did not fulfill their basic duty to protect victims of violence.

"When I went to the police, one day he was detained, the second day he was detained, the next day he was released. And I was told that it's your family problems, it's your showdown, deal with it somehow." (SS No. 39, Dushanbe, Women with disabilities).

One woman said that she had to refuse to apply to these structures, because she was asked to pay for the services of preparing and submitting the case to the court.

"We went to court. They treated us well, but asked for money, they said, bring 300-400 somoni and we'll provide you with a lawyer and you'll go with him. We do not have such an opportunity. My father gets a salary of 450 somoni, my mother gets the same. We ourselves barely have enough to live on". (SS No.69, Vose, Women with disabilities).

The completely opposite situation was revealed in the study regarding satisfaction with services provided by medical institutions, social services, public and other organizations. Without exception, all those who contacted us were satisfied with both the attitude toward them and the actions taken. For example, medical institutions not only provide qualified assistance, but also inform the police about the violence, and provide a medical opinion to the victim in a timely manner. Women's committees in their neighborhoods conduct counseling and discussions for them and their families, which helps women morally and psychologically.

Public and other organizations, including local governments and Jamoats, the Land Committee, and women's places of work or study, provide more long-term assistance to women - helping them obtain land to build their own homes, providing jobs, etc. *"Five months after the violence, I applied to the Land Committee of our district, they gave me land and I am very satisfied with them and their attitude towards me" (SS No. 88, Hisor, Women with disabilities).*

The rest of the studied groups of women subjected to violence.



The other groups of respondents studied were significantly more active in seeking help. On average, each woman applied to two or more organizations, and one of them applied to all the organizations we mentioned. Every third woman applied to 3 or more organizations for help and support.

Respondents living in the city were the most active in applying, by age - over 20 years old, from the following groups under study:

- Wives of labor migrants
- Women of different age and vulnerable groups
- Women sex workers

When considering the types of institutions to which women applied, it was revealed that most often these were public organizations and medical institutions. It should be noted that women with disabilities rarely mentioned cases of applying to public organizations. Next follow the police and legal aid. Only after them follow social services and educational institutions.

Analysis of the level of satisfaction with the work of these institutions showed that almost all respondents are satisfied with the quality of services provided by educational institutions and community organizations. *Three quarters* of the respondents are satisfied with the quality of services provided to them by medical institutions and social services. And only *two out of five* respondents are satisfied with the results of their appeal to the police.

"The more one encounters, the more one thinks, why should one approach them then, if one doesn't see any help from them." (SS No. 32, Dushanbe, Women with disabilities)

The main reason for discontent with the work of these organizations is that they did not help women to solve their problems, did not protect them from the violence and its consequences. The most common reason for not providing assistance is women's inability to pay for the services provided.

"I told them that I was HIV-positive and I needed a lawyer, many turned away from me immediately, others would not listen, only one man followed me and said, "Pay me from three thousand somoni to five thousand somoni, I will help you". (SS No.3, Dushanbe, WLHIV).

"When I saw that nothing was working out, I paid and hired a lawyer. The lawyer prepared my case and two days later it was sent to court". (SS No.1, Dushanbe, WLHIV).

Many times during the interviews women complained that the cases in question were decided in favor of the perpetrators of violence, which made their lives even more difficult.

"The prosecutor's office didn't help me in any way. They decided the case in their favor. There were representatives of the court, the district police, firemen, ambulance representatives, and the mahalla chairman. He locked up a girl who was 11 years old, put a knife to her throat and threatened her not to scream or he would kill her. And all this so that we wouldn't live in their house. After the prosecutor's office didn't take action, I went home and two days later the scandals started again, and he said you gave them money and you couldn't do anything. Then he beat me and the children". (SS No.15, Dushanbe, Women of different ages).

In their feedback, the women suggested that the police, prosecutors, and courts should be conscientious about their duties and "not ask women for money, who already have nothing".

Respondents gave a lot of positive feedback about the work of NGOs. Among those mentioned were such organizations as "Spin Plus", "Tajik Network of Women Living with HIV", "Bovari Plus", "Human Rights Bureau", "Marvovid" and others. Respondents named a wide range of services provided by these organizations. Among them are such as:

- Free provision of attorney's services.
- Free legal advice.
- Accommodation in a shelter.
- Occupational training in sewing and hairdressing.
- Counseling by a psychologist not only for victims of violence, but also for their families.
- Trainings and seminars on legal issues.
- Assistance in processing and obtaining documents, etc.



All respondents noted a very good attitude towards them when they contacted the above-mentioned organizations. *"They treated me very well, I'm very grateful to these organizations for having them and I didn't know where to go for so long. Since I am susceptible to this virus, I didn't know where to turn. I am grateful that there are such organizations and they are aware of our problems. (SS No.91, Rudaki, WLHIV).*

Despite this, they raised concerns about the short-term nature of projects aimed at eradicating violence, the number of such organizations. They expressed the opinion that not all women are yet aware of such organizations and do not approach them.

"Until mid-January, they were calling, asking about my condition, and then 6-7 months later, they said that their project was over, and they disappeared like that. If I need anything I call, they say, go there, go here. They say they don't work on issues of violence anymore." (SS No.6, Vose, WLHIV).

"I wish there were more organizations like this. Such organizations, where they bring women together and explain their rights to them. But no one knows your organizations, and you can make business cards for yourself and hand them out. You need to spread the word so people know there are organizations where women can apply". (SS No.15, Dushanbe, Women of different ages).

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO BUILD THE CAPACITY OF PARTNERS ON ELIMINATING GENDER-BASED AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the activities of all government agencies and public organizations in the area of violence prevention and provision of services to victims of violence. The mechanism of public social order for these types of activities for public organizations, as equal and full partners, becomes increasingly widespread. Institutional capacity of all partners has been built.

