

# GENDER

In Central Asia

# and WATER

№ 3 (10) March 2008

Newsletter of GWANET Network

## Gender and Higher Education in the Republic of Uzbekistan

**Discussion between I. A. Akhmedkhodjayeva,  
Project's National Coordinator and G.Pulatova,  
Chairman of Women's Committee at the  
Tashkent Irrigation and Land Reclamation  
Institute**

Since independent development of Uzbekistan, a network of humanitarian and technical institutes of higher educated has extended, mainly by opening of these institutes in provincial centers. A national program for manpower training makes provision for the establishment of colleges and lyceums in all regions throughout the republic. This enables girls to get professional training and higher education without leaving their homes for distant land and thus reduces their economic costs.

Besides educational institutions of new type, there are about 200 specialized secondary schools with more than 250 000 students, of which 52,4 % are girls and 47,6 % are boys.

The Uzbek educational system trains more than 6,5 millions, including 48,4 % of women, a share of which being sent for probation and advanced training abroad.

Selection of professions in educational institutions differs greatly among women and men. As a rule, female students prefer such sectors as education, health care, which male students choose industry, agriculture, construction, and education.



I. A. Akhmedkhodjayeva, Project's National Coordinator  
of Republic of Uzbekistan

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Existing stereotypes in thinking, i.e. division of labor into “female” and “male”, family traditions and economic factors influence the choice of professions by women and men.

Under transition conditions, our republic keeps mainly the public training system. Uzbekistan has favorable conditions for women to get education and advanced training. Every second specialist having higher or secondary education is a woman. There is high level of students and no gender parity problem in education. In terms of human investments, Uzbekistan approaches leading countries in the world.

Widespread development and application of information and communication technologies (ICT) as one of globalization aspects has an effect all over the world and in Uzbekistan, in particular, on empowerment of women and girls and facilitates gender equality.

Women in Uzbekistan possess high educational level: the share of women with higher and specialized secondary education is more than 50%. The public system of advanced training and re-training includes 23 institutions uniting 16 departments and 4 centers, including 14 training courses.\*

The Table below shows distribution of women with higher education among sectors and professions and distribution of higher education students among sectors.

Distribution of women dealing with research, design and engineering activities among scientific fields and professions, as of 01.01.2005.

Scientific fields and professions	Quality of specialists	Doctors of Science	Candidates of Science
Total	10527	430	2297
of which scientific fields:			
Natural sciences	2366	149	585
Mathematics, mechanics	353	7	89
Physics, astronomy	463	42	90
Chemistry, pharmaceutical chemistry	534	43	157
Biology, psychophysiology	550	39	207
Geological and mineralogical sciences	255	7	29
Geography (except for economic, social, and political)	211	11	16
Engineering sciences	1823	33	207
Medical science	1671	108	513
Agricultural science	477	11	78
Social sciences	1784	61	480
Economics	697	22	178
Law	146	4	35
Educational science	594	18	169
Psychology	136	13	63
Sociology	28	2	5
Political sciences	66	1	16
Other social sciences	117	1	14
Human sciences	2406	68	434
History	376	18	80
Philosophy	215	11	62
Philology	1489	25	237
Arts, theory and history of architecture	326	14	55

\*Second periodical report of the Republic of Uzbekistan on implementation of provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Tashkent, 2004.

### Distribution of higher education students by sectoral specialization of educational agencies (beginning of academic year 2005/2006)

	Women		Men		Distribution by sex, %	
	thousand	% of total	thousand	% of total	Women	Men
All educational agencies	113,9	100,0	164,8	100,0	40,9	59,1
of which :						
Industrial and construction	7,2	6,3	30,6	18,6	19,1	80,9
Agriculture	2,4	2,0	14,4	8,8	13,9	86,1
Transport and communication	2,6	2,3	13,2	8,0	16,3	83,7
Economics and law	12,8	11,3	17,1	10,3	43,0	57,0
Health care, physical culture and sport	10,4	9,1	13,2	8,0	43,9	56,1
Education	77,3	67,9	74,5	45,2	50,9	49,1
Arts and cinematography	1,2	1,1	1,8	1,1	40,6	59,4

The mean age of higher education students is 17–23 years. In native custom, this age is a time for marriage. Therefore, many people think that it is better to marry off a girl than to allow her to become graduated from a higher education institution. 40% students of all higher education institutions and 30% of post-graduates are women. 27,8% of Candidates of Science and 11,8% of Doctors of Science are women. However, women account for only 12% in Oliy Majlis (Uzbek Parliament).