At the national and sectoral level, the country has laid the foundation for a regulatory and legal framework of policies to prevent gender-based violence, identify and prosecute abusers, and provide various types of assistance to victims of violence. However, against the backdrop of certain gaps in the legal framework and contradictions between the existing norms of the legal framework and the widespread belief among the public that violence is tolerated and justified by its cultural features and "oriental mentality," the task of more active improvement of legislation increasingly becomes urgent.

By-laws in the area of gender and sexual violence are not fully utilized to strengthen the activities of various ministries and departments due to their certain weaknesses, and sometimes lack of knowledge of the approved sectoral instructions by the implementers. One of the reasons is the lack of an established mechanism for their registration in the state register of regulations in the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Tajikistan and conducting an appropriate legal review.

There is an insufficient level of implementation of a comprehensive approach to creating a sectoral system of services to prevent SGBV and support victims of violence, using international standards, associated with an imperfect legal framework, lack of developed infrastructure for responding to gender-based violence, lack of funding, lack of established mechanisms for interagency cooperation among all stakeholders, low level of gender sensitivity of a large number of specialists, weak implementation of the principle of the SDG "leave no one behind", etc.

Analyzing the causes of discontent of beneficiaries based on the results of appeals to various structures, it is necessary to note such problems as:

- ✓ existence of stereotypical perceptions and attitudes towards victims and assessment of cases of violence by the employees of the departments of various ministries themselves;
- ✓ insufficient level of preparedness for communication with clients;
- ✓ limited range of services provided;
- ✓ lack of 24-hour access for victims of violence to emergency psychological counseling or other services, etc.

According to feedback from quite a number of beneficiaries, they received almost no help as a result of their appeals to various agencies. Given the limited capacity of individual ministries and agencies to provide various



types of services to victims of violence, mechanisms for redirecting them to other social or law enforcement services have not been fine-tuned.

While at the level of national strategies and state programs, setting priorities and developing responses to gender-based violence usually runs through all the main sections, it is often completely out of sight at the level of sectoral programs.

No interagency mechanism has yet been established to oversee the development and implementation of policies to eliminate violence against women and girls and children. Inter-agency cooperation is poorly developed, and the redirection mechanism has not been fine-tuned, partly due to the lack of clear and accessible methodological guidance.

The overall level of gender sensitivity of staff in ministries and agencies in developing and implementing policies to promote gender equality and eradicate violence against women, including the level of awareness and skills of staff in responding to gender-based violence, can be defined as insufficient and requiring the intervention of educational programs.

Institutional mechanisms are being expanded in ministries and agencies to provide various services in the area of gender-based violence. At the same time, it must be noted that the country has not yet created a comprehensive system to prevent gender-based violence and support victims of violence, ranging from meeting practical, vital needs (providing shelter in crisis situations, clothing, food, etc.) to strategic needs, aimed at ensuring the access of women victims of violence to various types of resources, including vocational training, access to credit, new jobs, etc.

Limited access to SGBV services for abused women and insufficient quality of services further discourage women victims of violence from seeking help from various public institutions.

One of the weakest points in the activities of all key partners is the extremely low level of impact on public opinion about the unacceptability of gender-based and sexual violence against women and girls, changing gender-biased social norms for tolerating domestic violence, etc. With the exception of the "16 Days Without Violence" campaign, which tends to be fairly centralized and targeted, the capacity assessment was unable to identify any such well-organized awareness campaigns, especially at the local level. The reports contain information about the campaigns, but in practice, especially at the local level, with large crowds of people, a lot of different issues are simply discussed at the same time.

The lack of strong arguments for it does not help to strengthen the policy of inadmissibility and condemnation by local communities of the violence committed. To date, there is no unified statistical database on VAW in the country, which combines statistics on criminal and administrative offenses, on appeals to various centers and services to support women subjected to violence and services provided to them. The available statistics on victims and types of violence are not unified.

The creation of a unified database on VAW, including domestic violence, depends directly on solving common problems of recording registration and creating a unified database on all types of offenses. A unified registration of crimes based on the data of all law enforcement structures (8 structures) has been established and is being improved, but there is no unified accounting and reporting system for administrative offenses, referrals, and services provided to victims.

The inclusion of statistical data on administrative offenses in a single database of the Ministry of Internal Affairs will greatly contribute to improving the production and dissemination of data on VAW. Because, in everyday life, more administrative offenses are committed in the area of violence against women than criminal offenses. Another thing is that not all administrative offenses related to domestic violence are identified and recorded.

RECOMMENDATIONS

on improving the regulatory framework

The country program to provide technical support to government working groups to complete activities on improving gender legislation, including on domestic violence, and to submit the results for approval to the Government of Tajikistan, including such issues as:

- ✓ Inclusion in the Criminal Code of Tajikistan of a separate article providing for criminal liability for domestic violence, where one of the parties to these cases is a direct dependent family or other



- personal (marital, de facto-marital relationship) relationship between the victim and the person who committed the crime.
- ✓ Provide for liability in the Criminal Code for sexual harassment in the workplace and in public places.
 - ✓ Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Code related to the protection of victims of domestic violence and access to justice. Change domestic violence cases from private prosecution to public prosecution or public-private prosecution.
 - ✓ Amendments to the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On Regulatory and Legal Acts" regarding mandatory gender expertise of newly adopted laws, especially sectoral laws.

In accordance with the concept of providing free legal assistance in Tajikistan to amend the Law "On Legal Assistance" to include in the number of "persons entitled to free secondary legal support in criminal cases - persons who have suffered from domestic violence and torture, their close relatives and family members".

Strengthen advocacy before the Ministry of Justice of the RT to ensure the implementation of the Law of the RT "On Regulatory and Legal Acts" and increase ministries' responsibility for the development of departmental instructions in the field of prevention and support for victims:

- ✓ conduct an audit of the registered bylaws of ministries and departments in the area of prevention and elimination of gender-based violence
- ✓ based on the results of the audit, define a list of by-laws in the field of prevention and elimination of gender-based violence, subject to state registration with the Ministry of Justice
 - ✓ relevant ministries and agencies to review the already adopted instructions for compliance and ensure the implementation of regulatory and legal acts of Tajikistan and international standards in the prevention and eradication of gender-based violence
 - ✓ following the results of the examination, the relevant ministries and departments to submit the corrected bylaws to the Ministry of Justice for state registration.

Institutional arrangements

Promote the creation of the Interagency Council for the Prevention of Gender-Based Violence, headed by the Deputy Prime Minister. Provide for standing working groups in the structure of the Council in various areas, including groups to improve the regulatory framework, monitoring and evaluation, development of standards for the provision of services for prevention and survivors of violence, etc.

In order to promote the establishment of sectoral structures responsible for the development of gender-sensitive sectoral policies to hold public hearings on the implementation of measures of the Medium-Term Development Program of Tajikistan for 2021-2025 for the creation of gender groups in line ministries and agencies.

Among the functions of gender groups of ministries are to consider:

- Participation in the development and implementation of sectoral strategies, programs and action plans for their implementation.
- Development of recommendations and proposals to improve the industry and national regulatory framework.
- Participation jointly with relevant units of the ministry/department in the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of gender policy implementation processes, implementation of the National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan until 2030, the UN Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other national and international programs and plans.
- Assist in improving gender statistics, development of gender indicators, forms of accounting and reporting in accordance with international standards, and submit proposals to the management of the ministry/agency and the Agency for Statistics under the President of Tajikistan. In coordination with the leadership of the ministry/department, provide the Statistical Agency under the President of Tajikistan with the necessary statistical data in the area of gender issues in the industry.
- Conduct awareness-raising and education activities to increase the legal knowledge and gender sensitivity of ministry/departmental staff. For this purpose, develops informational materials and conducts informational gender sessions and training seminars.



- Monitor gender balance among the staff of the ministry/agency and develop proposals to the management of the ministry/agency for the promotion of qualified women and the preparation of a female cadre reserve.
- Development of recommendations to structural subdivisions of ministries/agencies, other line ministries and agencies, local executive authorities to ensure and take into account the interests and needs of men and women, including vulnerable groups.
- Promoting initiatives aimed at overcoming gender stereotypes among the population and in the field of industry policy, using the potential of the agency website, mass media, and information campaigns.
- Assistance in the creation and operation of gender groups in structural units of the ministry/agency in GBAO, Sughd and Khatlon provinces and Dushanbe city.

Intensify joint activities with the CWF and line ministries to conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of gender policies and programs with further discussion and dissemination of the results.

Building gender capacity and increasing gender sensitivity among employees of ministries and agencies

On the part of donors and the Spotlight Initiative, it is necessary to focus on assisting in the creation of a sustainable system of gender capacity building of ministries on the basis of existing institutions of professional development of ministries and agencies with the mandatory inclusion of special courses on the general issues of promoting gender equality and the specifics of gender-based violence prevention policies in the curricula.

It is reasonable to use a two-level model:

1. Continuously running special training courses within the system of professional development on the basis of sectoral institutes of professional development
2. Operational and mobile training on current gender-oriented topics and newly adopted policies and legislation

Analysis of previously conducted trainings, meetings and conversations with employees of national and district government agencies indicates the need for training programs on various topics with a priority of such as:

1. Direct and indirect discrimination of women and men
2. Promoting gender equality and religious norms, cultural traditions
3. The role of monitoring and evaluation in implementing policies to promote gender equality and eliminate gender-based violence
4. Problems and main directions of activities on providing quality services for women and girls affected by violence in accordance with international standards
5. Mechanisms and the most effective forms of development of interagency cooperation in the field of prevention of VAWG and support to victims of violence
6. Gender expertise and gender analysis: important tools for the development and implementation of gender policy
7. Gender statistics and maintenance of a database on requests and services to victims of gender-based violence

Improving the quality of basic services in the field of VAWG

Development of proposals by the Spotlight Country Program for ministries of implementing partners to create working groups to develop proposals to improve the bylaws for the provision of basic services to meet international standards.

As part of the implementation of component 4 "Quality Services" of the "Spotlight" program and component 1 "Laws and Policies" and the creation of a system of services in the field of sexual and gender-based violence to provide expert and technical support to relevant ministries and agencies to develop a list of public services in the field of sexual and gender-based violence in accordance with international standards and for entering it into the state register of public services in accordance with the Law of RT "On public services".



Development and implementation of the Communication Strategy of the Government to promote gender equality, eliminate gender stereotypes and change public attitudes and behavior towards all forms of violence against women and girls.

In education sector

The Ministry of Education and Science to discuss the feasibility of developing an action plan to create and build the capacity of creative teams to develop a new generation of textbooks.

Involvement of creative teachers, psychologists, methodologists and other specialists in the process of creating textbooks. Development of modules and training for teams of authors on the development of a new generation of textbooks with a mandatory gender component.

Amending the "Rules on the Procedure for the Publication of Textbooks, Programs, and Study Guides" in terms of a mandatory procedure for gender expertise of textbooks for secondary schools, universities, and other educational institutions.

Inclusion of the topics of gender aspects of education and forms of work among parents and the population on overcoming gender stereotypes in the mandatory programs of professional development courses for teachers and managers at all levels of the education system.