Given that women account for 60% in industrial sector, only 18% of laboratory and site managers, 12% of machine shop managers and their deputies and 11% of top managers are women. Minor quantity of manager women can be explained by lack of knowledge and the fact that child rearing takes a lot of time and after maternity leave women lose their professional skills, as well as by poor health. Well-educated women are of greater importance both for family and for rearing of new generation. The people's proverb states "while rearing a boy, you brings up a person, while rearing a girl, you brings up a society". Minor quantity of women in the system of specialized secondary and higher education also impacts on the general education activity.



In order to brush up women's knowledge, it is necessary to activate propaganda through the mass media. For women in maternity leave, continuous workshops should be organized in their community area or in job places. \*\*

Gul'bakhor Pulatova, Chairman of Women's Committee at the Tashkent Irrigation and Land Reclamation Institute has answered the following questions during the discussion.

\*\*Ways and methods to implement final recommendations of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Djizak, 2003.

***Gul'bakhor-opa, what can you say about gender-related situation in your institute?***

Currently, the Institute prepares water specialists in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Our graduates work in all fields of water sector and agriculture, and many of them contribute to the progress in these sectors.

The Table below shows division of the Institute's teaching staff by gender.



**Teaching staff of the Tashkent Irrigation and Land Reclamation Institute in gender dimension**

	<b>Total (persons)</b>	<b>Men (persons)</b>	<b>Women (persons)</b>	<b>% of the total</b>
Total teachers	341	178	163	47,8
Doctors of Science, incl. professors	25	21	4	16
Candidates of Science, incl. lecturers	139	115	24	17,2
	107	84	23	21,5

In 2006 - 2007, 575 girls were trained in the Institute.

***What can you say about preparation of female students to their future family life?***

According to the Decree of the President of Uzbekistan "About additional measures to support activities of the Women's Committee of Uzbekistan" and a Governmental Regulation on a program of actions to fulfill this Decree, a special program for ensuring women's employment for 2005-2007, a certain work has been undertaken in the institute in order to improve legal awareness of women, raise standard of culture in families, prepare girls for the future family life, etc. In order

to have necessary skills for further family life, during a cotton campaign the girls who do not leave for cotton harvesting, take training in the following areas and get certificates after its completion:

- physiotherapy massage;
- assistant nurse courses;
- medical cosmetology and visage;
- new mother school;
- new family school, where young women get acquainted with legal aspects of the institution of marriage.

In the near future, it is planned to open dress-making courses, as well as cookery course in the building of hostel.

The core of the Women's Committee (our teachers) provides great assistance to its activities. Those are professors Bakhretidinova, Batyrova, Toshkuzieva; assistant chairman of the Committee Khodjimukhamedova; and many others. Besides, the chairman of Girls' Club, lecturer Akhmedbekova, Rakhimova ("Club of Leader-Girls"), Umarova (Center "Family"),





Gerasimova (Club "Sport"), and scholar Tashmatova actively participate in Committee's activities. Moreover, the Committee collaborates with the public agencies and supervision authorities, such as khakimiyat (municipality) of Mirzo-Ulugbek district, Health Protection Association, Republican Center for Health Protection, Borowsky college, 9th family hospital, and preventorium "Orom".

Other the recent 3 years, a few women, teachers of the Institute defended their Ph.F. theses: Ismailova, Urazaliyeva, Khojimukhamedova, Rakhmankulova.

### ***What can you say about activity of female students?***

Particular attention is paid to all-round development and support of the younger generation in Uzbekistan. This is proved by the Decree of the President of Uzbekistan No. UP-2326 of 10.06.1999 "About supporting proposals for the establishment of the Public prize named by Zulfiya". This is a public prize named by the national poetess Zulfiya, which is granted annually to young talented women for their achievements in education, research, culture, arts, and social life. Since 2000, 84 young women were granted this prize.

Students from our Institute has also participated in the prize competition.

In 2006, this prize was granted to the fourth-year student Tashmatova D.