Reinforcing awareness-raising work with fathers by teachers and professors of educational institutions about the consequences for children of their violence against their wives in the presence of children. Because it leads to further reproduction of violence by their sons against their wives, and it already leads to the fact that boys at school subject their female classmates to psychological and sometimes physical violence.

In order to improve the quality of textbooks and to provide school teachers with a choice of textbooks, to draw attention to positive experiences with the development of alternative textbooks and to encourage potential authors to develop alternative textbooks.

On gender statistics

Improvement of gender statistics by expanding the list of disaggregated data by gender and other gender indicators in the database on the website of the Agency on Statistics under the President of Tajikistan, on the page "Gender Statistics", including data on women in business with the addition of new statistics on access to credit, including indicators on borrowers disaggregated by gender in general, by gender by urban and rural population, by sector of loans (agriculture, trade, industrial production, etc.).

Expansion of disaggregated data by sex and other gender indicators in sectoral collections: in labor, education, health, etc., as well as in collections based on sample surveys by including statistical data disaggregated not only by sex in general, but also by rural and urban men and women, by different age groups of men and women, disabled people, etc.

Supplementing the provided indicators in the statistical compilation "Gender indicators in dekhon farms" (DF) by including new indicators on shareholders disaggregated by gender, the average size of a land plot of DF headed by men and headed by women, indicators on loans of DFs, etc.

On the creation of databases on VAWG

The Spotlight Country Program to advocate for faster resolution of issues on the creation of a consolidated database on VAWG to use planned measures under the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics through 2030 to strengthen the coordinating role of the Agency for Statistics in the production of gender statistics at the administrative recording level and improve institutional mechanisms for interaction with key partners and data producers, as well as on the creation of an interagency gender working group of specialists from ministries and agencies.

The country program to develop a partnership with the Ministry of Interior and unify efforts to maintain the database to use the work already begun by the Main Information Analytical Center (MIAC) of the Ministry of Interior to create a unified database not only of criminal offenses, but also of administrative offenses.



To improve and harmonize administrative data and statistics on violence against women and girls of different social services it is necessary to develop and agree on a Roadmap detailing the institutional, methodological, regulatory and financial mechanisms for creating a unified database. The roadmap should include short-, medium-, and long-term action plans.

At the 1st stage it is necessary to create a coordination mechanism under the Agency on Statistics under the President of Tajikistan to develop and coordinate the model used to maintain databases, methodological and software of these databases. The composition should include all structures involved in the production of statistics on VAW in 2 areas:

- ✓ recording and reporting of crimes and administrative offenses (law enforcement agencies)
- ✓ on registration of appeals to social services under state structures and public associations, other non-profit organizations.

The presence of similar indicators on gender, age, marital and social status and other characteristics of victims of violence, as well as the identification of types of violence committed, the consequences of violence, the victim's relationship to the person who committed the crime, etc., in the forms for registering victims of violence (CWF, MHSP, centers under NGOs, etc.) is a good basis for further unifying the registration and reporting forms and creating a consolidated database on VAW in the future.

As part of an inter-agency partnership between all social service providers, including governmental and nongovernmental agencies (medical and social rehabilitation offices, CWF's Resource Center, Crisis Centers, shelters, etc.), accounting and reporting forms must be developed and agreed upon that include mandatory indicators on the victim, type of violence and perpetrator of violence.

Given that a consolidated database on crimes is maintained on the basis of articles of the Criminal Code, it is essential to develop a classifier of types of violence on the basis of articles of the Criminal Code.

RESULTS OF THE CAPACITY ASSESSMENT OF PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS

General information about registered POs in Tajikistan

According to the data provided by the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Tajikistan, 2,700 public associations were registered in the republic at the end of 2021. It should be taken into account that some organizations are registered, but not functioning. The vast majority of organizations, over 80% are registered in the form of public organizations.

In 2021 the Ministry of Justice received information from 1448 (in 2020 - 1505) public associations and seven political parties about continuing their activities. However, notifications of grants and assistance from foreign organizations were received from **2,556** (2,204 in 2020) public organizations. **Public organizations of Tajikistan in the past year 2021 received grants from abroad in the amount of 124 million 507 thousand 732 somoni, which compared with 2020 is more by 33 million somoni.**¹²

According to the ministry, in 2021 there were 431 (in 2020 - 487) applications for registration of public associations, registration of branches and representative offices, as well as liquidation. Of these, the Ministry rejected 105 (in 2020 - 111) applications for registration of public associations in connection with non-compliance with the provisions of the Law "On Public Associations. At the same time 122 (in 2020 - 103) public associations and 16 (in 2020 - 16) branches of public associations underwent the procedure of state registration of liquidation and were excluded from the Unified State Register of Public Associations.

¹² <https://www.adliya.tj/ru/news/publications/press-konferenciya-po-itogam-2021-goda>



General characteristics of the POs included in the capacity assessment

The capacity assessment of public organizations (POs) was conducted on the basis of the database created based on the results of PO mapping conducted by Tahlil va Mashvarat LLC from May 15 to June 15, 2020. After the official endorsement and exchange of notes¹³ on the implementation of the UN-EU Spotlight Initiative Joint Program and the official launch of the Program, the list for the capacity assessment was adjusted to reflect the past year's changes in the activities of the POs. Forty-one POs were included in the capacity assessment list. Due to the new wave of COVID, most of the POs were interviewed online. (See Appendix 13. Database of POs with projects).

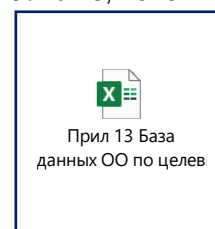


Table 4: Distribution of community-based organizations included in the capacity assessment by target district and by work with vulnerable groups

No.	Target cities/districts	Total	WLHIV	Persons with disabilities	Youth
1	Dushanbe	25	2	5	5
2	Isfara	2		1	1
3	B.Gafurov	1			
4	Yovon	1			
5	Vose				
6	Rudaki	1		1	1
7	Hisor	1		1	1
8	Khujand	6			3
9	Bokhtar	2		1	1
10	Kulob	3		1	1
	TOTAL	41	2	10	13

Results of the PO capacity assessment

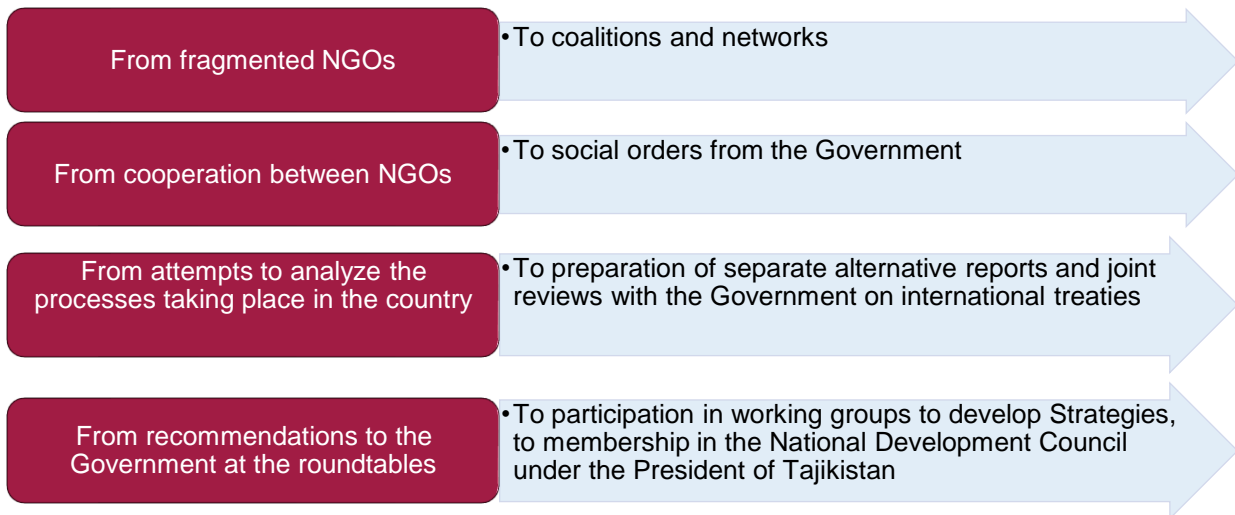
As the results of the study show, eliminating gender-based violence is a key priority for POs. Public organizations in the country, just as in the 1990s, have initiated public discussion of violence against women, lobbying to improve the legislative framework in the area of gender-based violence, conducting information campaigns on the inadmissibility of violence against women and girls with the support of international organizations and in partnership with the CWF and other government agencies, expanding activities to provide services to victims of violence, etc.

In recent years, POs have increasingly contributed to the promotion of gender equality and have been effective in their activities to prevent VAWG and provide services to survivors of violence.

The evolution of the relationship between state structures and POs indicates the deepening and development of social partnership between them. The developing dialogue between the government and the "third sector" facilitated the transition from targeted meetings to joint projects and activities, the social ordering of POs to implement social programs, participation in the National Development Council under the President of Tajikistan, etc.

Figure 20. Evolutionary directions in CSO activities

¹³ Decree of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan dated May 24, 2021, No.186.



The National Development Council under the President of Tajikistan is an advisory and consultative body established to ensure interaction between government agencies, the private sector and civil society on the implementation of the National Development Strategy of Tajikistan until 2030, medium-term development programs of Tajikistan and the Sustainable Development Goals. There are PO representatives on all interagency working groups of the Council.

What strategies do POs use to be more effective in addressing gender-based violence?



The results of the capacity assessment document the activities of the three PO coalitions in promoting gender equality and the elimination of VAWG.

Table 5. Coalitions of POs working to promote gender equality and end VAWG.

Title	Basis of activity	Areas of activity
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<p>Coalition of POs "From Legal Equality to Actual Equality" (43 organizations)</p>	<p>Operates on the basis of a partnership agreement, without forming a legal entity since 2008</p>	<p>Advocacy to promote gender equality and eradicate VAWG at the national and local levels. Gender expertise of laws, (public hearings, public M&E, alternative reports, statements, etc.). Building the capacity of coalition members and POs to promote gender equality and eradicate VAWG/SGBV, etc.</p>
<p>Rule of Law and Access to Justice Network of POs (18 members)</p>	<p>Operates on the basis of the Memorandum of Cooperation without establishing a legal entity since 2015</p>	<p>Assistance in effective implementation of the principles of transparency, accessibility and reduction of corruption risks in the judicial system and justice bodies. Helping to improve access to justice for victims of domestic violence. Helping improve access to justice for people with disabilities (men, women, boys and girls) and people living with HIV/AIDS Building the capacity of Network members to effectively implement strategic goals and objectives, etc.</p>
<p>Civil Society Coalition against Torture and Impunity (13 POs and 9 individuals)</p>	<p>Acts on the agreed Rules and principles of participation in the Civil Society Coalition against Torture in Tajikistan</p>	<p>Documentation of cases of torture and VAWG Legal advice Provision of a lawyer Psychological help, including rehabilitation Social support Trial monitoring Promotion of the Istanbul Protocol standards in law and practice</p>

An important role in uniting the efforts of CSOs is played by the PO coalition "From Legal Equality to Actual Equality", established on May 22, 2008, which currently brings together 43 organizations from different regions. The Coalition regularly conducts public monitoring, gender expertise of key draft laws, strategies and other acts, submits its recommendations to various draft laws and national programs, etc.