Female students of our Institute actively participate in various competitions. For example, the fourth-year student Tashmatova participated in the quizzes about UN as organized by the UN

Information Center and UN ECE in 2000, 2001, and 2002 and received diplomas. Besides education, the Institute pays attention to cultural and intellectual development of our youth.

A folk dance company "Orom" was organized in the Institute's palace of culture. There are many female students in this company. They are trained in national and modern dances and appear on stage. Youth festivals are held every spring in the Palace of culture.

The Government of Uzbekistan also pays big attention to physical development and health of the younger generation. This is demonstrated by the following governmental documents: Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Uzbekistan № 271 "About measures for further development of physical culture and sport in Uzbekistan" of 27.05.1999; the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Uzbekistan of 1.01. 2004 "About measures for activation of popular sports propaganda". Equal rights for physical culture and engaging in sports with respect to women are vested in the Law about physical culture and sport, Article 2. Women and girls are engaged actively in different sports. Athletic feats among many of them contributed to



recognition of national sport and were given government awards.

For example, Iroda Tulyaganova won first place in three largest tennis contests, such as open championships in Japan, Seoul, Hiroshima, among juniors.

The student Kulishova A. is a gold medal winner in handball, while the fourth-year student Khan G. is a gold medal medalist for taekwondo.



### ***What can you say about nurturing of gender sensitivity among the students of the Institute?***

One basic goal in the education system is gender mainstreaming. The teaching staff should be trained so that further to disseminate knowledge among the students. Until 2002, gender courses had been organized often by teachers' enthusiasm. Such courses were given at the National University of Uzbekistan, Tashkent Institute of Law, Dzhizak Pedagogical Institute, etc. In 2002, the Open Society Institute - Assistance Fund-Uzbekistan initiated a project for the development of tutorial and incorporation of gender course in higher education institutions in Uzbekistan. To achieve the goal, cooperation with the Ministry of Higher and Specialized Secondary Education was established for joint implementation. By present, two sources were prepared for approbation of the gender course: tutorial «Gender basics: theory and practice in present Uzbekistan» and its study guide. One objective of this training course is to promote gender knowledge and gender sensitivity among the country's students. Currently, the Women's Committee is dealing with fostering of the younger generation, including girls, in the spirit of gender equality. \*\*\*

Active participants of the Women's Committee pay serious attention to this problem. They organized round-tables, where Dinara Alimdjanova, Coordinator of gender programs at the Eurasia Fund held a training in gender education, explained the concept of "gender equality" (equal rights and opportunities), and told about gender problems of socio-economic development in

Uzbekistan. She underlined that dissemination of gender equality ideas and gender mainstreaming in the society, as a whole, and in each education institution, in particular, would help to overcome current contradictions in social and economic development. \*\*

Besides, O.Pulatov, the pro-rector of the Tashkent Irrigation and Land Reclamation Institute participated in meetings of the Women's Committee and indicated to a need for wider involvement of young professional women in addressing of water and agricultural issues.

In March 2008, a workshop on integrated water resources management was held in ECO-GIS Center at the Institute for representatives of provincial branches of the State Environmental Committee and 20 undergraduates in ecology. The national project coordinator I.Akhmedkhodjayeva delivered a lecture on gender mainstreaming in water management in Uzbekistan. The participants demonstrated their



interest in the lecture and upon completion they continued asking questions on this problem and giving examples from their lives and practices. The participants agreed unanimously that the gender equality issue was very topical and gender awareness should be raised everywhere, starting from family, local community, school and institute.

One way to solve this problem is to organize clubs in all education institutions that would focus on girls' leadership development and improvement. The Institute regularly holds competitions "Leader women". 10 students from the Institute participated in such competition in 2007.

In order to build new society, it is necessary to

\*\*\*Candidate of Economics Isakova T., Dr. of Economics Abdullayev A., <Gender and problems of educational work> International Conference



foster new values in respecting a person and avoid foisting a role, which is preferred by men, on women. Our society is comprised of families, where exactly woman is the main source of all social values in forming intellectual and moral ideology, in fostering the younger generation.

Therefore the place and role of women are very important in development of the society.