With the support of the Ministry of Defense and in partnership with NGOs, from 2008 to 2012 a uniform database "Life without violence" was created and maintained on referrals to Crisis Centers. Information on the coalition's database was submitted to the Agency on Statistics and published in the collection "Women and Men of Tajikistan."

Three alternative reports were prepared and submitted to the UN Committee on CEDAW (2006, 2012, 2018). A fourth alternative report on CEDAW is currently being prepared.

Although advocacy for a response to ending VAWG is not a core activity for the Civil Society Coalition Against Torture and Impunity and the PO Network on Rule of Law and Access to Justice, the coalition documents cases of VAWG and provides legal support to victims of violence.

The Civil Society Coalition against Torture and Impunity in Tajikistan was established in September 2011 to consolidate civil society efforts to combat torture and impunity in Tajikistan. The Coalition is an important platform and safe space for all members to receive support, professional advice, counseling, enhance their professional skills, join forces and speak with one voice to better impact decision makers, victims and donors.

In 2021, the Coalition's legal aid team documented 24 appeals concerning torture and cruel treatment, five of which were filed by women. The work is continued on 9 cases from previous years. Fourteen people were rehabilitated, of whom five were men and nine were women. Of the total number of victims, six were direct victims of torture and ill-treatment, and eight were relatives of victims of torture and/or ill-treatment.



In the last 2-3 years 14 POs have strengthened their work in the field of VAWG with vulnerable groups of women, including WLHIV, with disabilities (*see Appendix 13. Database of POs*).

Three organizations that participated in the capacity assessment provide shelter services: PO Korvoni Umed (Dushanbe), PO Femida (Dushanbe), and the Crisis Center Gulrukhsor (Khujand).

Korvoni Umed, a PO dedicated to helping victims of domestic violence, recently expanded a project to help its clients. More women now have the opportunity to take classes in sewing, cooking and jewelry making. Korvoni Umed PO has existed in Tajikistan for 12 years and works with women and children who are in difficult life situations and are experiencing difficulties.

The organization has its own shelter, where women can stay with their children from 3 to 6 months, receive rehabilitation and psychological help from specialists. But Umeda Sadridinova, the founder of Korvoni Umed, has always set a goal for her organization to work in such a way that it is not dependent on donors. This is how the first social cafe, Chatr, appeared, employing former employees of Korvoni Umed.

The training center runs three courses simultaneously. There are 10 women in the cooking course, and sewing courses are held in two shifts - in the morning and in the afternoon, with 15 students in each shift. "We provide an opportunity not only to learn, but also to be certified, because at the end of the courses we issue state diplomas in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population. And we know that when they leave us, these girls and women leave with a set of knowledge. They leave with a profession, and even if we won't be able to employ everyone in our café or organization, we know they can find work in another organization," says the founder of Korvoni Umed.

The Gulrukhsor Women's Center also has a shelter where women who are victims of domestic violence can find shelter, space, peace and support. Over the past 12 months, we have granted temporary asylum to 94 women and children, an average of eight new people each month. In the first 9 months of 2021, the Gulrukhsor Women's Center provided 2,622 free consultations to women, already 221 more than were provided for the entire year 2020. This amounts to helping an average of 10 women a day, every day of the week, every week of the year. Women who are victims of domestic violence can receive psychological counseling, support from social workers and legal advice to protect their rights. Through September 2021, 1,190 free legal consultations were provided, which is an increase from the 1,052 that were provided for all of 2020.¹⁴

On October 4, 2021, the Gulrukhsor Women's Centre held a roundtable to mark the official launch of the project "Strengthening Local Police Capacity to Protect Women's Legal Rights and Respond appropriately to Domestic Violence," with funding from the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives #CFLI¹⁵

In our opinion, the foundation for the long-term activities of the Center was laid by the agreement with the Regional Hukumat of Sughd Region on the transfer of premises for their use on preferential terms.

The purpose of the *Tashabbusi Huquqi* Public Foundation is to protect and promote human rights and freedoms in Tajikistan through the use of effective international human rights (child rights) protection mechanisms; to raise awareness of human rights/rights of the child. In 2020-2021 the Foundation documented 20 cases of sexual violence against children (15 girls and 5 boys) and provided support (*see Appendix 12. List of cases of violence against minor children. Criminal cases 2020-2021*).

Tashabbusi Huquqi PF initiated and coordinated with other POs the preparation of appeals to the Prosecutor General, the President of Tajikistan and other officials on bringing to justice for cases of sexual violence against children, as well as proposals to amend legislation to toughen penalties for sexual violence against children.

Weaknesses of POs

Against the backdrop of a large number of successful practices of POs in the field of VAWG, it is still necessary to state the insufficient organizational capacity of organizations due to the financial instability of POs. As a rule,

¹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/gulruhsor.tj/>

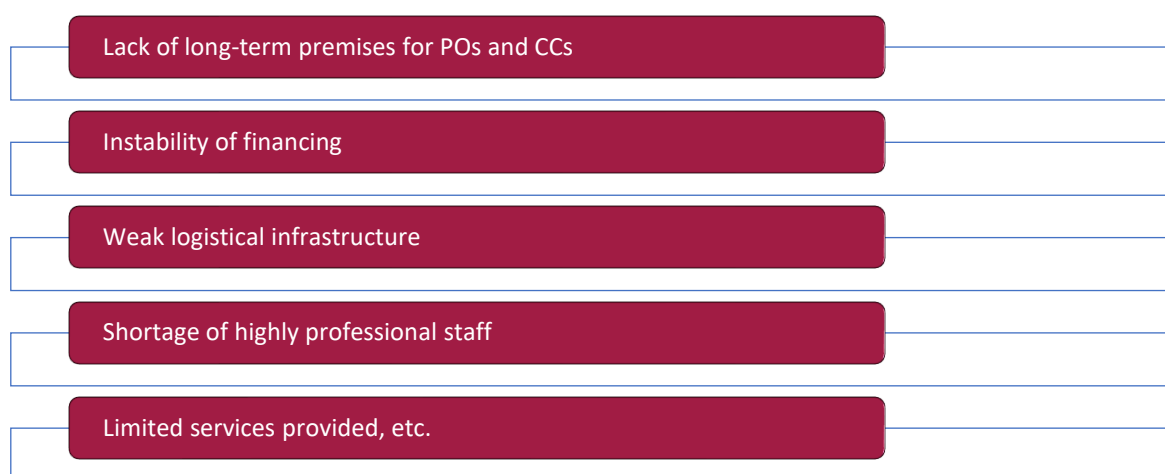
¹⁵ <https://www.facebook.com/gulruhsor.tj/>



the scope and programs of CSOs depend directly on the volume and availability of foreign donor funds. At the same time, the lack of funds deters CSOs from long-term strategic planning.

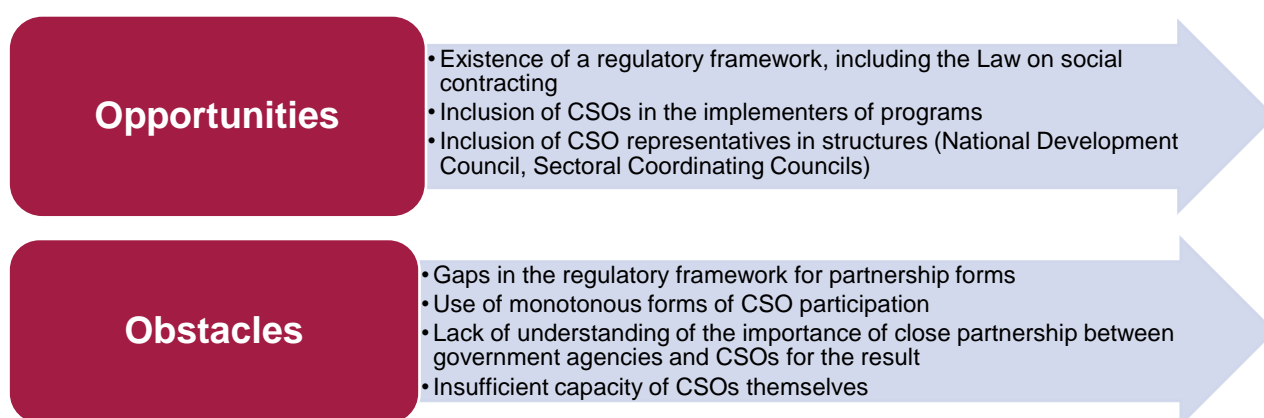
The capacity assessment showed that only 48% of POs operate on the basis of different types of strategies or action plans. Of those, 24% have strategies and action plans in place, and 24% have not yet had time to develop new plans and strategies.

Public organizations are included in the process of providing services and assistance to victims of violence in the target districts. However, it should be noted that the number and capacity of public organizations that deal with problems of domestic violence vary from region to region. The capacity of the NGO's support services for survivors of violence is also limited due to a number of problems. According to last year's capacity assessment, only 1 in 5 organizations had ever had staff members participate in collecting data on the prevalence and/or incidence of violence.



The untapped opportunities for social partnership between government agencies and POs, including gaps in the regulatory framework on the forms of participation and involvement of CSOs in joint activities with government agencies, still limited use by government agencies of the social contract for CSOs, etc. do not contribute to the expansion of the list of services and their quality by CSOs.

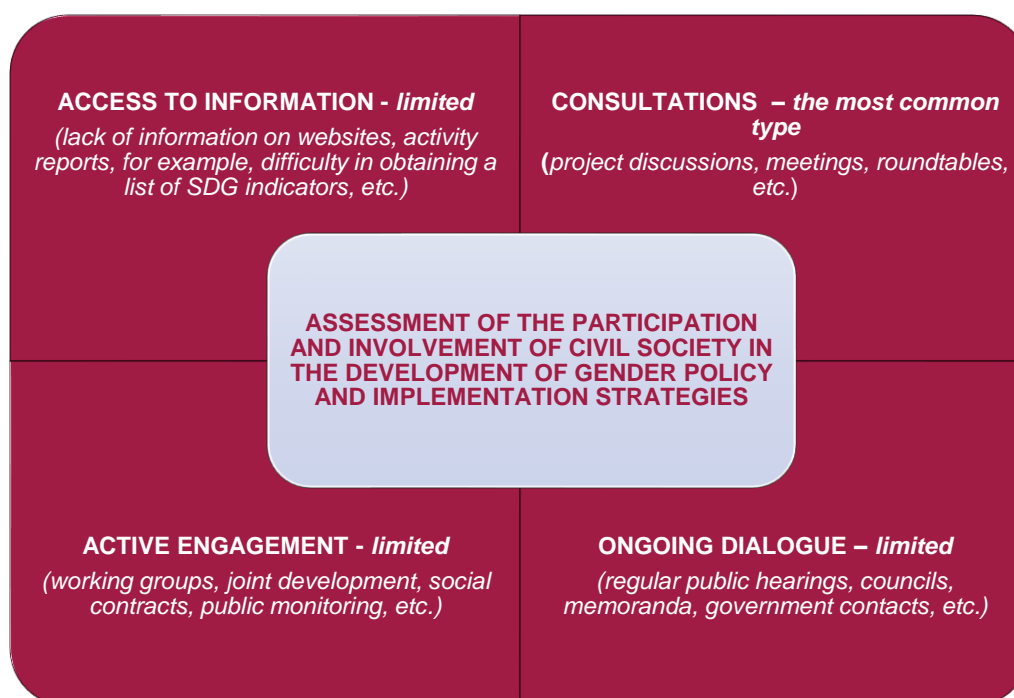
Figure 21. Opportunities and obstacles to the development of partnerships between government agencies and CSOs



Despite the fact that one third of the interviewed POs noted that they had participated in the discussion or development of various strategies and state programs on gender equality in varying degrees, the degree of CSO involvement is not yet very high, and the forms of participation are quite monotonous.