Only self independent, intellectually mature woman is able to foster free and gender-sensitive person and thus, contribute to stronger citizenship. Gender courses should be incorporated into curricular in all fields: human and natural, engineering sciences to build social consciousness and activity. This will promote gender sensitivity, positive changes and gender balance in the society as a whole.

\*N. Kurganovskaya «Gender education resources in Uzbekistan», International Conference «Involvement of Uzbekistan's women in the development and social changes under transition period». Tashkent, 2002.

\*\*D.Alimdjanova «Gender problems of socio-economic development in Uzbekistan», International Conference «Involvement of Uzbekistan's women in the development and social changes under transition period». Tashkent, 2002.

## ROLE OF WOMEN IN WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN KAZAKHSTAN

**A. Zh. Omarbekova**

According to the Water Code of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Committee on Water Resources (hereinafter Committee) is an authorized body in charge of water resources use and protection in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The Committee is a part of the Ministry of Agriculture of Kazakhstan, and belongs to it in compliance with the hierarchy of state authorities.

The Committee is managed by Chairman and two deputies. The Central Office of the Committee is represented by three departments and six

divisions, which deal with water resources management; control and supervision; operation of waterworks facilities, water supply and land reclamation systems; and financial and economic issues.

34 people work in the Central Office of the Committee, including 14 women (41%), two of which working at decision-making level (5.8%).

### COMMITTEE ON WATER RESOURCES

Department	Actual staff number	specialist			women	
		chiefs of department, chiefs of division	top	senior	total	At decision-making level
Department for regulation, use and protection of water resources	10	3	5	2	5	1
Department for organization of waterworks facilities operation and land reclamation	10	3	5	2	3	1
Department of financing, investment and organizational-legal activities	11	3	6	2	6	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>14</b>	

The Committee has territorial bodies in the major eight basins in the country, Basin Water Authorities (hereinafter BWA). The main objective of BWA is to carry out state management in water resources use and protection within the respective basin.

The actual staff number of eight BWAs is 176 people, including 80 women (45.4%). Two of eight BWAs are headed by women (Balkhash-Alakol BWA and Tobol-Torgai BWA) (25%).

### BASIN WATER AUTHORITIES

Organization	Actual staff number	education			women
		higher	specialized secondary	incomplete higher	
Aral-Syrdarya BWA	22	20	2		5
Balkhash-Alakol BWA	31	20			13
Nura-Sarysui BWA	19	16	7	4	13
Tobol-Torgai BWA	18	15	3		12
Shu-Taklas BWA	16	15	3		5
Ural-Caspian BWA	21	19	1		8
Ishim BWA	25	25	2		14
Irtys BWA	24	21	3		12
TOTAL	176				80

The Committee has republican state-run enterprises (RSE) in each province, which maintain and operate waterworks facilities of inter-

provincial and national significance. The total staff number is 1196 people, including 430 women (about 40%).

### REPUBLICAN STATE-RUN ENTERPRISES

Organization	Actual staff number	Education			women
		higher	specialized secondary	incomplete higher	
RSE "Atyrauvodkhoz"	59	32	25	2	16
RSE "Aktyubvodkhoz"	16	12	4		5
RSE "Astana su"	32	18	8		11
RSE "Vostokvodkhoz"	29	25	4		9
RSE "Zapadvodkhoz"	30	18	11	1	10
RSE "K. Satpayev Canal"	381	232	104		205
RSE "Kostanaivodkhoz"	26	19	7		12
RSE "Karagandavodkhoz"	32	21	9	2	18
RSE "Severvodkhoz"	32	18	13	2	13
RSE RD "Severvodstroy"	27	8	5		5
RSE "Tarazvodkhoz"	31	17	1		7
RSE "Mangystauvodkhoz"	9	2	3	1	3
RSE ODSP "Aral"	29	26	3		11
RSE "Sarkand KhRU"	14	12	2		6
RSE "Yesil su"	183	70	75	7	67
RSE "Yugvodkhoz"	276	171	88	12	32
TOTAL	1196				430

Furthermore, the Committee comprises state institutions "Hydrogeological-meliorative expeditions" (HHME) and RMC "Kazagromeliovodkhoz" with total staff number of 154 people, including 57 women (37%). These state institutions monitor the condition of irrigated lands, and make recommendations and conclusions on keeping and improvement of reclamation condition of lands.

Women are mainly employed in state management of water resources in the field of

control and inspection, water accounting, and organizational and legal activity (about 50%), less women work at republican state-run enterprises, which deal with operation of waterworks facilities and hydraulic structures (about 40%).

Based on the above-mentioned, it can be concluded that gender balance is kept in the water sector in Kazakhstan.

Name of organization	Actual staff number	Education			women
		higher	specialized secondary	incomplete higher	
RMC "Kazagromeliovodkhoz"	16	15	1		6
Zhetusui HHME	55	43	7		19
South Kazakhstan HHME	50	37	11		22
Kzyl-Orda HHME	33	23	10		10
TOTAL	154				57

## International Women's Day, 8 March 2008: Investing in Women and Girls

A few campaigns conducted by the United Nations have received more active and broad support than the campaign for women equality promotion and protection. The Charter of the United Nations signed in San Francisco in 1945 was the first international agreement to proclaim gender equality as a fundamental human right. Since then, the Organization has helped create a historic legacy of internationally agreed strategies, standards, programmes and goals to advance the status of women worldwide.

Over the years, United Nations action for the advancement of women has taken four clear directions: promotion of legal measures; mobilization of public opinion and international action; training and research, including the compilation of gender desegregated statistics; and direct assistance to disadvantaged groups. Today a central organizing principle of the work of the United Nations is that no enduring solution to society's most threatening social, economic and political problems can be found without the full participation, and the full empowerment of the world's women.

Gender equality has been recognized by member states as one of the key factors in achieving the UN's priority goals in peace and security building, human right protection, and development, including the Millennium Development Goals. This theme is expected to attract attention to progress in women empowerment as well as to inadequate funding for the action in this regard.

### Message of the UN Secretary-General on the occasion of International Women's Day, 8 March 2008

At the 2005 World Summit, Governments of all nations agreed that "progress for women is progress for all". Yet the 10-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action revealed a serious gap between policy and practice in many countries. A lack of political will is reflected in the most telling way of all: lack of resources and insufficient budgetary allocations. That is why the theme of this International



Women's Day is "Investing in Women and Girls".

This failure of funding undermines not only our endeavours for gender equality and women's empowerment as such; it also holds back our efforts to reach all the Millennium Development Goals. As we know from long and indisputable experience, investing in women and girls has a multiplier effect on productivity and sustained economic growth. No measure is more important in advancing education and health, including the prevention of HIV/AIDS. No other policy is as likely to improve nutrition, or reduce infant and maternal mortality.

We do have some progress to build on. Financial resources have been mobilized in increasing women's employment, enhancing the role of microfinance, advancing credit for enterprises for women, and driving public finance reforms. More than 50 countries have launched gender-responsive budgeting initiatives. The private sector is scaling up efforts to finance women's economic empowerment, and women's funds and foundations are emerging as innovative sources of financing.

But we must do more. All of us in the international community -- Governments, multilateral Organizations, bilateral institutions and the private sector -- need to calculate the economic costs of persistent gender inequality, and the resources required to remedy it. We need to create mechanisms for tracking investments in gender equality. We need to monitor and report resource allocations on a regular basis. We need to adjust

domestic budgets as well as international aid flows to real needs, and ensure that they are sustained.

In the United Nations family too, we need to better match demands with resources. The resources available for gender mainstreaming must be made more sustainable and predictable -- particularly at the regional and country levels. And to make a real difference, our gender-specific machinery needs funding that is commensurate with the challenges. I firmly believe that one dynamic and strengthened gender entity, consolidating resources currently scattered among several structures, would attract better funding from the donor community. By mobilizing forces of change at the global level, and inspiring enhanced results at the country level, such an entity would better advance our cause to empower women and realize gender equality worldwide. I urge Member States to muster the political will to bring the consultations on this issue to a successful conclusion.

This year we find ourselves at the mid-point in the race to reach the Millennium Development Goals by the target date of 2015. Only by investing in the world's women and girls can we expect to reach our destination. On this International Women's Day, let us resolve to unite in this mission.

Source: [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

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**ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY IS ONE OF WAYS FOR  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY**

**[www.gender.cawater-info.net](http://www.gender.cawater-info.net)**

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