Figure 22: Assessment of the participation and involvement of civil society in the development of gender policy and implementation strategies.



FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

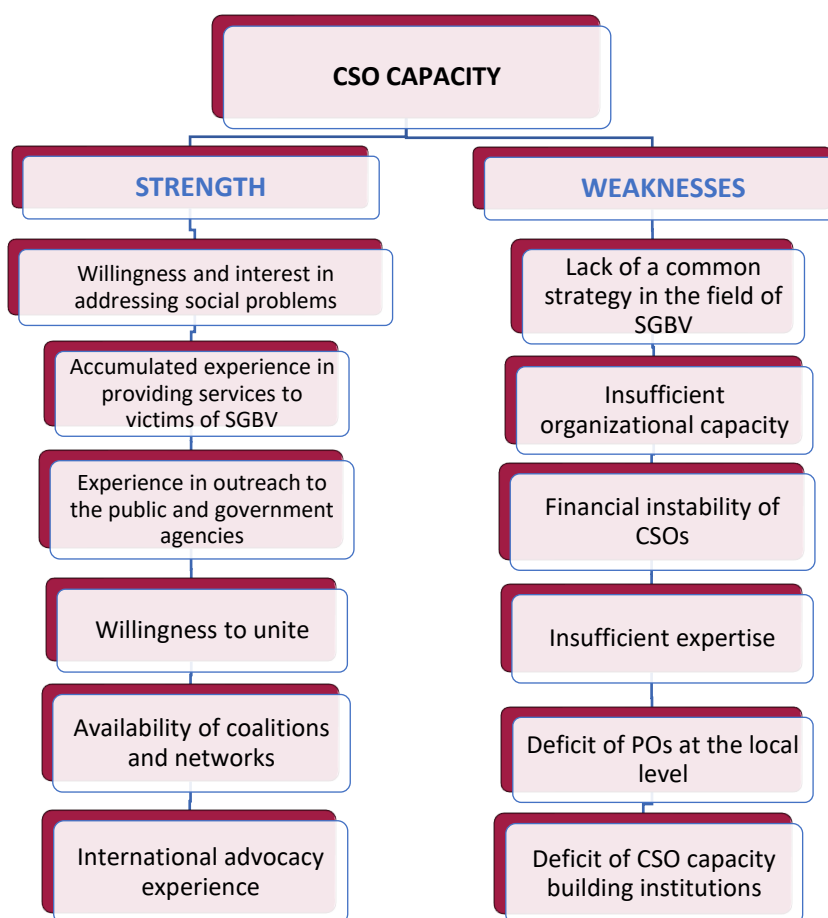
Public organizations strive to effectively promote the interests of various social groups and protect their rights, including through legislative initiatives. Active POs, networks promoting the rights of women and men subjected to multiple discrimination:

- ✓ People with disabilities
- ✓ WLHIV
- ✓ SW
- ✓ Rural women and others

Along with the strengths of CSO activities, weaknesses also draw the attention. Financial instability is one of the key problems of POs. Lack of financing deters CSOs from long-term strategic planning and hinders further development.

Public awareness of CSOs remains low. The role of CSOs is determined not by their number, but by their ability to influence social processes and government decision-making. To this end, it is necessary to make greater use of non-standard approaches to problem-solving, responsiveness and flexibility in activities to prevent VAWG and develop partnerships with government agencies.

Figure 23. Strengths and weaknesses of CSO capacities.



As part of the project activities of the Spotlight Program, it is important to strengthen activities to increase the capacity of CSOs, especially to join efforts and develop cooperation between CSOs, create networks and coalitions of various kinds, including organizations from different sectors (gender and youth POs; service organizations and those carrying out activities to advocate for improvement of legislation, public monitoring and evaluation, etc.)

The future prospects and development of CSOs should be focused on:

- ✓ Building their capacity
- ✓ Sustainability through finding mechanisms to secure new sources of funding
- ✓ Development of new forms of interaction between CSOs (networks, platforms, etc.)
- ✓ Design and implement new CSO development strategies
- ✓ Strengthening partnerships with government agencies
- ✓ Expanding the circle of partners and, first of all, through involvement of men, religious organizations, etc.

Use the most effective coordination mechanisms to implement the Civil Society Strategy and Action Plan "Behavioral Change and Implementation of Initiatives to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls," developed jointly by POs as part of the implementation of the UN Women Country Program "Spotlight" in partnership with the PO Gender and Development.

First of all, it is necessary to enhance the institutional capacity of CSOs, which includes a number of activities:

- ✓ Exchange of experience among civil society organizations, in which CSOs with experience, knowledge and reputation contribute to the development of new, young organizations;



- ✓ Creation of the Knowledge base in an online format can also contribute to capacity building, the preservation of accumulated positive experience, its transfer and further development.

Significant is the work with society as a whole, which implies:

- ✓ Development of volunteer work
- ✓ Interaction with the private sector.



In order to expand access to information about the activities of POs, the placement of registers of POs working in the field of VAWG on the websites of public and international organizations with regular updates of the database. As part of the Spotlight program activities, creating a web resource on various CSO activities, including the creation of an expanded registry of gender-sensitive CSOs.